Rebuilding Institutions through Diaspora Engagement
Impact of Skilled Migration on Domestic Change

Chiara Cancellario

Abstract The paper – based on a wider Ph.D. research - wants to provide an analysis of the contribution of skilled migrants in the processes of institutional strengthening and institutional rebuilding through the employment of "social remittances" (Levitt, 1998) and to find out to what extent skilled diaspora may act as an international anchoring actor (Morlino, 2011). The analysis is conducted in the attempt to interpret the results according the "diaspora perspective". The focus on diaspora actors aims to provide a cognitive model on the topic different from the current in use, influenced by International Organisations, NGOs, and Governments.The research is organised as a qualitative case study analysis assisted by process tracing. It has a double focus: together with the data collection about the interventions of organisations on home country context, it tries to capture behaves, motivation and frameworks influencing any of the intervention in object. To do so, the objects of the analysis are specific projects, which involve skilled diaspora currently resident in the UK, leaded by international organisation or civil society associations and implemented in the Horn of Africa. The research looks at the of diaspora action at a "micro level", working on the factors of contribution of social development which are, according to Wescott and Brinekerhoff (2006), "mobilisation", "opportunities" and "motivations". Furthermore, the analysis refers to the variables of "legitimacy" and "effectiveness", which definition is borrowed from Lipset's "Some social requisites of Democracy: economic development and Political Legitimacy" (1959).

The case study analysis is conducted through a semi - structured interview based on two questionnaires, which slightly differ according to the nature of the engagement (from above/ from below). The main difference in the questionnaires regards the starting point of the case study: in the "from above" cases, the respondents will refer to the experience for which they have been ask to participate. In the "from below" cases, the respondent will have as a starting point an initiative of their choice chosen from the one of the organisation they belong to.

The organisation which participated at the research were 15, mostly based within UK and Italy, and the IOM Somalia, for the "QUESTS MIDA" case. The findings have revealed that the inclusion of local civil society is a key determinant, because is the turning point to evaluate the level of legitimacy of the initiatives of "change", being the principal concern of single diaspora members and organisations. This element has a direct impact also on "effectiveness" which emerged to be mainly based on the ability of inclusion

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of different levels of society. In this framework the "mediation" of the international organisation is not always so sensitive to that need, and it may cause tensions and mistrust towards the whole processes in place. If it true that the institutions in the processes described as "international anchoring" develop through social learning and rule adoption, it is also true that the process has to be framed adding a reference to the "development framework" in which diaspora operates which represent the privileged ground of action for the establishment of good governance seeds.

Keywords Diaspora - Development - Democratization - Social remittances - Legitimacy Effectiveness

JEL Classification F22

1. Introduction

The paper aims at illustrating the results of a wider Ph.D. research which investigates, through a qualitative analysis, the potential impact of diasporas on the development of home country institutions, and outlines the main criticisms of policy and practices in terms of "legitimacy" and "effectiveness".

The study focuses on two sets of case studies named, following Smith and Guarnizo's definition, "*transnationalism from above*" and "*transnationalism from below*" which identify two different modalities of diaspora engagement. The "transnationalism from above" refers to the projects and initiatives led by the International Organisation on Migration (IOM), and outlined in a definite policy programme; the "transnationalism from below" projects are managed by diaspora civil society organisations. The organisations involved in the research, are based in London and Wales, and have met during the research fieldwork in London in the first half of 2015.

According to the UK Office for National Statistics, a fifth of the total non-UK born population in England and Wales (1,3 Million people) come from Africa. The highest proportion of Black/black British comes from Nigeria and Ghana (89%). The analysis reports that the most relevant migration flow is dated back from 1960 to 1981, when the majority of the East and South African population settled in England and Wales.

Observing the data on education and employment of the African Population collected by David Owen in the paper "African Population to the UK" (2008) nearly a quarter of Africans have a degree or similar qualification, in particular west Africans, who are most likely to get higher education degrees.

The research was based on the three factors of diaspora contribution, identified by Wescott and Brinkerhoff[1], which are: the *ability to mobilise*, the *opportunity structures* and the consequent *motivations.* These factors are considered as the basis in response to the research question, which focuses on Lipset's definition of legitimacy and effectiveness[2], reformulated as following:

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[1] Brinkerhoff J. Wescott C., *Converting migration drains into gain – Harnessing the resources of overseas professionals*, Asian Development Bank, 2006

[2] It is fundamental to underline that the definitions of "legitimacy" and "effectiveness" have been formulated from Lipset's article "*Some social requisites of Democracy: economic development and Political Legitimacy*", where the definitions are elaborated as following: "*by effectiveness, meaning the actual performance of a political system, the extent to which it satisfies the basic functions of government as defined by the expectations of most members of a society, and the expectations of powerful groups within it which might threaten the system, such as armed forces. [..] Legitimacy involves the capacity of a political system to engender and maintain the belief that existing political institutions are the most appropriate or proper ones for the society*." (1959).

Perceived legitimacy of diaspora presence and action in home country contexts: the legitimacy is understood as the capacity of the actors to engage and maintain relationships in the home country contexts which are legitimate because recognised as appropriate for the context of reception from local civil society and local authorities.

Perceived effectiveness of diaspora action in home country contexts: for effectiveness meaning the actual performance of the intervention in question, and the actual success in satisfying the needs and the expectations of the receiving societies and institutions, and the ability to contribute to the resolution of problems related to institutional rebuilding and strengthening. The research may be contextualised in the area of studies which investigates the relationship between migration and development, through the employment of remittances, both economical and social.

