Background document and discussion carried out in the context of the Diaspora National Summit project funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), with a contribution from the For Africa Burkina Faso Foundation and the Charlemagne Foundation
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The main objective of this document is to provide indications and suggestions for bringing migrant associations into contact with Italian Cooperation, considering the new regulatory context and the significant dialogue and role that might be structured over the course of time. The document is of an informative and explanatory nature, and has the aim of offering ideas for discussion and gathering opinions, suggestions and ideas, and in this way becoming a tool for diasporas.

The document was used during the territorial meetings held in Florence, Naples and Padua in July 2017, and those held in Rome, Cagliari, Milan and Turin in September 2017. This has led to the preparation of this version for the November 2017 Diaspora Summit.

In turn, the discussions during the meetings resulted in the drafting of the document on the recommendations made by the diasporas for Italian Cooperation. A document on the Italian system with diasporas was also produced. This document collects a series of forms compiled by the various actors in development cooperation on their work experience with migrant associations and a document on the experiences of the diasporas.

It was prepared by Tana Anglana, Veronica Padoan and Andrea Stocchiero (CeSPI) with a contribution and collaboration from Aurica Danalachi and Ada Ugo Abara. The coordinator of the project on the Summit is Cleophas Adrien Dioma. We would like to thank the various commentators for the notes and suggestions we have received.
1. Immigrant associations in the new Italian Cooperation law

1.1 Introduzione

For over forty years, Italy has been affected by an increasing presence and passage of persons arriving from third countries, most of whom are from the so-called Developing Countries. This population component is now consolidated, and has branched out throughout Italy in very different ways, depending on the socio-economic context of reference. The concentration of foreign persons in certain areas of the country – such as medium-large urban centres, where there are generally more opportunities for job placement and other advantages – over the years has undoubtedly encouraged the birth and development of a heterogeneous world of migrant organizations and associations.

These organizations and associations have always played a fundamental role, not only by encouraging integration pathways in the host society and places where information can be obtained and relationships formed, but also by promoting and organizing international solidarity and development cooperation activities, very often almost unconsciously, because until recently they were not recognized or supported by adequate regulatory instruments or institutional support. Among other things, in recent years, following the sudden social, environmental, economic and political upheavals being experienced by destination countries, including Europe in general, and Italy in particular, and also countries of origin and transit, in particular Africa and the Middle and the Near East, the role of migrant associations has acquired an increasingly important role in supporting and guiding the paths of inclusion and development. A number of these associations have participated, and are now participating, in projects that have been directly or indirectly funded by Italian Cooperation, or through international organizations such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and decentralized cooperation by local authorities and other public and private bodies such as bank foundations, together with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), study centres and universities, cooperatives and businesses. Similarly, migrant associations are carrying out projects funded at a European level and participating in calls for proposals from the European Commission, programmes such as the Joint Migration and Development Initiative and multilateral bodies such as the United Nations International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

The fundamental role migrant associations play in fostering development cooperation practices in countries of origin is now acknowledged in the international debate. Diasporas are having, and can have, a significant impact at economic, social, cultural and political levels, for example through the role played by remittances, migrant entrepreneurship and investments in productive sectors, through transnational social capital and human resources, in direct contact with local authorities and communities. All this is also achieved by taking increasing account of the environmental agenda, where, for example, by implementing

1 See, as an example of this example, the City of Milan’s co-development programme: http://www.comune.milano.it/wps/portal/ist/it/amministrazione/internazionali/progetti/cosviluppo

2 See Foundations for Africa: http://www.fondazioniforafrica.org/

3 See: http://www.migration4development.org/
sustainable agriculture projects, diasporas can counteract desertification and create jobs at the same time, thereby contributing in part to reducing migratory pressures.

1.2 The recognition of diasporas in Italian Cooperation

This rich and significant human, social, political and economic heritage provided by the world of migrant associations, which undoubtedly constitutes a fundamental resource for growth, has not always found the space it needs to tell its story and develop. Over the past few years, however, this space has been given shape in important new legislative instruments that are stimulating the leading role of diasporas in Italy. Specifically, this is the result of the new laws governing Italian development cooperation (Law 125/2014)\(^4\) and Italian Cooperation’s three-year planning and direction document (2016-2018)\(^5\). These tools have been developed with the aim of supporting implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, in line with the experiences and best practices of Italian Cooperation. For the first time, the conditions are being created to allow migrant associations to play a concrete, operational role in these policies.

This change in approach mainly involves the link between international migration and sustainable development. On the one hand, migrations are the result of international imbalances, while on the other they can help correct these imbalances. Migrations have costs and benefits. Cooperation is required to reduce the former and exploit the latter to improve the sustainable development of both Italy and the home countries. In fact, the topic of "migration and development" has been identified by Italian Cooperation as a priority that crosses all intervention sectors, including agriculture and food safety, education, training and culture, health, good governance and the fight against inequality. Those who migrate are therefore not only vulnerable persons who have needs, as has been the case with the general orientation that has been adopted to date; they are also active players who can contribute to the processes of international cooperation and sustainable development through certain practices, some of which will be gone into in greater detail below.

For the first time in the history of Italian cooperation, the migratory dimension is expressly introduced in law 125/2014. From the initial provisions of the law, migratory flows – which are divided into communities, organizations and associations in the various areas of the country – are identified as processes that can encourage and support development and relations with countries of origin. For Italian cooperation policy, therefore, it is not only local authorities, regions, NGOs, universities and non-profit organizations that will play a fundamental role; the new bodies the law has recognized, such as immigrant associations and organizations, social cooperatives and fair trade and microfinance entities will, too.

**Box 1 - Law 125/2014**

\(^4\) Law no. 125 of 11 August 2014. Rules on International Development Cooperation

\(^5\) Resolution dated 23 March 2017. Three-year planning and orientation document on development cooperation policy.
Development cooperation is an integral part of Italy's foreign policy. It is inspired by the principles of the United Nations Charter and the European Union’s Charter of Fundamental Rights, as well as those of other international organizations. Its main purpose, in accordance with the principle set forth in Article 11 of the Constitution, is to contribute to the promotion of peace and justice, encouraging relations of solidarity among peoples based on the principles of interdependence and partnership.

