

ENGAGING DIASPORA in development

Tapping Our Trans-local Potential for Change

www.sfu.ca/diasporas

Dialogue Program Human Insecurity and Peacebuilding: Diaspora Perspectives and Roles

Wednesday, July 13, 2011 6:30 - 9:00 PM

SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, 580 West Hastings Street

Project Co-Directors

Joanna Ashworth
Centre for Sustainable Community
Development, SFU

Shaheen Nanji
International Development, SFU

Dialogue Planning Committee:

Robert Anderson
School of Communication, SFU

James Busumtwi-Sam
Department of Political Science,

Nadia Chaney
Poet, Artist, Educator

Hanna Cho
Museum of Vancouver

Alexander Dawson
Department of History, SFU

June Francis
Faculty of Business Administration,

Joe Knockaert
Former Director of CIDA, Pacific

Tamarah Prevost
School of Communication, SFU

Sophia Sithole
School of Communication, SFU

Umeeda Switlo
CUSO-VSO

Scott Young
Asia Pacific Foundation

Project Coordinator: **Mignon Alphonso**
Research Assistant: **Chloë Straw**
Research Assistant: **Rosamelia Andrade**
Social Media Coordinator: **Jinny To**
Program Assistant: **Kris Nordgren**
Map Design: **Taylor Smith and Karen Wong**

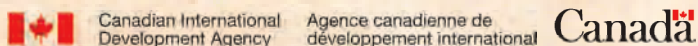


Dialogue Purpose

This dialogue is part of an ongoing public engagement series that examines the unique role of the diaspora resident in Vancouver who are committed financially and personally to development activities in the global south. Diaspora-driven development efforts have a powerful impact in the global south that reverberates here in Metro Vancouver. While often informal or grassroots, these initiatives demonstrate the benefits and unique strengths of the diaspora – cultural awareness of communities of origin and residence, fluency working in dual cultures, awareness of local issues and concerns (trans-local), and long-term personal commitment to projects and communities.

Many diaspora communities and individuals in BC have escaped civil unrest and/or conditions of personal insecurity in their countries of origin, or the countries where they lived, before arriving in Canada. From this safer refuge many work tirelessly to transform conflict and raise awareness about human insecurity in their regions of attachment.

Funding support provided by:



This project is undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada provided through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).
Ce projet est réalisé avec l'appui financier du gouvernement du Canada accordé par l'entremise de l'Agence canadienne de développement international (ACDI).

Project partners:



with special thanks to Bruce and Lis Welch Community Fund.

Program

6:30 pm Welcome

Dr. Joanna Ashworth & Ms. Shaheen Nanji

Co-Directors, Engaging Diaspora in Development Project

Exploring Diaspora Contributions to Peacebuilding

Dr. James Busumtwi-Sam, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science

Diaspora Experiences

Featured presenters / storytellers reflect on enabling factors, limitations, and lessons in conflict transformations and peacebuilding.

Juliane Okot Bitek, Uganda

Ritendra Tamang, Nepal and Bhutan

Kawa Jabary, Northern Iraq

Reena Lazar, Israeli and Palestinian Youth Project

Dialogue - All

What have diasporas accomplished in terms of transforming conflict and increasing human security in regions of attachment?

What are the effective and legitimate roles of diaspora in gaining support for human rights and security?

What are the possibilities for peacebuilding -- from formal to informal approaches to transforming conflict, reconciliation, and supporting good governance in regions of attachment?

Final Reflections - Weaving Stories and Theories Together

Dr. Robert Anderson, Professor, School of Communication

A CLOSING POEM - JULIANE OKOT BITEK

9:00 pm Adjourn

Reception to follow in atrium

Speakers

ROBERT ANDERSON, Ph.D. (Chicago) is a Professor at the School of Communication at SFU. His primary interests include Negotiation and Dialogue as Communication, International Development and Communication, Communication in Conflict and Intervention, and Communication in the History of Science and Technology.

JOANNA ASHWORTH, EdD is Associate Director for the Bolivia Community Economic Development project and advises community organizations throughout BC on multicultural dialogue planning. She is a senior research associate at the Centre for Sustainable Community Development. Joanna is also co-director of the Engaging Diaspora in Development: Tapping our Trans-local Potential for Change project.