The impact of economic remittances on home country economy, the role of "migrant enterprise" and the positive link between migration and home country development is a well-known topic. The present research goes beyond the economic impact, trying to analyse the migration and development linkage using the instruments of political science, opening grounds to the discussion of the role of Diasporas in democratisation processes (Morlino, 2011). To this aim, the theoretical base of the research lies in the constructivist theories of International relations. The constructivist approach allows to " *focus on the role of ideas, norms, knowledge, culture, and argument in politics, stressing in particular the role of collectively held or 'intersubjective' ideas and understandings on social life*" (Finnemore, Sikkink, 2005).

Along these lines, diaspora contribution to institutional development may be seen as an element of the process of Socialisation, which "*aims to facilitate the internalisation of democratic norms, policies and institutions through the establishment and intensification of linkages between liberal international fora and states actors and transnational communities*" (Morlino, 2001). According to the object of study, it is important to clarify the notion of "social remittances" used in this context. Although it will recall the general idea that defines social remittances as "ideas, know-how, practices, and skills", it is also recognised that any kind of measurement or definition of social remittances is quite impossible, because of their variety of shapes and understanding from academic literature. For this reason, it was necessary to narrow the object of the research, focusing on a definite (specific) typology of activism of diaspora which includes the following elements:

- not an economic support, but including knowledge, skills and capability sharing
- The intervention is delimited in time and space, is referable to the broader concept of "migration and development" and is "intentional" because the actors work on the basis of a project set by a definite organisation. This helps to reduce the principal bias in the study of social remittances, which may be addressed as "volatility".

After the research contextualisation, through the definition of the theoretical framework and research methodology, the empirical analysis will start from a summed up analysis of the previously mentioned three factors of diaspora contribution, which will open the floor to a discussion on *legitimacy* and *effectiveness* in the attempt to interpret the results through the "diaspora perspective".

A focus on diaspora actors, both at individual and organisational levels, provides a cognitive model on the topic, which differs from the current model in use, mainly influenced by International Organisations, NGOs, and governments. It will allow, in my view, a contribution in identifying the criticisms and the gaps both in policies and practices, unravelling a new inclusive policy perspective which, by modifying the current pattern, considers diaspora as an actor with a leading voice in the debate on migration and development potentialities.

2. The "theoretical space" of the research: Transnational Diasporas as epistemic communities

According to the purposes of the research, the classical definition of "diaspora" provided in literature by Clifford, has been implemented with further characteristics, which enable to highlight the activities of diaspora in the receiving context and the different patterns of action for the development of sending countries. In the paper "Diasporas" (1994), Clifford argues that the modern concept of Diaspora has to be enriched with the idea of the transnational dimension of migrant communities, highlighting that the "borders" of diaspora are rarely founded on a nation-state dimension. In this vein, Diasporas maintain connections with their native home because "*transnational connections break the binary relation of minority communities with majority societies*".[3]

To this aim, it is appropriate to refer to the taxonomy elaborated by Milton J. Esman through which he identifies three "classes": Settler, labour and entrepreneurial diaspora. The purpose of Esman's taxonomy is to make a distinction between the reasons for migrating and the function assumed by the person in the receiving context. The three classes he identifies cover the whole ensemble of diasporic groups, such as the transnational, refugees, historical and contemporary diasporas. He also identifies some central tendencies which characterise single diaspora groups, and the predominant function which they perform in the receiving context.

In this classification, the entrepreneurial diaspora consists in those people with business experience and professional skills who choose to seize better opportunities in the host country context, gaining new competences and advancing their professional position. "*the first and certainly the second generation gain access to education and attain middle class status in business, skilled labour and professional roles. They provide role models for their youth. A few become wealthy and influential. If they encounter exclusion or discrimination, they innovate professional roles or discover and exploit niches or high-risk opportunities in the local economy that enable them to practice or further develop their entrepreneurial talents*" (Esman, 2009).

According to the aims of the present research, the key characteristic of skilled diaspora is the capacity to affect the economy of the countries of origin, not only through the economical remittances, but also through circular/return migration, participation in business, science, technology, political or educational networks and activities producing positive externalities.
Furthermore, the transnational relations in object have a precise "*localisation*" which undermines a strategy of intervention of the host and home countries.

To better specify, *Transnationalism from above*, the canalisation and institutionalisation of transnational practices spontaneously occurred among diaspora groups and home countries. European Union countries and African countries, and the single programmes of intervention based on global and European migration policies are one of the grounds of this research.
In a similar way, the second set of initiative aims of the study – the *from below* ones –can be conceptualised under the framework of the so-called "core transnationalism", as activities that: a) form an integral part of the individual's habitual life; b) are undertaken on a regular basis; c) are patterned and therefore somewhat predictable. (Guarnizo, 2000).
Given this framework, the second point to analyse concerns the way in which transnational practices are carried out and the role of diaspora networks as one of the key actors in these processes.

Generally speaking, the theory of networks in political science is referred to as "*the role the networks of knowledge based experts – epistemic communities – play in articulating the cause*

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3 Clifford, *Diasporas*, 1994

and effect relationships of complex problems, helping states identify their interests, framing the issues for collective debate, proposing specific policies, and identifying salient points of negotiation" (Haas, 1992). This definition undermines that epistemic communities are actors which - through knowledge - keep power and have a recognised influence on national and international polity ("*control over knowledge is an important dimension of power*"). Epistemic communities expertise are recognised and, as Haas points out, have the characteristics of sharing a value-based knowledge; sharing beliefs which are the basis for the contribution towards policy issues and actions; sharing an inter-subjective notion of validity, which influences the criteria for evaluating the knowledge in a specific sector of expertise; sharing of policy practices in facing a specific policy issue to which their knowledge is directed. This definition undermines a conception of epistemic community as an elite, and its role in the decision making process is relevant because of a high level of legitimation of its policy action in the institutional and political context.

