Women in the Diaspora in Germany and their Engagement for Sustainable Development in Countries of Origin

Exploratory Mapping

WINS Global Consult

> **If you don't change culture, if you don't change power, if you don't change access to resources, you don't change much.**
>
> **Tasneem Balasinorwala, Power South**

THANK YOU TO ALL THE WOMEN WHO TOOK PART IN THIS STUDY AND SHARED THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH US. YOUR VOICES ARE TRULY INSPIRING.

> **I have already achieved so much in Germany. And I want to share that with disadvantaged people in my home country. That's why I'm so committed to the work we do, human rights and humanitarian aid**
>
> **Jenny Tausch, Southern Cameroons European Women e.V.**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AWEF	African Women's Empowerment Forum
BMZ	Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DiO	Diaspora Organisations
FFDP	Feminist Foreign and Development Policy
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
KII	Key Informant Interview
LATAM	Latin America
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex and Asexual
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
NA	North Africa
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PMD	Programme Migration & Diaspora
SDG(s)	Sustainable Development Goal(s)
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
WB	Western Balkan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recognising the high potential of women in the diaspora as leaders and agents of change, the "Programme Migration & Diaspora" (PMD), funded by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ), commissioned this exploratory mapping of women with a migration history in Germany and their engagement for sustainable development in their countries of origin. The study aims to generate an evidence-based understanding of where, when, why, and how women in the diaspora engage for sustainable development, as well as the opportunities and challenges they face. It also explores how to foster opportunities for self-empowerment among women in the diaspora and promote their meaningful participation in development policy and actions. The study should be read within the frame of the Federal Government of Germany's feminist foreign and development policy, the overall goal of which is the realization of human rights and equal participation for all, regardless of their gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity or other characteristics. As the results of this research make clear, strengthening the rights, resources and representation of engaged women in the diaspora not only has the potential to transform gendered dynamics within diaspora cooperation but can also contribute to the protection of women migrants more generally and to addressing gender inequalities and supporting marginalised groups in countries of origin.

A qualitative data collection strategy was employed, including a desk study of secondary data and primary data collection in the form of semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FDGs). The desk review allowed for a mapping of diaspora women organisations and women leaders in the diaspora and took stock of existing literature on their engagement for sustainable development in their countries of origin. In total, 128 diaspora women actors in Germany (organisations and individuals) were identified and included within a database. KIIs and FDGs with 46 women in the diaspora from ten PMD partner countries enabled a more in-depth exploration of their experiences, perspectives, and aspirations for engaging in sustainable development.

KEY FINDINGS

The study revealed the following key findings on diaspora women's engagement for sustainable development:

There is a lack of systematic learning around women diaspora actors. Women in the diaspora play a crucial role in the sustainable development of their countries of origin, as well as in promoting participation of diaspora communities, yet their diverse contributions often remain overlooked. Most diaspora studies do not address the gendered experience of diasporas or conduct an in-depth analysis of the diverse configurations of power that produce gendered hierarchies in these communities.

Intersectionality is key to understanding the identities, experiences, and engagement of women in the diaspora. Gender is not the only determining factor affecting the experiences of women in the diaspora. The intersection of factors such as age, sexuality, gender, class, generation, and socio-political status also shape, facilitate or constrain their involvement in sustainable development.

The engagement of women in the diaspora takes diverse forms and often focuses on women and other marginalized groups. Women in the diaspora are active in diverse areas of engagement and, through their individual networks, organisations, and businesses, participate in processes of change both in countries of origin and in Germany. Through activities such as advocacy, knowledge transfer, and empowerment programmes, women diaspora actors make an important contribution to transforming discriminatory gender roles, combating gender inequalities and strengthening the capacities and (economic) empowerment of women and other marginalized groups in origin countries.

Engagement in the host country and in the country of origin are not mutually exclusive but complementary and interconnected. Women in the diaspora not only contribute to sustainable development in their country of origin, but also transform the social, cultural, political, and economic space of their country of residence. In Germany, women's diaspora organisations contribute to community building, support female newcomers in their

integration process and strengthen social cohesion between immigrants and the local population. This also strengthens capacities, motivation, and opportunities for engaging in sustainable development in countries of origin.

The organisation and engagement of women in the diaspora often takes place in more informal and private realms. Self-organised spaces of mutual support and networking turn the personal into the political and help women to master the difficulties of everyday life in a self-determined way. At the same time, this more informal mode of organisation makes it harder to identify women's groups and can exclude them from standard mechanisms of support.

Women's motivations for engagement are as varied as their experiences. Drivers for engagement are frequently shaped by personal experiences of marginalisation or privilege, by a sense of injustice related to development or integration challenges, and by perceived moral obligation, political responsibility, and a desire for social change. On an individual level, engagement is often part of a search for purpose and personal empowerment, or simply a way of having fun and (re)connecting with communities in countries of origin.

Important enabling factors for women's engagement include secure socio-economic and residency status and community support. High socio-economic status and secure residency status in Germany provide women in the diaspora with the financial, human, and social capital required for engagement. Support from family, partners, close friends, and the community can help women to overcome challenges, and networks and social capital in countries of origin play an important role in eliciting and enabling civic engagement in Germany and abroad.

Gender-specific challenges, such as traditional gender norms or patriarchal role distributions, can hinder the engagement and participation of women in the diaspora. Due to their status as migrants and their gender, migrant women are often exposed to multiple disadvantages and discrimination. This can limit their opportunities for engagement. They may have less say than their male colleagues in the diaspora organisations they are involved in, for example. When it comes to returning to the country of origin, gender-specific and more general development challenges, practical barriers, and lacking networks in the country of origin prevented diaspora women from realizing their aspirations.

Recognising and supporting women as leaders in diaspora organisations is key to ensuring their meaningful participation in sustainable development. When it comes to the capacities of women-led diaspora organisations, the majority are limited by the fact that they work on a voluntary basis and rely on donations and membership fees to realise their activities. Even though women are considered as important agents of change, their representation and visibility, especially in political spaces, remains marginalised. Ensuring the full and equal participation of women in diaspora organisations not only involves mobilising more female members, but also giving equal consideration to women's opinions, issues, and demands in a meaningful manner.

"
The diaspora is anything but simple, the identities are different, multi-layered, you have to take care of them and not just straighten them out.

Jelena Volic-Hellbusch,
Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence

1.   INTRODUCTION

Women with a migration history can and do make significant contributions to sustainable development in their countries of origin. In addition to engaging in general development activities, women-led initiatives foster women's empowerment and challenge traditional gender norms, hierarchies, and stereotypes, thereby disrupting discriminatory structures. Women's groups and organisations may engage in advocacy efforts to raise awareness on the rights of women or other marginalised groups, or lobby for a commitment to more gender-sensitive, gender-responsive and gender-transformative approaches to sustainable development. In their countries of residence, initiatives led by women in the diaspora have created a safe space for female migrants and refugees, in which women can articulate and share their stories and challenges to collectively find solutions (Féron, 2021). The participation of women and girls in policy development in both contexts is crucial, for only when their perspectives are incorporated into local and national decision-making processes can it be ensured that policies address their needs. At the same time, engaging as a women in the diaspora is not without its challenges; male dominance persists in many diaspora organisations and can contribute to women's role as change agents and leaders being overlooked (Busbridge & Winarnita, 2015).

Recognising the high potential of diaspora women actors as leaders and changemakers for sustainable development, the "Programme Migration & Diaspora" (PMD), funded by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Devel-

opment (BMZ) and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, commissioned this exploratory mapping of diaspora women actors in Germany and their engagement. The aim was to generate an evidence-based understanding of where, when, why, and how women in the diaspora engage for sustainable development in their countries of origin and beyond, as well as the challenges they face in doing so. By offering insights into women's experiences as migrants in Germany, their aspirations as well as the opportunities and challenges they face in their engagement, this study provides a basis upon which to improve existing offers and develop new initiatives to allow women to further empower themselves and to promote their meaningful participation in development policy and actions. It should be read within the frame of the Federal Government of Germany's feminist foreign and development policy, the overall goal of which is the realization of human rights and equal participation for all, regardless of their gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity or other characteristics. The feminist development approach aims to strengthen the rights, resources and representation of women, girls and members of LGBTIQ+ communities and to eliminate structural inequalities, unequal treatment and discrimination for all marginalized groups. By recognizing women diaspora actors as important agents of change and ensuring their representation and participation in sustainable development processes, the PMD, its partners and other stakeholders can contribute to achieving the goals of a feminist development policy.

2. METHODOLOGY

The overall objective of this research was to provide evidence-based information on women in the diaspora and their engagement with sustainable development in their countries of origin. The research engages with women with a migration history from selected PMD partner countries (Cameroon, Colombia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Kosovo, Serbia, and Tunisia), who reside in Germany and are in some way or the other contributing to the development processes of their country of origin. The specific objectives of the study, as outlined in the table below, were focused on utilising learning for improving support of diaspora women's engagement.

INCREASED PROGRAMME UNDERSTANDING — A better understanding of where, when, why and how diaspora women are engaging and/or could be mobilized

IMPROVED PROGRAMME OUTREACH — Improved programme outreach with diaspora women/diaspora women's networks

IMPROVED EFFECTIVENESS — In mobilizing and supporting diaspora women to contribute to sustainable development in their countries of origin;

IDENTIFICATION OF NEW SUPPORT MECHANISMS — to adapt PMD offer to better support diaspora women's engagement for the achievement of sustainable development goals in PMD partner countries;

This exploratory mapping employed a qualitative data collection strategy, which included a desk study of secondary data as well as primary data collection. The desk review allowed for a mapping of diaspora women organisations and key individuals in Germany and took stock of the literature on the engagement of women in diaspora for sustainable development in their countries of origin. Primary data was collected through semi-structured in-depth key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) to explore diaspora women's experiences, perspectives, and aspirations more in depth.

2.1. DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

2.1.1. MAPPING EXERCISE

The mapping of women-led diaspora organisations was carried out through a three-step process, starting with an assessment of the common register portal of the German federal states (www.handelsregister.de), as well as registers from the origin countries, to generate a database of formally registered diaspora women-led organisations.

Using social media sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram was an important next step to identify more informally organised actors and key active diaspora women. It is important to note, however, that this approach only identified organisations that highlight their national (e.g., Ecuadorian) and gender (women) identities in their names. Hence, initiatives which connect women beyond the national level (e.g., at the regional level) or on more thematic level (e.g., human rights, development, humanitarian aid) might not have been identified.

"Snowball sampling", where intermediaries and research participants facilitate contact to other relevant actors, was used as a method to identify and approach additional actors and to further develop a database of 128 diaspora women actors (organisations, networks, key individuals, and experts).

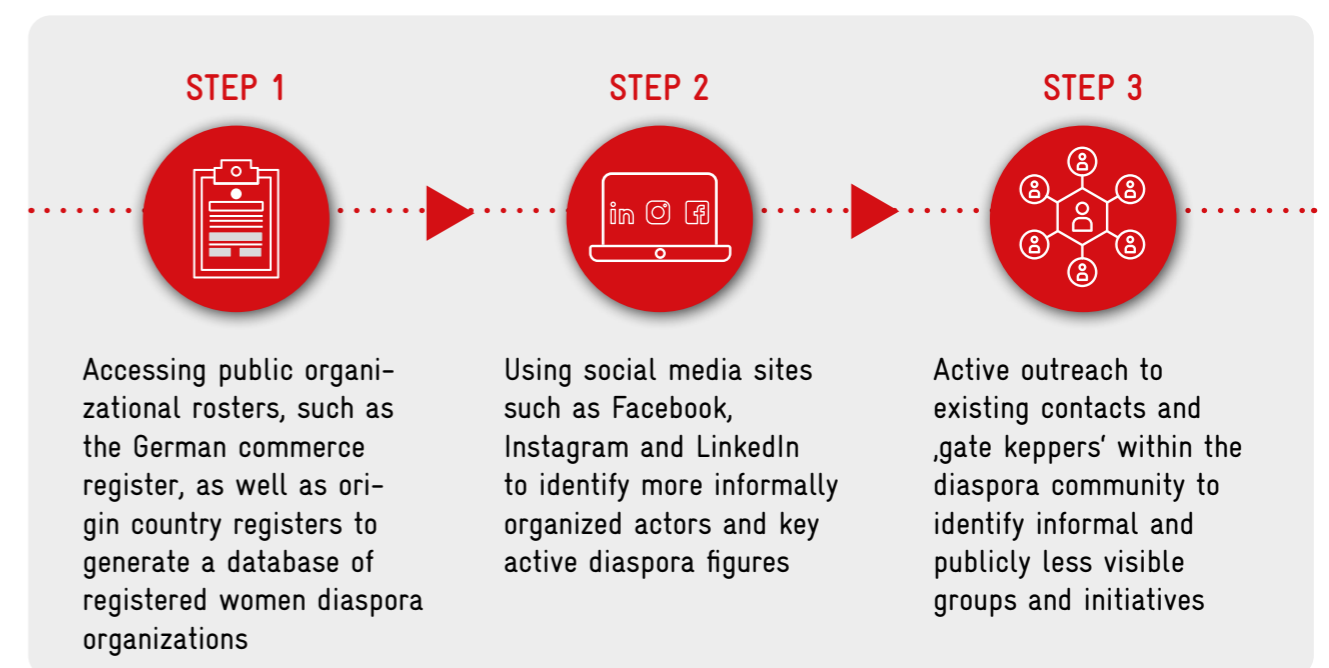| STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3
Accessing public organizational rosters, such as the German commerce register, as well as origin country registers to generate a database of registered women diaspora organizations	Using social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn to identify more informally organized actors and key active diaspora figures	Active outreach to existing contacts and ‚gate keppers' within the diaspora community to identify informal and publicly less visible groups and initiatives

FIGURE 1: DIASPORA WOMEN ACTORS MAPPING (SOURCE: OWN FIGURE)

2.1.2. PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION

KIIs allowed for an in-depth exchange with women from different countries of origin. The aim of the interviews was to explore their perspectives and aspirations, as well as the opportunities and challenges women face in their engagement in the sustainable development of their countries of origin. The technique of "purposeful sampling" – in which participants are chosen based on certain traits or qualities – was used for the selection of participants. The aim was to achieve a representative sample in terms of intersecting factors such as countries of origin, migration experience, age groups, and minority status. The study also aimed to examine diverse forms and areas of engagement and sectors of expertise

In total, 37 interviews were conducted that reflected the diversity and complexity of diaspora women's engagement in sustainable development of the country of origin (see Chapter 4.1. Characteristics). The semi-structured interviews were conducted based on an interview guide (see Appendix B/C) and took place both face-to-face and online. The interviews explored themes such as migration experience, subjective view of the diaspora in Germany, motivations and visions, forms of engagement, challenges and opportunities, networks and collaboration and recommendations for supporting women in the diaspora.:

Given the complexity and sensitivity of the topic, the semi-structured interviews were conducted in a flexible way to allow for fluid discussions and adjustments regarding individual circumstances so that each interview partner had the space to share her specific viewpoints adequately. The FGDs enabled an exploration of different attitudes, perceptions, feelings, and ideas about a topic among participants. The method focused on interactions between participants and helped to investigate similarities and differences in the participants' opinions and experiences. The aim of the FGDs was to support group brainstorming, to investigate collective views and create a space where participants can exchange their experiences, develop and generate ideas, and explore issues of shared importance. To broaden the perspectives received in the KIIs, two FGDs with selected diaspora women were conducted. In total, 9 women participated in the discussions, 6 in the first and

3 in the second. The discussions were conducted online, took around 3 hours (including a break) and captured the following themes and questions:

» **Engagement:** What motivates participants and what role does their gender identity play in this? What issues do participants consider particularly important with regard to women? What forms does their engagement take, what activities do they engage in?

» **Challenges:** What (gender-specific) challenges do participants face in their work? What keeps other women in the diaspora from getting involved? How can these challenges be overcome?

» **Perspectives:** What do participants see as the greatest (learning) successes of past engagement? What would they like to continue in the future, what would they like to change? What support do participants need for this?

To complement the collected data, two FGDs were conducted with selected GIZ advisors (e.g., PMD advisors from GIZ headquarters in Germany as well as PMD advisors from selected partner countries) to develop programme-specific recommendations to improve the mobilisation and support of diaspora women and their contributions to sustainable development in their countries of origin.

2.2. DATA ANALYSIS

KII and FGD recordings were partially transcribed to prepare the material for the process of analysis. To ensure consistence across the transcripts, the findings were documented using a standardised documentation template (see Appendix D), which maintained all the relevant information (e.g., date and location of the KII / FGD, participants characteristics).

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data. Thematic analysis is a technique for summarising and organising text that involves using multiple coding levels as a strategy for categorising qualitative data. The process of coding involves the labelling of similar text passages with a code to prepare the transcripts and field notes for comparisons and for the identification of patterns. The main aim was

to discover patterns and to develop themes that categorise the issue under study into generic concepts and to a more generalisable theory or system of explanation and inter-relation. Given the explorative nature of the research, the coding followed a dual deductive and inductive approach. Some codes were identified deductively before the inductive coding process, which were guided by the conceptual framework and research questions. The bottom-up and data driven inductive approach was used to discover themes and categories not considered by the current body of literature. To ensure consistency, an internal workshop was conducted with all researchers involved in the project. The workshop examined the main research findings to develop a framework for the analysis. A thematic map summarised the findings from the different data sources.

2.3. LIMITATIONS/OBSTACLES AND MITIGATING STRATEGIES

The study was subject to the following limitations and practical obstacles:

» Identification of women-led organisations through desk research represented a major challenge during the mapping process. Searching the commercial register led to very few hits when looking for women's organizations in the diaspora. The desk research helped only to identify highly visible actors. In addition, given potential power dynamics and structures within the context of diaspora mobilisations, women may represent a less visible or even marginalised population not easily identified and accessed through desk research.

» In some cases, it proved helpful to contact other diaspora associations to find out if they have a significant number of women on the board, among the members, or among the target group (snowball sampling method). As snowball sampling relies on specific intermediaries to establish and facilitate further contact, it may create bias in the sample by reflecting and potentially embodying community dynamics and socio-cultural power relations. To minimise this risk, different entry points were used to diversify the types of networks and individuals captured in the sample. These included

outreach to existing contacts, GIZ staff, research participants and potential gatekeepers within the diaspora communities, which helped identify relevant informal and less publicly visible groups or initiatives as well as individuals who are not active yet but could give added value to the programme.

» Many associations listed in the commercial register are no longer active or no contact information can be found via the Internet or social media searches. In addition, the response to written inquiries by e-mail was rather low; telephone contact was more promising but not always possible because of missing information. Due to these obstacles, it was not possible to fully control the sampling strategy. The approach enabled heterogeneity in the sample only to a certain degree, since it led to overrepresentation of highly educated women, with higher socio-economic status, who live in Germany for a long period (see below).

» Time constraints and availabilities affected data collection. As diaspora engagement is often realised alongside other responsibilities, finding time to schedule an interview proved difficult in some cases. Hence, despite an interest in participation, it was not always possible to realise the interview. A third focus group was scheduled, yet since only one participant attended the meeting, it was not possible to conduct the FGD. An attempt was made to offer flexibility by giving respondents the opportunity to choose the date and time that fit to their schedule.

» It is important to mention that it was beyond the scope of the study to conduct a comparative analysis of diaspora women based on their countries of origin. Rather the focus lies on a more general analysis of diaspora women in the German context, although origin country specifics are highlighted where possible. It should, however, be taken as implicit that there will be significant differences between origin country contexts.

3.   CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The following section outlines the key concepts this research refers to, namely, gender and migration, diaspora, and diaspora women and sustainable development.

3.1.   "FEMINIST DEVELOPMENT POLICY" AND THE GENDERED DYNAMICS OF MIGRATION

In line with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the pledge to "Leave No One Behind" (LNOB), Germany's development policy aims to fight hunger, poverty and inequality and assert human rights. Therefore, the BMZ is dedicated to actively addressing gender inequalities, explicitly promoting women, girls, and marginalised groups, and ensuring their equal participation. The German government also pursues a feminist development policy which "is centred around all people and tackles the root causes of injustice such as power relations between genders, social norms and role models" (BMZ, n.d.). A so-called "feminist development policy" places emphasis on ensuring that women and other marginalised groups obtain access to the three 'R's – Rights, Resources and Representation. It is based on key principles, including human rights, inclusion, gender transformative action and an acknowledgement of intersecting discriminations. A feminist development approach seeks to identify and challenge discriminatory power structures and builds alliances

with civil society to propose alternatives of cooperation, participation and dialogue at eye level and with respect. In the context of migration and diaspora engagement, a feminist development approach requires the recognition of migration as an omnipresent human phenomenon rooted in different drivers such as war, conflict, economic distress, and discrimination. It acknowledges that migration experiences are impacted by gender, as well as by a range of other intersecting conditions and vulnerabilities (e.g., LGBTQIA+, urban rural, ethnic, and sectarian affiliations). It considers people's different vulnerabilities and needs when migrating and applying for asylum (Cheung, et al., 2021), including, but not limited to those associated with gender.

