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**A STUDY ON DIASPORA ENGEEMENT IN
DEVELOPMENT PROCESS OF MYANMAR**

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A STUDY ON DIASPORA ENGEEMENT IN DEVELOPMENT
PROCESS OF MYANMAR

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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ABSTRACT

When people leave their home country for reasons, they usually take their identity, culture, tradition, and custom with them. In many cases the emotional connection with their country of origin grows even stronger. This thesis focus on examining Myanmar government's efforts of diaspora engagements in development and Myanmar diasporas' willingness to engage in development process and constraints limiting their ability to get involve in rebuilding Myanmar. Both primary and secondary data were collected from several sources and analyzed. A survey was conducted among Myanmar diaspora community in Canada where more than 10,000 nationals, including both socio-economic and political migrants, currently reside. Among them, over 160 people were selected by using simple random sampling method, and survey findings were illustrated with descriptive method. That diaspora engagement in development can have substantial impact on development of home country has been proved for decades. Diasporas have been attracted and considered as agents of development for decades by many countries. In Myanmar, current and previous governments have shown that they were interested in utilizing skills and experience of their national living abroad in development process at home. They have made few efforts to increase diaspora engagement in development process. Some policies are in line to be implemented. Current diaspora engagement in public and private sectors in Myanmar are very encouraging. Yet Myanmar nationals living abroad are still very eager to get involved in reform and development processes, however there are some constraints holding them back.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFF	ASEAN Football Federation
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
BC	British Columbia
BSPP	Burma Socialist Programme Party
CAD	Canadian Dollar
CONICET	National Council of Scientific and technological Research
CSIC	Sectorial commission scientific research
DFID	Department for International Development
DICA	Directorate of Investment and Company Administration
EMPA	Executive Master of Public Administration
EPUM	Economic Policy of Union of Myanmar
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMS	Greater Mekong Sub-region
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JMC	Union- level Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee
MFF	Myanmar Football Federation
MIC	Myanmar Investment Commission
MIPS	Myanmar Institute for Peace and Security
MPA	Master of Public Administration
MPC	Myanmar Peace Center
MSDP	Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan
NATO	The North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCA	Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement
NGO	Non- Governmental Organization
NYC	National Youth Commission
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PR	Permanent Residence
PRFRT	The Permanent Residence of A Foreigner Rules
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal

SID	Society for International Development
TSC	Technical Secretarial Center
USD	United States Dollar

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In today's world, a country's competitiveness in the global economy, its productivity, and economic growth depend on a workforce whose skills and knowledge are continually improved. But many countries did not have educational systems capable of meeting this challenge and many others are witnessing their most highly skilled workers emigrate to developed countries where better opportunities are present. Indeed, many countries were, before opening themselves up to the world, isolated not only from global flows of trade and capital but from the knowledge and technology that make these possible. When they decide to reform and engage in globalization, they found themselves in shortage of knowledge, technology, and skilled workers.

Nationals living abroad become an interesting source for knowledge transfer and skilled workers. The role of diasporas in the development, poverty reduction, reconstruction and growth of countries of origin is drawing considerable policy interest. To utilize their potential maximum-contribution to development, and minimize potential negative effects, any policy concerning a country's relation with the overseas diasporas needs careful management. According to IOM, members of diasporas' willingness to engage in socio-economic development of their home lands are very profound, provided that the opportunities offered to do so are credible, and that specific cooperation mechanisms between home and host countries allow them to keep their jobs in the host country.