With reference to initiatives ascribable to "social remittances", the most suitable theoretical definition is the one provided by Keck and Skikkink of transnational advocacy networks: "*A transnational advocacy network includes those relevant actors working internationally on an issue, who are bound together by shared values, a common discourse, and dense exchanges of information and services*". (Keck, Skikkink, 1998). The role of transnational networks in international migration is, according to Robert Lucas, twofold. On the one hand, it is a way to increase familiar linkages amplifying the migration streams; on the other hand, they may play a key role in development, influencing economics and politics.

It is clear how the migration history of each individual, cannot be addressed, excluding the relations with the network in which people are embedded. Networks shape the engagement of people in economic, social and political fields influencing both private and public spheres.

As Peggy Levitt states, diaspora networks raise "*at first in response to the economic relations between migrants and non-migrants, social religious, and political connections […] the more diverse and thick a transnational social field is, the greater number of ways it offers migrants to remain active to their homelands. The more institutionalised these relationships become, the more likely it is that transnational members will persist*" (2001).

The interactions and the interconnections of diaspora with home countries, has become deeper over time mainly due to two principal factors: Firstly, global processes at political, economic and social levels, which tend to "*de-link from specific national territories while transnational processes are anchored in and transcend one or more nation states* "(Kearney, 1995); secondly the emergence of new patterns of global capitalism, which have allowed for the raise of communication and transportation technology, with clear consequences on mobility and connections. In addition, transnationalism influences the political and institutional sphere because diaspora is able to organise its political life across national borders and demand for new rights as dual citizenship or to exercise specific political rights, as the influence on institutions of the countries of origin through a "diaspora quota".

The issues, which constitute the object of the present work, are grounded in the transnational theory and look to diaspora networks as the key factor in the migration and development policies and practices. It is necessary to clarify that the empirical research will look at the engagement through networks as a substantial part of transnational engagement but, due to the nature of the development/institutional rebuilding practices in analysis, the engagement through networks and civil society organisations may assume peculiar forms of involvement. Diaspora networks are, according to the nature of the initiative (from above/from below), involved in different stages of the policy process. For instance, the initiatives "from above" prefer to collaborate identifying the

networks as implementing partners, while, in the initiatives "from below", the patterns of action may assume different shapes. A further conceptualisation of this point and an in-depth study of those relations will be provided in the paragraph on case studies description.

3. Methodology and case studies selection

Generally speaking, literature on migration and development, is characterised by a widespread optimism regarding the contribution of diaspora to the home country economies and social development. This optimism is close to an institutional view of the migration and development linkage, in particular to the "triple wins" idea, namely the possibility of the implementation of a virtuous circle that provides positive outcomes (at least) for the migrants themselves, in the sending and receiving areas.

The research will try out this optimistic approach, and will look at outputs and outcomes of the institutional rebuilding programmes, working on the main actors involved in the initiatives, in particular on diaspora organisation and networks, together with the principal occasions of engagement, as the international organisation programmes, where diaspora is seen as "beneficiary". The research hypotheses, which will be verified through the qualitative analysis, have been formulated on the elements of the literature both on international anchoring and on migration and development, and challenge the current research on the topic through the discussion regarding sensitive issues such as the relationship between diaspora and democracy (and state consolidation).The majority of case studies have been chosen during the period of visiting the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, in the Department of Development Studies, which has allowed me to be in contact with relevant organisations, scholars, activists and "eminent migrants" engaged in the transmission of social remittances.[4]

The case study analysis has been conducted through a semi - structured interview based on two questionnaires, which slightly differ according to the nature of the engagement (from above/ from below). The main difference in the questionnaires regards the starting point of the case study: in the "from above" cases, the respondents will refer to the experience for which they have been ask to participate. In the "from below" cases, the respondent will have as a starting point initiative of their choice chosen from the one of the organisations they belong to.

The questionnaire has been studied to be a flexible instrument, to adapt to the respondents needs: it has been filled autonomously, followed by an in depth interview, or by the respondent together with the interviewer, which has facilitated collection of the most relevant information in terms of accurateness.

4. Analysis

4.1. Case studies overview

For the purposes of this paper, the results will be summarised looking at legitimacy and effectiveness with a reference to "mobilisation", "opportunities" and "motivation" factors. The empirical research has been conducted looking at twelve organisations, which engage diasporas, in particular: nine diaspora ethnic or region based organisations (mainly Ethiopian and Somali), two diaspora networks and one International organisation.

The organisations are based in the UK (England and Wales), where, as said in the

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4 to ensure the validity of the results and respect the will of the respondents, the case studies will be anonymous.

introduction, the largest part of the empirical work has been conducted. The choice of looking at the organisation rather than the individual action has been made according to some considerations on the nature of diaspora engagement itself and the contingencies which have occurred during the research fieldwork and will be deeply explained further. The present research has tried to narrow the geographical area of origin, of the diaspora organisations involved, to the Horn of Africa, however the nature of the majority of the organisations involved in the research is differentiated. If half of the organisations have a national/regional base (for instance, the Ethiopian ones mainly work on the region of Tigray), the rest of organisations in their structure development have chosen to abandon the region -based focus building their network on a wider geographical area. It is particularly relevant with the advocacy activities on certain issues (mainly health and children - women rights), which have expanded and built partnerships in more than one country.