Migrants are often perceived as „gender-neutral" economic actors, yet gender as well as self-identified or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity influence the causes, risks and dynamics of migration. For example, discrimination experienced because of sexual orientation and gender identity can be reasons why a person decides to migrate. Once the decision to migrate has been taken, it is often the case that migrant women have less access to information or education and fewer opportunities for regular migration, making them more vulnerable to exploitation, abuse, and trafficking as well as precarious working conditions (see e.g., Anjali, 2016 or Hennebry et al., 2021). Given the feminized nature of care work, women migrants are often disproportionately impacted by global care chains, making them more at risk of working

in the informal economy without access to social protection. Further, gender-specific barriers can make it more difficult for people to arrive and integrate successfully in countries of arrival. Social and cultural norms regarding masculinity and femininity influence whether and how migration can have positive effects, e.g., in terms of empowerment, or whether negative effects such as discrimination or gender-based violence predominate. The gender roles or set of behaviours ascribed to individuals because of their perceived gender as determined by prevailing cultural norms are often based on restrictive binary understandings of masculinity and femininity, and can vary greatly depending on the region and country, but also within societies. Overall, men on average benefit more than women from the positive aspects of migration, such as education, access to resources, entrepreneurship, and investment, while the latter more often experience economic, social, and cultural discrimination (GIZ, 2020). At the same time, women migrants bring diverse talents, expertise as well as social and financial remittances, and can make significant contributions to their countries of origin, transit, and destination – both economically and socially.
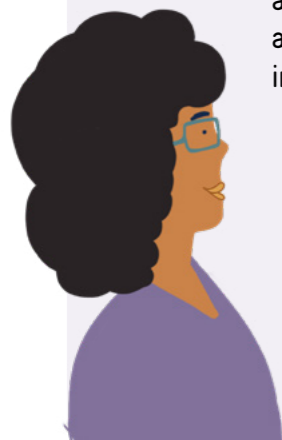
In addition to the experiences of women and girls, which are often insufficiently considered in migration and diaspora research, the experiences of members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual and more (LGBTQIA+) communities, who, for example, are exposed to gender-based violence or disadvantage, must also be considered. Heteronormative assumptions often dominate discussions in the context of migration; for example, it is assumed that migrants are heterosexual and identify with the gender they were assigned at birth. However, this does not apply to all migrants; on the contrary, migrants and their families are very diverse and often do not fit into the usual categories (UN Women 2016). At all stages of the migration process, LGBTQIA+ migrants face an increased risk of human rights violations, including violence, exploitation, and abuse. As described for women above, the LGBTQIA+ migrants make great contributions to their countries of origin, but the discrimination they face disadvantages their position in the labour market. They are, for example, more likely to work in the informal sector and face higher rates

of poverty and unemployment. (UN Women, n.d.) Where migration and development policy fails to include a broader range of measures related to gender, in addition to biological sex, it reinforces the invisibility of women migrants and people with different gender identities and their gendered experiences (GIZ, 2021). As mentioned above, however, gender and/or sexuality are only one of many factors that can affect migration experiences. Women and members of the LGBTQIA+ community often face multiple forms of discrimination based on their sex and / or sexual orientation and gender identity in combination with their migrant status and other factors such as age, caste, class, sexuality, socioeconomic condition, race, religion, disability, and physical appearance. This combination or overlapping of different forms of discrimination is referred to as intersectionality (also multiple discrimination). These types of discrimination can be found at a legal level, in the design and / or implementation of public policies and programmes, or the lack thereof; in the workspace, within the family, and, often, it is women themselves who do not recognise their rights, further exposing them to vulnerability (UN Women, 2015).

It should be noted that non-binary individuals or persons not identifying as man or woman are not explicitly included within the scope of the study. Nonetheless, they are part of the target and further research into their experiences and engagement should be considered for the future.

KEY FINDINGS AND MESSAGES

A **feminist approach to migration**, based on the Feminist Foreign and Development Policy (FFDP) of the German government, no longer considers migrants as „gender-neutral" economic actors, but takes into account gender, gender identity as well as other intersecting vulnerabilities when implementing projects.

Understanding and making visible the experiences of women and LGBTIQ+ migrants is essential for achieving a stronger gender-responsive and gender-transformative approach in the sense of the FFDP.

Girls and women, as well as marginalised groups such as members of the LGBTQIA+ community, are often particularly affected by **discrimination, disadvantage, and vulnerability**. At all stages of the migration process, they are at increased risk of human rights violations, including violence, exploitation and abuse.

Most migration and diaspora research assumes a **binary concept of masculinity and femininity**. People who identify with a different gender, multiple genders or no gender at all are often insufficiently considered in migration and diaspora research.

Future studies should give greater importance to the experiences and engagement of non-binary migrants.

It is important that migration projects take into account the existing vulnerabilities and needs of women and other marginalised groups in project design and strengthen their contribution to the sustainable development of countries of origin.

3.2.   DEFINING THE CONCEPT OF DIASPORA

There is no agreed-upon definition of „diaspora". The term is rather frequently applied as a synonym for immigrant populations, displaced communities, ethnic minorities, or transnational social formations (Brubaker, 2005; Dufoix & Waldinger, 2008; Vertovec, 2007). In line with newer conceptualisations within the diaspora literature, this study understands diasporas as multi-layered, heterogeneous, and dynamic social formations, hence moving beyond essentialist conceptions of identity, culture, and belonging (Adamson, 2008; Baser & Swain, 2010; Sökefeld, 2006). According to Feron (2021), feminist approaches and gender studies have played a crucial role in recognising the internal complexity of diaspora groups and their internal power dynamics.

To distinguish diasporas from other categories of migrants, this study defines the term, based on the following features (see Figure 2):

Traditionally, the concept of diaspora was used to describe the experience of forcibly displaced persons from their homeland following a traumatic event. Central to the notion of diaspora was a catastrophic event that led to this displacement, traumatised the group as whole, and created a central feeling of victimhood (Sheffer, 2006). Over time, the concept of diaspora has expanded to incorporate other ethnic/national groups that might not have experienced massive, forced displacement, but maintained a collective memory and strong connections to their homeland (Cohen, 2008). In line with these newer conceptualisations, this study perceives diasporas resulting from both voluntary and forced migration.

Members of diaspora display sustained ties and sense of belonging to a real or imagined homeland. Hence, regardless of whether people have an own migration history or are descendants of migrants or not, they can still be part of a diaspora, as long as they feel a sense of belonging to

FEATURES OF DIASPORAS

MIGRATION
the movement of people from one country to another

GROUP CONSCIOUSNESS
collective national, cultural or religious identity

BELONGING
sustained ties and a sense of belonging to a real or imagined homeland

CONNECTIONS
organisational networks and transnational links

TRANSNATIONAL PRACTICES
actions and contributions to pursue the achievement of collective goals

FIGURE 2: FEATURES OF DIASPORAS

their country of heritage. In contrast to more essentialist understandings of diasporas that imply a homogeneous dispersed population with historically fixed identity, values, and practices, newer conceptualisations focus on the process of construction of belongings. Recent scholarship rejects ideas of migrants' natural rootedness and belonging to places of origin by recognising identities as fluid, hybrid, multidimensional, personalised complex social constructions, which are shaped not just by ethnicity, religion, or nationality, but also by other social locations such as gender, social class, generation, and lived experiences (Anthias, 1998; Weerakkody, 2006; Werbner, 2002). Attachment to the homeland should therefore not be seen as static, but as process in which construction of meaning and interpretations of belonging is shaped by various actors and contexts.

Collective consciousness is a central aspect of diasporas, which is characterised by group solidarity and co-responsibility, connecting members based on an idea of a shared collective past and future. Sökefeld (2006) argues, "there can be no diaspora community without a consciousness of diaspora, in other words without an idea of shared identity, of common belonging to that group" (p. 267), albeit the nature and meanings of the collectivity can (and often tend to) be highly contested among the members. Rather than imposing a communal identity based on a homogenising narrative, a constructionist understanding of diaspora puts emphasis on an investigation of the processes through which this identity may or may not be created and sustained and who is expressing and claiming community for what purpose. Hence, in spite of the emphasis on solidarity and co-responsibility, it is important to highlight that the process of collective consciousness construction and community mobilising comes with different power and exclusion dynamics that engender distinct spaces of representation, participation, and leadership (Miralles Crespo, 2021). Ang (2003) argues, diasporic identity "can be the site of both support and oppression, emancipation and confinement, solidarity and division" (p. 3). As discussed in section 3.3 of this report, diasporic spaces tend to be shaped by configurations of power and inequalities that produce gendered relations, positions, and hierarchies.

If collective identities are understood as socially and politically constructed, there is a need to investigate the actors who produce, mobilise, and spread the discourse of the transnational community. Diaspora organisations are important structures and networks that engage in the community building process. Bush (2008) defines diaspora organisations as "complex, formal, informal or semi-formal organisations that articulate and pursue goals that are asserted to be representative of the interests and aspirations of 'the diaspora' as a whole" (p.195). Diaspora organisations range from hometown associations, religious and cultural clubs and development, humanitarian or human rights organisations to political parties and activists, academic networks, and media outlets that engage in the construction of the discourse of community (Kleist, 2015; Sinatti & Horst, 2015). It is important, however, to highlight that collective action of diaspora groups often tends to be a result of transnational mobilisation activities by a small but often powerful elite, whose legitimation may be contested (Adamson, 2008; Portes et al., 2007). The focus on the institutionalised and organised diasporas might conceal transnational mobilisation of diaspora members that goes beyond formal means of engagement. A gendered analysis of diasporas further stresses the importance of including less visible and informal groups, as diaspora women engagement often tends to take place in the more informal and private realm, yet also in a political relevant space (see 3.3 of this report).

Diaspora actors not only engage in practices through which the community is constructed and mobilised, but also in transnational actions through which diaspora groups seek to pursue the achievement of collective goals. In the last decades, the potential of diaspora groups to participate in development processes in countries of origin has been increasingly recognised. As "agents for development", diaspora groups contribute economically, through remittances, investment, and transnational entrepreneurship or through the transfer of know-how and skills. Diaspora groups may engage in political processes of the country of origin through conventional means (e.g. overseas voting), or through raising awareness or lobbying on political issues. Socially, diaspora actors may contribute to peace processes and mechanisms, promote infrastructure development, education and employment,

and community development or provide humanitarian or emergency assistance (Brinkerhoff, 2011). Some groups may advocate for social change, human rights and gender equality in their country of origin.

The transnational perspective of diaspora engagement highlights that diasporas' practices are embedded in and contribute to social, economic, and political processes and networks across geographic spaces (Glick Schiller, 2013). As actors of diaspora tend to be embedded in multiple societies at once, they may engage in both the origin and residence contexts simultaneously (Horst, 2018; Koopmans, 2004). Diaspora actors also transform social, cultural, political and economic spaces of the country of residence, by promoting the inclusion of co-nationals, advocating for rights and against discrimination or promoting intercultural dialogue and social cohesion (Però

& Solomos, 2010). Transnational practices of diaspora actors, hence, can be considered not just as a form of civic participation in the country of origin, but as a crucial part and voice of the civil society in the country of settlement (Horst, 2013; Müller-Funk, 2019). Yet, diaspora groups do not act in a political vacuum; rather their actions are encouraged, constrained, or shaped by the transnational opportunities, hence, contextual factors in both the country of origin and residence. Given that diaspora engagement is embedded in wider social and development processes, the development impacts of diasporas are also fundamentally heterogeneous and largely depend on the structural opportunities and constraints present in the country of origin and residence, as well as socio-political dynamics of diaspora communities and the capacity and aspirations of diaspora actors (de Haas, 2010; Ragab, 2020).

> ❝ If you don't change culture,
> if you don't change power,
> if you don't change access
> to resources, you don't
> change much.
>
> **Tasneem Balasinorwala, PowerSouth**

KEY FINDINGS AND MESSAGES

Diaspora identities and senses of belongings are shaped not just by ethnicity, religion, or nationality, but also by other social locations such as gender, social class, generation, and lived experiences.
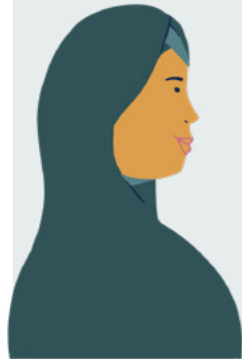
Research should investigate how the intersection of factors such as age, sexuality, gender, class, generation and socio-political status, may shape, facilitate or constrain diaspora involvement in sustainable development.

Diaspora collective consciousness construction and community mobilisation are accompanied by different power and exclusion dynamics that engender distinct spaces of representation, participation, and leadership.

Research and policy design should not only take into account these power dynamics, but also ensure that less visible actors are identified, recognized, and represented.
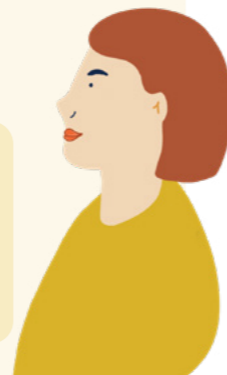
Transnational practices of diaspora actors can be considered not just as a form of civic participation in the country of origin, but as a crucial voice in civil society in the country of settlement.

There is a need to move beyond a uni-directional investigation of transnational practices, by exploring circularity of transnational practices and how these are shaped by the intersection of origin and residence country dynamics.

3.3.   DIASPORA WOMEN AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Women in the diaspora can play a crucial role in the sustainable development of their countries of origin, as well as in promoting participation of diaspora communities in the societies of residence, yet their diverse contributions as leaders and changemakers often remain overlooked. As such, there is limited literature specifically on diaspora women as agents of development. Most of the diaspora studies commissioned by GIZ (and other actors) do not engage in a gendered analysis of diaspora engagement. As such, there is little systematic analysis and reference to the experience, roles, and contributions of diaspora women. In the studies on the Serbian diaspora (Tomić, 2016) and the Columbian diaspora (Grewe, 2015), women are not even mentioned beyond the aggregated statistics. In the Ecuadorian diaspora study, most of the participants interviewed were women, yet the study did not engage in a detailed exploration of gendered dynamics within the diaspora (Müller et al., 2018). Other studies, while not discussing the engagement of women in-depth, highlight projects that target women (Tunisian diaspora, see Ragab et al., 2013)), as well as the work of women-led organisations (Kosovo diaspora, see Novinšćak Kölker, 2016) and the important role women play as leading actors in associations within the diaspora community (Indonesian diaspora, see GIZ, 2016). Concerning the Cameroonian diaspora (Winterhagen, 2015) and Indian diaspora (Saravanan et al., 2018), studies emphasise the male-dominance within diaspora organisations. While the studies show that women compose a considerable part of the diaspora organisations' membership, they often do not hold leading position in the organisations. Similarly, a study on the Ghanian diaspora in Germany points out that although women play an active role in diaspora organisations and successfully implement projects aimed at development in Ghana and the participation of the Ghanaian diaspora in German society, leadership positions in the associations continue to be male-dominated. Further, the study highlights that due to multiple responsibilities (paid work & care work) and resulting time constraints, Ghanaian women more frequently associate through informal groups and mutual social support networks (Mörath, 2015). In a similar vein, the Ethiopian diaspora study points out that

women may engage in more informal organisations, and are therefore less visible in the diaspora space (Warnecke, 2015).

This short review shows that most of the available diaspora studies in Germany do not account for the gendered experience of diaspora, nor invest in an in-depth analysis of the diverse configurations of power that produce gendered hierarchies and positions. Hence, as Clifford (1997) rightly emphasises:

❝ Diasporic experiences are always gendered. But there is a tendency for theoretical accounts of diasporas and diaspora cultures to hide this fact, to talk of travel and displacement in unmarked ways, thus normalising male experiences (p. 258).

Yet, feminist scholars of diaspora studies show that women play a central role in diaspora community building, politics, and engagement in sustainable development. Women in the diaspora and women-led diaspora organisations implement projects with the aim of promoting civic engagement, community development, and humanitarian aid in countries of origin, but they also seek to influence political processes in the country of origin and of residence (Al-Ali, 2007; McIlwaine & Bermúdez, 2011). In addition to engaging in general development activities, women-led initiatives can challenge traditional gender norms, hierarchies, and stereotypes and foster women's empowerment (Godin, 2018). Women's groups and organisations may engage in advocacy efforts to raise awareness on women's rights, or to lobby for a commitment to gender-sensitive as well as gender-transformative approaches to sustainable development (Hewitt, 2011). As such, women's diasporic political struggles often intersect with feminist struggles for more gender-based rights and equalities (Al-Ali, 2010).

In the countries of residence, diaspora women initiatives can create a safe space of belonging for female migrants and refugees, in which women can articulate and share their stories and challenges to collectively find solutions (Bailey, 2012). Studies that have analysed the differences between men and women in diaspora politics conclude that men tend to engage more visibly in the diasporic public sphere, whereas women's engagement tends to take place in the more informal and private realm (Mügge, 2013). Further, women may show a greater commitment to engaging in diaspora community building in their country of residence while their male counterparts contribute more towards political and development processes in their country of origin (Osirim, 2008). In her research, Bailey (2012) explores African women's engendered resistance in their everyday life in the UK, through an analysis of the African Women's Empowerment Forum (AWEF). Basing her analysis on the concept developed by hooks (1990) of 'home place' as a space of resistance, she argues that diaspora women community groups not only offer services to respond to daily needs, but that these spaces also have a political dimension, since cultural and political visions, concerns and acts of collective resistance can be articulated. She therefore advocates for an extension of the notion of politics to include spaces of belonging and solidarity as a personal political space of women's self-empowerment. In creating and maintaining such safe and trusted spaces in which women migrants can speak about their experiences and seek avenues to know and claim their rights, diaspora women can be valuable partners for interventions to address the vulnerabilities experienced by some female migrants.

A feminist development approach, however, should not only account for the different journeys, experiences, and motivations of individual women and men, but also needs to explore structures and configurations of power and inequalities that produce gendered relations, positions, and hierarchies (Al-Ali, 2010). Al-Ali (2007) states how important it is:

> **to understand the gendering of refugees and diasporas not merely in terms of women, but to think about it also in terms of relations of power and privilege informed by situations of maleness and femaleness** (p. 51).

Central to this is often the question whether diasporas are sites in which patriarchal relations are reproduced or if they can offer women spaces for emancipation and empowerment. In the context of settlement, women often face multiple forms of discrimination not only due to their gendered but also based on their racialized identities (Anthias, 2012). In the context of origin, traditional gender ideologies and roles may limit the space to challenge gender hierarchies and to contribute to political processes (Al-Ali, 2007). Further, the topic of male dominance within diaspora communities has been brought to light. It has been observed that women often stay on the sidelines of decision-making, are not involved in the roles of community leaders as much as men and are more active in informal interventions (Busbridge & Winarnita, 2015). Hence, there is a need for a more in-depth understanding of the diverse structural factors, community dynamics, and organisational processes that may produce power asymmetries within diaspora engagement and constitute obstacles for women's participation.

Yet, it is also important to understand diaspora women as heterogeneous groups. As individuals, women face different social, economic and political circumstances and conditions in the destination country that, along with different trajectories of displacement, shape their identities, aspirations and their capacity for engagement. A differentiated analysis is required, not only of social stratification as a gendered process, but also of its intersection with other markers such as social class, capability, ethnicity, age, ability and sexuality (Al-Ali, 2010; Godin, 2019; Miralles Crespo, 2021). For instance, the study by Busbridge and Winarnita (2015) revealed that women are generally underrepresented in diaspora dialogue initiatives, yet those women who participated in the format were highly educated and qualified professionals, who played an active political role in their respective communities. Anthias (2012) argues that diaspora studies should account for

> **a contextual, dynamic and processual analysis that recognizes the interconnectedness of different identities and hierarchical structures relating to gender, ethnicity, 'race', class and other social divisions [based inter alia on religion, sex, marital status, generation, nationality] at local, national, transnational and global levels** (p. 102).

KEY FINDINGS AND MESSAGES

Most diaspora studies do not account for the **gendered experience of diasporas**, nor invest in an in-depth analysis of the diverse configurations of power that produce gendered hierarchies and positions.

The design and implementation of diaspora studies and mappings should aim for an equal represen-tation of women in the sample and engage in an in-depth analysis of their gendered experiences and challenges.

Women's engagement tends to take place in the more **informal and private realm**, with often greater commit-ment to engaging in diaspora community building in their country of residence.