1.1 Rationale of the Study

In 2008, after 46 years of self-isolated and centrally planned and socialist-style-closed-economy since military coup in 1962, Myanmar has finally chosen the market economy system again. A partially liberalized constitution, referred as 2008 Constitution, was adopted by a national referendum in 2008. In term of political system, critics view the 2008 constitution as a quasi-civilian system because twenty-

five percent of parliament members in both chambers are non-elected military-personals appointed by commander in chief. However, in term of economic system, 2008 constitution clearly states the economic system newly adopted by the country. In article (35) it says, “The economic system of the Union is market economy system”. And article 36 (a) also states “The Union shall permit all economic forces such as the State, regional organizations, cooperatives, joint-ventures, private individual, so forth, to take part in economic activities for the development of National economy” (Union of Myanmar, 2008). Military regime, between the years of 1988 to 2010, has been starting partially marketing liberalization before 2008 constitution was adopted. Agricultural sector was part of the liberalization program. The 2008 constitution became active in 2011 after general election in 2010. Since then, private sector has been forcefully encouraged and supported by government, and private sector has been growing rapidly. According to the Directorate of Investment and Company Registration (DICA), almost 70, 000 private companies have been registered. The reform economic liberalization policies, especially those reforms that focused on foreign trade and investment, promoted a higher level of international economic integration. Reforms promoting internationalization have helped to generate sustained economic growth. Indeed, Myanmar has had one of the highest annual rates of growth in the world at close to eight and to nine percent real GDP growth between 2011 and 2015.

As private sector growth at a fast pace, many unseen-challenges and inefficient policies have been interesting debates to keep the growing economy sustainable. To feed the growing FDI and merge into the global market, rising demand for skilled labor has also been one of the challenges such as political stability, robust banking system to support international transactions, high land costs, infrastructure and logistic costs, labor laws, facing currently. As Myanmar attracts more investments, it has been a tough struggle to provide skilled labours for the construction, tourism, manufacturing, and service sectors. In his article in Myanmar Times, Kyaw ko ko (2017) highlighted what Myo Aung, permanent secretary of Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, said “Myanmar was in need of skilled labours to compete with other ASEAN countries” (Kyaw Ko Ko, 2017).

To be able to meet the high demand of skilled workers, Myanmar government seemingly have only two options: to train locals, or to bring already-trained foreign skilled workers. Training local people is a must for a long-term plan, however it is not

a comprehensive solution for urgent needs of increasing demand for skilled workers. In this case, to attract and bring in skilled workers is a task need to be done urgently. Government did not want to fill all positions for the skilled workers with foreign expatriates. It set a quota system for companies; a certain percentage of total positions for skilled workers in a company must be filled with locals. Knowledge sharing and skill transfer is another anticipation from foreign skilled-workers besides their high productivities. However skill transfer and knowledge sharing did not happen fast enough to catch up the shortage of local skilled-workers. Local skilled workers are still fall short of their quota. Previously it was set that, for the companies registered with Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC), at least 25 % of total skilled workers, technicians, and staff, must be Myanmar citizens during the first two years of operations. With the hope that skill transfer and knowledge sharing would take place in work places, and skill trainings would, at the same time, produce a number of skilled workers to fill the gap, this percentage had to increase to at least 50% during the 2-4 years of operation, and to at least 75% in years 4-6. Employers may hire a larger percentage of foreign employees for technological and managerial work with the approval of the Special Economic Zones (SEZ) management committee. However, this quota system was abolished by the enactment of the new Myanmar Investment Law 2016, just leaving requirement of approval to appoint foreign workers (Nang Kay Si Kham @ Lorenz, 2018,). Terminating the quota system for skilled workers confirms that the scarcity of local skilled workers is still a serious problem.

As a part of the efforts to bring skilled labours Myanmar government introduced “the Permanent Residence of a Foreigner Rules” in 2014. It was intended to be an incentive program for foreign expatriates and former Myanmar citizens. The program aimed to provide more convenient entry and exit the country without going through the long process of visa and stay permit application process for the expatriates with long term contracts, and some local-like rights during their stay in Myanmar.