At a first stance, the questionnaire prepared was intended to be handed out individually to single project participants of a certain organisation, reaching a sample of at least one hundred people.
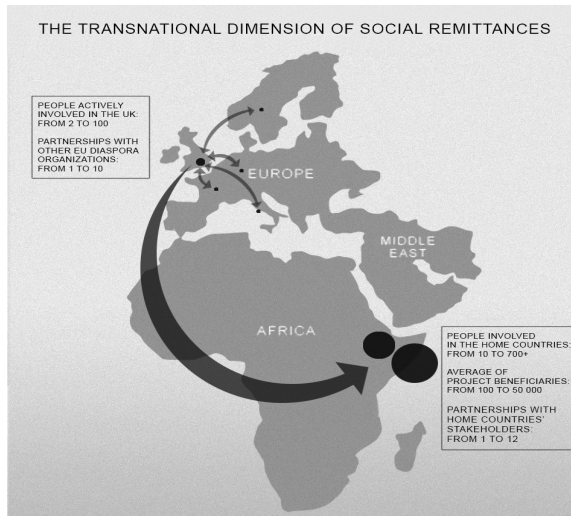
During the fieldwork, it became apparent that the first objective was unrealistic because of the structure of each organisation. It is evident that there is a strong interconnection between stakeholders or partners outside UK, and that diasporic transnational organisations personnel or volunteers residing in London were quite few. Furthermore, the organisations sometimes used to work together and/or overlapping with bigger networks or institutions.

The choice of looking at the organisations rather than individuals was made also according to the consideration that the nature of individual engagement is wide-ranging and fragmented. The organisation assures the existence of a structured project of intervention, an internal organisation of the staff and an easier traceability of the stakeholders involved. Furthermore, it is possible to exclude "unclear" intents in the home country and the predominance of "personal ambition" as principal motivation for the engagement (ie. Economic or political advantage) which represents a bias for the objectives of the research. Executives were asked to respond to the questionnaire on behalf of their organisation. The majority of these people have a high-qualified job and higher education degrees.

Almost every organisation provided data about its own activity. This data collection had been particularly difficult, because of the reticence of some of the respondents to give that type of information, considered as "sensitive". The information provided shows that the number of stakeholders in the home country context is large, and may also reach 50,000 beneficiaries for all the activities and services provided. Furthermore, the collaboration with home country civil society and the local institutions is particularly relevant in order to understand the structure of each organisation. Ethiopian organisations in particular, are able to build very good relationships with institutional stakeholders, due to the local policy on diaspora, considered as one of the major resources for the development of the country.

It means that some organisations have a wider network of collaborators in the home country, both from institutions and civil society, and it has a great significance for the analysis of the research variables. It has been estimated that, due to the transnational nature of most of the organisations, the number of stakeholders which reside in Africa, is bigger than the number of stakeholders in the UK and Italy, as witnessed in the diagram below:

Figure 1 The transnational dimension of social remittances: diagram elaborated by the author on the basis of the data collected during the research

THE TRANSNATIONAL DIMENSION OF SOCIAL REMITTANCES

PEOPLE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN THE UK: FROM 2 TO 100

PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER EU DIASPORA ORGANIZATIONS: FROM 1 TO 10

EUROPE

MIDDLE EAST

AFRICA

PEOPLE INVOLVED IN THE HOME COUNTRIES: FROM 10 TO 700+

AVERAGE OF PROJECT BENEFICIARIES: FROM 100 TO 50 000

PARTNERSHIPS WITH HOME COUNTRIES' STAKEHOLDERS: FROM 1 TO 12

The choice of the case studies has also taken into account the kind of activities that each organisation carries out in the home country context.The present research work has put aside the "economic value" of remittances, focusing on institutional and social development. As previously mentioned, diaspora in its action is conceived as an "epistemic community" which provides support based on the transmission of ideas and specific knowledge in different sectors of public and community life.

In this sense, the selection of the organisations has been based on their capacities to contribute to local policies through the strengthening of institutions, local capabilities and civil society awareness on definite issues, in the framework of specific projects or programmes and defined goals. The Organisations' categorisation was inspired by the definitions of "transnationalism from above" and "transnationalism from below" made by Smith and Guarnizo (2003).

However, empirical evidence has shown that one of the most interesting models of organisations that characterises the diaspora engagement, is wider and more structured, and characterised by the will of building and enhancing development partnerships pursuing the different needs of diaspora groups. Those organisations also assume the role of *networks*, being the principal reference point of smaller diaspora organisations and also Home and Host country governments, local authorities and transnational institutions (in particular the European Commission and the United Nations). Together with activities of diaspora supporting different sectors (employment, entrepreneurship, training..), much of the work of those organisations is based on lobbying and advocacy to governments, through the participation in principal institutional dialogue processes on migration issues but also bringing together civil society and governmental partners in self-directed activities (conferences, platforms, building of partnerships). Those organisations constitute a sort of hybrid of the two concepts of transnationalism "form above and from below", working as a sort of "juncture" between the two levels.

4.2 Legitimacy

Diasporas temporary return programmes are one of the major activities of engagement and imply an employment of human resources – skill, knowledge and capitals – in a perspective of growth through a top-down approach.

These initiatives - marked as "transnationalism from above" - are characterised by a commitment of international organisations, governments, local authorities, which engage diaspora individuals as "beneficiaries" of the projects. The international organisations work on directly engaging diaspora, with frequent calls of application for diasporas - mainly from the Somali region – or indirectly, through the involvement of a Europe-based civil society organisation, which has the role to disseminate or make awareness about both the IO's programme and the issue of diaspora engagement itself.

