

## Engaging Diaspora in Development: Dialogue Series

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SFU is bringing together leaders of Metro Vancouver's diverse multicultural communities and the general public for a two-year public dialogue series beginning Jan. 19, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at SFU's Wosk Centre for Dialogue.

The CBC's Margaret Gallagher is moderating the Jan.19 dialogue, which will be streamed as a live webcast at <http://www.lidc.sfu.ca/broadcast> (Note that Adobe Flash Player 10 is required).

The dialogues will focus on how many of the communities, known as diasporas, contribute or have the potential to significantly help with development issues in the countries of their origin. The goal is to tap their potential to bring about change.

"These are resourceful leaders; they've done everything from building schools in Pakistan and funding education in Namibia and Bangalore, India, to organizing Haitian relief and supporting peaceful social mobilization southern Sudan," says Joanna Ashworth, co-director of the project.

The dialogues will explore the impact of current initiatives as well as the potential for future endeavours. The first deals with innovations in poverty reduction and economic development.

Project co-director Shaheen Nanji says the dialogues will examine diasporas' local knowledge of the community and their potential to contribute to social, economic and ecological development. "This phenomenon is gaining attention internationally but there is much yet to be explored," she says.

The dialogues are organized around the UN Millennium development goals and will focus on initiatives that address poverty reduction and economic growth, health, education, peace and human security and diasporic contributions to development.

An interdisciplinary advisory group of SFU faculty, graduate students and community leaders will also provide input. Funding support provided by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and presented in partnership with SFU, CUSO-VSO and the BC Council for International Education.

For more information contact [diasporas-info@sfu.ca](mailto:diasporas-info@sfu.ca) or visit: [www.sfu.ca/diasporas](http://www.sfu.ca/diasporas).