Political responsibility for development cooperation has been given to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, who establishes the guidelines for it and ensures the unity and coordination of all national cooperation initiatives. Specifically, on the one hand, the new governance structure increases the political weight of the Deputy Minister, who is responsible for issues of development cooperation, while on the other it establishes the Italian Agency for Cooperation and Development (AICS) and makes the Cassa Depositi and Prestiti its financial arm.

Other bodies (the Interministerial Committee for Development Cooperation (CICS), the Joint Committee for Development Cooperation and the National Council for Development Cooperation (CNCS)) have also been planned to implement the new legislation in terms of participation and consultation by the Italian system.

Finally, for the first time, this new legislation offers a prominent role to immigrant organizations and associations to actively promote their participation in the development of cooperation processes in Italy and with regard to the countries of origin (Articles 2 and 26).

The diasporas can participate in Italian Cooperation at both a political-institutional and an operational level: at a political-institutional level especially particular through the CNCS, and at an operational level through access to calls for funding.

1.3 Political participation

Within the general framework of international development cooperation, new bodies have been set up to enable and facilitate dialogue with parties that have been called on to participate in development cooperation actions, including immigrant organizations and associations.

In particular, Chapter III of Law 125/2014 (Political orientation, government and control of development cooperation) identifies the institutional bodies involved and the bodies to be created as a function of the new law. The areas of competence and the responsibilities of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI) have been identified, and the position of Deputy Minister for Development Cooperation has been created to be the principal political leader of government assistance with development. Three new bodies have been established: the CICS, the Joint Committee and the AICS.
The Interministerial Committee for Development Cooperation (CICS), which is chaired by the Prime Minister, has the task of ensuring the planning and coordination of all activities as well as the coordination and consistency of national policies with development cooperation objectives, approving the three-year planning and orientation document.

The Joint Development Cooperation Committee, which has been created at the MAECI, is chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation or the Deputy Minister of Development Cooperation, and includes the Director-General of Development Cooperation and the Director of the Italian Agency for Cooperation and Development (AICS). Specifically, it approves all cooperation initiatives with a value of over two million euros, and establishes the annual plan with reference to countries and areas of intervention.

The law created the Italian Agency for Cooperation and Development (AICS) with the task of applying cooperation operationally: that is, carrying out activities of a technical and operational nature associated with the preliminary investigation, formulation, funding, management and control of the cooperation initiatives referred to in the law; contributing to planning; operating through the parties indicated by the law through competitive processes; providing services to public administrations; and managing European, bank and international fund programmes (Article 17).

It is to the National Council for Development Cooperation (CNCS) to which it is important to pay attention, however, because it is there that participation by the diasporas can be expressed. This body, which is governed by Article 16 of the above-mentioned law, includes within it the main public and private, profit and non-profit entities in the field of international development cooperation. It therefore includes
representatives of the Ministries concerned, the Regions, the autonomous provinces of Trento and Bolzano, local authorities, the AICS, the main networks of civil society organizations, universities and voluntary organizations. Members of the Council are appointed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation for a term of three years. If necessary, this appointment can be revoked by ministerial decree at any time with regard to all members. Participation in the National Council does not provide for any form of compensation, reimbursement of expenses or attendance fees. The National Council for Development Cooperation is therefore a new, permanent tool for participation, consultation and proposal. The constant presence of a representative of the diasporas is a clear sign of the acknowledged prominent role that is desired to be given to the immigrant organizations and associations in discussions on the objectives and guidelines of cooperation, as well as the implementation and incentivization of innovative practices. The Council convenes at least once a year and where necessary in order to obtain opinions or express recommendations. Its resolutions are adopted by a consensus.

Additionally, up to five persons with skills in the matters discussed at the sessions may be invited on the initiative of the Minister to attend the sessions. These individuals do not have the right to vote. As further confirmation of the new approach the law is intended to give Cooperation, one of the four topic-related working groups through which the Council operates has been specifically dedicated to migration. The consultation areas for the topic-related groups are as follows:
1. 2030 Agenda for sustainable development: policy consistency, effectiveness and evaluation.
2. Strategy and guidelines for Italian development cooperation.
3. Role of the private sector in development cooperation.
4. Migration and Development.

The working groups, on the other hand, can be called several times during the course of a year, depending on the planned activity schedule. Various observers can be invited to participate, depending on the issues addressed.

In the first year of its activity, Group 4 on migration and development met several times, and worked on three fronts: first, on consistency between the development cooperation and migration policies; second, on the potential contribution migration can make to planning Italian cooperation; and third, on establishing a pathway for participation by the diasporas in Italian cooperation, which gave rise to the initiative that led to the Diaspora Summit of the Diasporas with Italian cooperation. As regards the financial aspect of international development cooperation, Cassa Depositi e Prestiti S.p.A. was involved, and the MAECI entered into a special agreement in order to use it and the companies in which it has a shareholding for the preliminary investigation and management of the financial profiles of development cooperation initiatives, such as the management of aid credits and other risk capital financial

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6 Adrien Cleophas Dioma is the representative of the diasporas at the CNCS and coordinator of the "Migrations and Development" group (the alternate representative is Tana Anglana).
Finally, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation calls a national public conference **every three years** to encourage citizens to participate in development cooperation policies. The migrants' associations are therefore also called to participate in the Conference.

### 1.4 Participation in calls for tenders

Looking more closely at the legislation, the requirements and some of the **guidelines required for migrant organizations** and associations to be able to access Italian Cooperation calls for tenders are worth illustrating. Although there are still no guidelines on the issue of migration and development and participation by diasporas, **migrant associations are eligible for the funding referred to in Article 26, paragraph 2 of Law 125/2014.** The requirements for being included on list of cooperation subjects are identified in Box 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 2 - Requirements for registration on the list</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Being established pursuant to the domestic laws of a <strong>Member State of the European Union or any other State</strong> that is a party to the <strong>Agreement on the European Economic Area</strong>;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Acting in a manner <strong>compliant with the principles established by Law 125/2014</strong>, and respecting international standards in the area of human rights, social responsibility and environmental protection;</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Not being indebted to the public administration</strong> for debts that are certain, fixed and due, including the debt situations deriving from the revocation of contributions;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <strong>Not having acted in a manner characterized by gross negligence</strong> or bad faith in the realization of projects or in the conduct of their activities;</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. <strong>Not being in any of the situations of incompatibility</strong> provided for in Article 38 of Legislative Decree163/2006;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Including among their <strong>statutory purposes</strong> the performance of activities that pursue the <strong>objectives described in Article 1, paragraph 2 of Law 125/2014</strong>;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. <strong>Not pursuing profit-making objectives</strong> or providing for the application of any income, including income deriving from ancillary commercial activities or other forms of self-financing, for institutional purposes;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. <strong>Not being controlled by profit-making entities</strong> or being associated with any profit-making entity in such a way that it exercises significant influence over the applicant body or may derive significant economic benefit from the public contributions received;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. <strong>Providing adequate</strong> guarantees on the implementation of the planned activities, with particular regard to <strong>financial stability and the full-time availability</strong> of the required structures and qualified personnel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. <strong>Possession of operational experience and organizational skills in the development cooperation sphere.</strong> To this end, documentation must be provided to the effect that that it has been established for at least three years and has carried out activities in the countries included in the &quot;DAC list of ODA...&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 Downloadable from [http://www.aics.gov.it/?page_id=3844](http://www.aics.gov.it/?page_id=3844)
Recipients” published by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development or activities to educate and increase awareness among global citizens. Said documentation must specify any experience in the field of emergency humanitarian and first emergency initiatives.