Diaspora women are heterogeneous, they face different social, economic and po-litical circumstances and conditions in the residence country that, along with different trajectories of displacement, shape their identities, aspirations and capacity for engagement.

Policy design should not only recognize women's ways of organizing as a politically relevant space, but also foster their participation without co-optation or rendering them less safe through our interventions.

Research and po-licy design should consider the inter-sectionality of dias-pora women and ensure that other marginalized groups (e.g., minorities) are also represented and mobilized.

4. WOMEN IN THE DIASPORA AND THEIR ENGAGEMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

4.1.   CHARACTERISTICS AND MIGRATION HISTORIES OF RESEARCH SAMPLE GROUP

The sampling strategy adopted for this study was only partly able to account for the diversity of women in the diaspora. As will be shown, there are certain groups of mi-grants (especially lower skilled) that are underrepresented in the sample. The sample characteristics point to certain factors that positively influence the capacity and aspirations of women to engage in the sustainable development of the country of origin or in the context of Germany. In line with other studies, the sample indicates that education, em-ployment, and a secure legal status seem to be major factors that promote diaspora engagement, since these factors in-fluence the capacity and ability to get involved (Guglielmo, et al., 2010; Hammond, 2013; Koser, 2007).

4.1.1.   CHARACTERISTICS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE SAMPLE

With regard to age, two thirds of the participants belong to the age group of 30 to 45 years, however, some younger female students as well as pensioners were also among the respondents (see Figure 3).
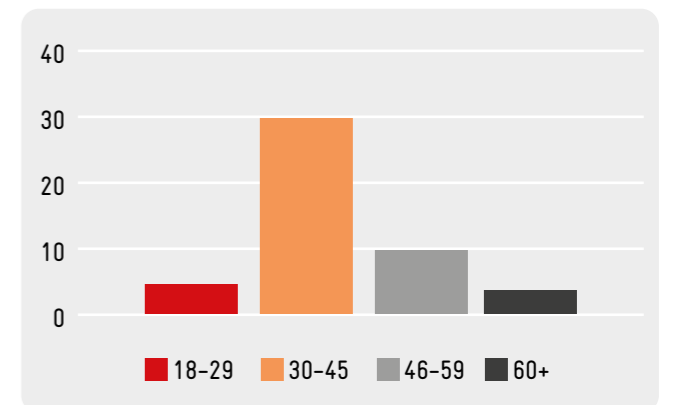
FIGURE 3: AGE GROUPS OF PARTICIPANTS

In terms of education, out of the 39 of whom the education-al level is known, 87 percent have a university degree, 10 percent completed a vocational training and one person has secondary education. This shows that the sample of women participating in the study is composed of mainly highly skilled individuals. Further, out of the 39 of whom the employment status is known, 67 percent are active in the labour market. Of those, two thirds (15) are employed and one third (10) are self-employed. With regard to the rest, 12 percent are students and 5 percent are retired, whereas one respondent engages in home / care duties (see Figure 4).
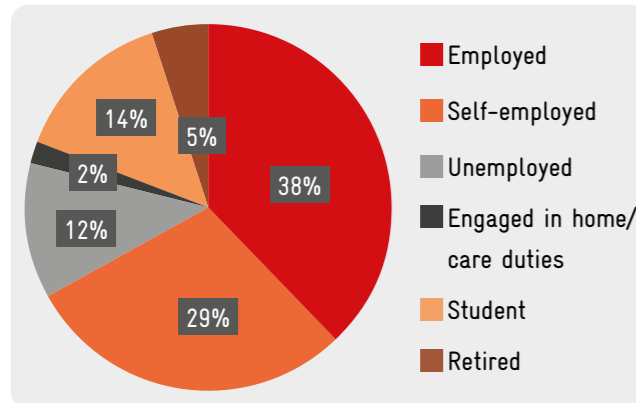
FIGURE 4: EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF PARTICIPANTS

A large majority of respondents have lived in Germany for a very long time, in some cases more than 10 years. Two of the participants were born in Germany and some came as small children and grew up here. About 20 percent of the respondents had been in Germany for 1-5 years, about 10 percent for 5-10 years (see Figure 5).
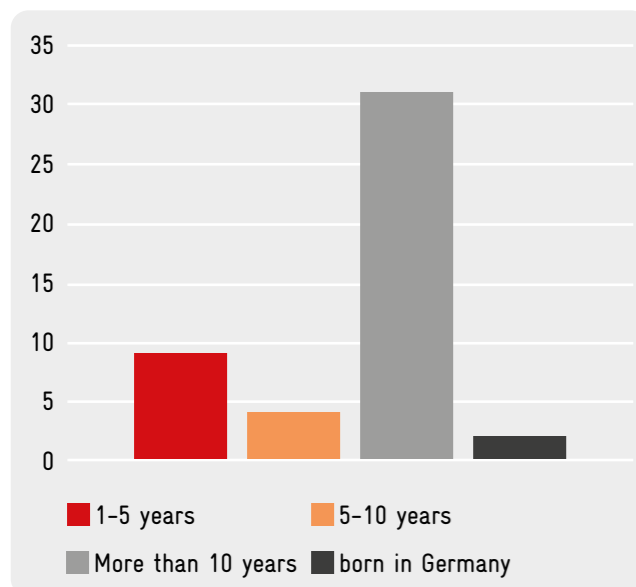
FIGURE 5: PARTICIPANT'S DURATION OF RESIDENCE IN GERMANY

The sample therefore reflects the experiences of diaspora women with higher socio-economic status, who have often lived in Germany for a longer period and who are mostly well established in the German context. A higher socio-economic status often provides individuals with financial, human, and social capital, thus giving them access to key resources such as money, skills and networks, which increases the capacity for engagement.

While certainly these factors shape capacities for engagement, it must be acknowledged that the sampling strategy mostly resulted in the identification of more visible and formalised actors. Hence, other groups of diaspora women (e.g., lower skilled, younger) may engage, but they might be more likely to do so through more informal means.

4.1.2. MIGRATION HISTORY, EXPERIENCES OF INTEGRATION AND RETURN ASPIRATIONS

Regarding the migration history of the respondents, the sample was able to capture a diversity of migration experiences, with participants migrating to Germany for a wide range of reasons, because of studies, family, and partners, for economic / employment or conflict / political reasons. For around 45 percent of respondents pursuing education was a decisive factor in their migration decision. Around one third of the participants stated that living with the partner / husband was the reason for their migration to Germany. Six of the respondents were forced to leave their country of origin due to war and persecution, either as children or young women with their family, or to a lesser extent on their own. Finally, five women migrated to Germany because of work or a job opportunity.
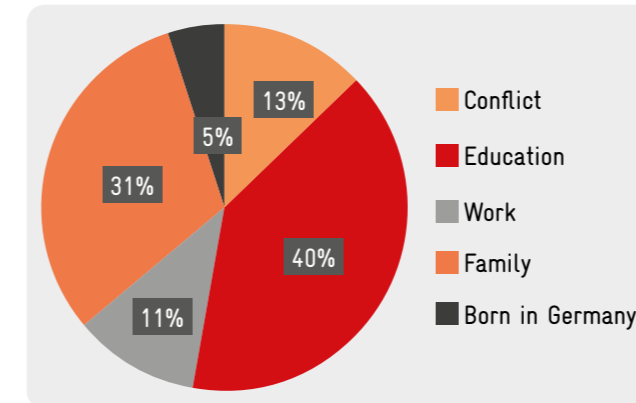
FIGURE 6: PARTICIPANTS' REASON FOR MIGRATION

However, what became apparent is that it is often not just one factor that shapes migration decisions, but that these are multi-dimensional.

Similarly, women face multiple challenges during their integration process. For instance, participants who migrated during the conflict from the West Balkan, faced considerable difficulties in terms of integration especially due to their insecure legal status. They often lived for a considerable time in Germany with a "Duldung" (tolerance status) and hence in a constant state of limbo and insecurity. Due to the study ban resulting from their status, they faced many obstacles in pursuing higher education, something they only achieved through insistent struggles with the authorities.

> **In 2000, I started my studies. I had a refugee status, where I had to extend my Duldung every 3 months. I actually had no right to study. Nevertheless, I made my way and set everything in motion […] When I went to the immigration office with my matriculation certificate and said I needed a student visa, the officer reacted as if I were a criminal, that's how he dealt with me, I'll never forget that. (WB-7).**

Next to the language barrier, German bureaucracy (e.g., related to legal status, health insurance and other social services) as well as a lack of integration support and information presented major challenges especially at the beginning of the integration process. Some participating women also faced difficulties in finding a job, which led to a feeling of disempowerment as it was a struggle to form their own identity beyond being a wife and a mother, as one respondent highlights: *"When you migrate you lose a lot, you lose your power of being seen, your voice is reduced." (LATAM-1)*

Additionally, some women also faced discrimination in their work life, as for example one women who felt "completely underestimated" (SSA-14). She perceived lacking language skills as one reason why people did not treat her as equal. In addition to the everyday demands of the integration process, the realities of diaspora women's lives in Germany are, then, shaped by experiences of exclusion, discrimination, and racism. Participation in diaspora communities can alleviate some of the negative impact of these experiences. As one respondent stressed:

"I was feeling so bad because of the racism I experienced, it was very hurtful and on top I didn't have the possibility to defend myself because I didn't speak German [...] the possibility to be together with people with similar interests and with groups of women allowed me to integrate with the diaspora community and with the German society and feel a rightful member of society. (LATAM-7).

As this quote illustrates, support and solidarity from the community play an important role in overcoming challenges in integration processes. While these challenges in some cases led to a feeling of disempowerment, the findings also indicate that the participating women showed strong resilience and developed strategies to navigate the obstacles. Overcoming the challenges in the migration process also contributed to a sense of independence and empowerment, as one participant indicated: *"Arriving in Germany got me out of my comfort zone, I feel strong and sure that I can rely on myself to integrate and raise my children". (LATAM-5)*

With regard to return aspirations, many participating women are willing to return permanently to the country of origin in the long term, but others cannot imagine going back. Return aspirations are often complex and ambivalent, and they may change over time. Even if there were strong aspirations and longing for return in the past among some participating women, eventually these were not accompanied by an actual decision and realisation of return. The findings show that both context and personal aspirations matter for the return decision and aspirations. Conflict, instability but also more general development challenges, such as a malfunctioning social welfare system, low quality of education, high levels of inequality, poverty, and unemployment are contextual factors that prevent participating women from returning permanently to their country of origin. In contrast, the opportunities for wellbeing in Germany - especially regarding the social, health, and education system - are contextual factors that shape the decision to stay. This is particularly the case for participants with children, as they want them to grow up in a secure place. On top of these more general challenges, gender inequality and traditional gender norms that persist in the country of origin are for some also a factor that influenced the return decision, as one interviewee highlighted: *"I could not return to my country for a longer period, always when I am visiting, I find it very, very hard to confront the patriarchal society, the social injustice, the war. I love my country and admire the women living there fighting against the machismo, but I could not do it, I do not want to." (LATAM-1)*

The structures of the return context, thus, play an essential role in the development potential of migration and return. For example, the transfer of acquired skills and knowledge in the home country depends largely on the institutional and social structures that returnees find and that are created for them. For women in the diaspora, patriarchal structures and gender-based violence are a further obstacle in addition to the general development challenges, so that return can contribute to frustration and alienation rather than to aspirations for policy change.

In addition to contextual factors, participants also mentioned some practical obstacles with regard to potential return, such as finding a place to live and taking care of the education of their children.

"Moving to Cameroon to work will be complicated. You leave your house, you go to Cameroon for three months, six months you need a new home. Afterwards, if the child goes to school, it's already a problem. But otherwise, I think you are always happy to go back home. To work, especially when you know that what you are doing for your country is for the good of your country. We try to see these disadvantages as advantages. (SSA-1).

Those who want to return mentioned that they wanted to introduce their children to „the other identity" and that they miss the „community at home". Aspirations for return were, hence, shaped by questions and negotiations of belonging in a transnational context. Having a job opportunity was another decisive factor for the return decision: *"For the moment, I still intend to return to Cameroon. There, I can go back if I am sure that I am not going back to sit at home. I'm going back to work; I'm going back to do something." (SSA-1)*

The participants who had returned permanently or temporarily often did so because of a job or internship opportunity in the country of origin. As the following quote illustrates, it is often the combination of professional ambitions with the aspiration to invest their skills and expertise for sustainable development of the countries of origin that inspires a return: *"I believe my skills and knowledge are more impactful there. If I stay it would be only in Germany or a place that will allow me to be in a position to support Africa through different projects". (SSA-9)*

Interestingly, the findings showed that participants who spend some time working or studying in the country of origin, often continued to return temporarily or more permanently. For instance, two respondents from the Western Balkan conducted research for their Master thesis in their country of origin. The networks established during their stay encouraged them to return and to invest their skills and knowledge, one through working for a development agency and the other through organising a workshop with local social institutions during her PMD diaspora expert assignment.

KEY FINDINGS AND MESSAGES

A **higher socio-economic status** often provides individuals with financial, human, and social capital, which increases capacity for engagement.
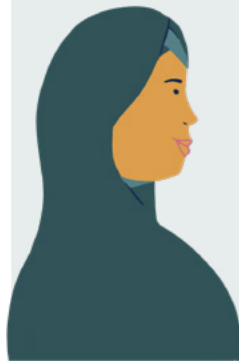
Creating opportunities for integration such as access to language courses and work, to long-term legal residence and/or citizenship, and to social/civic engagement opportunities can foster transnational engagement of migrant women.

Despite the various challenges related to integration processes, women showed **strong resilience and developed solution strategies** and the support and solidarity from the community plays a crucial role in navigating the obstacles.

Engaging with diasporas should be based on a resource-oriented approach, that recognizes and builds on the strength of diaspora women and their self-organized spaces.

Next to **gender-specific and more general development challenges, practical barriers and lacking networks** in the country of origin prevent diaspora women from realizing their return aspirations.

A comprehensive approach in promoting return is needed that addresses practical barriers but also more gender-specific structural factors. Offering professional and network opportunities for returning women are key enabling factors.

4.2.   WOMEN DIASPORA ACTORS AND STRUCTURES OF ENGAGEMENT

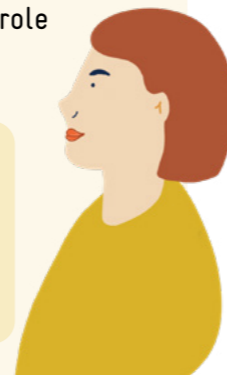If diasporas do not merely result from migration, but rather emerge through an active process of mobilisation, there is a need to explore the actors and agents who produce, mobilise, and spread the discourse of the transnational community. Lyons and Mandaville (2010) argue that not every migrant who feels connected to the homeland and shares a common origin with others should be considered as part of a diaspora, but only those who are 'mobilised to engage in homeland political process' (p. 126). Diaspora actors can be formal or informal political, social and cultural leaders who, with the help of institutions, create and shape a collective identity and mobilise it for a common goal (Cohen, 2008). In the realisation of collective goals, diaspora actors mobilise through a wide range of institutions such as religious and cultural clubs, development, humanitarian and human rights organisations, youth and women groups, political parties and activists as well as diaspora entrepreneurs and businesses, academic networks, and media outlets (Kleist, 2015; Sinatti & Horst, 2015).

However, as mentioned earlier, diasporas are characterised by socio-political community dynamics that are often marked by processes of exclusion. Hence, a focus on diaspora leaders (and those who are mobilised) often neglects the experiences and perspectives of potentially marginalised members of the community. For instance, some diaspora groups might be characterised by more informal and less visible organisations and initiatives based on loose structures and networks of solidarity, something which has been highlighted especially in the case of diaspora women's engagement (see Chapter 2.3 Diaspora women and sustainable development). Moreover, there are diaspora contributions that are not linked to formal or informal collectivities, such as diaspora knowledge transfer as well as other forms of economic, social, cultural, and political remittances that are realised through individual forms of engagement.
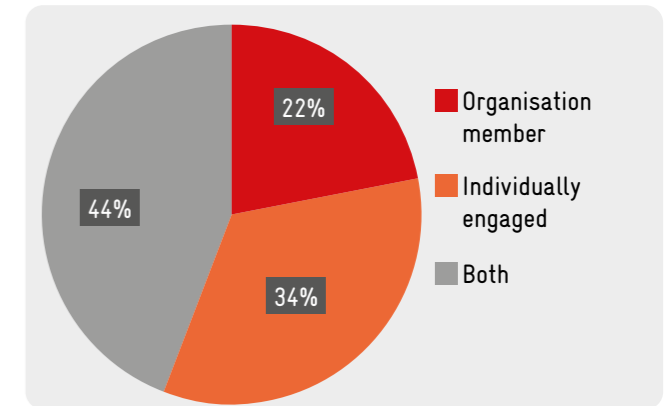
FIGURE 7: FORMS OF ENGAGEMENT

This research has engaged with women with a migration history from a diverse range of countries, who reside (or have previously resided) in Germany and are in some way contributing to the development processes of their country of origin / or in the context of Germany. This includes women who are leaders or members of diaspora organisations / networks in Germany, as well as women who engage individually in sustainable development. The study therefore applies a broader understanding of diaspora actors, including leaders and members of diaspora organisations, as well as business and social entrepreneurs who engage in sustainable development through individual contributions. The individual contributions often took place during temporary return visits with the aim of sharing knowledge through participation in conferences, the organisation of workshops and seminars or short-term collaboration with origin country actors. Several interviewed women do small-scale fundraising to realise short-term projects (e.g., financing of beehives for women in their community of origin or basic IT training). Next to this, engagement takes also place in the virtual realm, for instance through offering ongoing online mentoring for students in the country of origin.

In total, two thirds of the participants were representatives of diaspora organisations, whereas more than half (also) engaged in sustainable development of the country of origin through individual means. As Figure 7. shows, around 44 percent of the participating women contribute to sustainable development both as member of an organisation as well as through individual engagement.

The following section presents an overview of women's participation in diaspora organisations, sheds light on diaspora women as business leaders and social entrepreneurs and explores the different forms engagement can take and, through this, illustrates the diversity of women's engagement.

4.2.1. LANDSCAPE OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN DIASPORA ORGANISATIONS

With regard to organisational affiliations, the study was able to capture a diverse range of types of organisations (see Figure 8).

FIGURE 8: TYPES OF ORGANISATIONS

From the participating women, 7 were part of women-only organisations, which are organisations that exclusively have female members and often evolved due to the need of providing a safe space for mutual support for migrant women and women and girls in the country of origin. Among these organisations one can distinguish between two types. The first are women's organisations that aim to support women, children, and youth empowerment in the country of origin. Next to advocacy for women's rights 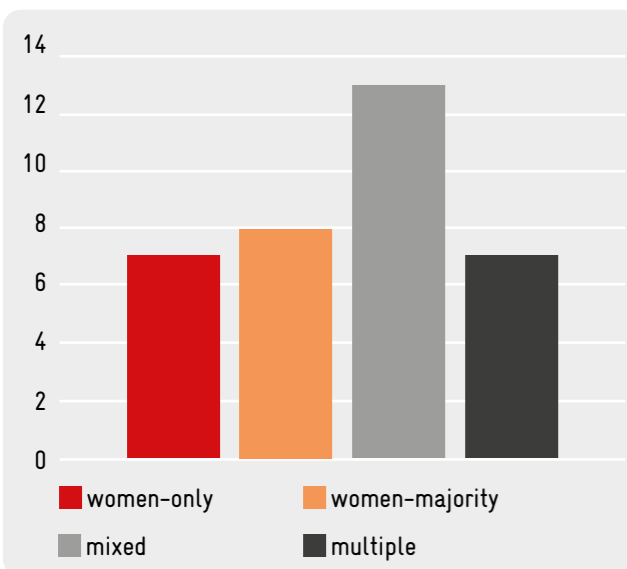and community empowering, some of the organisations focus on supporting capacity building of businesses and trade companies of women in the country of origin.

ORIGIN COUNTRY FOCUSSED DIASPORA WOMEN-LED ORGANISATIONS

African Women for Empowerment aims at improving the life of children and women in Africa through a range of activities in the fields of empowerment, community development, social and educational assistance.

Southern Cameroons European Women advocates for human rights especially women's rights and children's rights, forges for peaceful solution to the conflict in Southern Cameroon, provides humanitarian assistance to war victims and refugees, and empowers women to improve their living standards.

The **Africa Women in Trade** aims to create a Network where African women and youth can access information regarding Africa Continental Free Trade Area, provide market access regionally, nationally, and globally, and offer capacity building and access to capital through grants and investments.

The network **Africa Women in Europe** aims to support African women and youth small and medium-sized companies, by informing, creating market access, linking investors and funders, as well as sharing skills and promoting sustainable partnerships.