Research is not new in studying these kinds of projects, outlining the diaspora and international organisation interventions in the efforts to stop brain drain and improve brain circulation. Diasporas are hired to engage in activities that aim at strengthening the capacities of the institutions, also by providing policy guidelines and training. To this aim, personal resources as skills, capabilities and confidence in a certain work environment are essential. The majority of the people involved are men with higher education diplomas, and past work experiences in development cooperation also as volunteers. The good positions and careers undermine a good economic integration in the country of residence. In these specific cases, for the nature of the programme itself, the individuals are not affiliated to an organisation/diasporic association, and choose autonomously to apply.

The people interviewed consider the support of the international organisation and – consequently – the approach of the programme to the institutional strengthening an essential aspect. Although Diaspora demonstrates a high level of commitment and high trust in its capacities, there is also the awareness of the importance of funding and resources – both human and material – which the organisation is able to provide.

The most important case study for this section has been the IOM QUESTS MIDA project[5], which aims at employing, for a definite period, diaspora professionals in home country institutions. To study legitimacy, the analysis will consider the interaction between the International Organisations, the local authority and the diaspora and the consequent effects on civil society. Before starting, it is important to notice that local civil society is "excluded" in the sense that it is considered an "indirect beneficiary" of the project in analysis, because it does not have an active role in the project activities.

From the interviews it has emerged that "engaging and maintaining relationships" in the home country context means to build a relationship firstly with the International Organisation, which will provide support and resources during the "return period" of the diaspora.
A variegated level of trust between "beneficiaries" and the organisations has been registered, which will be the first "relation" analysed. This is a sort of pre-condition for the analysis of legitimacy because IO is the "mediator" between the diaspora and the local authority. Diaspora, in general, considers the IO accountable for, but may become particularly severe, on the basis of the perception of how the IO knows the territory it operates in. The main critical points regarding the appropriateness of the intervention lies in the perception of the level of awareness that the organisation has, and the capacity of building bridges even beyond the institutional level, including civil society.

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5 http://www.quests-mida.org/

"I think that The IO has known how to access all the resources they can get from western countries. They have connections with different Diasporas. I met here in Mogadishu different people from different countries. It is very important to get a lot of experience and meet different people".

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"International organisations have to ask us what we need. They also have to have greater consideration toward people who have background information on a country. They use to hire people who do not have enough information or have been out from the country for years. Those people have language and cultural barriers. People in Somalia need people who understand them"

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"If diaspora works together with the government of the home country, it may avoid a lot of problems. The advantages of diaspora engagement have to be communicated to the Somali people, in particular with reference to social remittances. There are no disadvantages for Diasporas. International institutions have to be a partner in this process"

The second level, which may enable the understanding of the "legitimacy", lies in the relationship between the diaspora beneficiary and the hosting local authority. The collaboration between diaspora and local authorities is the key element of the project, and influences its success and the "appropriateness" of the interventions deriving from this collaboration on a wider scale. This element is one of the most critical ones, because for the majority of respondents, there is no full collaboration, and the local authorities are often considered as unskilled and not cooperative. In this sense, the full cooperation represents an aspect of the legitimacy, because it is the symptom of the total acceptance of the intervention and the mutual recognition of the significance of diaspora work.

"There are two different feelings among the local staff. One group is co-operating and is ready to learn while the other sees the diaspora staff as a threat to their growth and will try to sabotage the work of the expatriate".

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"The other experts and I are very involved with the institution; in fact we have integrated very well into the institution due to the fact that we have now been there for 2 years and more. Also the reason for interaction with the organization is at a very high level because the staff are now very open and trustful of us due to the duration we have been there."

The last level to identify the legitimacy in the "from above" cases regards the relationship between project beneficiaries (and the whole programme) and civil societies of home countries. As mentioned civil society is an indirect beneficiary of the IO initiatives, and marginally involved in the process.

However, it is the subject that mostly concerns Diaspora, which aims to establish a relationship based on accountability and trust. In particular in the Somali context, it has been noticed a widespread concern on the motivations for the return. The prevalence of personal ambitions, career opportunities etc. as the principal aims for going back may turn into a "conflict" with locals in the process of re-integration. This issue is present in the answers, and much of the respondents are critical toward the returnees who seek for political roles or economic

speculations. The engagement of civil society actors in this process allows a slight change in this perception, creating a linkage between civil society, diaspora and the International Organisation and enhancing trust among the actors. Although the projects aim of the study mainly refers to institutional strengthening, there are some spaces for civil society, both as partners (recruiters of potential project participant) or beneficiary of diaspora intervention.

Especially in the first case, their presence is essential not only for recruiting, but in building awareness and sense of belonging (identity building), and helping the re-integration within home country context minimising the risk of tensions.

> *"If the diaspora person has the skills to contribute, it is fine, apart from being a clan. There are engineers, doctors, nurses, even the ones who know administration or work in the local governments, if they have got money and want to make things there it is fine. But the people who go there and just want to become ministry or parliamentarian no, they are damaging the people who are there. On 300 parliamentarians, 2/3rds are from the Diaspora, and what happened to the people who are coping there? Rebuilding our country is always in our mind, but the question is how."*
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> *"There are many good stories and less good stories of diasporas back home, but in the end the advantages are more than the disadvantages"*
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> *"Anyone at any age of Somali origin living outside the country has the idea of giving back to the community and a strong sense of going back. The way to do that has a lack of "how" to do it and I think it is the gap we fill because we were able to connect the diaspora young Somali in Europe to the means to go back home and encourage them to make it possible giving them the platform to meet other people such as institutions or universities."*
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> *"Now there is a more complete understanding from African governments that diasporas are doing what they are doing, they are acting, and the real challenge is to find a way to support the diaspora without negatively affecting local communities, and finding a compromise. This issue can be overcome, and is strictly correlated with training. At the same time, I can understand the feeling of frustration of local communities, because we are speaking about access to resources, and resources are power. Diaspora is competing unfavourably for positions. I think is also important to stress the transnational dimension of the diaspora, so I think it is a mistake to assume that diaspora goes back only to have best jobs. In reality they do back and forth and have good relationships with the communities, because they are their relatives."*