11. **Demonstrating the capacity to self-finance and obtain funds other than public funds.** In particular, applicants must demonstrate that they have availability of financial resources other than those provided by public bodies, including supranational public bodies, at a level of no less than 5% of their overall revenues over the three-year reference period.

The lack of even one of the above requirements will result in immediate exclusion from the list, for which the Agency will provide reasons.

In July 2017, AICS began discussions on a review of the eligibility criteria for civil company organizations. It is important that diaspora organizations should also contribute their observations, as well as NGOs. According to the AICS, there are certain elements to be taken into account:

- "the reference threshold of the total value required for implementation of cooperation initiatives must be equal to or greater than 150,000 Euros in the three-year reference period;"
- a broader and more modern sense of cooperation activity ... (for example, ... inclusive business initiatives carried out by the diasporas) ... 
- additional criteria, ... such as the awarding of EU programmes, the ability to manage and report on public resources ... or the possession of certain certifications (ISO 9001) "8.

The AICS’s aim is to broaden the involvement of the parties identified in the law in development cooperation activities. This debate has seen a number of different positions being adopted by among the organizations taking part, especially in relation to the characteristics of the requirements for being recognized as actors in development cooperation. Thanks to the pathway adopted for preparation of the National Diaspora Summit, it was possible to access the work on the review of the criteria, which was discussed by the diasporas at the local meetings. These meetings revealed the main issues and proposals that led to the drafting by the diasporas of the document on recommendations for Italian Cooperation.

In addition, it clearly emerges in the latest tenders dedicated to civil society organizations (CSOs) and non-profit organizations that the diasporas have assumed an increasingly important role. Indeed, the recent tenders issued by the AICS relating to both global citizenship education initiatives to be carried out in Italy and cooperation projects in the developing countries promoted by the CSOs highlight the relationship between migration and development. On the one hand, the initiatives that focus on this relationship are considered to be of overriding interest, and refer to interventions that contribute towards

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8 AICS, Information Note, Subject: implementation of the process of reforming the criteria and parameters for the inclusion of civil company organizations and other non-profit entities in the list.
improving living conditions in countries of origin, thereby reducing migratory pressures. On the other hand, the implementation of partnerships in which immigrant organizations and associations can play a leading role are viewed as elements of added value.⁹

It is also interesting to observe the role of the diasporas in tenders dedicated to local authorities, especially if one considers the fact a number of cooperation initiatives with migrants’ associations have been realized that in the past thanks to funding from Italian Municipalities and Regions (see for example the experience of the City of Milan’s¹⁰ tender on co-development) and the resources of the bank foundations (Fondazioni4Africa Senegal and Burkina Faso¹¹). OIM Italia - in some cases in collaboration with CeSPI - has also pooled diaspora funds with funds from Italian Cooperation and decentralized cooperation for initiatives aimed at the communities of origin of migrants resident in Italy¹², while the IFAD has recently launched a project with OXFAM Italia to support investment in migrants for the creation of businesses and youth employment in the rural areas of their home countries (Morocco and Senegal). In particular, with the new AICS tenders¹³ for local authorities, the actions that can be funded by Italian Cooperation must, among its various objectives, pursue the promotion of the transfer of skills, knowledge, and professional and financial capacities of the diasporas to contribute towards the development of their respective home countries.

In all these calls for tender, therefore, migrant associations are called to be protagonists, in partnership with the CSOs and local authorities and companies and other players in the performance of cooperation activities. If they are recognized as being eligible for Italian cooperation, migrant associations will have direct access to calls for tenders to CSOs, asking others to enter into partnerships with them. They can be leaders or partners, depending on opportunities and capabilities.

In this regard, it is necessary to look at why migrant associations are in a secondary position compared to more structured CSOs. It is therefore important to discuss what the feasible hypotheses are for encouraging greater and improved access to calls for tenders by migrant associations. A first hypothesis, which draws on the experience of the City of Milan and IOM Italia is to launch specific calls for tenders to migrant associations as project leaders, with a view to promoting their role. If the

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¹² In programmes such as MIDA Senegal and Ghana, MIDLA, WMIDA, MIDA Youth, MIGRAVENTURE, A.MI.CO. Awards and others. See for example: http://diaspora.iom.int/sites/default/files/publication/pdf/ghana-senegal.pdf; and the recent initiative to strengthen the A.MI.CO. Diaspora, Awards, which, by means of a call for project proposals aimed at migrant associations that were part of the A.MI.CO. (Migrants Associations for Co-development), provides economic support for the implementation of sustainable development initiatives in countries of origin. The initiatives of the A.MI.CO. Courses and A.MI.CO. Awards are carried out with a contribution from Italian Cooperation.
intention is to increase participation by migrant associations in cooperation, ad hoc calls for tenders in must be provided for that give them the possibility of access, increasing their capacity to draft proposals and manage projects. This was what happened in the successful case of the City of Milan, which was agreed with the CSO.

A second hypothesis could be inspired by the experience of European cooperation, which provides for a re-granting mechanism by which the Commission entrusts a partnership of CSOs and/or local authorities that have high levels of management capacity with a quantity of resources that the partnership undertakes to distribute to smaller CSO, including migrant associations, through an ad hoc call for tender. In this way, the funds can reach small, decentralized areas and associations. An example of this type was recently adopted by the Tuscany Region14.