The second type of organisations connect women, often of diverse origins, in their local environment with the aim to support integration of migrants and refugees, as well as intercultural exchange. Many of these organisations are involved not only in their own community but also support the integration of refugees and migrants from various contexts. Empowerment of women also plays a major role in their engagement.

RESIDENCE COUNTRY FOCUSED DIASPORA WOMEN-LED ORGANISATIONS

Perlentreff is an intercultural women's association established by Tunisian diaspora women that promotes women, families, and refugees and helps them integrate into society.

AMIKAL is a centre for educational and cultural exchange and aims to promote positive interaction with different cultures established by women from diverse backgrounds.

The organisation Friedensweg established by Tunisian diaspora women aims at promoting youth welfare, education including vocational training, as well as at contributing to international understanding.

Next to these, 7 of the respondents were part of women-majority organisations. These organisations mostly involve women, who tend to hold leadership positions, and who design and implement the projects. The organisations also have male members who often tend to act more in the background. These organisations often focus on more general aspects of sustainable development.

Kolumbienkampagne Berlin is an advocacy group that aims at contributing to political and social transformations in the origin country by reporting on the human rights situation and the situation of social movements in Colombia.

ViaNiños is a non-profit association that helps vulnerable children, teenagers, and their families in Ecuador. Their goal is to provide a better future for Ecuadorian children who work on the streets.

Other women-majority organisations focus on the promotion of social cohesion, integration, and participation of migrants in the context of Germany.

Sustainable Women for Development aims at promoting understanding between Germans and Africans as well as between Africans, through a range of social, cultural, and sport activities to strengthen cultural identities.

The association **Mwagni** is mainly active around **knowledge transfer and education**. Their goal is to share their own experiences of integration with young people, foreign students, and refugees through mentoring programmes. Through empowerment workshops and special women's courses, the organisation aims to empower migrant women and girls in their decision-making power and achieve intellectual independence.

Finally, more than one quarter of the participants are engaged in mixed organisations, which range from integration and cultural associations to development, humanitarian and human rights organisations and students / academic networks. Some of the organisations aim to promote integration, community building, and social cohesion in Germany.

Permif e.V. is a non-profit organisation for the Indonesian people that was formed with the aim of increasing friendship and cooperation between the people of Indonesia and people in Germany in the social and cultural fields.

IASH aims to identify and address social, cultural, and educational needs of Hannover Indian Community in particular and Indian people in general. Also, to contribute significantly to the perseveration, awareness, and promotion of Indo-German cultural heritage and to be an active participant in affairs of interest to the Association and its membership.

URACult e.V. has set itself the task of presenting Balkan art internationally. The Organisation sees itself as a forum for all kinds of art forms, such as music, theatre, painting and dance. While their engagement is mainly directed towards Germany, the organisation occasionally collects donations for small-scale development projects in the country of origin.

The association **Vielfalt in Hannover e. V.*** (Diversity Africa in Hanover e.V.* or VAH e. V.*) was founded to build bridges between Germany and Africa. Their engagement focuses on supporting sustainable development in Africa and in the country of residence. In Germany, the association aims at supporting the integration of migrants and refugees, while in Cameroon the organisation focusses on the promotion of vocational training and sustainable agricultural production.

NeMiB represents the perspectives and interests of people with migration and refugee experience at the political level in Germany. Next to that NeMiB is involved in shaping the guidelines for sustainability and development policy.

Other diaspora organisations aim at contributing to sustainable development in the countries of origin.

ZentralAfrika e.V, an organisation that aims at promoting well-being and education of children affected by war in Central Africa, by financing school fees and medical fees of orphans.

PASoS, a group of architects, wood technicians, carpenters, and interested people who have come together to develop, plan, and build projects together, initially in Las Gilces, on the coast of Ecuador, and in the future other (construction) projects with communities in need, through volunteer work.

Finally, the study also captured student and academic networks that aim at supporting well-being, community and integration of students and academics in Germany, as well as knowledge transfer and professional exchange.

KMKI – the Indonesian Catholic Student Family is an organisation by and for Indonesian students in Germany and sees itself as a community characterised by a family, Catholic spirit.

PPI Jerman is an Indonesian student association that aims at supporting Indonesian students in Germany. The organisation also conducts programmes or workshops specifically targeting women (e.g., seminars / workshops focusing on sexual harassment or abuse during marriage) to help women and girls.

DIJA Gesellschaft albanischer Akademiker e.V. is engaged in various fields through knowledge transfer, project management, and consulting. DIJA aims at scientific promotion, knowledge transfer, professional exchange, as well as networking and cooperation between partners and institutions from Albanian-speaking and German-speaking countries, as well as countries of the EU.

Ghanaian Professionals & Students Germany e.V. is a group of people who identify as Ghanaians or of Ghanaian origin who studied, currently study or work in Germany. The goal of the association is to promote the integration of Ghanian students in Germany through social and intercultural activities and also to harness skills acquired in Germany for development corporations in Ghana.

Deutsch-Äthiopischer Studenten- und Akademikerverein (DÄSAV) e.V. is a nationwide, independent association of students and academics which aims to support Ethiopian students and academics in their professional and personal development. In addition to university education, the association also support interdisciplinary cooperation and training and promotes dialogue between students and practitioners from business and public life.

As this overview illustrates, diaspora women's forms of engagement are diverse and heterogeneous. Thus, diaspora women contribute to a lively and politically, culturally, and socially engaged civil society, with the aim to not only promote sustainable development in their countries of origin, but also to foster integration and participation of migrants and refugees in the German context. The findings suggest that women-led organisations have women's empowerment as their central focus, while other organisations focus more generally on tackling developmental or integrational challenges. Yet, some of the latter organisations realise projects that aim at empowering diaspora women and girls in their decision-making power.

When it comes to the capacities of diaspora organisations, the vast majority of organisations captured in this study work on a voluntary basis and rely on donations and membership fees to realise their activities. This is particularly true for women-led organisations focussing on the German context. Some organisations active in integration receive funding or financial support from municipalities and other local actors. In the context of India and Indonesia, some organisations received financial support from embassies. Many of the organisations that realise projects for sustainable development in their country of origin have established good contacts with GIZ and other donors. Yet, the high bureaucratic hurdles, which require

skills, time and human resources were mentioned as major challenges in the application process. Further, especially for smaller organisations, the co-payment is difficult to guarantee. Fundraising and cooperation with the private sector, therefore, offers alternative avenues for funding for some organisations. One respondent highlights that their activities are mainly funded through cooperation with companies (e.g., money transfer companies, airlines, banks, investment companies) because it requires less paperwork (2 pager instead of full project proposal) and offers more flexibility. In general, organisations are faced with the critical challenge of ensuring financial sustainability, which hinders organisational autonomy, long-term planning, and flexibility. The focus group discussions further revealed that many participating women were interested in implementing projects in their country of origin, yet they perceived the lack of financial resources as one of the major obstacles for realising their ideas. Financial capacity, therefore, can be considered as an important determining factor of realising projects in the context of origin. Promoting capacity development of diaspora organisations, hence, may enable diaspora women actors to get involved in sustainable development of their countries of origin.

When it comes to human resources, one can observe that the vast part of the continuous work is actually realised by a small proportion of very active individuals. In that sense, some participants mentioned that they face difficulties to mobilise volunteers for a more permanent engagement. This can pose a great challenge, especially since volunteering is often done alongside other responsibilities related to work, study, and the family.

❝We all work as volunteers, and have our jobs and families, finding the time to work for the organisation is a big challenge. (LATAM-8).

With regard to women's leadership in diaspora organisations, most of the women who participated in this study are (or have been in the past) in leadership positions in their respective organisations. Some organisations actively pursue a gender parity strategy, also in terms of leadership, while in other cases women's leadership is fluctuating, mainly because it proved difficult to find women who are interested in leadership positions.

The findings also indicate that even though women are considered as important agents of change, their representation and visibility in many diaspora groups seems marginalised. This is particularly true when it comes to the political space of diasporas, where women are often a minority in diaspora meetings. Given the male dominance in diaspora organisations, the format of the meetings often does not encourage women to speak up. Hence, many highlight that women do engage but often more in the religious, social, cultural, or informal sphere. As a result, women often act in the background but do not receive recognition for their work.

"The women are more involved than the men. But the men run the organisations. All the presidents of the organisation were men. There was no woman running it. But the women are very involved in raising money and materials, doing the projects." (NA-3)

Further, some feel that when women are in higher office, it is often a façade, as they often stay on the side-lines of decision-making, as one respondents points out: *"Women do all the work with very little help and are not allowed to decide. And that's why I have to fight to be a boss too". (SSA-7)*

Another manifestation of patriarchy is seen in women's internalisation of these structures, often resulting in a climate where women compete against each other, as one interviewee highlights:

" I think it's absurd that we women in particular so often feel we have to compete with each other and be better than the others in order to get ahead ourselves. In my opinion, this is due to our social system, which was created mainly by men and gives us the feeling that we should not be satisfied with ourselves and feel comfortable in our skin. I would like to contribute to changing that. (NASIA-4).

The path to ensuring the full and equal participation of women in diaspora organisations, hence, not only means to mobilise more female members, but it also involves giving equal consideration to women's opinions, issues, and demands in a meaningful manner.

KEY FINDINGS AND MESSAGES

Diaspora women **contribute to a politically, cultural-ly, and socially engaged civil society,** with women-led organizations specifically active in promoting children, youth and women empowerment, both in Germany and in the country of origin.

Promoting diaspora women actors, therefore, not only has the potential to develop their capacities, but also serves broader developmental goals of women's empowerment both in the country of origin and in the country of residence.
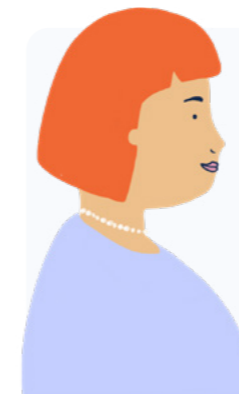
The vast majority of organisations operate with **low financial capacity,** and this is particularly true for new, or women-led organisations focusing on the German context.

Next to offering less bureau-cratic and flexible funding, establishing a starter/seed fund for the project develop-ment phase (idea conceptualisation) can empower women to realise sustainable development projects in their country of origin.

Even though women are considered as important agents of change, their **representation and visibility,** especi-ally in political spaces, seems often **marginalised.**

Women's emp-owerment also means transfor-ming patriarchal structures that engender multiple positions of disadvantage of women, by working with domi-nant structures and pro-moting opportunities for self-reflection within the diaspora communities.

4.2.2. DIASPORA WOMEN AS BUSINESS LEADERS AND SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS

Next to diaspora civil society actors, this study also aims to shed light on diaspora women business and entrepreneurship. Transnational diaspora business and entrepreneurs can be conceptualized as "migrants and their descendants who establish entrepreneurial activities that span the national business environments of their countries of origin and countries of residence" (Riddle, Hrivnak & Nielsen, 2010, p.398). In some cases, diaspora entrepreneurs may permanently return to their countries of origin, while other entrepreneurial contributions are realised through circular and temporary return visits or in the virtual realm through social networking sites or online engagement. Being transnational in nature, diaspora entrepreneurship not only promotes sustainable development in the countries of origin, but also contributes to the economies of the residence countries (ebd.).

This study captured three types of diaspora business and social entrepreneurship. The first type are transnational businesses, that are managed and registered in Germany and work with communities and local partners in their country of origin and through this, connect the business environments of their countries of origin and country of residence. By amplifying connections between their country of origin and Germany, the aim is to enable the circularity of products, knowledge and ideas: "My aim is to build a bridge between Germany and Ghana, bring

products both ways". All four business and social entrepreneurships captured in this study aim at promoting women's empowerment by raising the economic (or social and political) position and participation of women, and through this support sustainable development of their country of origin:

> ❝ I engage to increase the self-esteem of the artisan women and their families who work with me, increase their feeling of being valuable. I want to highlight that women are the main producers and their husbands only help them. (LATAM-5)

Next to providing economic opportunities for women, some businesses focus on capacity development of women producers by offering training for example in financial literacy, or technical production knowledge. Giving ownership to women and empowering them to become decision-makers in management positions, is seen as a central contribution to gender equality in the country of origin.

Paqu is a young company willing to preserve the Ecuadorian culture through handcrafted products exclusively handmade in Ecuador.

The import company **Latitud 0°** aims to promote and improve the Ecuadorian coffee industry and is working on various projects to make coffee cultivation sustainable. With regard to gender equality, the company provides training, skill sharing, and project follow-ups to females in the community.

The label **AYE Kollection** is a one-woman business that aims to bring out the best designs from Africa with authentic African prints with a combination of tradition and modern couture. The business contributes to sustainable development by using the talents and expertise in Ghana and giving some tailors and seamstresses work and livelihood opportunities.

PowerSouth promotes an equitable relationship between global (German/European) resource providers, and the implementers and entrepreneurs of environmental and sustainable initiatives in the global south. PowerSouth was conceptualised on the basis that more needs to be done to connect local and grassroots organisations (with a gender and marginalised community lens) in India to resources and funds from Germany. Power South is a beneficiary of PMD support.

The second type refers to diaspora business and social entrepreneurship, which were established by returnees in their country of origin. The entrepreneurship is often driven by the aspiration to invest their professional skills and knowledge acquired during their stay in Germany to promote sustainable development in their countries of origin. The two examples captured in this study do not directly aim at promoting women's empowerment, but rather aim to promote wellbeing, physical and mental health, or civil society development and social and political transformations more generally.

Sunčev Zrak is a counselling centre for breastfeeding, mental and physical development of new-borns. The aim of the centre is to assist parents in Serbia during the phase of early parenting by offering counselling, seminars and workshops on topics related to breastfeeding, and mental and physical development of new-borns.

Zajednicko is a platform for theory and practice of commons aiming at contributing to a just, equal, and sustainable society based on the practices of democratic participation, participatory management, public, social and cooperative ownership, and an economy based on the principles of self-organisation, cooperation, and solidarity.

Finally, other businesses and social enterprises focus on sustainable development in Germany by promoting social engagement or the integration of migrants into the German society. Interestingly, both examples below are also characterised by a transnational dimension in their entrepreneurship, as the women entrepreneurs work with female students in India in the field of app development,

hereby encouraging knowledge circulation between the country of origin and of residence. Even though their businesses do not have a concrete focus on women's empowerment, the transnational dimension of their engagement has the potential to contribute to the advancement of the position of women in their country of origin.

Givetastic is a smart giving and engagement platform that empowers employees to contribute to social and environmental projects of their choice using the corporate donation budget or CSR budget. The goal is to promote social engagement and transparency and empower individuals to create positive social impact.

New2 app aims to bundle reliable information for migrants and offer value-added services through forums and a digital marketplace. The main aim of New2 is to build bridges between cultures and promote successful integration.

While the participating women successfully mastered the path towards becoming transnational entrepreneurs, they are also confronted with several challenges in their engagement. One the one hand these include contextual aspects, such as managing administrative and legal hurdles in transnational context, and one the other more gender-related obstacles that women may face as business leaders.

" Being a women, I have felt people don't take my business seriously and think I do this as a hobby (LATAM-5)

Ensuring financial sustainability, as well as developing business-related skills were other important needs that participating women articulated. As for start-ups it is often difficult to borrow money in the conventional banking system, target credit lines for diaspora women entrepreneurs were considered as an important measure to help women to develop and expand their business further. Further, capacity development programs that promote business skills development, such as business plan devel-

opment, financial planning, project implementation or marketing were considered as important, yet often missing, support structure:

" If you want people becoming change -makers, you can support them with trainings and workshops throughout their work, also connecting people to exchange experiences and sharing knowledge (WB-2)

The examples captured above illustrate the complexity of transnational diaspora businesses and entrepreneurship, and the variety of transnational connections and contributions. While the first type of business is transnational in nature by connecting economic context and activities across geographies, the other examples illustrate the circularity of transnational transfers, by enabling sharing of knowledge practices and ideas between the context of origin and of residence.

KEY FINDINGS AND MESSAGES

Many business and entrepreneurial activities captured in this **study directly or indirectly aim at empowering women**, by enhancing the economic (or social and political) position and participation of women in the country of origin.
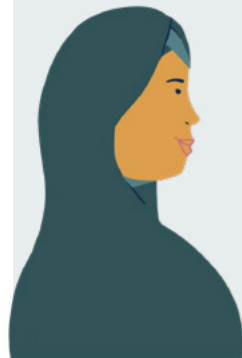
Promoting diaspora women's entrepreneurship, therefore, not only contributes to personal and professional development of these actors but can also have positive impacts on women empowerment in the context of the origin country.

Diaspora businesses and social enterprises not only promote sustainable development in the countries of origin, but also **contribute to the economies of the residence countries** and, hence, **encouraging knowledge circulation** across geographic spaces.

Moving away from a uni-directional understanding of transnational transfe enables a better understanding of how migration contributes to development across geographies and sheds light on indirect and hidden forms of knowledge circulation.
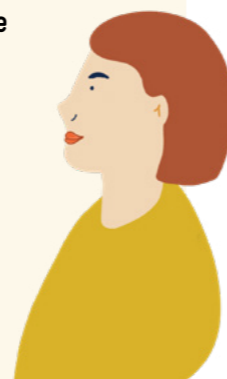
While the participating women successfully mastered the path towards becoming transnational entrepreneurs, they are also **confronted with several challenges**.

Programs should empower women diaspora entrepreneurs, by offering targeted capacity building programs that promote financial sustainability, as well as the development of business-related skills and support network building.

4.3.   FORMS AND FOCUS OF INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE ENGAGEMENT

The transnational perspective on migration emphasises that migrants are often embedded in multiple societies and engage in cross-border exchanges, interactions, and transnational activities in the space of societies of origin and residence (Glick Schiller, 2013; Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004; Mazzucato, 2008). As mentioned earlier, diaspora actors not only contribute to sustainable development in their country of origin, but also transform social, cultural, political, and economic spaces of their country of residence. Hence, this research understands diaspora engagement as a process in which collective action and practices can be either homeland-oriented to influence political and development processes in the country of origin, or residence country-oriented in which civic or political practices address the context of residence, or hybrid in which these actions may intersect and happen simultaneously. Transnational practices of diaspora actors and migrants can therefore be seen not only as a form of participation in the place of origin, but also as a crucial part of civil society in residence countries (Horst, 2013). Sinatti and Horst (2015), therefore, question the dominant understanding of development as tied to geographical spaces, and call for a reconceptualization of the term:

> If development is no longer seen as something that happens in a geographically defined space, or solely in developing countries, but rather for the people concerned (who may leave that space in order to gain greater development goals for themselves and others) […], development, then, might be about creating better conditions for people rather than for places (p.148)

In line with this people-centred approach to development, this study explores the practices and contributions of diaspora women beyond geographic spaces and outlines their contributions in different fields, such as advocacy, knowledge transfer, promotion of women, children, and youth empowerment, culture and integration. Due to the large number of organisations and the wide variety of areas of engagement, it is outside the scope of this study to conduct a quantitative inventory of the transnational activities of diaspora women in Germany. Instead, the aim of the following section is to illustrate the diversity and variety of practices by means of selected examples.

FORMS AND FOCUS OF INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE ENGAGEMENT

ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

Aimed at raising awareness on human rights topics and advocating for peaceful solutions to conflicts in countries of origin, or on the situation, needs and rights of migrants and refugee communities in Germany.

CULTURAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Cultural activities, including singing, dancing, readings, theatre plays, or spiritual events, aim at promoting community building and diaspora women's self-empowerment, trauma healing, and tackle different forms of gendered stigmatisation.

KNOWLEDGE CIRCULATION

Depending on their expertise, skills, and knowledge, participating women engaged in knowledge transfer in a wide range of areas, including promoting entrepreneurship, civil society development, as well as the development of the educational, social and health systems.

PARTICIPATION AND EXCHANGE

Support for migrant women, children and youth ranging from assistance with government agencies to providing legal advice or psycho-social support, as well as activities fostering intercultural exchange.

WOMEN, CHILDREN & YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

Promotion of women, children, and youth empowerment in countries of origin through activities in the fields of community development, social and educational assistance, promotion of employment & entrepreneurship.

SELF-EMPOWERMENT

Self-organised spaces of mutual support turn the personal into political, collective struggle. Workshops, coaching, and mentoring activities tackle gender equality and women's empowerment to strengthen the self-image, sense of agency, and role of women in society.