In the case of "transnationalism from below" the decision of diaspora organisations to mobilise toward the home country vary according to their dimension, necessities and capacities. Much of those organisations are region-based and engage mainly in coherence with their professional skills. Some organisations are academic or research based, working on the strengthening of institutions; other organisations mainly work in their native region, through personal contacts and informal networks. There are also – among the case studies – issue-based transnational organisations, which involve a high number of officers and beneficiaries, with a long tradition of engagement and a trans-national recognised impact.

Although the variety of the cases, those organisations share the basic feature of being independent from an international organisation, and to prefer a grassroots approach for their

initiatives of development. There is no mediator between the diaspora organisation, the local government and the local civil society, with a consequent change of the nature of the relationships among the actors in term of interactions and – consequently – on the level of trust.

This set of case studies collect the organisations which prefer to work through a "grassroots approach", which act through direct contact with civil society and also through the collaboration with local organisations involved as implementing partners of certain initiatives.

On the side of legitimacy, in more than one interview the basic question which diaspora asks itself is whether they are legitimised to bring change, and it has been the principal point of reflection of the majority of interviews. For the "from below" cases the nature of the relationships and the linkages with home country actors has resulted in being heterogeneous: diaspora may be seen outside civil society and- consequently- perceive itself as an "outsider", although others feel more integrated, because of their ability to build partnerships. In this context, Local Ngos or charities are "gatekeepers" able to support diaspora in building the relationships. Once the relationship of trust is built, it becomes easier to communicate and to find a welcoming environment, while in some cases diaspora may tend to rule. A more general point of discussion is that, for those cases, the idea of "democratisation" is strongly contested, in favour of the idea of "development".

Looking at the factors of engagement, the first difference concerns the "identity building" of the community. The reasons to engage lay in the identity of the groups, and there is no necessity of a preliminary process of identity building, as the "recruitment phase" in the from above cases. During the interviews, the "legitimacy", was investigated through several questions on the perception that home country actors usually have on the organisation's activities.

The picture given by the separate analysis of the attitude of civil society and local authorities reveals two main points of interest: firstly, the issue of "integration" within the local civil society, secondly the modalities through which the trust between the organisation and the local authorities is shaped.

According to the first point, it has been noticed that the integration within civil society is the most problematic issue for diaspora actors. The organisation's respondent was asked to illustrate the relationship between themselves and the beneficiaries/ stakeholders of their intervention, under the perspective of the potentialities of change. For the respondents "engaging and maintaining relationships" and the issue of "appropriateness of the actions" are related with the integration within civil society. It is, essentially, to be perceived not as a "foreign" but as an equal member of civil society with the same ambitions and aspirations.

"It is a responsibility, and diaspora is a key factor because it is the most titled actor which can take action. It is a moral responsibility. But the diaspora has to be skilled properly otherwise may cause damages rather than benefits."

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"Diaspora has to be able to influence policy makers but at the same time not be part of the political processes. Policy advising and institutional rebuilding are the most appropriate spaces for diaspora action. Diaspora may organise themselves in several ways (in clans, or regions for instance), but it is important to have a coherent policy and be coherent to the good practices already existing carried on by the people on the ground. What is needed is a systematic approach rather than a "here and there" approach."

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> *"You are a foreign person. Because of Diaspora there are some issues, which usually come out. I am not a stranger, but people think there is a lot of money and diaspora is favoured. For this reason the government tries to take some measures in order to take the population from abroad".*
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> *"Diaspora is a few people, we are a sort of spray of the perfume. We as diaspora are nothing. No way for me to influence the civil society. You can contribute to change. For instance, if you work in the government, but in society you are nothing".*

This tendency changes the objectives, which are not related to leading and "importing" an institutional or policy change, but to support it from the inside.

> *"It has been a positive learning curve overall, but now more than ever I am convinced that sustainable development in Africa will come from home-based effort. The role of the diaspora is to support this change not lead it. The narrative of Diaspora as saviour of home countries is reductive and in some cases diaspora involvement can be counterproductive as some Diaspora get involved in home affairs for personal financial and political gains, which may not align with the national good. It is legitimate for local actors to be critical of Diaspora motives in taking part in development initiatives. It is up to diaspora actors to prove the value added of their contribution to the development of their country of origin, and diaspora actors need to lose their sense of entitlement whether it is by choice or not, the fact is they are not permanent residents living the everyday reality of their country of origin"*
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> *"It is not a matter of influence. We sit down and identify the need and then we prioritise it according to the needs. The people choose the projects."*

The second point, which explains the "legitimacy" of diaspora, concerns the relations with the institutions, which become more articulated and have a direct influence on the aforementioned issue. It is important to remember, to clarify the analysis, that the influence on institutions is mainly understood as *"policy change"* and is carried out through advocacy and campaigning, but also mentoring, skill transfers through training or lobbying. Policy change does not mean that the issue is "political": the organisations are de-politicized, they are not activists but - as the respondents often remarked - actors of development.