Success here depends on strengthening pathways, and on the ability of migrant associations to develop, implement and report effective and sustainable project proposals. In this regard, decentralized cooperation, NGOs and bank foundations and international organizations such as OIM Italia, have all carried out in the past – and continue to propose – information, training and support initiatives for migrant associations that provide not only traditional courses on project design, but also support for strengthening associations, relations with institutions and communications to the general public.

14 See http://www.info-cooperation.it/2017/06/bando-per-micro-progetti-di-co-sviluppo-in-toscana/
Diasporas, development and interventions in countries of origin

The idea of giving immigrant associations the opportunity to become active players in the construction of development cooperation practices is an innovative one. On the other hand, the history of this country and of the immigrants who live here is already intertwined with a variety of activities with ties to development cooperation, or activities that may in any event have links to cooperation, and that fully cross over between immigrant communities and Italy.

Before all of this, however, comes in-depth knowledge of the migratory phenomenon and migrants and their relationship with the development processes that link Italy with the countries of origin. Italian Cooperation is taking its first steps in this regard, and it could prove helpful to develop this pathway by enhancing existing knowledge. This significantly includes the heritage developed thanks to the commitment of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, as highlighted in the document on the Italian system with diasporas.

2.1 Financial remittances

A clear example of the contribution migrants make to development is the shipment of remittances to their countries of origin. This is among the most widespread and constant individual and collective practices. Suffice it to say that according to the latest data from the Bank of Italy, which refer to 2016, these remittances represent 0.3% of Italian GDP, and amount to approximately €5 billion. This is more than the amount provided by Italian Cooperation, and has a direct impact on the welfare of the families of migrants by alleviating their poverty, and has significant effects on education, nutrition, housing and health and financial inclusion in the countries of origin, as well as on the commencement of numerous work and entrepreneurial activities. It is therefore a priority to make good use of remittances for local development in developing countries by extending their benefits and reducing their negative effects in terms of encouraging the culture of migration and dependence on these resources.

The Italian government has committed itself to reducing the costs of sending remittances in order to free up vast resources for the welfare of families. At the G7 summit in L’Aquila, the Italian government has committed the richest countries to promoting regulations aimed at increasing competition in the financial transfer market in order to encourage cost reductions. In the context of a World Bank initiative, thanks to support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Bank of Italy, and with the promotion of the IOM and a consortium of NGOs, the Mandasoldiacasa website, which is managed by CeSPI, was created. This website allows migrants to compare transfer costs and to choose the most appropriate operator.

Other initiatives, such as the one supported by the Fondazioni4Africa Senegal programme, have sought to link remittances to local development through measures for literacy and the financial inclusion of migrants and their families in the destination country and the country of origin. This is done by making it simpler to open current and savings accounts and facilitating access to credit. Alongside these measures, others

http://www.mandasoldiacasa.it/it
have sought to promote the creation of platforms linking banks, money transfer operators and microfinance institutions so as to channel remittances in such a way as to facilitate the movement of capital and its investment in local development.

Finally, a number of projects have supported the promotion of collective remittances for local development. For example, OIM Italia’s MID programme, the IFAD’s programme with the Philippines NGO Atikha\(^{16}\) and certain NGO initiatives have supported migrant village associations with the investment of collective remittances in small-scale activities for agricultural development, education and health in local communities. Cooperation resources have been added to the migrants’ own resources.

### 2.2 Social remittances and training

Remittances are traditionally considered to be economic and monetary in nature, but it is important to remember that they are also made up of the so-called **social remittances**, which include the skills, training, ideas and professional experience acquired in the country of origin and later in the destination country that can be reinvested for the development of the home country. Integration in the destination country should – at least in theory – allow immigrants to be able to access better qualified jobs and tasks and consequently to have the opportunity to be paid higher average wages, to which the amount of remittances is correlated.

In the Italian labour market, unfortunately, a true match between supply and demand – that is, the possibility of being employed in a job that at least partly reflect the wealth of experience and skills acquired over time – is increasingly difficult to achieve, and can be particularly difficult for non-Italians.

In an attempt to encourage a change of direction, therefore, a series of **projects and actions aimed at allowing the effective integration of persons from third countries into the Italian productive fabric have been concluded**. Considering the areas of vocational training, education and educational systems in general; promoting investment in technical training and promoting the recognition of skills, such as qualifications.

Below are some of the few cases of pilot **programmes dedicated to vocational training in countries of origin** to be promoted in the international labour market:

- **EU-Tunis Mobility Partnership- European Union, Italy, Tunisia and Italy Lavoro S.p.A.**
  
  This intervention is aimed at strengthening the quality of the Tunisian professional training system, especially in the tourism and agriculture sectors, for workers involved in circular migration schemes\(^{17}\).

- **Education and Training for Egyptian Youth - OIM Cairo**
  
  The aim of this intervention is to strengthen the Fayyum technical hotel institute for tourism and to prepare students for job opportunities in the tourism sector, both in their own country and abroad\(^{18}\).

As regards these initiatives, it is important to stress the need to actively involve diasporas in the relations between the Italian government and the countries of origin so as to construct policies and interventions that take account of migratory realities and people’s needs and aspirations at a transnational level,


thereby avoiding a top-down approach only. In this area, we note the experience of the Ministry of Labour and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the case of Moldova, as described in the document on the Italian system with diasporas.

2.3 Circulation and returns

Another important aspect to consider is the possibility of facilitating movement between the destination country and the country of provenance or origin, encouraging circular, two-way and return migration, because supporting a continuous, cyclical movement of immigrants can enhance all the territorial contexts involved. There can be no doubt that in order to support this type of mobility, an adequate legislative context is first needed, and so certain European countries have signed specific cooperation agreements and programmes with countries of origin precisely in order to support circular and temporary migration. For example, in an attempt to satisfy these mobility and cooperation practices, Italy (like France, Hungary and the Slovak Republic) has put in place entry channels for seasonal work that enable round-trip migration (despite the fact that the procedure for participating in these seasonal flow decrees is not easy to access). Other European regulatory systems, on the other hand, allow immigrants to return to their home countries for a certain period without having to apply for a new residence permit (Belgium, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia and Lithuania). In others, immigrants can leave without losing their residence permit in the host country (Germany, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia and the United Kingdom).