FIGURE 9: FORMS AND FOCUS OF INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE ENGAGEMENT

Advocacy activities, on the one hand, aim at raising awareness on human rights topics and at advocating for peaceful solutions to conflicts in the countries of origin. Given that women and children tend to be the most affected by the war, there is a need to advocate for the rights of women and children, as one respondent from Cameroon highlighted: *"We draw the world's attention to the crisis in Cameroon. We show the challenges of women and children in war zones. We do public relations. The government doesn't like that." (SSA-5)*

Another example includes advocacy campaigns targeting global inequalities and localisation of aid to challenge unequal access and structures of power within the global development system more generally. In addition to advocacy efforts in the context of origin, other organisations aim to raise awareness on the situation, needs, and rights of the migrants and refugee communities in Germany. Finally, advocacy is targeted at actively educating people and spreading awareness on different topics related to global transformation and challenges including environmental protection, animal rights, racism, and human rights:

> **"**The purpose of my engagement is not necessarily to support sustainable development in Indonesia but to educate the younger generations about topics I consider important including environmental and social issues. I feel that I cannot change the country but instead I can try to have an impact on some people. (ASIA-1)

Knowledge transfer and circulation is considered as an important tool for promoting sustainable development in the country of origin by respondents. Depending on their distinct expertise, skills, and knowledge, participating women engaged in knowledge transfer in a wide range of areas, including promoting entrepreneurship, civil society development, as well as the development of the educational, social and health system. This is realised through different forms of return to their country of origin (permanent, temporary, or virtual return). In some cases, return was organised independently, while in other cases women were part of the participants of PMD programme components (e.g., Diaspora experts, Returning experts). As such, some participating women return more permanently and worked as origin country actors or established their own NGOs and business in the country of origin. In other cases, temporary return was aimed at promoting capacity development of origin country actors, empowering marginalised communities through more explicit knowledge transfer methods, such as formal trainings, seminars, and lectures. Other more indirect forms of knowledge transfer include activities of co-teaching, on-the-job training, or mentoring, which in some cases is done also in the virtual realm, for instance through online mentoring of female students in the country of origin. Another organisation promotes circulation of knowledge by organising events in Germany connecting origin country actors with stakeholders in Germany to discuss different topics of knowledge transfer.

A central aspect of engagement is the promotion of women, children, and youth empowerment in the country of origin through a range of activities in the fields of community development, social and educational assistance, but also the promotion of women's employment and entrepreneurship. Promoting women's education as well as raising awareness among women and the wider community on topics related to GBV and gender inequalities is seen as crucial to empower women and girls to become agents of change in their communities: *"Especially in the global south, the men are pushed more to go to school than the women. Most often, women are the socially weak in the communities. And now, given the war situation that we have right now, that makes the situation really worse. So, most of the women have lost their husbands, they are left on their own. These are the people we like to empower." (SSA-3)*

When it comes to the promotion of women's employment and entrepreneurship, activities range from supporting NGOs that support entrepreneurs by offering funds to small and growing enterprises to capacity building (e.g., financial literacy, technical knowledge for productivity increase, quality improvements) for women in the area of agricultural productions. Other business activities aim at show-casing the talent that exists the country of origin and giving value to traditional knowledge. In their work, participants also want to promote self-empowerment of women by increasing the self-esteem and a feeling of being valuable, among women / families who work with them. The activities therefore aim to bridge the gender gap through the promotion of women's economic empowerment in the country of origin. Other initiatives aim at promoting education and wellbeing of children as well as economic participation of youth in the country of origin. As such, some organisations saw the need to promote the education of children, through the provision of financial support to children, schools, and educational centres, while another organisation supports an association that offers vocational training for traumatised youth. Next to offering financial resources, some diaspora organisations aim to develop internal capacities of NGOs to enable them to become financially more independent and sustainable. Some of the partner organisations focus mainly on young girls, given the gender-specific protection needs

(e.g., GBV they face in addition to the general deprivations due to poverty).

In the German context, cultural and social activities play a central role in the engagement and often serve three main purposes. On the one hand, the aim is to promote community building within the diaspora, by providing a space for the expression of identities and the cultivation of heritage, traditions, customs, and the culture of the origin country. Here, diaspora organisations can also serve to introduce children (born or growing up in Germany) to the culture and traditions of their parents, and through this also foster engagement of the young generation in the future. For example, a study participant from India emphasizes how important it is to her to introduce her 8-year-old son to Indian culture. Through the exchange with children of the same origin, she wants to give him the opportunity to break down stereotypes, to get to know Indian culture through self-experience and to integrate elements into his "German life" (ASIA-8). In addition to organising cultural and religious events, as well as celebration of origin country's holidays, regular meetings and gatherings help to promote contact and interaction within the community. Cultural activities, including singing, dancing, readings, theatre plays, or spiritual events, also play a central role in promoting diaspora women's self-empowerment, trauma healing, as well as in the tackling of different forms of female stigmatisation. Often these activities not only aim at women from the country of origin but seek to promote exchange among women from diverse contexts.

Secondly, cultural activities, including film festivals, musical events, and traditional dancing, also aim at fostering social cohesion between immigrants and the local population and contribute to intercultural dialogue and peaceful coexistence at local level. Through raising awareness of the culture and context of origin, these activities also want to break down certain stereotypes towards the country of origin. One important aim is also to change the perceptions of integration and to show that those who newly arrived in Germany are also bringing important resources with them and can successfully contribute to the German society.

Finally, in some cases, cultural events, or the collection of donations in religious festivals are organised occasionally to support infrastructure projects (e.g., building of schools, hospitals) or support of marginalised communities through the transfer of collective remittances. Other organisations use cultural productions to raise awareness on human rights issues in the context of origin. As such, activities realised in the country of residence are linked with development issues in the context of origin.

Next to this, the aim is to provide orientation for newcomers in their new life environment and to support them in their integration process. In many cases, the integration support work started informally at first, with women meeting, supporting each other and implementing some activities: "We are a family. We are there. We help each other. We support each other" (NA-7). Over time, some of these loose associations have been formalised, among other things, to obtain more visibility as well as government funding. One study participant explained that many associations offering integration support are run by women because women are more concerned than men about their children and prospects in the country of residence. Activities range from providing assistance with government agencies and doctors' visits, organising information events on asylum procedures, and providing legal advice or psycho-social support. Many of the associations, in which the interviewed women are involved, offer both integration support (e.g., literacy and German courses for adults) as well as language courses for children to learn the mother tongue of their parents and cultural events. Many, especially women-led, organisations aim to offer targeted support for migrant women, in response to the gender-specific challenges they face during their integration process:

> " I noticed that female migrants and their children were not getting enough attention in German society. For whatever reason. Maybe because they have a lot to do, maybe because they don't speak German well, maybe family reasons. I have to do something for them. (…) I had a lot of ideas at the beginning and there was also a lot to do. (NA-2)

These initiatives often want to provide a safe space for migrant women to discuss their challenges and solution strategies during their integration process. As such, these self-organised spaces offer the possibility of mutual support and networking, which make it possible to master the difficulties of everyday life together and in a self-determined way. In addition, workshops, coaching, and mentoring activities aim at discussing aspects of gender equality and women's empowerment to strengthen the self-image, sense of agency, and role of women in society. Besides the individual and collective aspects of self-empowerment, activities also aim at tackling the structural dimension, by raising awareness on women's rights through knowledge sharing on the political system and laws in Germany.

To conclude, the participating diaspora women contribute to social, political, and economic development processes across the different geographies, both on an individual and on a collective level. While some forms of engagement have a sole focus on the context of origin, others focus on the country of residence, while many times diaspora women engage in multiple societies and spaces simultaneously. Often there is a strong aspiration to contribute to development processes in the country of origin, yet as the following chapter will outline in detail, women also perceived crucial barriers to realise this potential. Finally, the role of self-organised spaces for migrant women is often neglected and seen as politically or developmentally less relevant. This study argues that diaspora women self-organised spaces not only create a space of solidarity, belonging, and self-empowerment, but can also strengthen migrant women collective voices.

KEY FINDINGS AND MESSAGES
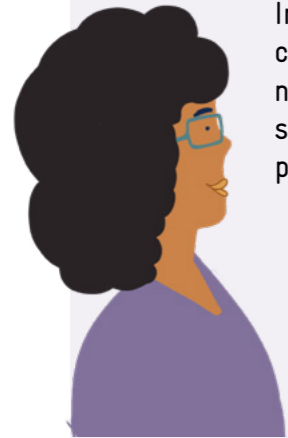
In Germany, women's diaspora organisations contribute to community building, support female newcomers in their integration and strengthen social cohesion between immigrants and the local population.

The work of women's diaspora organisations in integration work in Germany should be more strongly appreciated and supported through appropriate funding.

Through various formats and activities in the countries of origin (advocacy, knowledge transfer, empowerment programmes), women's diaspora organisations make an important contribution to combating gender inequalities, strengthening the capacities of women and their economic empowerment.

The promotion of transnational projects of diaspora organisations in the countries of origin is an important lever to promote sustainable development.

Diaspora actors not only contribute to sustainable development in their country of origin, but also transform the social, cultural, political and economic space of their country of residence.

Engagement in the host country and in the country of origin are not mutually exclusive but complementary; they should therefore not be considered in isolation from each other, but their intertwining should be the focus.

5. OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR DIASPORA WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT

It has been argued that the space and nature of diaspora mobilizations depends on the opportunities and constraints diasporic political entrepreneurs encounter in the country of residence, the country of origin, and the international sphere, hence the exogenous factors enabling or constraining mobilization (Adamson, 2008; Chaudhary & Moss, 2019; Sökefeld, 2006). It is important to highlight that transnational opportunity structures are group and context specific and therefore might empower some groups, while also constraining others. Thus, different groups even within the same diaspora, face different opportunities and constraints within the transnational field, which shape the nature, forms and aspirations of mobilisation.

Further, Al-Ali, Black and Koser (2001) stress the importance of transnational capabilities, which refer to the willingness and ability of individuals to engage in political, economic, and social transnational activities. Capabilities include not only the more structural factors such as the political opportunities or constraints that diaspora actors encounter in the transnational field, but also their agency, such as the level of motivation to maintain group solidarity as well as the willingness and desire to re-establish links with the country of origin. As such, capabilities are also shaped by "the extent to which individuals and communities identify with the social, economic or political processes in their home countries, which is a prerequisite for them to engage in transnational activities" (Al-Ali et

al., 2001, p. 581). A sense of belonging, hence, presents a significant precondition for establishing links with the place of origin and for engaging in transnational practices. Motivations might be shaped by feelings of obligation, guilt and grievance or a desire for power, just as well as an aspiration for social change and transformation that inspires new or renewed interest of diaspora actors to shape the politics of the country of origin (Brinkerhoff, 2011). Demmers (2007) argues that critical developments in the homeland, such as secessionist conflicts or revolutionary struggles, can be considered as transformative events that trigger mobilisation around a shared consciousness, as a collective identity becomes salient (the so-called "diasporic turn"). Hence, individual capabilities, aspirations, and desires are shaped by the macro-level transnational opportunity structures and positionalities.

Keeping these aspects in mind, the following section explores the challenges and opportunities, as well as the personal drivers, enabling factors and needs of the participating diaspora women, putting a specific focus on their gendered dimensions. Finally, it explores the importance of social networks in shaping the transnational space and practices.

TRANSNATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS OF DIASPORA WOMEN ACTORS

ENABLING RESSOURCES	NEEDS	OPPORTUNITIES	CHALLENGES
Secure legal status; education and economic security; personal and professional skills; family and community support; networks; time and flexibility	Funding – access, skills, & support; networks and trusted partners; platforms for exchange; visibility and recognition; skills and personal development	Connection to and support of CoO actors (governmental & civil society); Societal transformations in CoO; Spaces of empowerment in CoR; Economic opportunities in CoR	Multiple discrimination; Limiting traditional gender roles; Patriarchal structures; Struggles of (dis)belonging, identity and group membership

FIGURE 10: TRANSNATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS OF DIASPORA WOMEN ACTORS

5.1.   OPPORTUNITIES, DRIVERS AND ENABLING RESOURCES

The factors that motivate and enable women in the diaspora to engage in voluntary work and other forms of engagement towards sustainable development are as diverse as their migration histories. The findings indicate that in addition to context related factors of the country of origin and the country of residence, personal drivers shape these aspirations.

5.1.1.   CONTEXT-RELATED DRIVERS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Important reasons for women to get involved in the sustainable development are the political, economic, and social developments in their countries of origin. This is especially true for those study participants who come from countries where war or war-like conditions prevailed or still prevail (e.g., Cameroon, Colombia, Kosovo). For example, after the outbreak of war in Cameroon, more and more women in the German diaspora began to volunteer. One Cameroonian study participant was initially involved in the church for many years. However, when war broke out in Cameroon, she wanted to do more for the people there and alleviate the suffering of disadvantaged people,

especially women and children in war zones, through her commitment: *"For me, it was the misery, this consternation, why I had to do something. I can't see this injustice and do nothing" (SSA-5)*. The increase in the involvement of Cameroonian women in the diaspora is also reflected in the number of Cameroonian associations founded in Germany between 2017-2018. For one participant from Colombia, the peace agreement from 2016 was an important momentum for engagement. After decades of war in Colombia, the peace deal gave her a *"feeling of hope"* and motivated her to start a business idea which aims to improve working conditions in Colombia (LATAM-2). In one case, political developments in the country of origin were even mentioned as a decisive factor for return. A Serbian study participant mentioned processes of change in the region, especially the unification of the opposition, as a reason to return and to support this process: *"How could I analyse literature in Germany when a new society was emerging down there" (WB-1)*.

Hence, next to a feeling of obligation to fight injustices in the country of origin, a spirit of hope and aspiration to contribute to social and political change were important motivating factors. However, women from countries that are comparatively stable also mentioned conditions such as deteriorating economic developments as reasons for their

engagement. Economic misery, coupled with the impact of the global Covid-19 pandemic, poor governance, mismanagement, and corruption were keywords mentioned by one study participant. For another participant, it was specifically the lack of perspective for young people who, despite qualifications, have no professional perspectives due to the situation of the labour market in the country of origin. Most of the interviewees themselves have friends and relatives in their close circle who suffer from difficult economic conditions, unemployment, and underemployment. Closely related is the observed brain drain as another as important driver that evoked women's commitment. The fact that an increasing number of students and highly qualified professionals leave the country has been a major reason for the creation of organisations and networks in the diaspora:

> ❝ In the last ten years, brain drain and emigration out of Tunisia has increased a lot. And usually, these are students who leave to study abroad, or professionals who leave the country to work abroad. This was the main motivation. (NA-5)

Another study participant from Cameroon mentioned formative events in her childhood related to climate change. She reported that the effects of climate change were felt very strongly in her community of origin in the north of Cameroon. The difficult living conditions in the face of increased rainfalls or prolonged periods of drought had already awakened in her at a young age the motivation to study geography and to get involved in the environmental field. Environmental pollution in the country of origin was also one reason for a participant from Ecuador to work in the media sector. She realised early on that the media have a great influence, for example, by drawing attention to environmental pollution in the country of origin.

Many participants also mentioned a regression in terms of gender equality in countries of origin, for example due to a change of political power and the strengthening of religious fundamentalist parties, as decisive factors for their engagement. This shows that the women interviewed, some of whom have been living in Germany for more than ten years, have maintained their close connection to their countries of origin. Concerned about the deterioration of the living conditions of the compatriots, especially women, they feel affected and to a certain extent obliged to make their contribution.

In the country of residence, respondents highlight that the German context offers a lot of opportunities for diaspora women actors due to the high standard of living and because of the better security and safety when compared to the context of origin. As indicated above, many consider the situation to be better for women in Germany, because gender equality is perceived to be higher and gender norms that confine women to the private space are less strong than in the country of origin. Especially when it comes to civic participation, the German context can provide a lot of space and opportunities for some interviewees: *"I have observed over the years that it is mostly women who organise events within the Indonesian diaspora and rarely men. I also believe that Germany offers a lot of space for this, for designing, creating, and organising in groups to make a difference." (ASIA-4)*

At the same time, as mentioned before the participating women encountered various challenges during their integration journeys. In several cases, their own (negative) integration experience in Germany became an incentive to get involved themselves, as participants wanted to share her experience and learnings to support and encourage other migrant women in their migration process.

„I noticed that female migrants and their children were not getting enough attention in German society. At the time, society was different, there were not as many integration offers as today. I had to do something for them." (NA-2)

For some, being in the diaspora can offer an advantage, as women can not only draw the best from both contexts but are also able to build bridges between the countries, as one respondent highlights.

"There was a time when I didn't really feel like I belonged anywhere, but then I thought, I'll build something in between. […] Now it is wonderful, because Germany promotes me, I have opened all the doors for me here and in Kosovo too. That you always build bridges from these stones, that can take us further. If you want to achieve something, you have to build opportunities out of obstacles." (WB-6)

While opportunities for engagement exist both in the country of origin and residence, this section shows that developmental and integration challenges are often the crucial contextual drivers for diaspora women actors. These diaspora women actors can be considered as agents of change who try to tackle the diverse needs of communities both in the context of origin and of residence.

5.1.2.   ENABLING FACTORS AND ASPIRATIONS

Enabling factors include the women's capacity to engage in sustainable development, as well as the factors shaping them. As already shown in the previous chapters, a higher socio-economic status can be decisive in shaping diaspora women's capacity of engagement. Next to this socialisation, previous civic knowledge and experience, as well as support from the social environment and social capital and networks shape the women's capacities of engagement.

Many of the women interviewed attribute their own commitment and engagement to the influence of the family and their upbringing. Parents in particular play an important role and often serve as role models. Some of the study participants reported that they were shown how important it is to support people in need by their parents' solidarity towards fellow human beings in their community of origin. This influenced and motivated the young women to get involved and to stand up for the rights of other, vulnerable population groups through their actions (e.g., Cameroon, Ghana, Tunisia).

For example, in the case of one study participant from Cameroon, it was the mother who took care of not only her own children but also other children in the village as best she could. In some cases, she even paid the school fees of the other children:

> ❝ We used to live near a school. The children who come to school, they don't have a place to live, they don't have anything to eat. My mother used to be that mother who would take care of any child. Whether she knows the child or not. She would house the child, she would feed the child, sometimes she would even pay its fees. (SSA-3)

In the case of one interviewee from Tunisia, the father campaigned for the first school for girls to be founded in the community during the time of the French protectorate (NA-3).

Other women from the Western Balkans mentioned that being socially and politically involved was already a central aspect of their life before their migration, as they were active in community projects in their country of origin. After their arrival in Germany they were eager to continue their community work, not only because they wanted to invest the skills they have gained through their engagement in their country of origin, but also because they aspired to contribute to social change in the context of residence, by empowering refugee children and women in their integration processes in Germany. Hence, as women migrated, their ideas, values, and practices travelled with them and were further shaped by their encounters in their residence society.

When it comes to most valuable resources, support from the family, partner, and close friends were mentioned as an important enabling factor. Since the engagement often takes place alongside work and family responsibilities, having a supportive environment is crucial, as one participant states:

> ❝ You have to have a husband who really goes along with it and supports it. My husband is German, he supports it completely. He supports my commitment. (SSA-5)

This study shows that social capital and networks play an important role in eliciting civic engagement. Networks not only offer opportunities for engagement, but also often provide practical and emotional support. Having a network of trusted partners is also particularly important, if engagement takes place from a distance, as local partners can handle the operational tasks, follow-up and monitor the implementation more effectively: *"I have the contacts for the construction. There are firms for water analysis. We need people on site for the follow-up. Because that's what development projects are all about, the follow-up. (...) I've taken part in too many meetings, so I have contacts." (SSA-1)*

Fostering partnerships with other organisations can further contribute to capacity development, through joint learning and sharing of resources, as one participant highlighted: *"Sometimes, it even helps to partner with someone instead of just getting the funding and doing it ourselves. As getting the funding and doing it ourselves is also again an overhead. And if there is another entity which has full-time employees who can do, for example, the administrative stuff, that would be helpful, also. If we can share the tasks and partner on certain programmes." (NA-4)*

Some of the women interviewed report that major changes in their family and work situations have benefited their involvement. The decrease in care work due to children entering adulthood, stability in their working lives, or retirement age are some pertinent changes that free up time and energy for volunteering (NA-2,NA-3). In some cases, such a major change also triggers a search for a new purpose in life. A study participant from Tunisia reported thus: *„Then I was finished, my children were grown up. I asked myself: What are you going to do now? You have achieved everything you wanted, you have a job, the children are grown up. I told myself I would support migrant women in my area." (NA-2)*

Another study participant founded her own non-governmental organisation (NGO), which is concerned with sustainable development in her country of origin, shortly after retirement because newly available time in this next phase of life allowed her to do so (NA-3).

The awareness that women in Europe are privileged and have opportunities for development and action that are often denied to women in their countries of origin can be a motivation to get involved: *„When I came to Europe, I saw that women and men were treated almost equally" (NA-3).*

For instance, one participant from Colombia perceives herself as being able to be „more open" in Germany, as sexism is less strong in Germany and "not life threatening" for her (LATAM-2).