Institutions search and ask for more diaspora, recognising the role of remittances in the local economy and societies and taking the best from diaspora action in term of knowledge, networking, policy and investments. This is particularly true for the countries in the Horn of Africa, where the interviewed diaspora comes from. In these contexts, specific regulations are in place as in the case of specific "diaspora rights" (Ethiopia), and where Diaspora is one of the key actors in the rebuilding of the country (Somalia).

The grassroots approach toward the "rebuilding" of home country institutions has to be accountable also in the host country institutions. This is because local charities or administration often finance diaspora organisations for their development projects.

In both of these cases, there is a good collaboration with the two levels, but at the same time diasporas seek for independency. Although "independency" is often mentioned as a core issue for the legitimacy in the home country, particular cases or tensions have not been registered.

Too much "harmony" may result counter productive for diaspora. Especially in the case of

Somali diaspora, when institutions give too much space or there is a manifest line up with a certain party, there are risks of tensions with civil society.

There are cases where independency is not the first and fundamental issue, and the organisations completely share governmental goals and attitudes toward the diaspora organisations' projects, through a mechanism of mutual support, in terms of finance but also in accountability and visibility towards civil society. According to the respondent organisation, it has not an impact on the legitimacy within civil society, revealing a general optimism toward the success their own work.

In general, organisations work to have an impact on institutions, which is mainly indirect. They do not work directly within a certain authority with personnel and politicians, but they prefer to bring issues from a grassroots level with the aforementioned instruments. In some specific cases, the organisations choose to be engaged in particular dialogue platforms where both institutions of host and home countries take part. This particular aspect, which has been observed in a couple of case studies, requires the capacity of mobilisation at a higher level, much closer to "activism". Their behaviour results in coherence with Price's:

"A final issue concerning the authority of transnational civil society actors is the acceptance of their role in bringing information and moral concerns to light. As noted by Paul Nelson (in Khagram, Riker, and Sikkink), this legitimacy can derive from claims to represent affected communities (for example, of the global poor, the South), to represent a domestic constituency, or to be official participants in institutionalized political processes."[6]

Within this particular case, it has been highlighted from the respondents the need of "learning" the policy language and an intense work of networks to be invited to the "table" and to be "legitimised" from the grassroots levels to speak in their voice.

> *"Now, if you entangle with central government, you will not be independent anymore. Furthermore, governments donate not in cash but in benefits, so to say, land, reduced taxation etc. If you enter in government finances you risk your freedom. If you are an independent expert you challenge them."*
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> *"After training and workshops I am optimist because I have been financed and my local partners are happy and asked me to set the mentoring programme again because of its positive results. I am waiting for funding to start again. Civil society and local authorities accepted me and my work, and government officials have approved it entirely. The real problem is to meet the expectations of those people."*
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> *"Diaspora has to be able to influence policy makers but at the same time not be part of the political processes. Policy advising and institutional rebuilding are the most appropriate spaces for diaspora action. Diaspora may organise themselves in several ways (in clans, or regions for instance), but it is important to have a coherent policy and be coherent to the good practices already existing carried on by the people on the ground. What is needed is a systematic approach rather than a "here and there" approach"*
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> *"You have to invite yourself to the table, you don't have to wait to be invited to meetings. It is fundamental to identify how and where the conversation is taking place and get yourself there"*

6 Price, R., *Transnational civil society and advocacy in world politics*, World Politics (55), June 2003, 579-606

4.3 Effectiveness

Like the concept of legitimacy, the definition of effectiveness has been borrowed from Lipset, as: "*the actual performance of the intervention in discussion, and the actual success in satisfying the needs and the expectations of the receiving societies and institutions, and the ability to contribute to the resolution of problems related to institutional rebuilding and strengthening*".

The analysis of the effectiveness will proceed according to the examination of "outputs" and "outcomes". In particular, the outputs will regard the direct effect of single diaspora intervention, while the outcomes the general effects, with a look to the potentials of diaspora as an actor of "democratisation".

As described in the concept elaboration of the research, a unitary definition of social remittances - and their measurement, is almost impossible, because of their volatile nature, and the concept itself has been framed according to their "*systematic and intentional*" transmission. This is the principal reason of why it has been chosen to work on the efforts of some diaspora organisations, dividing the research into specific interventions. For the analysis of the variable, it is necessary a first look at the principal activities that each organisation – especially the ones "from below" carries out in the home country, and the principal modalities of implementation.

As mentioned before in the explanation of the case studies selection, the choice has been made according to the activities implemented in the home country, which – in their heterogeneity – have the common feature of the will of impact – through a direct collaboration or indirectly – on local institutions or policy making.

Although much of the organisations implement different initiatives in different sectors, to facilitate the analysis, the projects are be gathered into four "topics", which are:

- "*advocacy and campaigning",* which has the scope to raise awareness on sensitive social issues, and covers the two levels of civil society and governments both of European and African countries.
- *"skill transfer, capacity building and institutional support*": which mainly concerns the "from above cases". It implies the direct work on institutions, through the transferring of skills, knowledge and capacities "to foster transparent, accountable, and responsive governance"[7].
- "*training, mentorship and research*" concerns the initiatives of skill transfer at civil society levels, including specific training for government officials and research at different levels including cooperation between home and host country research centres and universities.
- "*institutional dialogue*": mainly concerns the creation and/or the participation at transnational dialogue platforms on diasporas and development, where diasporas are invited to bring a contribution for policy making at a wider level.

In this framework, with regard to the "success in satisfying needs and expectations", the "from above cases" clearly have major opportunities in terms of resources and influence. There is a big response to the calls published by the IO and good evaluation of the activity overall.