To give a better idea of the mechanisms that circular migration can implement and encourage within an economic process, we will now describe a project involving Italy and Morocco, in particular the Emilia-Romagna and Khenifra Regions. This intervention calls for the creation of an integrated commercial production space between Khenifra and the fruit and vegetable district of Emilia Romagna, at the same time stressing the role of migrants as development agents.

In turn, the Italian Ministry of Labour has decided to strengthen its actions relating to training migrants in the movement of skills in order to respond to the specific needs of the Italian labour market with regard to opportunities for reinvestment of qualifications in home countries, as indicated in the document on the Italian system with diasporas.

In recent years, assisted voluntary return projects supported by the European Union and the Ministry of the Interior have been expanding. Traditionally, IOM Italia offers assistance to migrants who wish to return to their countries of origin through assisted voluntary return and reintegration programs. In more recent times, several NGOs have also begun to work on accompanying migrants and their families who ask to return to their country of origin for various reasons. From a development cooperation point of view, the most important commitment is to facilitate social and economic reintegration in the country of origin. In some cases, reintegration can represent an opportunity to contribute to local development by enhancing migrants’ resources and skills. In other cases, return has a humanitarian value when it responds to the

19 European Migration Network 2011.
20 Towards sustainable migration. Interventions in countries of origin. The Italian Centre for International Development (ICID) 2017.
needs of migrants, as has been highlighted by certain NGO experiences.

2.4 Diasporas in cooperation
Obviously, given these considerations, the involvement of diasporas becomes essential to the promotion of virtuous practices in development cooperation. Diasporas represent a natural bridge between the countries because they have created strong ties with the destination territory in which they now habitually live and the country of origin. To encourage these practices at an international level, various initiatives have been put in place that involve both the territories concerned. In this regard, the IOM has identified a series of priority actions aimed at encouraging development cooperation pathways. These have been described in a study.

1. **Transfer of human capital**: these are policies that aim to fill in gaps in terms of skills and professional experience through the involvement of migrants who have acquired significant qualifications in specific employment sectors in the destination countries in initiatives and projects in the countries of origin. These policies are also known as "brain banks", "brains trusts" and "brain circulation". Many of these interventions have been implemented by governments jointly with international organizations. One example of this is the OIM Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) project, which seeks to involve qualified members of diaspora communities resident in the European Union in development in their countries of origin through temporary assignments that enable skills and knowledge of institutions in the countries of origin to be strengthened.

Other countries, on the other hand, use the internet to create scientific, technological and business networks by connecting diaspora members with local experts. An example of this the Philippine Brain Gain Network (BGN) which promotes commercial development in the country through a network of professionals and organizations in the Philippines and abroad.

2. **Direct investments**: these programmes encourage investment by diaspora entrepreneurs in their countries of origin in order to contribute towards training and the development of economic activities aimed at encouraging growth in the country. Various operating methods have been put in place to date. There are also projects that are mainly aimed at providing information about the types of investment that can be put in place, the requirements and procedures through the use of consultation or information portals. In Ethiopia, for example, a "one stop shop" has been activated for investors in the diaspora. In other projects, attempts have been made to encourage investment by simplifying access to local economic networks, for example by developing commercial events dedicated to members of the diaspora or through meetings between local entrepreneurs and government representatives from the territories involved. In order to support these investments, some countries operate by providing funding, supplementary funding or low-interest loans: in this regard, the Development Marketplace for African Diasporas has been set up in Europe. In Italy, OIM promotes projects for direct investments for the

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21 Developing a Road Map for Engaging Diasporas in Development. A handbook for policymakers and practitioners in home and host countries. IOM-MPI, 2012.
22 See diasporamarketplace.org
creation of enterprises in countries of origin through the MigraVenture projects (funded by Italian Cooperation) and BASE (Bureau d'Appui aux Sénégalais de l'Exterieur). In the recent past, the Veneto Region has led a project called Success Pathways funded by the European Commission, which has supported the creation of immigrant companies in Senegal through the activation of a guarantee fund.

3. Capital market investments: these policies are aimed at encouraging investment in the capital market by the diaspora communities in their countries of origin. In this regard, countries such as Bangladesh, India and Tunisia have created a new category of deposit account in commercial banks that allows members of the diaspora to deposit their savings in their home country. Other countries have introduced "diaspora bonds", which pool diaspora resources so they can be invested in infrastructure and development projects. Examples of this may be found in Ghana, where the Golden Jubilee Bonds were issued in 2007, and in Ethiopia, which created the Millennium Corporate Bonds in 2008. Another option is transnational loans, which allow immigrants resident abroad to finance their families in their countries of origin.

4. Diaspora cooperation: this consists in private donations by members of the diasporas in their countries of origin. Philanthropic intermediaries are used to implement these practices so that the donations are more effectively applied. Among the best-known and most active intermediaries are the Brazil Foundation, Give2Asia and PhilDev. In other countries, these private donations are supplemented with government funds, as is the case with the Mexican programme Tres por Uno (3x1), or the Moldovan program PARE 1+1. The same type of mechanism has been put in place by the MIDA Italia Senegal programme with the Italian and decentralized cooperation mentioned above. Many initiatives involve small investments in education and health, and in local agricultural development activities.

5. Tourism and trade in the diaspora: this practice starts out from the assumption that because tourism is an area in which significant job and economic opportunities can be created, it is of fundamental importance fundamental to enhance the strategic role diaspora communities can play in the development of this productive sector. In this regard, some countries promote return visits for members of the diasporas, including certain types of cultural heritage and business tourism. Other initiatives conducted by immigrant associations with NGOs and within the context of the Fondazioni4Africa Senegal programme have sought to include stops in home villages in Tour Operator tours, thereby investing in local development. Alongside the tourism sector, the business sector also presents various opportunities: migrant associations can promote exports from their countries of origin, in particular towards the ethnic market, through business initiatives. Certain associations have sought to promote fair trade together with NGOs.

After this brief overview, we can therefore claim that the link between development cooperation practices and immigrant communities can be extremely deep and well-structured, and the new Italian cooperation rules not only ratify and govern this approach, but also offer the world of diasporas important

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new tools and opportunities.

2.5 Strategic objectives and interventions
To conclude, therefore, in order to better understand the policies and best practices to be put in place to support development cooperation processes in countries of origin, a report entitled "Towards Sustainable Migration" produced by the ICID - Tor Vergata and funded by Italian Cooperation has identified the following strategic objectives (supplemented here by considerations offered by) and the associated potential methods for intervention.