JULIANE OKOT BITEK comes to a diasporic identity quite honestly -- she was born to Ugandan exiles in Kenya. She has Bachelor's Degree in Fine Art and a Master's in English. This fall, she begins her doctorate as a Liu Scholar at UBC. Juliane lives with her family in Vancouver.

JAMES BUSUMTWI-SAM, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor specializing in International Relations and Comparative Development in the Department of Political Science at SFU. His primary interests include International Organization, the Political Economy of Development and Security, and International Relations theory. His regional specialization is African politics and development. He has published on international organizations and regional security, the political economy of macroeconomic policy reform and financial liberalization in developing countries, and international financial institutions.

KAWA JABARY was born in Northern Iraq, the Kurdish region. He was arrested for political activities against the Kurdish Regional Government in 1994. After Kawa was released, he left Iraq for Turkey. In Turkey, he was given a political refugee status and sent to Canada. Kawa has been in Canada since 1997. He completed an undergraduate degree, majoring in political science at SFU. This coming September, he will begin a masters program in political science.

REENA LAZAR is one of the founders and the Executive Director of the Peace it Together Society. Peace it Together unites young people from opposing sides of a conflict to co-create films that are then used as educational and empowerment tools in the conflict region and around the world. The third dialogue and filmmaking program focusing on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict takes place from July 7-August 4, 2011 and will bring together three delegations of 10 Israeli, Palestinian and Canadian university students to British Columbia. Now that Peace it Together has successfully tested their model in one context, they will be replicating it to other areas of conflict over the next several years. Visit: www.peaceittogether.com

SHAHEEN NANJI is Director of International Development and Faculty Engagement at SFU. She co-directs Engaging Diaspora in Development: Tapping our Trans-local Potential for Change and oversees CIDA projects in China and Kenya. Shaheen is working on a Master of Arts in International Studies, with a focus on diasporic influences on development. Born and raised in Nairobi, Kenya, Shaheen moved to Vancouver in 1989 and has firsthand understanding of the ways diaspora communities seek to give back to their birth nations.

RITENDRA TAMANG is from Nepal and holds a PhD in Social and Cultural Anthropology from the California Institute of Integral Studies, San Francisco and an MA in Communication Studies from the University of Western Sydney, Australia. Ritendra's research focuses on anthropology of intersections of international development and migration in a broader contemporary societal and political context. Ritendra is currently a consultant with Network for Development and Democracy in Vancouver.

ENGAGING DIASPORA in development

Tapping Our Trans-local Potential for Change

www.sfu.ca/diasporas

SCARS by Juliane Okot Bitek

My words are scars that remind me of the sharp pain of the moments that my body was broken into, but retain just enough memory, so I don't forget. Words run through my mind, tumble out of my mouth create whirlwinds of perplexed faces that sit with you around the wang'oo, waiting for the telling at the fire pit.

You don't have to be shot to know that the force of the bullet will pick you up and throw you away. It will numb you and then waken you to the instance of intense burning arising from the trajectory where metal fragments break into joyous pieces of death swimming about inside your blood stream. Here, take these words. Catch the whirlwind in your palm. Rest a bit with me.

In the afternoon, we can count the lines in fallen tree trunks scattered about the landscape. In the afternoon, we shall sit by the river, looking for river ghosts that dart across the banks. In the evening, you can sit by me and hold me up as I let the torrents out. These stories must be told, they must be told, they must be told, they must be told. They are only scars after all, not like open flesh in the hot sun, not like broken blisters against rubber boots, bone through skin, a persistent and itchy bald spot on the top of your head after the last idea you could use as otac to balance the jerry can on your head disintegrated into nothing.

My words are the skeletal remains of abii grass, still standing after the burning, still waving with the afternoon breeze; waiting, waiting for you to touch it so it can crumble into wisps of ash in your palm and take you back with the distinct smell of the smoke from the fires of the last dry season.

Suggestions?

Seeking stories of Trans-local leaders

Are you or someone you know doing exemplary development work in the Global South while based in the Metro Vancouver area?

Please email us at diasporas-info@sfu.ca

Next dialogue in the series: *Diasporic Contributions to Development*

Wednesday, September 14, 2011 6:30 – 9:00 PM

SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue

Follow our blog series on:

engagingdiaspora.wordpress.com/

Stay updated with us on:



Facebook Group
www.facebook.com/EngagingDiaspora



www.twitter.com/SFU_Diaspora