When it comes to the aspirations of women for an engagement, these were on the one hand shaped by personal experience of marginalisation or privilege, or senses of injustices related to development or integration challenges. On the other hand, they were also driven by a variety of emotions, be it a moral obligation and sense of political responsibility, a desire for social change and giving back, a search for purpose and personal empowerment, or simply having fun.

Personal experiences of poverty, gender injustice, or natural disasters also had a great impact on the then still young women. A study participant from Cameroon reports how shocked she was by the poverty conditions in her community of origin. Coming from a home where education was a priority, she was aware of her comparatively privileged position:

" I saw that I was very privileged because my parents put a lot of emphasis on education. We always had everything we needed to get a good education. But I know many others who had to walk 20 km every day to get to school, they were exhausted, they didn't have enough to eat, they didn't have pencils. So, it was already very close to my heart that I help such young people. (SSA-2)

Other participants from Colombia, Cameroon, Ghana, and Tunisia experienced in their childhood that girls and young women were treated differently from their male peers in their communities of origin and even in their families: *"I grew up seeing how patriarchy has made women struggle"* (LATAM-2); *"I come from a big family. And I saw that the sons were treated better than the daughters -more by the women in the family."* (NA-3)

One participant stated that her motivation to support women is rooted in the way she was raised as a girl in Ghana, where male household heads took all important decisions whereas women were expected to take on subordinate roles, neglecting their skills and talents. A study participant from Cameroon described something similar; she witnessed how her mother suffered from the fact that the father of the family had several wives (SSA-6). These experiences often created a sense of injustice and laid the foundation for a later commitment to gender equality. For the Cameroonian interviewee this experience was a decisive factor in later founding an association in Germany to strengthen women's rights in Africa. An Ecuadorian interviewee explained that the fact that women were treated like "second-class citizens" was the reason to turn her back on her country of origin and free herself from her family by emigrating to Germany (LATAM-10).

These remarks show the great influence of the family situation and upbringing on women's later commitment. The experiences from childhood, whether positive (in the sense of influential role models) or negative (in the sense of self-experienced or observed injustices), exert a great influence on the women interviewed, even in adulthood. From these experiences, the women draw great strength and energy to use their skills and talents to change something in their countries of origin. Many interviewees are aware and have experienced that their contribution makes a difference. One participant from Cameroon states:

" I believe that Africa has untouched potential and many resources, one of which is its people. I firmly want to play a key role in cultivating this potential of young people [...] to achieve the promise and true potential of Africa's development. (SSA-9)

A recurring response to the question of what motivates the women was "to give something back." In fact, many of the women interviewed feel the desire to share their privileges and contribute to the equal treatment of men and women in their countries of origin through their engagement. One participant sees herself as very privileged because she was able to complete her education as a woman in Cameroon. She would now like to use Germany to help other women in her country of origin to follow a similar path (SSA-8). Another participant states: *"I have already achieved so much in Germany. And I want to share that with disadvantaged people in my home country. That's why I'm so committed to the work we do, human rights and humanitarian aid."* (SSA-5)

One of the women interviewed even reported feeling uncomfortable visiting her home country only as a tourist, given the challenges in her country of origin: *"I was really bored and I said to myself, 'This is not nice that I don't feel comfortable in my home country.' And that was the start of me getting more involved. I have to try to do something, because I am one who is always active."* (SSA-2)

In addition to the search for purpose and the feeling of giving something back, working with like-minded people, helping those in need and successfully completing projects, can bring a sense of fulfilment. A Cameroonian woman has found fulfilment in working with others for others: *„I have a feeling of wanting to do something for others. When you see a particular social need, you try to find a solution for it. And for you to try to find a solution for it, you will have to walk with others, get in an organisation. (…) Right now, it doesn't give me any income, but I still do it. It is something motivating me. I am jobless, but I am so filled with work for this organisation. It's fine, I am happy doing it."* (SSA-4)

Another participant from Cameroon emphasises that she would have had much better earning opportunities in her actual training profession, but nevertheless decided on the profession as an integration counsellor because it gives her a lot of wings:

" **If I were to work in my area of studies, I would probably earn three times of what I am earning as an integration commissioner. But the truth is that I have never really regretted taking the job that I am doing now, despite the much lower salary. I go to bed with a very high level of fulfilment, at least most of the time, knowing that I have done something good. This feeling doesn't have a price.** (SSA-3)

In addition to these more altruistic motivations for engagement, working with like-minded people can also simply be a lot of fun. One participant from Indonesia stated that the key drivers that motivate her engagement are very personal: fun and the sense of belonging: *"I find the engagement in these diaspora organisations to be quite fun. This is actually weird because back in Indonesia I did not engage in any organisation but here in Germany it is fun to me. Also, I feel a sense of home…I feel comfortable talking to other members and I just like being in a place where there are lots of people that I know, and we are all supporting each other."* (ASIA-3)

Finally, for others, especially those who are coming from conflict affected countries, social engagement was also a coping strategy to counter feelings of resignation, despair and to regain a feeling of self-efficacy and sense of agency during their first time in Germany that was often marked by insecurity and temporality. As the following quote indicates, the engagement also helped to process the traumatic experiences during the war: *"For me, it was a kind of self-therapy when I became active and helped others who were in the same situation as me. This helped me to stay active and not fall into a deep hole. Through this, I also processed my war experiences."* (WB-7)

In their engagement, gender identity was not only identified as a challenge, but also as resulting in strength and creativity in engagement: *"The women in Africa are raised to be able to create more because a lot is asked of them. Maybe it's a downfall but also a good thing because it makes them more creative and also more committed. And they build society."* (SSA-7)

In that sense, engagement further can contribute to a sense of empowerment: *"As much as you are willing to invest in yourself, you can invest in your business. If you're not good to yourself, you can't be good in your business."* (WB-3)
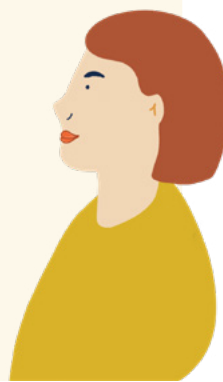
KEY FINDINGS AND MESSAGES

Context-related reasons and **motivations** for migration lie in the **political, economic and social developments** in the countries of origin (e.g. war and peace, lack of economic prospects and brain drain, regression in gender equality).

Working with women in the diaspora offers many potentials, such as their in-depth knowledge of the context in the country of origin and their high motivation to contribute to change.

Personal reasons for women's involvement are often to be found in their family environment and upbringing as well as their own experiences with Gender Inequality in their country of origin.

Experiences from the country of origin give women in the diaspora the necessary knowledge and credibility to carry out projects themselves – making them valuable experts and intermediaries for development projects.

Support from the family, partner, close friends and the community, as well as **networks and social capital** play an important role in eliciting and sustaining diaspora women's civic engagement

Organising regular opportunities for networking among diaspora women actors not only creates a space for collective brainstorming and exchange of experiences but may enable engagement in sustainable development of the country of origin.

5.2.   CHALLENGES AND NEEDS

In addition to more general challenges with regard to development in the context of origin (e.g., instability, corruption) and with regard to bureaucratic obstacles related to, for example, entrepreneurship, there are also gender-specific challenges to women's engagement. In particular, persisting traditional gender norms as well as gender inequality were seen by some participants as barriers to realising projects for sustainable development in their country of origin. As such, in contexts where patriarchal views still prevail, there is often little understanding by the family in the country of origin concerning the reality of women in Germany (e.g., that they also contribute to the family household and that this is necessary to be financially independent).

In addition, women may face multiple responsibilities in their life that hinder them from getting involved in voluntary work. As such, women in the diaspora often do not only take care of the family and the household, but also work or study, which leaves them with little time to commit to voluntary engagement. Some women point to the fact that patriarchal structures, also present in the context of Germany, engender these unequal gender roles, in which the responsibility of taking care of the family and the household is still imposed on women rather than men.

> " There is still a patriarchy. Even in Germany, men want to be active and know their wives are at home. (…) If there are children, women usually have to take care of them. There is no equal distribution of work.
> (SSA-5)

In addition, living abroad may further limit the capacity of engagement, due to the lacking support networks when compared to the context of origin. Especially when the extended family is left behind in the country of origin, women may lack the valuable support from the family and the community to handle the multiple responsibilities related to childcare, as one respondent from Sub-Saharan Africa emphasised: *"Back home, the whole village takes care of the baby. Here, you have to do that by yourself. You have to take your child to kindergarten, you have to pick the child up. You have to clean your house, you have to do the grocery. You have to do everything by yourself. So that is already a challenge to many people, especially foreigners, who do not have their parents here." (SSA-4)*

This is also considered a barrier for mobilising other women for one's engagement. Some respondents highlight that in their organisations, they face a challenge to mobilise women to commit on a regular basis to activities. Consequently, the work of the organisation often remains on the shoulders of a few active individuals, which makes it difficult to build strong and sustainable structures for engagement: *"Finding interested people is a difficulty. I get 100 people on the day of the event. But I need people who think with me, who write with me on the concept, who go the way with me and discuss what the long-term vision is." (ASIA 8)*

Especially when it comes to taking up a leading role in an organisation, the multiple responsibilities involved can pose a great challenge, since this form of engagement can consume a lot of time and energy. As such, some women reported that they gave-up their positions due to changing circumstances in life, which demanded from them to focus on building a family or a career. When it comes to temporary return, family responsibilities were also mentioned as one important factor, that makes it difficult to spend a period of time in the country of origin, especially when children still go to school and hence need the presence of the family in Germany.

In addition, women in the diaspora face challenges and barriers as both migrants and women. The position of a double (or multiple) disadvantage often leads to experience of discrimination and lack of recognition, visibility, and access to resources (spaces, no sponsorships, no financial support). These positions of disadvantage are experienced in different spaces, 1) in the context of their organisation and the broader community, 2) in the German context, and 3) in the context of origin. Some women have experienced male dominance in their organisation, in which they feel they must continuously prove their capabilities, intelligence and understanding on political issues, and face an uphill battle to be taken seriously as committed leader of the organisation. Being a woman often means that their perspective and ideas are not always taken seriously, leading to a continuous struggle to be heard, as one respondent pointed out:

> " In association work with men, you always realise, no matter how good you are, how many good ideas you have. These ideas are difficult to realise because the men are always louder and you can't talk much because then you are considered a woman without respect. Although you just try to communicate what you think differently, it's always a struggle.
> (SSA-7)

However, gender inequality is not only experienced in associations, but also perceived as persistent in German structures and society. Diaspora women may not only face gendered challenges in their integration process, especially when it comes to employment or recognition of their education, but also in their work and cooperation with German society structures: *"We always have to fight for our place. I see a lot of people don't take us seriously and I have to say that's also part of the German structure. It's not just in our countries that there is no gender equity. So here in Germany, I've experienced worse than in the country of origin in some cases." (LATAM-10)*

Moreover, some women who established their own business mentioned that they often had to prove themselves and sometimes felt that their expertise and knowledge is tested or not taken seriously: *"Being a woman, I have felt people don't take my business seriously and think I do this as a hobby." (LATAM-7)*

Further, discrimination and racism are not only experienced based on being a migrant woman, but also on other identity markers, such as being black or being a Muslim in the German society. The dominant perception towards women is therefore further shaped by gendered stereotypes, that construct migrant women from specific places of origin, as agency-less, apolitical, and invisible subjects, as one respondent states: *"One is negatively perceived as a foreigner, then as an Albanian, and then as a woman, so it was important for me to make myself visible. In Germany, there is the image that women from Albania are oppressed, uneducated and not visible, and because they only stay at home due to patriarchal structures, they have no idea anyway. So you are overwhelmed with so many clichés. … I have always tried to show that there is more in us, there is brain, there is intellect, and then I go even further that we also have something to say in the global context and understand something about politics. We always have to show that we can do just as good a political analysis as the men." (WB-6)*

Other participants reported that they face structural racism in the form of barriers and difficult access to civic resources (e.g., funding, network, space). For instance, a participant from North Africa mentioned that she has faced discrimination when it comes to receiving support from the municipality. She feels male-led organisations not only receive financial support, but that their engagement is much more recognised and appreciated. She perceived the lack of support and appreciation for her organisation because of discrimination based not only on her migrant and gender identity, but also based on her religious identification.

Access to financial resources is seen as crucial for women's engagement in sustainable development. While most of the organisations represented in this study highlight the need for more financial resources in general, many also point out that lacking financial means is specifically a challenge when it comes to realising ideas for sustainable development of in their country of origin. Most of the respondents made clear that ensuring financial sustainability for their organisation is one of the major challenges regarding their engagement. As the previous example illustrates, patriarchal and racist structures in Germany pose a considerable barrier for women to access resources needed for voluntary engagement. Empowering women as agents of change, therefore, also needs structural work that tackles the multiple positions of disadvantage of diaspora women, as one respondent put it:

> " If you don't change culture, if you don't change power, if you don't change access to resources, you don't change much. (ASIA-5)

Historical marginalisation and the experience that women must prove themselves continuously may also result in a feeling of lacking the confidence and skills needed for engagement. Some respondents reported that getting access to resources to develop their organisational capacity (e.g., funding, networks) requires specific business, communication, and presentation skills. If women do not have previous work or voluntary experience that require these skills, they perceive that capacity development trainings are needed to equip women with these essential skills and knowledge: *"We really need training. We come from different backgrounds. There are people who have not that knowledge of how an organisation works. (…) It will be nice if GIZ can offer specific trainings on how to run an organisation, how to build an organisation. We came in out of need. And need doesn't give you time to study before doing it." (SSA-3)*

As such, empowering women refers to enabling women to develop their professional and personal skills and capabilities, but also to access support structures that provide opportunities for participation in a diverse range of areas and activities:

> " Access to opportunity is important, access to attending a meeting, access to participating in a project, access to participating in a workshop, this is important. Because it is not only about funding, but all these things also lead to better collaboration. (ASIA-5)

Further, many respondents stressed the need for networks and trusted partners to engage in sustainable development of their country of origin. While many of the participating women that only engage in the context of Germany were generally interested and sometimes even had concrete ideas for realising activities with regard to sustainable development, they lacked the knowledge of and contact to reliable partners in their country of origin.

"In India, many things work through personal contacts and networks. If an Indian in Germany were to call their networks and say we have someone, that would open many doors. But getting to this is hard work, and at the moment I don't have the time." (ASIA-7)

"Honestly, for me the contact is important. When the contact is there, you can facilitate many things. (…) It's not that we don't want to. Not even in Tunisia. (…) There has to be a bridge and this bridge is missing at the moment. And I don't want to swim. (…) I mean, we can get involved in Tunisia. I could certainly do a good project. But I need support for that." (NA-2)

A trusted person or network is not only seen as an important enabling factor for engagement in the country of origin, but also as crucial to successful implementation and monitoring of the voluntary or business activities, especially when this is done from a distance while abroad. As one woman explained,

In addition to networks and social capital in the context of origin, other participants emphasised the importance of platforms for network and regular exchange among diaspora women to enable engagement in the country of origin. As such, networks are not only seen as an important aspect of information and knowledge sharing. Meeting with like-minded women can also create a space for empowerment and emotional support. Through creating a collective space for brainstorming and exchange, networks among diaspora women encourage women to engage in sustainable development of their countries of origin. For instance, one woman stresses that if there would be a network among diaspora women *"we might be able to share information and encourage each other, we can still do something little or virtual"*, because *"we share the same language and culture". (SSA-10)*

KEY FINDINGS AND MESSAGES
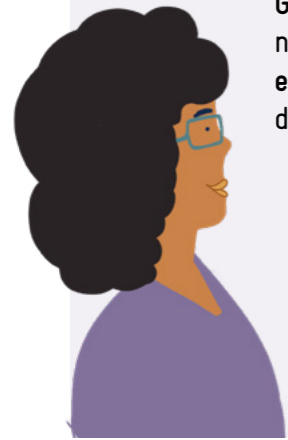
Gender-specific challenges, such as traditional gender norms or patriarchal role distributions, can **hinder the engagement** of diaspora women towards sustainable development in countries of origin.

Development projects should therefore also work on social norms, for example by promoting awareness-raising measures – both in Germany and in countries of origin.
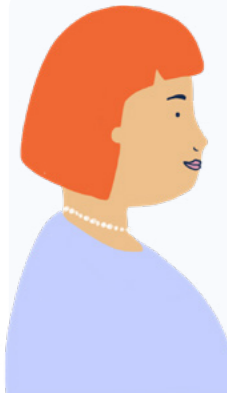
Due to their status as migrants and their gender, migrant women are often **exposed** to multiple **disadvantages and discrimination** and have less say than their male colleagues in the diaspora organisations they are involved in.

Women in the diaspora often face **multiple burdens** (care of the family, work, studies, etc.) and sometimes do not have the necessary time and energy to engage in voluntary work in addition.

Projects to promote the diaspora should specifically promote women-led and women-majority organisations and/or focus on female activists involved in mixed organisations (e.g., access to financial resources, professional and personal skills training for women, facilitation of networks).

In projects with the diaspora, the multiple burdens of many women should be taken into account and mitigated by parallel support offers (for example, childcare).

5.3. THE IMPORTANCE OF NETWORKS AND COOPERATION WITHIN THE DIASPORA AND BEYOND

Transnational networks, ties and connections stretching across multiple states present not only a key feature of diasporas but have also been shown to be crucial determinants for transnational action and practices (Guarnizo et al., 2019). These intertangled networks create a space though which ideas, practices, and resources are exchanged and transformed across geographies. In investigating transnational relations, Glick Schiller and Levitt (2004) call for an approach that differentiates between forms of "being" and "belonging", hence distinguishing between the existence of transnational social networks and a sense of belonging to that network. Not every person who may be embedded in a transnational network necessarily feels a strong sense of belonging to a diaspora community or a homeland, nor does belonging always translate into strong connection and transnational practices. Moreover, transnational networks are structured by power hierarchies and operate in gendered ways, hence, one's positionality in a network is shaped by intersections of gender, ethnicity and class and other important social boundaries and hierarchies (Anthias, 2021).

All diaspora groups captured in this study are characterised by great heterogeneity, which is not just shaped by different socio-economic, political, ethnic, age and gendered positions, but also by distinct trajectories of migration and displacement.

❝ We do not come for the same reason, not for the same plan. Some come to live permanently, others want to go back, some proceed to second or third migration. (SSA-10)

As such, diasporas tend to be composed of different groups, such as professional, student or refugees and asylum seekers and organised through different types of organisations (including professional/student networks, development, and human rights organisations, religious or cultural associations). Some groups organise based on the country of origin while others connect their members based on region or city of origin or residence. This diversity is often reflected in a certain fragmentation, where diaspora groups may organise in separate spheres with little interaction:

❝ The diaspora is anything but simple, the identities are different, multi-layered, you have to take care of them and not just straighten them out. (WB-1)

The complexity of the sense of belonging of participating women to their diaspora communities is as complex as diasporas themselves. As such, diaspora communities can provide a space of solidarity and support, as much as a site of exclusion and oppression. As indicated above, support and solidarity from the diaspora community played an important role in women's engagement and daily life, especially to overcome the challenges in integration processes. One participant reported that she had a desire to establish contacts and networks within the Indonesian community in Germany, as she found this very helpful in obtaining information about studying and working. The lack of an organised community where professionals in the diaspora can exchange ideas and come up with common ideas was also named by a Tunisian study participant as a motivation for founding a new diaspora network: „*We don't want to do fundraising, but we want to do brainraising. We wanted to tackle the brain-drain and create a community of professional people who can find each other and provide some brain product.*" (TUN-4)

Especially at the beginning of the integration process, for some, the diaspora community provided a space of belonging and support where one can connect with others, speak the language and have a feeling of home: *"Knowing so many women from the diaspora helps me a lot to feel at home here."* (LATAM-5

As such, participants also highlighted the importance of connections with the broader community beyond formal diaspora organisations, as they perceive this as crucial for having a meaningful impact: *"Working in formal organisations is not necessarily that interesting for me anymore, but rather the informal work in communities. Because there I feel that I have much more space to create a group and make a difference with many people." (ASIA-4)*

On the other hand, some women were less motivated to engage with their diaspora community, as they perceived this as a barrier to their integration process. For some of these women, the situation changed when they started a family and the diaspora became more important as a place where children can connect to the country of origin and learn the language and the culture.