1. **Making migration a choice and not a necessity**: through active employment policies in the home country (promotion of entrepreneurship, training, employment services and employment subsidies). These cooperation programmes aim to tackle the root causes of migration, especially economic. Other programmes deal with emerging causes, including environmental, by supporting initiatives to strengthen local communities' capacities for resilience. On the other hand, one also needs to be aware that depending on the context, these initiatives could encourage, and not reduce, emigration, as shown by the analyses conducted by various researchers based on the transition theory24. Cooperation programmes and investment for job creation in countries of origin are not direct substitutes for emigration. It is only over the long term, with a reduction in international inequalities, that migrations can be associated with voluntary decisions.

2. **Increasing the employability of potential migrants**: by promoting and incentivizing programmes dedicated to vocational education and training, the recognition of skills and support for investments by companies in destination countries to recruit skilled workers. These programmes are poorly implemented, however, due to the crisis in the Italian labour market and the rigid nature of its immigration laws, and in any event are of little significance.

3. **Preparing future migrants with "skills and knowledge relating to migration"**: through training and information programmes to be completed prior to departure regarding the labour market and the general living conditions in the destination country. This type of intervention obviously only makes sense if the country of destination is willing to implement regular immigration channels for employment purposes. This does not seem to be the case in Europe today, except for special labour specializations. On the other hand, projects to raise awareness of the risks of illegal migration are becoming more widespread in order to curb flows by offering alternatives of local development.

4. **Facilitating bidirectional movement of migrants and accumulated knowledge, skills and capital**: through a legislative context and cooperation agreements that facilitate circular migration, thereby reducing the brain drain and encouraging the brain gain.

5. **Promoting the involvement of diaspora communities in the countries of origin**: through various actions that involve direct intervention by diaspora communities (direct and capital investments, information networks, the transfer of human capital, philanthropy from the diaspora, diaspora tourism and trade, as

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24 See, for example: [https://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/publications/wp-24-10](https://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/publications/wp-24-10)
mentioned above, and also by strengthening the capacity of diasporas and migrant associations to cooperate by participating at both a political and an operational level).

6. **Making migration a reversible choice by encouraging "return migration"**: through policies and legislative measures that support return migration, including in association with the voluntary return assistance programmes supported by the Ministry of the Interior and the European Union.

7. **Protecting children who have been "left behind" by migrant parents**: through policies that reinforce the system of protection and social support for minors left in their home countries, with the involvement and assistance of separated mothers and fathers within a framework of networks of social protection at a local level.

These concepts can be partly jeopardized, however, because the relationship **between migration and development can be influenced and exploited by the European and Italian political debate on the management of the migratory phenomenon**. It has been pointed out at various levels, in fact, that the development cooperation policy can be swallowed up by the objective of containing and halting migration in transit and home countries without offering regular and safe channels as required by the United Nations Global Compact for Migration and objective 10 for sustainable development.

It is important to make the point that on several occasions during local meetings, the diasporas have **highlighted the gradual degeneration of the economic, social and political situation in Italy**. This situation reduces the spaces for positive action on mutual and shared development.

Cooperation planning and the related good practices should therefore be considered within the more complex framework of the current difficult conditions and the need to adopt a positive political and value approach with regard to cooperation on migration development and management. It is important for the diasporas to make their voices heard on these choices.
3. The diasporas in Italian Cooperation’s three-year plan

3.1 The Italian Cooperation plan

The legislation governing Italian development cooperation has been rendered operational by the three-year Cooperation Planning and Guidance document (2016-2018), which outlines the priorities that will accompany development cooperation practices in the coming years. In particular, the thematic and sectoral intervention priorities are identified; they include not only agriculture, food safety, education, training, culture, health, governance and the fight against inequality, but also new areas in which Italy has strong skills.

Geographical priorities, starting with humanitarian aid in the most fragile areas, include, in this order, East and Sub-Saharan African regions, the Mediterranean Basin and the Middle East, the Balkans, the Afghan-Pakistani region, parts of South-East Asia and some areas of Central America. The geographical priorities are based on the one hand on historical, political, commercial and cultural relations, and the proximity – not only geographic – of certain countries, while on the other they take account of the growth prospects of certain areas, the comparative advantage that Italy has in certain sectors, the commitments made in international contexts and participation in multi-donor programs.

Within this framework, the theme of migration and development crosses practically all geographical contexts and spheres of action. In fact, if one studies the three-year planning and direction document (2016-2018), one sees constant reference to international migration, which is not only considered with regard to its most urgent and disruptive context, which is tied to the profound upheavals and wars that persist in various parts of the world such as Africa and the Middle East: the accent is also placed above all on the more structural dimension of this phenomenon, which has been of interest to Italy for over forty years.

New features have also been introduced on the financial front. First of all, the programme envisages a gradual increase in resources over the three-year period: €120 million in 2016 (an increase of approximately 40%), €240 million in 2017 and €360 million in 2018. This increase corresponds to a trend that began in 2012. In fact, according to the data available on openaid.aics.gov.it, Italian public development aid has increased from 2.4 billion euros in 2012 to 4.4 billion in 2016. However, this growth depends to a large extent on the fact that the costs of refugee reception in Italy, which reached €1.5 billion in 2016, are included in the accounts on government aid for development. Aid is therefore inflated compared with the specific objectives of cooperation for the development of partner countries. In any event, of the total amount, 2 billion are bilateral (1.5 are for refugee reception) and 2.4 billion transited through the multilateral channel, in particular through the European Union (1.7 billion euros) and international bodies (development banks and UN agencies). In 2016, AICS managed 214 million euros, of which 126 million were for the construction of 371 projects, mostly concentrated in Sub-Saharan African countries.

Box 3 - Three-year Planning and Direction Document (2016-2018)

The main objective of the Three-Year Planning and Direction Document 26 is to make a contribution to the creation of a sustainable development strategy by translating it into consistent policies, local and national priorities, concrete actions and an effective use of resources.