The success in satisfying the needs is also to be considered in relation to the stakeholders. In particular, the "from below" cases have a wider range of stakeholders, including the donors of host countries. The organisations have the duty of being accountable, especially through a precise balance of finances. Furthermore, pre-departure training reduces possible tension enabling to work in such a way so as to meet the expectations of the local population.

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7 http://www.quests-mida.org/page.php?id=bndsNnZmYmhqMjc

"You have to keep a timing and finance balance; a clear balance sheet and expenses have to be precise, otherwise we don't get funding next year."

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I think that the IOM has know-how and access to all the resources they can get from western countries. They have connections with different diasporas. I met here in Mogadishu different people from different countries. It is very important to get a lot of experience and meet different people.

The "ability to contribute" is the most controversial issue, especially because the difficulty in accessing some of the monitoring and evaluation documents, because of their "confidentiality". According to the documentation which each organisation provided, there is a general success of the initiatives in place, especially in reference to the number of beneficiaries reached and the continuity of the projects throughout the years. As Lipset states, education is the ground and the necessary (but not sufficient) condition for the support of every democratic practice, resulting more significant than income and occupations. The work of international organisations goes in this sense, in order to meet diaspora needs and civil society needs.

Under the MIDA program, IOM is currently providing capacity injection in four key sectors: Health, Public Finance Management, Education and Justice. IOM and its partners believe that the three sectors are crucial for economic development and stability of Somalia. To date, IOM, through the implementation of 10 projects and project components has facilitated and supported; more than 372 Somali diaspora assignments within more than 80 Somali institutions, including ministries such as health, finance, planning, interior, justice, foreign affairs and others. 30 professional interns recruited from 2014 to date. The MIDA participants have trained more than 500 locals through workshops and on job trainings.[8]

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We have worked in over 9 African countries supporting over 18 partner organisations, including being the driving force behind the foundation of 3 local, women-led organisations. Currently we support 50 girls clubs across Africa, involving over 1,500 girls to provide peer support, information and signposting on sexual and reproductive health and girls' rights.

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Sometimes there are tensions between the centre and the periphery, and- most importantly – there is a real need to manage expectations of diaspora concerning what they can achieve, in particular through authorities and local authorities, because in many cases the diaspora we are working with has an incomplete understanding of the local context in terms of local system, local procedures, entitlements and even the legal system. This is a point which has been raised to us by three African governments that we trained. There is a sort of frustration because diaspora who goes home expects a lot and sometimes those expectations are unrealistic (ie. Access to resources, infrastructures, will of receiving a special treatment).

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8 IOM QUESTS MIDA FACTSHEET – provided by International Organization for Migration (IOM) Mission in Somalia, Nairobi Office

Going beyond numbers and official reports, it is important to consider how the presence of the "international organisation" or a "diaspora network" has an impact in terms of effectiveness. International organisation, as a mediator, guarantees finances, continuity and accountability of diaspora initiatives. The "*ability to contribute*" as from the definition refers not only to the project itself, but – with reference to the outcomes - also to the ability to contribute to spreading the idea of good governance and - in particular cases – democratic norms. Au contraire, the "from below" cases which, as seen, have a closer contact with civil society, and the impact on governance is indirect, with a lower success of adoption of certain norms or practices. However, the absence of the international organisation in the grassroots processes have increased chances to include wider ranges of civil societies and build awareness on certain topics, or to ensure a direct support in certain activities.

6. Conclusion

This paper has illustrated the preliminary findings of a wider Ph.D. research, trying to give a response to the research hypothesis illustrated in the methodology section. In particular, it has been analysed, through the analysis of qualitative interviews, the factors of contribution identified by Wescott and Brinkerhoff according to the macro-categories of "legitimacy" and "effectiveness" elaborated from Lipset's conceptualisation.

Following the hypotheses, it is possible to develop the idea that, for the evaluation of the impact of diaspora intervention on the building of "good governance", the joint analysis of legitimacy and effectiveness has a key importance for two reasons: firstly, it allows to give space to the study of the interactions among stakeholders, through the conceptualisation of the patterns of actions and relationships; secondly, it enables to correlate this element to the performance of intervention, in relation to definite needs and expectations. To this aim, a specific definition of social remittances becomes fundamental. The classical approach which refers to "*ideas, know how, practices and skills*"(Peggy Levitt) has been improved through a glance at the means of transmission, which has to be intentional and systematic, and definite in time and space.

In both the *from above* and *from below* set of case studies diaspora has been considered as the central actor around which the analysis has been build. The illustrated findings have revealed that the link between diaspora and democratization is not direct, and normative change undermines some conditions. In particular, the inclusion of local civil society is a key determinant, because it is the turning point to evaluate the level of legitimacy of the initiatives of "change", being the principal concern of single diaspora members and organisations. This element has a direct impact also on "effectiveness" which emerged to be mainly based on the ability of inclusion of different levels of society. In this framework the "mediation" of the international organisation is not always so sensitive to that need, and it may cause tensions and mistrust towards the whole processes in place. It is possible to argue that the relation between diaspora and democratisation (or better, "good governance") is not based on a direct correlation. With reference to diaspora as an "external" or an "international" actor of democratisation, capable of influencing institutions through the existing social linkage, it is necessary to refer also to the concrete conditions of access to democratic building practices. If it is true that the institutions in the processes described as "international anchoring", develop through social learning and rule adoption, it is also true that the process has to be outlined, adding a reference to the "development framework" in which diaspora operates, which represents the privileged ground of action for the establishment of *good governance seeds* through the promotion of social learning.

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