> ❝ Giving my kids the possibility to actively participate of their Latin American culture and language. (LATAM-1)

Diaspora communities and their organisations may provide a stable space of belonging, in an experience and condition which is marked by displacement, instability and insecurity. However, not all interviewed women feel a sense of belonging to a diaspora. Those who self-identified as minorities sometimes experienced exclusion and marginalisation within broader diaspora communities: *"And also, the intersectionality of who you are, are you a Hindu or a Muslim, all these layers add to the complication of fitting into the society, or the diaspora society." (ASIA-5)*

These women also articulated a troubled relationship with the homeland, which was characterised by feelings of dis-belonging and estrangement. Being perceived as a stranger in the country of origin was something other respondents also experienced and was seen as sometimes a troubling aspect of homeland belonging. In addition, many respondents also articulated a troubled relationship with the residence country, in which the search for belonging was deeply interwoven with the search for acceptance, and experience of racism and discrimination. Some interviewees, therefore, felt torn between their country of origin and Germany and have the impression that they do not belong anywhere: *"We are foreigners here in Germany and at home in Tunisia too." (NA-6).*

Coming to terms with one's own identity and belonging is considered important for many women: *"Integration always takes place from two sides. You become a complete person when you work out your self-identity. The more you do that, the more satisfied you are." (WB-7)*

Diaspora organisations and networks can help to work out one's own identity: *"The issue of identity, that is, how I identify myself and what place I have in the world, how I can grow beyond that, but also how I can empower others - these questions are very close to my heart." (LATAM-10)*

When it comes to networks and connections to the country of origin, the findings indicate diverse experience. Most of the women are embedded in transnational networks and engage in transnational practices and exchange, yet to varying degrees. Regular return for visits, frequent contacts with family members and friends in the country of origin or following the origin country's news were common features of participants' transnational lives. Beyond the personal realm of transnational connections, networks to origin country actors (e.g. government, private sector, civil society) differ greatly. Those who already engage in sustainable development in the country of origin often maintain a strong network of trusted partners, which they see as crucial for successful implementation. Others, and especially those who do not engage in the country of origin, often stated that a lack in networks and trusted partners is one major factor preventing them from an engagement. In addition, participants also highlighted the importance of networks and connections with women groups from other countries of origin, as this enables an environment of learning from different contexts. Belonging therefore is also shaped by the gender-identities as one participant put it:

> ❝ I see myself as a bridge builder between people, especially women from all over the world. It's okay to belong nowhere but everywhere at the same time. (ASIA-4)

To conclude, transnational belongings are dynamic and subject to change. They are often complex and evolve in a relational space, in which residence and origin country context, as well as socio-political community dynamics intersect with each other. Embeddedness into transnational networks not only vary among participants but can be also considered as one important determinant of transnational engagement in the countries of origin.
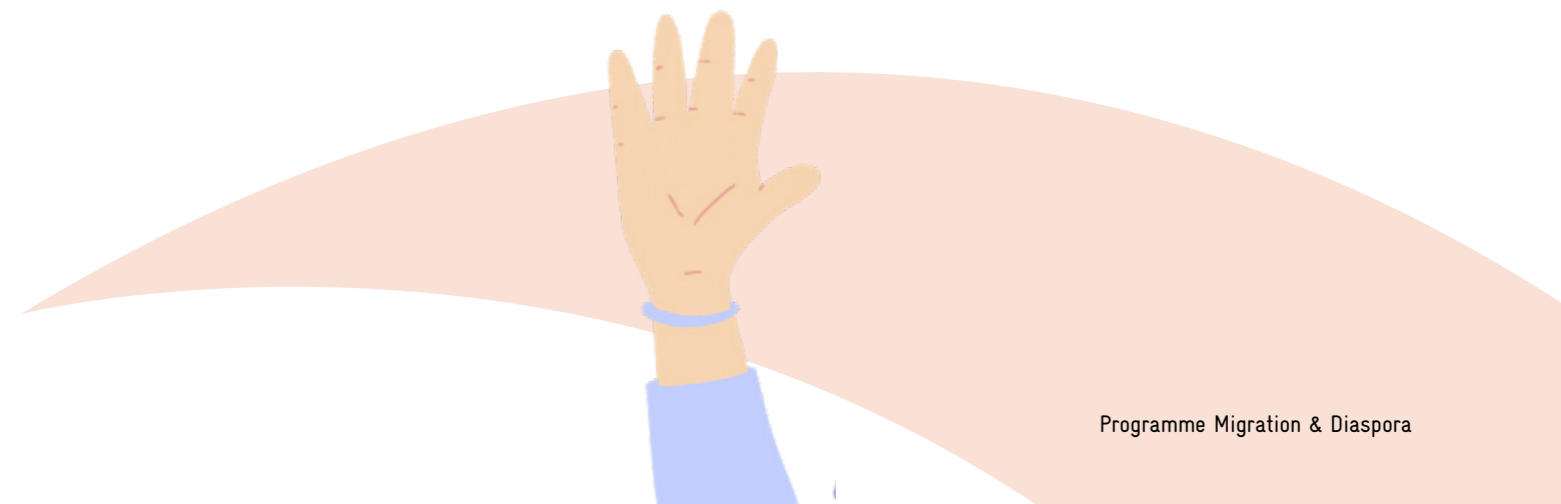
KEY FINDINGS AND MESSAGES

Involvement in diaspora groups or participation in a diaspora organisation's activities can maintain a **sense of identity or belonging** to the country of origin or create one for the children born / growing up in Germany.

The role of the diaspora in integration work in Germany on the one hand, and in maintaining ties with the country of origin on the other, should be more strongly valued and supported through appropriate funding.

While many **newcomers make use of the support services** offered by diaspora organisations (e.g., for integration), this often creates the conditions for these women's later involvement in the organisations.

Measures for integration as well as measures to promote sustainable development in countries of origin should therefore not be viewed in isolation, but often go hand in hand.

Many diaspora organisations do **not have the necessary networks and trusted partners** in the country of origin which would act as major enabling factors for realizing projects and initiatives for sustainable development.

An added value of a diaspora project would be to build bridges between engaged women in Germany and in countries of origin through networking events and the support of transnational projects.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

The overall objective of this research was to provide the PMD with evidence-based information on diaspora women and their engagement with sustainable development in their countries of origin. The project engages with women with a migration history from selected PMD partner countries (Cameroon, Colombia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Kosovo, Serbia, and Tunisia), who reside in Germany and are in some way or the other contributing to the development processes of their country of origin. The study aimed to contribute to gaining a deeper understanding of where, when, why, and how women in the diaspora engage towards sustainable development in their countries of origin and beyond.

Women in the diaspora can and do play a crucial role in the sustainable development of their countries of origin, as well as in promoting participation of diaspora communities in the societies of residence, yet their diverse contributions as leaders and changemakers often remain overlooked. Most diaspora studies do not account for the gendered experience of diasporas, nor invest in an in-depth analysis of diverse configurations of power that produce gendered hierarchies and positions. Yet, it is important to highlight that diaspora women are heterogeneous; they face different social, economic and political circumstances and conditions in the residence country. Along with different trajectories of displacement, these conditions shape wom-

en's identities, aspirations and capacity for engagement. It is therefore necessary to investigate how the intersection of factors such as age, sexuality, gender, class, generation and socio-political status may shape, facilitate or constrain diaspora involvement in sustainable development.

Diaspora women actors are active in diverse areas of engagement and, through their individual networks, organisations and businesses, participate in processes of change both in the countries of origin and in Germany. Women's motivations for engagement are as varied as their experiences. Drivers for engagement are frequently shaped by personal experiences of marginalisation or privilege, by a sense of injustice related to development or integration challenges, and by perceived moral obligation, political responsibility, and a desire for social change. On an individual level, engagement is often part of a search for purpose and personal empowerment, or simply a way of having fun and (re)connecting with communities in countries of origin.

Diaspora women actors not only contribute to sustainable development in their country of origin, but also transform the social, cultural, political and economic space of their country of residence. Engagement in the host country and in the country of origin are not mutually exclusive but complementary; they should therefore not be considered

in isolation from each other, but rather as intrinsically linked and interconnected. Moreover, the findings suggest that women's engagement frequently takes place in the more informal and private realm, often with greater initial commitment to engaging in diaspora community building in their country of residence. Policy design should not only recognize women's ways of organizing as a politically relevant space, but also foster their participation without co-optation or rendering them less safe through our interventions.

The study reveals a number of enabling factors for diaspora women's engagement, as well as highlighting specific challenges and needs. Higher socio-economic status is an important enabling factor for engagement, since it often provides individuals with financial, human, and social capital – in other words with the money, skills and networks needed for engagement. Support from family, partners, close friends, and the community can also help women to overcome challenges, and networks and social capital in countries of origin play an important role in eliciting and enabling civic engagement in Germany and abroad. In general, women showed strong resilience and capacity to develop solution strategies despite the various challenges related to migration and integration processes. This resilience was strengthened by the support of women's diaspora organisations and informal groups and networks. Gender-specific challenges, such as traditional gender norms or patriarchal role distributions, can hinder the engagement of diaspora women towards sustainable development in countries of origin. Gender-specific and more general development challenges, practical barriers as well lacking networks in the country of origin sometimes also prevented women in the diaspora from realizing their return aspirations. Due to their status as migrants and their gender, migrant women are often exposed to multiple disadvantages and discrimination and have less say than their male colleagues in the diaspora organisations they are involved in. The majority of women-led diaspora organisations are limited by the fact that they work on a voluntary basis and rely on donations and membership fees to realise their activities, an even though women are considered as important agents of change, their representation and visibility, especially in political spaces, remains marginalised. Ensuring the full and equal

participation of women in diaspora organisations not only involves mobilising more female members, but also requires giving equal consideration to women's opinions, issues, and demands in a meaningful manner.

6.2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENGAGING DIASPORA WOMEN IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The following recommendations are relevant for implementing organisations in the field of diaspora support who wish to mobilise and further empower diaspora women actors. They have been developed through consultation with diaspora women actors themselves.

1. Generate, share, and act on learning around all women in the diaspora

Introduce a gendered and intersectional lens to diaspora studies and mappings to acknowledge and understand the distinct experiences, roles, and contributions of women and other groups at risk of marginalization. In the design and implementation of diaspora studies and mappings attention should be paid to not only an equal representation of women in the sample, but also that the research engages in an in-depth analysis of their gendered experiences and challenges. For instance, asking how the gender identity shapes motivations and capacity of engagement, as well which gendered challenges and opportunities participants encounter can provide meaningful insights. This would not only enable an in-depth and contextualised understanding of diaspora women engagement in diverse contexts but would also contribute to a better comparison of men's and women's experiences.

Translate knowledge into practice by developing practical guidance for diaspora actors and involve them in creating tools that enable and promote feminist organising within diaspora initiatives. Diaspora studies, often lying at the interface of research and policy, seek to inform different kind of stakeholders, including residence or origin country governments, (international) NGOs or intergovernmental organisations, and diaspora groups themselves. When reporting findings,

one should ensure that the outcomes of the research are accessible to a diverse audience. Poster presentations or infographics, or a podcast series, can be creative ways to convey the story of the data to a broader audience. Developing toolkits with methods and tools and other helpful resources that enable and promote feminist organising within diaspora initiatives can offer practical guidance for diaspora actors to put the generated knowledge into practice.

2. Support the meaningful participation of women in all their diversity at all levels

Recognise women in the diaspora and women-led organisations as key partners for a feminist approach to sustainable development. Women in the diaspora are especially engaged on themes such as gender equality, human rights, and marginalised groups, including the rights and protection of women in migration. Their engagement has the potential to transform discriminatory gender roles.

Ensure participation instead of decoration by involving women in the diaspora in the development of joint strategies and the design and implementation of projects. Diaspora women should be equally represented and visible at events and activities. Involving women as trainers and facilitators, or as panel speakers may encourage more women to participate and engage in further activities. Involving diaspora women in the the design and implementation of projects can help to establish a sustainable cooperation structure, create a sense of ownership, and promote learning opportunities for diaspora women actors. Creating a diaspora advisory board with selected diaspora women representatives who are willing to dedicate their expertise to the promotion of women's empowerment can be another way of promoting diaspora women's involvement in decision-making processes. Here, it is important to consider intersectionality of diaspora women and ensure that marginalized groups (e.g., minorities) are represented. Next to programmatic inputs, advice and recommendations on diaspora engagement programming, the roles of the advisory board could also include assessments of applications submitted within

the program components. The involvement of women should move beyond an advisory function, as real participation means allowing co-determination and at least partial delegation of decision-making authority.

Transform patriarchal systems by working with dominant male-led structures and promoting opportunities for self-reflection within diaspora communities, among origin country actors as well the international development scene. Women's empowerment also means transforming patriarchal structures that engender multiple positions of disadvantage of women. For example, offering trainings for diaspora actors that tackle aspects of women's empowerment, (toxic) masculinity, and sexism is crucial to enable diaspora women leadership and gender parity strategies within diaspora organisations. To ensure cultural sensitivity and a safe space for reflection, learning facilitators should come from the diaspora itself. Organising such trainings with country of origin actors is crucial to raise awareness and knowledge on women's empowerment among these actors. Further, supporting women's empowerment projects in the country of origin, as well as embedding a gendered perspective in all aspects of development work is crucial to transform structures.

Ensure gender-mainstreaming through the integration of a gender and intersectional perspectives into the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of activities and programmes. This includes taking women's specific needs into account by offering support for children / family responsibilities during assignments, a flexible timeframe (shorter time, virtual or hybrid) for assignments, as well as financial contributions (for housing, travel, and childcare). Other examples already implemented by PMD include providing childcare at events and trainings and creating an information sheet on women's safety and potential support structures in the country of origin for returning diaspora experts.

3. Address gaps in funding for women diaspora actors

Offer less bureaucratic, more flexible and more user-friendly funding mechanisms. Bureaucratic hurdles in funding application processes represent a considerable barrier for women diaspora actors. New, small, or informal organisations often lack the capacity to participate in complex funding and monitoring activities. Women usually have multiple responsibilities and cannot always respond to calls for applications within set deadlines. Funding mechanisms should be made more accessible and respond better to the needs of marginalised groups (e.g., women, youth, other minorities, LGBTQIA+). Measures such as rolling applications, multilingual and simpler application forms and reduced reporting duties could increase accessibility for smaller organisations and prevent the concentration of aid in a small number of professionalised CSOs, while providing newer ones with experience and opportunities for growth.

Offer more structural long-term grants that cover indirect costs and the human resources necessary for the survival and development of small, primarily volunteer-based organisations.

Offer starter grants for small, informal, and new organisations / project ideas: Many participating women showed high interest in implementing ideas for sustainable development of the country of origin but lacked the time and resources to realise these ideas. Establishing a starter / seed fund for the project development phase (idea conceptualisation) can empower women to realise sustainable development projects in their country of origin. Alongside financial resources, the incubation of diaspora initiatives also requires targeted capacity development training, individual coaching, as well as networking opportunities.

Ensure transparency throughout the funding process by providing detailed feedback, which helps applicants to identify gaps and lessons learned for future applications. A considerable number of participants mentioned that they would have liked to receive detailed feedback following an unsuccessful funding

application. Feedback is not only important to ensure a fair and transparent funding process, but also helps the applicant to identify gaps and lessons learned for future application. The feedback can be also used in the development of capacity building programs, as it allows for a systematic identification of capacity building needs.

4. Build capacities in a targeted and accessible way

Offer targeted capacity development for women in the diaspora as leaders and as agents of change. A long-term and sustainable approach is needed, with training opportunities that enable women to develop the knowledge and practical skills necessary for implementing sustainable development projects. The participating women identified a wide range of topics, including business / project plan development, advocacy, community mobilisation and participation, as well as managing voluntary work. Developing practical skills in communication, fundraising, leadership, and other aspects of organisational development were identified as a crucial need. In organising capacity building programmes, the multiple responsibilities of women should be taken into consideration. Organisation and compensation for childcare and a training schedule that suits the capacities of the participants are crucial to ensure a fruitful learning environment. Trainings could be made more flexible e.g., through online self-paced formats, allowing women to select the trainings that they feel are relevant for their skills development.

Facilitate mentoring for women in the diaspora to provide individual support and guidance throughout different stages of project development and implementation. Mentoring programmes can also support networking and knowledge exchange between diaspora actors. In addition to training, coaching and mentoring sessions can help to individually support diaspora women in their project design, funding application and implementation of their projects. Coaching sessions can further enable the transfer of knowledge gained during the trainings into practice. Both 1:1 sessions for more targeted support, as well as group sessions where participants can share their experience and challenges and develop solutions and lessons learned can be fruit-

ful formats for coaching. An example of this approach is the Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Groups organised within the Business Ideas for Development offer of PMD.

Create an independent diaspora hub which serves as a training and networking centre, where women can access multiple opportunities for participation, support, and information. Many participating women indicated that the support services are not easily accessible. This results in ignorance concerning available support opportunities. Instead of working with a "Kommkultur" where those in need of support need to seek out opportunities, support structures should be embedded in the living environment of diaspora women. An independent diaspora hub (physical and virtual) could provide multiple services in a 'one-stop-shop', directing diaspora women to opportunities for support and participation while also acting as training and networking centre.

5. Provide access to opportunity through networking and outreach

Create access to opportunities for meaningful exchange and network building with other diaspora women actors and women's organisations in countries of origin. Networks were identified as crucial for promoting diaspora women's engagement. Organising regular opportunities for networking among diaspora women actors creates a space for collective brainstorming, exchange of experiences, and the generation of new ideas and initiatives. Many participating women indicated that they would be also interested in an exchange with women from different countries of origin and sectors of engagement, as this provides the opportunity to learn from a variety of contexts, explore common challenges and identify solution strategies and lessons learned. To facilitate participation, these meetings should be organised online and/or decentralised in different locations in Germany. Another important enabling factor for realising projects for sustainable development is a network of trusted partners in the country of origin. Activities that promote transnational connectivity of diaspora women with actors in their country of origin could include a mapping of origin country actors and women's organisations, that

can be shared with interested diaspora women actors. As personal contact is crucial, virtual networking events that connect diaspora women with origin country actors in different development fields (e.g., business & trade, environmental sustainability, community and women empowerment, education, health) should also be organised. If utilised well, these kinds of opportunities and platforms can have a gender transformative potential.

Ensure effective outreach by sharing information on activities and offers through diaspora women's associations and informal networks. Increasing outreach to diaspora women actors is important to raise awareness among diaspora women on engagement activities and programmes. When working with mixed diaspora organisations, it can be beneficial to not share the invitations through the general email or board, but directly identify or ask for female members of the organisation to participate. The organisation of information events for women can help to motivate and encourage women's participation. These meetings could take place decentralised (online and in-person) in different locations in Germany, in cooperation with women diaspora organisations, and with organised childcare to reduce the barrier for participating. Further, cultural activities along the sharing of information may help to create a safe space and atmosphere.
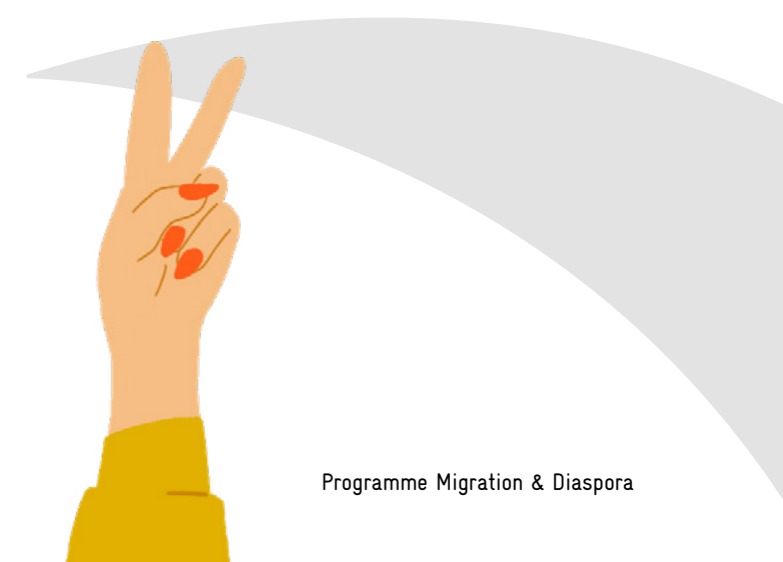
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – INFORMED CONSENT

WINS Global Consult is a consultancy firm for international cooperation. Its multinational team combines significant know-how in development cooperation with a broad network of associates and implementation partners in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. We have been commissioned by "Programme Migration & Diaspora" of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) to conduct an explorative research study on women's diaspora engagement towards development in their countries of origin.

The objective of the study is to contribute to a deeper understanding of where, when, why, and how women in the diaspora are engaging in sustainable development in their countries of origin. Further, we want to generate insights on women's aspirations as well as the opportunities and challenges they face in their engagement. The study further aims to offer recommendations to PMD to improve the mobilisation and support of diaspora women to contribute to sustainable development in their countries of origin and to develop new initiatives and improve the programme's outreach and support to diaspora women. By sharing your experiences and perceptions you make a valuable contribution to the evaluation of the achievement of objectives, the challenges encountered, as well as the lessons learned. The interview will take around one hour. Please note that your participation in this interview is voluntary and if you are considering participating, the information obtained will be used for scientific purposes only and will be kept strictly confidential. You have the right to deny answers to questions you do not feel comfortable with and to withdraw from the study at any time with no adverse repercussions.