Specifically, the first priority remains humanitarian aid in the most fragile contexts - Syria, Iraq, Sudan, South Sudan, Yemen, Sahel, the Horn of Africa, Palestine and the CAR - and is applied in areas such as agriculture and food safety, education, training and culture, health, governance and the fight against inequality. In particular, the thematic priorities can be divided into eight macro-areas:

- governance, rights and the fight against inequality
- migration and development
- health
- education
- sustainable agriculture and food safety
- the environment, climate change and energy for development
- preservation of the cultural and natural heritage
- the private sector

As far as the identification of the geographical areas of intervention is concerned, priority countries are identified, which become the main recipients of the cooperation resources. These so-called priority countries are defined by certain traits, such as a humanitarian emergency, which today is more closely related to the so-called migration crisis than ever before. Specifically, the priority countries and the areas involved are:

- Sub-Saharan Africa: Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Niger, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan.
- the Mediterranean and Middle East: Egypt, Tunisia, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine.
- the Balkans: Albania and Bosnia.
- Latin America and the Caribbean: Bolivia, Cuba and El Salvador.
- Asia: Afghanistan, Myanmar and Pakistan.

This new plan is accompanied by the new governance structure of Italian Cooperation that is described in the first chapter. These are noteworthy innovations that should ensure a greater consistency, effectiveness, connection and political priority in development cooperation, involving the various actors in the Italian system, including migrant associations, in a more structured manner.

These being the premises, in the three-year period that is currently under way, Italian Cooperation plans to implement and/or incentivize a series of innovative initiatives that enhance the role of diasporas in the

creation of employment and income, in particular by leveraging the development of entrepreneurship, in close relationship with the countries of origin and transit, and with reference to previously-tested models, such as those launched in Senegal under the PLASEPRI programme. An example of this is in Egypt, with the LIFE - Local Development Initiatives for Egypt with Egyptians Abroad Project - which finances business initiatives using the know-how of the Egyptian diaspora in Italy. These are considered to be successful models, and the European Union has suggested that inspiration be drawn from them when creating initiatives for the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability in Africa and the fight against the root causes of migration.

3.2 The role of the diasporas and the working group on migrations and development of the CNCS

The central, transversal role of migration has also found operational synthesis in the National Council for Development Cooperation (CNCS), within which, as we have noted previously, working groups on the issues to be addressed, one of which is dedicated to Migration and Development, have been set up. The discussed in these working groups are:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Box 4 - Migration and Development Working Group</th>
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<tr>
<td>Until now, the Migration and Development working group set up within the National Council for Cooperation (CNCS) has conducted its business by dividing itself into three sub-groups divided into the following topics:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. the consistency of its policies, with particular reference to the European context;</td>
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<td>2. the mainstreaming of Migration and Development in cooperation planning;</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. the involvement of diasporas in Italian cooperation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The goal is to develop an Italian Migration and Development Agenda that includes the opportunity to:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• promote the definition of a national policy consistency plan, as required by the DAC/OECD and the EU, and as provided for in Law 125/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>• promote the definition of Italian Cooperation’s guidelines on Migration and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>• contribute to Italian Cooperation’s planning on Migration and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>• promote the establishment of a pathway to implement the contribution of the diasporas on Migration and Development in Italian Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The analysis has focused on five main action plans: political dialogue, migration and development, legal migration, illegal migration, asylum and protection.</td>
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<td>At the same time, proposals were put forward, the most relevant of which concerned the following topics:</td>
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<td>• expansion of the legal immigration channels for work and study to cover not only the most qualified migrants</td>
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<td>• the implementation and reinforcement of humanitarian corridors</td>
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</table>

This working group includes representatives of the various stakeholders in the Italian development cooperation system, representatives from international organizations such as IOM and IFAD and experts in the filed.

In this regard, thanks to an agreement between MAECI, the Ministry of the Interior, the Community of Sant’Egidio, the
• the commencement of trials on circular migration for the improvement of migrants for the development of both Italy and the countries of origin
• recognition of professional and educational qualifications
• an extension of social security agreements to include the possibility of aggregating social security contributions for the purposes of the requirement for the achievement of the right to retirement
• the need to amend certain aspects of the Bossi-Fini law (2002), with particular reference to the need to facilitate the establishment of legal, safe channels for the various types of migratory flow, as required by and as being negotiated with the UN Global Compact for migration.29
• consolidation of protection systems for the most vulnerable groups at an international level in association with the domestic level, especially in relations to minors and women.30

Today, therefore, it is possible to trace the orientation of the Migration and Development working group through the sharing of certain objectives, including:
• recognition and protection of the rights of migrants
• preventing forced migration due to conflicts and instability through political and diplomatic interventions
• increasing collaboration between countries of destination, origin and transit, with awareness of the fact that the same country often falls into all three categories
• reducing the social costs of migration and increasing its potential for development in both countries of origin and countries of destination.

There has also been the emergence of the sharing of certain practices such as territorial cooperation, migrant entrepreneurship, the role of NGOs in the management of migratory processes, bilateral cooperation and multilateral development banks and South-South cooperation.

Finally, the idea has been created in this group to create a pathway for the involvement of diasporas in Italian Cooperation, to make them protagonists and relevant players, if possible, in a structural way. This is where the Diaspora Summit initiative was created.

The diasporas are therefore called on to adopt cooperation plans and practices, to advance their own ideas and suggestions on the priorities and projects to be supported, as well as to reflect on more political

Federation of Evangelical Churches and the Tavolo Valdese, a humanitarian corridor has been set up – http://www.esteri.it/mae/it/politica estera/temi globali/diritti umani/i-corridoi-umanitari.html – while attempts are also being made to strengthen the resettlement tools.

29 See: https://www.unglobalcompact.org/take-action/action/humanitarian-needs

30 In this regard, a new, advanced law (no. 93/2017) has been approved for the protection of unaccompanied minors, which however requires a national implementation plan and adequate funding. Italy also has advanced legislation on the fight against trafficking (no. 28/2003). It is necessary in both cases to consider the international dimension of these phenomena and the role of cooperation: projects to protect groups of vulnerable migrants in their countries of origin and in transit countries are already under way. These projects call for a network and capacity support approach for local prevention and protection and the availability of alternative solutions to illegal migration.
aspects, such as the question of consistency between cooperation and migration policies.

This is why it is necessary to support more intensive dialogue among the various players (regions, local authorities and civil society organizations, including migrant organizations) on development issues, encouraging a "culture of cooperation", especially among young persons, and therefore also the so-called "second generations", by including cooperation in the school programmes with the education for global citizenship.

Local meetings of diasporas have led to the preparation of intervention proposals, which are summarized in the document containing the diasporas' recommendations to Italian Cooperation.