Anything you say during the interview or any comments you make will not be linked to your name. If results of this study are published or presented, individual names and other personally identifiable information will not be used. Herewith, you confirm that:

- The purpose and nature of the study has been explained to you in writing or oral form.
- You understand that you will be participating voluntarily.
- You understand that anonymity will be ensured, because personal data is collected only to record consent and is stored separately to interview responses, with no attempt made to link them.
- You understand that you can withdraw from the study, without repercussions, whether before it starts or while you are participating.
- You understand that you can withdraw permission to use the data at any time, in which case the material will be deleted, up until five years after the completion of the project.
- You understand that after this date, the personal data collected from me will be destroyed.

I agree that my contact details may be shared with the GIZ. I understand that my contact details (name, email address, telephone number, organisation name and address) will be securely stored on GIZ servers and will only be used for the purpose of sharing of information relating to events and offers of the PMD and other relevant programmes of GIZ. GIZ will not share my data with third party persons without my consent.

I do not agree to share my contact details with GIZ

Signature: _____   Date: _____

APPENDIX B – KII INTERVIEW GUIDE

I. QUESTIONNAIRE IDENTIFICATION

Date		
Location		
Name of Interviewer		
Name of interviewee		
Organisation name (if applicable)		
Function within the organisation		
Profession		
Civic engagement		
Phone number		
Email address		
Consent to share contact details and information with GIZ?	Yes	No

II. OBJECTIVES AND PROCEDURE OF THE INTERVIEW

Thank you very much for speaking with me. I am a researcher working with WINS Global Consult. We have been commissioned by the "Programme Migration & Diaspora" of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) to conduct an explorative research study on women's diaspora engagement towards development in their countries of origin.

The aim of the study is to contribute to a deeper understanding of where, when, why, and how women in the diaspora are engaging in sustainable development in their countries of origin. Further we want to generate insights on women's aspirations as well as the opportunities and challenges they face in their engagement. The study further aims to offer recommendations to PMD to improve the mobilisation and support of diaspora women to contribute to sustainable development in their countries of origin and to develop new initiatives and improve the programme's outreach and support to diaspora women.

The objective of the interview is to explore more in-depth your aspirations, as well as the opportunities and challenges you face in your engagement in the sustainable development of your country of origin. The interview will take around 90 minutes. Please note that your participation is voluntary, meaning that you have the right to deny answers to questions you do not feel comfortable with and to withdraw from the study at any time with no adverse repercussions.

One of this study's goals is to have a roster of women diaspora and migrant organisations and active individuals that can be used to foster participation in development initiatives. --> *Do you agree that your contact details will be securely stored on GIZ servers and will only be used for the purpose of sharing of information relating to events and offers of the PMD and other relevant GIZ programmes? GIZ will not share your data with third party persons without your consent.*

Do I have the permission to record the interview? The audio file will be shared only within the research team. Note that everything you share with me is confidential and anonymous, your name will never be used in our reporting.

III. GUIDING QUESTIONS

Migration experience	*First, I would like to start with a more personal question*

Can you tell me a bit more about your migration experience?

- What year did you move (return) to Germany (to your country of origin)?
- What were the reasons for your migration to Germany (return to your country of origin)?

Can you tell me a bit more about your migration decisions?

- By whom was the migration decision (return decision) made?
- How do you think women could be empowered to make independent migration decisions and better inform themselves about the conditions in the destination country (country of origin)?

Can you tell me a bit more about your integration experience?

- How would you rate your integration (reintegration) experience in Germany (in your country of origin)? What was decisive for this?
- To what extent has migration to Germany (to your country of origin) changed your social situation as woman? What effects do you observe in terms of gender equality?

Do you have migration plans for the future and what are they?

- Could you imagine returning to your country of origin for a certain period of time to pursue a voluntary or professional activity that contributes to the sustainable development of your country of origin?
- If yes, what duration would be suitable for you (3-6 months, up to 2 years, permanent return)? Would being an employee or starting a business be an option for you?
- If no, what are the reasons why a (temporary/long-term) return is not an option for you? What incentives would be necessary to increase your willingness to return?

Diaspora community in Germany	*Now, I would like to ask you some questions on the [X] diaspora community in Germany.*

Can you tell me some details about the [X] diaspora community in Germany?

- Is it homogeneous or heterogeneous (in terms of socio-economic factors, gender, ethnicity, political aspirations and religion)?
- Are there strong ties / networks within the diaspora community in Germany, and in other countries?
- How connected do you feel to the diaspora community in Germany, in what ways are you involved in this community?
- What is the relationship to the [country of origin]? Are there strong connections? Follow up: are these connections in any way formalised (e.g., diaspora events)?
- How do you perceive the "evolution" of the diaspora communities since you've lived in Germany?
- How do you see the role and visibility of women in the diaspora community?

Motivations & Visions	*Now, let's talk about your personal motivations and the priorities you see with regard to sustainable development in [country of origin].*

- What are the key drivers that motivates your engagement?
- How does your gender identity shape your motivations and engagement?
- With regard to sustainable development in [country of origin], what are the issues you consider particularly important or urgent?

Forms of engagement	Organisations	Individuals
	Now, I would like to ask some basic information about your organisation—about how it started, why it started, and its registration status.	*Now, I would like to ask some basic information about your engagement—about how and when it started and in which form it takes place.*
	Can you tell me something about the origins of your organisation?	**What form does your engagement towards development in [country of origin] take?**
	• In what year was this organisation established?	• Are you working individually or together with others?
	• Why was the organisation established, and why at that time?	• Is it voluntary engagement or linked to your employment?
	• What would you say is the goal or the "core mission" of the organisation? Has it changed over time?	**Since when do you engage this way?**
	What can be said about internal gender mainstreaming within your organisation (staff):	**What do you see as the main goal of your engagement?**
	• What is the proportion of men and women among the DiO's staff?	
	• Are women represented in leadership positions?	**How do you finance the expenses that arise within your engagement?**
	• How do you assess the gender competences of the DiO staff? What are the training needs?	
	What can be said about the DiO's members?	
	• How many members does the DiO have? Does this include both active and inactive members? (What is the size of both groups?)	
	• Is the size of your membership consistent, or does it fluctuate?	
	• What is the proportion of men and women? What else can be said regarding the members' characteristics (e.g. age, educational background, migration generation etc.)?	
	How is your organisation financed?	

Transnational practices	Organisations	Individuals
	Now, let's talk about what your organisation does, about what kinds of activities or events your organisation organises or takes part in.	*Now, let's talk about how you engage, what kind of activities you do with regard to sustainable development of [country of origin]*
	What kind of activities and projects does your organisation implement both in Germany and in [country of origin]? (Please, describe all activities in detail)	**What kind of activities you do as part of your engagement?**
	• What are the "core activities", of the organisation? What other sorts of actions or events does your organisation take part in?	• What are your „core activities"? Do you also engage in other side activities?
	• Why have these activities become the focus of your organisation? What inspired these activities (linked to overall motivation / identified priorities above?)?	• What inspired these activities (linked to overall motivation / identified priorities above?)?
	• Have these core activities changed over time?	• Have these activities changed over time?
	Does the organisation conduct specific activities or projects aimed at promoting women's empowerment?	**Do you conduct specific activities or projects aimed at promoting women empowerment?**
	• If yes, can you describe them in detail?	• If yes, can you describe them in detail?
	• If not, why?	• If not, why?
	Does your organisation send collective remittances back to your country of origin?	**Do you send remittances back to your country of origin or receive remittances?**
	• If yes, what was the purposive the money was sent for?	• What motivates you to send remittances?
		• In general, how do you think remittances can influence sustainable development of your country of origin?

Networks and Cooperation	Organisations	Individuals
	So far, we've talked about the types of activities your organisations take part in. We also want to understand how you work together with other organisations—for example, here, in the country of origin, or even in other countries.	*So far, we've talked about the types of activities you take part in. We also want to understand how you work together with other individuals and organisations—for example, here, in the country of origin, or even in other countries.*
	Is the organization part of any larger network of organisations, like an umbrella organization of [country of origin] diaspora organisations, or a migrant platform/initiative, or something similar? Why or why not?	**Are you as an individual linked to broader diaspora platforms, or other networks (e.g. professional network, migrant network etc.)?**
	How do you interact with stakeholders in [country of origin]?	**How do you interact with stakeholders in [country of origin]?**
	• What kind of stakeholders are these?	• What kind of stakeholders are these?
	• And how do you cooperate?	• And how do you cooperate?
	What can you say about the gender strategies and policies of the country of origin?	**What can you say about the gender strategies and policies of the country of origin?**
	• In general, how do you perceive the situation of women or the level of equality between men and women in your country of origin?	• In general, how do you perceive the situation of women or the level of equality between men and women in your country of origin?
	• How do you assess the gender strategies and policies in your country of origin, especially in migration or diaspora policies?	• How do you assess the gender strategies and policies in your country of origin, especially in migration or diaspora policies?
	• Are there gender-specific goals and support programmes for women in the diaspora?	• Are there gender-specific goals and support programmes for women in the diaspora?
	• To what extent are women's interests represented vis-à-vis German politics?	• To what extent are women's interests represented vis-à-vis German politics?
	• To what extent does your organisation aim to influence policy making in [country of origin] or Germany?	• To what extent do you aim to influence policy making in [country of origin] or Germany with your engagement?

Involvement with PMD	*As mentioned before we are commissioned by PMD to do the research. PMD's work aims at enabling key actors in partner countries to make more effective use of regular migration and diaspora engagement to achieve their development goals.*
	Have you participated in a PMD activities in the past? If yes:
	• In which activity (returning expert, diaspora expert, DiO, Business Ideas for Development, etc.)?
	• What is your experience with the programme? What would you advise the programme to change?
	• How do you think the share of women in the respective programmes could be increased?
	• What would be necessary for the implemented projects / expert assignments / business start-ups to make a stronger contribution to gender equality?
	If not, what prevented you from participating?
	Would you be interested in taking part in PMD programmes and activities?
	• If yes, through which means/forms?
	• If not, why?
Opportunities and Challenges	*I would like to talk about the future of your engagement—about what is on your agenda for the coming months and years. Also, I would like to learn more about the opportunities and challenges you face in your engagement as well as the resources you need/use to address them.*
	What do you consider as your biggest achievement in the past and what would you like to achieve with your engagement in the future? [For instance, what are your short/medium/long-term goals?]
	• What were your biggest learnings with regard to your engagement? Can you think of best practices, that you want to share?
	• What are the most valuable resources you have with regard to your engagement?
	What are the key challenges/obstacles you face now and in the future?
	• Do you think there are gender-specific challenges women face in the XX diaspora in Germany? Do you think there are specific opportunities as well?
	• Do you feel there are specific challenges women face when engaging in activities with the country of origin? If so what are the concrete gendered barriers? Do you think there are specific opportunities as well?
	• Can you think of challenges you would face if you would return to your CoO, whether long term or short term?
	• What do you need to overcome these challenges? Are there specific resources that you think could help support/expand development-focused activities?

Respondent's profile	*We almost reached the end of my question. If you don't mind sharing, I would love to learn a bit more about your personal characteristics/situation.*

Which of the following age groups do you belong to?

18–29   30–45   46–59   60+

Which religion do you associate yourself with, if any?

Which ethnic group you feel a sense of belonging to, if any:

What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed?

No schooling completed   Compulsory education   Secondary education   Vocational training   University

What is your employment status at the moment?

Employed   Self-Employed   Unemployed
Engaged in home/care duties   Student   Retired
Prefer not to answer

How long have you been living in Germany?/Since when did you return to your country of origin?

Less than 1 year   1–5 years   5–10 years   More than 10 years

What is your current legal status? (you can tick more than one boxes)

Temporary residency   Permanent residency   Naturalized citizen

Do you feel any of these aspects influence your motivation or ability to engage with your country of origin?

Mapping exercise	*Finally, we are continuing the mapping process and would be happy if you could assist us with sharing some contacts of your network.*

Can you recommend another [country of origin] women-led diaspora organisation in Germany?

Can you recommend women with a migration history from [country of origin] who reside in Germany (or returned in the last years) and are in some way or the other engaged towards the development of their country of origin?

Closing	*We reached the end of my questions. Thank you very much for the inspiring discussions.*

Is there any other important information, you think I should know?

We are also planning to conduct additional activities, including a focus group discussion and a workshop.

Would you be interested in participating in these future activities?

After finalising the data collection, we will be working on a report. Once this is finalised, we are happy to share the findings with you. Again, thank you very much for contributing to our study by sharing your valuable perspectives and experiences.

APPENDIX C – FGD GUIDE

I BASIC INFORMATION				
Date of the FGD				
Place of the FGD				
Moderators				

II PARTICIPANTS CHARACTERISTICS				
Names of Participants				
Age	18–29:	30–45:	45–59:	60+:
Origin Countries	XX:	XXX:	XXX:	
Organisations				

III OBJECTIVES AND GUIDELINES

Good [morning/afternoon], and welcome. Thank you for taking the time to participate in our focus group discussion and for making such an important contribution to our research.

We have been commissioned by the „Migration & Diaspora Programme" of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) to conduct an exploratory research study on the engagement of diaspora women for development in their countries of origin. The aim of the study is to gain a deeper understanding of where, when, why and how women in the diaspora engage in sustainable development in their countries of origin. We also aim to gain insights into women's aspirations and the opportunities and challenges they face in their engagement. The study also aims to make recommendations to the PMD to improve the mobilisation and support of women in the diaspora, as well as to develop new initiatives that promote the engagement of women in the diaspora.

The aim of this discussion is to explore common views and create a space for women to share their experiences, develop and generate ideas, and explore issues of common concern. You have been invited to join this discussion and share your views and experiences. We want you to feel comfortable and safe to share your ideas, even if they differ from those of others. There are no right or wrong answers. You do not necessarily have to agree, but please listen respectfully to what others have to say.

The discussion will last about three hours, including a 20-minute break. We will act as facilitators to guide the discussion. Please make sure that you talk to each other, not only to us.

For our documentation, we would like you to fill in the list of participants. We would like to record the conversation to make sure we do not miss any comments. If you agree, we will address each other by first name in this conversation, but your names will not be used in the results of this project. When we write up the conversation, you will simply be referred to as ‚Participant 1', ‚Participant 5', etc. Please be assured that your identity will be kept absolutely confidential. We would also ask that you do not share the information shared by participants with anyone who did not take part in the discussion. Please remember that you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

If there are no further questions, we can start the discussion.

Consent	Yes:	No:

V. GUIDING QUESTIONS

Introduction (15min)	**Round of introduction**
	Let's start with a round of introductions.
	Please tell us your name, where you come from, how long you have lived in Germany and what motivated you to come to Germany. And finally, what you hope to gain from this discussion.
Engagement (50min)	**Motivation**
	Let us now talk about your engagement. First of all, we would like to know more about your personal motivations and the priorities you set with regard to your engagement in Germany and in your country of origin.
	What are the most important factors that motivate you to engage?
	How does your gender identity affect your motivation and engagement?
	Which issues do you consider particularly important or urgent with regard to sustainable development in your country of origin?
	Which issues do you consider particularly important with regard to the situation of women/migrants/returnees?
	Forms of Engagement
	Now we would like to ask you about some basic information about your engagement –what this engagement looks like and what projects you implement.
	What forms does your engagement take? If you are involved in an organisation, how long have you been doing this and in what role?
	In which thematic field do you/your organisation engage? What kind of projects/activities do you/your organisation carry out?
	Do you/your organisation also carry out projects/activities to promote sustainable development in your country of origin? With which organisations/networks?
	If not, what are the reasons for this?
	Would you/your organisation like to carry out projects/activities in the country of origin and do you have any initial ideas on what these could look like?
	Do you/your organisation carry out projects that specifically target girls and women or pursue gender equality?
	How do you assess gender equality within your own organisation (gender ratio, women in management, gender skills)?
	Break (20 min)

	Learnings	
	We would now like to talk about what learning experiences you have had over the last few years and what best practices you can share with us.	
	What have been the biggest successes in terms of your engagement? Are there any particular learning experiences you would like to share?	
	What do you know about successful projects/activities of other women in the diaspora?	
	Do you think that there are gender-specific opportunities, i.e. women may have certain advantages over men in their volunteering??	
Opportunities & challenges (40min)	**Challenges**	
	Now we would like to know more about the challenges you personally, but also other women in the diaspora, face in their engagement.	
	What challenges have you encountered in your work so far and (how) are they related to your gender identity?	
	What other (gender-specific) challenges do women in the diaspora encounter? What stops other women in the diaspora from getting involved?	
	What resources do you/other women in the diaspora need to overcome these challenges?	

	Future perspectives
	We would like to talk about the future of your engagement – about what is on your agenda in the coming months and years.
	Which projects/activities would you like to continue in the future and which new projects/activities would you like start?
	What steps are necessary to expand your activities to new topics, new countries or new target groups?
	To what extent could PMD-GIZ support you/your organisation to continue or expand your projects (e.g. to activities in the country of origin)?
	Could you describe the support needs as concretely as possible?
Future perspectives (30min)	**Cooperation with PMD**
	As mentioned above, we were commissioned by PMD to conduct the research. PMD's work aims to enable key stakeholders in partner countries to use regular migration and diaspora engagement more effectively to achieve their development goals.
	Have you participated in a PMD activity in the past?
	• If so, could you briefly describe your experience?
	• If not, what has prevented you from participating?
	Would you be interested in participating in PMD programmes and activities?
	• If yes, in which projects/instruments would you be interested?
	• If no, why not?

	We have reached the end of our questions. Thank you for actively participating in the discussions and sharing your thoughts and opinions with us – we really appreciate your time and the stimulating discussions. We thank you very much for your participation!
Concluding remarks & outlook (10min)	**Is there any other important information you think we should know or aspects you would still like to share with us?**
	If you have any questions or comments about this study in the future, please feel free to contact the study team. Once the data collection is complete, we will work on a report. Once this is completed, we will be happy to share the results with you.
	We also intend to organise a workshop with diaspora women in a face-to-face format at the end of the summer. There, the study results could be presented as well as GIZ's thoughts on supporting women in the diaspora.

APPENDIX D – TEMPLATE FOR KII/FGD DOCUMENTATION

I BASIC INFORMATION	
Date of the interview / FGD	
Location / medium of the interview / FGD	
Name of the inter-viewer / moderators	
Translation used	Yes No

II INFORMATION ON THE INTERVIEWEE/PARTICIPANTS	
Name(s)	
Age group	18–29 30–45 46–59 60+
Religious affiliation	Christian Muslim Hindu Buddhist Sikh Jew Atheist Other (please specify):
Ethnicity	
Country(ies) of origin	
Country and place of residence	
Length of residence	Less than 1 year 1–5 years 5–10 years More than 10 years
Legal status	Temporary residency Permanent residency Naturalized citizen
Highest degree of education	No schooling completed Compulsory education Secondary education Vocational training University
Employment status	Employed Self-Employed Unemployed Engaged in home/care duties Student Retired Prefer not to answer
Organisational affiliation	No Yes, list Name(s)

IV DOCUMENTATION OF RESPONSES

(Note: When reporting your findings do not report what people said in a list-like fashion, but instead analyse and try to interpret the meaning of what the respondents are saying. Here you can ask yourself what the findings mean within a specific context and how the social positions and characteristics of your respondent(s) may shape and intersect with the specific context. Include direct quotes to illustrate your findings.)

Question block	Main findings
Migration experience	
Diaspora community	
Motivations & Visions	

Forms of Engagement	
Transnational practices	
Cooperation & networking	
Involvement with PMD	
Opportunities & Challenges	

V OBSERVATIONS AND ADDITIONAL REMARKS FROM INTERVIEWER	
Comments on the process of the inter-view/FGDs	*(e.g., personal comments of the interviewee(s) on the preparation, conduct and conclusion of the interview/FGDs)*
Reflections on the interview process	*How was the overall atmosphere of the interview?* *How were the power dynamics during the interview process? How did my gender, nationali-ty, education level, etc. influenced the interview dynamics?* *Were there questions that did not work well—for example, were misunderstood, unclear, or inappropriate for the context? Where there any sensitive issues during the interviews, such as questions causing discomfort?*
Reflections on the FGD process	*How was the overall atmosphere of the focus group discussion?* *How were the group dynamics? Were all participants equally involved in the discussions, or were some participants and their positions marginalised?* *Were there any major points of disagreement and contestation or any lines of conflict among the participants?* *What were major points of agreement and common views among the participants?* *Were there questions that did not work well—for example, were misunderstood, unclear, or inappropriate for the context?*

On behalf of

Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development