3. 4. Implementing a more structured dialogue between the diasporas and Italian Cooperation

We would like to conclude this path for understanding the laws on development cooperation and the tools and perspectives it offers Italy's resident immigrant population by attempting to offer some concrete proposals of pathways to be undertaken in order to define a methodology for the involvement of diasporas, to be developed over the course of time. It will be possible in this way to activate a more constant, structured dialogue among the diaspora associations and organizations, the countries of origin and destination and, more generally, the institutional structure of Italian Cooperation.

This is why the tools prepared by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, including the integration portal, the meetings begun with migrant communities and the relationship with the new generations (as indicated in the document on the Italian system with diasporas) are of use. These tools can be placed at the service of Italian Cooperation, as has already been done in the case of use of the database of migrant associations to be invited to local meetings.

As one seeks to imagine a structured dialogue between the diasporas and Italian Cooperation, it is helpful and interesting to observe the practices previously implemented in certain European contexts, where a network of diaspora associations has been created that operate and coordinate together. France has undoubtedly adopted the most structured intervention methodology through the establishment of the FORIM - Forum des Organisations de Solidarité Internationale Issues des Migrations.

Box 5 - FORIM

FORIM is an international platform established in 2002 with the aim of encouraging and supporting integration of the immigrant population, with a view to exchanges between France, the country of destination and the situations of origin, within a perspective of development cooperation. According to the viewpoint proposed by FORIM, immigrants and their organizations are "natural" promoters of development, social cohesion and dialogue with civil society organizations (CSOs) towards all the territories involved. FORIM was created by immigrant associations engaged in international solidarity in line with the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It therefore has political and institutional recognition. This forum-platform includes a network of approximately 700 associations, federations and groups of immigrant organizations for international solidarity (the acronym is OSIM in French), which operate in various contexts, such as Sub-Saharan Africa, the Maghreb, South-East Asia, the Caribbean and the
Indian Ocean region. In recent times, relations have also been instituted in other territorial contexts, such as Latin America.

How is FORIM structured?
FORIM is divided into various roles and bodies. Its senior management has a President, a General Secretary, a Treasurer and three Vice-Presidents. It also has a Board of Directors, which is made up of numerous immigrant associations, collectives and organizations that are scattered throughout France and come from various parts of the world. There is also a General Assembly, which is made up of all the members of FORIM.

What does FORIM do?
FORIM supports the role of immigrant organizations as promoters and main players in local development cooperation through information, research, training, the establishment of funds, exchanges and discussions on projects, communications and support for dialogue. Some of the projects and interventions conducted to date are:
- Support for local development projects from the OSIM through a national programme known as PRA/OSIM, which has been operational since 2003, and supports immigrant associations throughout the planning phase, measuring their ability to activate international cooperation and solidarity practices. The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development provides financial support, and the French Development Agency has also added a network of 24 operators throughout France since 2016. Various intervention sectors have been activated over time, including health, education, agriculture and access to water.
- The National Forum for Integration and Mutual Development (RENAICODE) supports immigrant organizations’ local development projects in the countries of origin. In particular, this consists in a series of meetings held by FORIM in various regions of France with field visits to the countries of origin.
- The international meeting of the South (RIS - Rencontres Internationales Sud): these are meetings between the various local and national players from the world of institutions to the world of civil society to encourage participation by diasporas in cooperation practices and to encourage diffusion and sharing of them.

The FORIM case therefore represents an initial hypothesis of structuring the involvement of diasporas in development cooperation. A similar structure could also be created in Italy if the MAECI and the AICS were to decide to invest in reinforcing dialogue with the diasporas and in their operational involvement in cooperation.

A second structural hypothesis relates to the integration of immigrant associations with the world of Italian civil society organizations oriented towards cooperation. In Italy, where the immigrant associations and organizations are being directly involved in development cooperation process for the first time through the new Law 125/2014, it might be helpful to think about encouraging them to join the networks of the civil society organizations that are already working in the
area of international development cooperation. Some of the possible contexts in which diaspora organizations and associations can be involved to encourage and implement these new cooperation practices are:

- AOI (the Association of Italian Organizations for International Cooperation and Solidarity)
- CiNI (Italian Coordination of International Networks)
- FOCSIV (the Federation of Christian International Voluntary Service Organizations)
- Forum SaD (the Permanent Forum for Long-Distance Support)
- LINK2007
- Local networks of civil society organizations for solidarity and cooperation, such as Coordinamento Piemontese (COP), Colomba [Lombardy), Coonger (Emilia Romagna), Marche Solidali and those in other Regions.

A third, very demanding hypothesis is tied to the IDEA (International Diaspora Engagement Alliance) project, a US Federal Government initiative supported by USAID³¹. Specifically, this project – which was presented for the first time during the inauguration of the Global Diaspora Forum held in the United States in 2011 - involves the establishment of a non-party, non-profit organization managed through a public partnership between the American Department of State, the US Agency for Interactional Development (USAID) and the Calvert Foundation. The participants are a select group of high-level donors and players from the business community, international and diaspora organizations, US foundations and US government agencies. The main objective is to promote the planning and implementation of initiatives to support the activities and pathways of diaspora communities by intervening in various ways: facilitating networking between diasporas, the private sector and non-profit organizations; supporting access to new resources, such as the Sustainable Diaspora Goals (SdG) Challenge ³² programme; offering technical assistance and professional training for members of the diasporas; and supporting implementation of the projects.

In order to enable the operating methods of the IDEA project to be better understood, the most significant initiatives are illustrated below. For example, MicroMentor is an online community of entrepreneurs that provides assistance and fosters the development of international business networks. One very attractive event is participation in and active support of the Global Diaspora Week – GDW – which is dedicated to diaspora communities and their contributions to global development. FISH 2.0 is an operation that brings together businesspeople dedicated to fishing and aquaculture and potential investors and consultants who can provide assistance. Specifically, particular attention has been paid to persons from the Pacific Islands, where fishing is one of the principal activities.

Thanks in part to this information, the local meetings of the diasporas discussed the possibility of jointly creating and developing other methods and paths for self-organization through which to encourage greater participation on the part of the associations. Proposals have emerged that have been collected in

³¹ USAID, the U.S. Agency for International Development.
³² http://www.diasporaalliance.org/sustainable-diaspora-goals-sdgs-challenge/
the document on the recommendations from the diasporas to Italian Cooperation.