In recent years, Myanmar governments have done several reform efforts to make Myanmar more attractive to expatriates. One of the notable changes after 2011 was the relationship between Myanmar diasporas and their homeland. Sentiments of resentments and distrusts – lasted for decades between diasporas and previous military regime, created by the past political circumstances lessened to some extent after new

government led by president U Thein Sein took office in 2011. The Government of Myanmar had continued to maintain high barriers and strict regulation over the economy and done little to encourage economic growth through foreign trade and the inflow of external investments for many years. The closed nature of Myanmar's economy and the relationship between government and diasporas around the world had discouraged members of its own diasporas from contributing to the country's economic development. Since 2011 government's reform policies have shifted toward a higher level of liberalization along with welcoming outlook of diasporas. Simultaneously, members of Myanmar's Diaspora, the *Overseas Myanmar*, have disproportionately dropped their past resentments associated with the circumstances regarding their departure of Myanmar from the outbreak military regime.

Although some resentment remains due to the fact that the 2008 constitution is not fully democratic, most have faded in light of Myanmar's recent economic achievements since they are generating greater economic opportunities that are attracting the highly skilled and educated overseas Myanmar who have accumulated capital and knowledge, to return home and contribute to Myanmar's economic growth (Economist, 2008). Communications between diaspora and homeland became more positively active. In August 2011, the first elected president Thein Sein, an ex-general, initiated reform policy towards diasporas by welcoming Myanmar dissidents in exile to "come home" in order to help contribute towards the national development of the country.

During 1990s and 2000s, Myanmar diasporas – not only political exiles but also all socio-economical emigrants, were very vigorous and active to help bring the political change and democratization back home. They have tremendously played their role in democratization and liberalization phase by mobilizing international forces and supports. However, after 2011, in the next phase, the focus has been dramatically shifted to how they can effectively contribute to the social and economic development in their homeland. For the LDCs, and developing countries, in regard of diasporas, financial remittances from diasporas are perceived as most significant contribution to their birthplace during time of rebuilding infrastructures and carrying out other development programs as the foundation of development processes. Myanmar is not an exception. Remittance money is a one of important resources for development. However diasporas can do much more than sending money back for their homeland. "Diasporas can play an important role in the economic development of their countries

of origin. Beyond their well-known role as senders of remittances, diasporas can also play a role in promoting trade and foreign direct investment, create businesses and spur entrepreneurship, and transfer new knowledge and skills” (Newland & Sonia Plaza, 2013)

The recent trend of the *Overseas Myanmar* returning to Myanmar is still in its first phase and its full potential has not been realized yet. It nonetheless remains a great source of economic development for the country. While there have been an growing number of studies examining Diasporas engagement in economic development of their home country, the studies have mainly emphasized on large emerging economies such as India (Kapur, 2004; Saxenian, 2006; Pham, 2010) and China (Smart and Hsu, 2005; Pham, 2010). Unfortunately, there are only few articles written on the Myanmar Diaspora and their potential contributions to Myanmar. Billo (2012) pointed out, in his article on Asia Society blog, that experts and academics urge Myanmar’s government to reach out to its diasporas to utilize the skills and local knowledge that its former inhabitants can offer (Billo, 2012). He also quoted Ivan Small, an anthropologist based at Cornell University who has studied Southeast Asian diaspora groups extensively, saying “Engagement is a favourable approach for Myanmar, and one of the best ways to catalyze diaspora contribution in the country is to encourage and support them to return as volunteers," to high light the role of diaspora members (Billo, 2012). More studies exploring how to utilize Myanmar diaspora engagement in economic development of their home country need to be done. More works need to be done to examine limitations, challenges, and opportunities associate with Myanmar diaspora engagement efforts from both government and diaspora communities. In order to development an efficient and affective policy on diaspora engagement for national development, it will require not only systematic observing and studying policies of countries with similar situations, but also consultations of all stakeholders.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follow:

- 1) To examine the current government’s diaspora engagement efforts and the views of members of Myanmar diaspora on government’s diaspora engagement efforts
- 2) To identify the limitations and constraints to diasporas’ engagement in

development process

1.3 Method of Study

This study used both primary and secondary data. Secondary data were gathered from several reliable sources such as government publications, government departments, organizations' official publications and researches, peer-reviewed articles and books, previous original researches, and new papers and journals. Primary data were collected through survey well-designed questionnaire referencing the questionnaires from previous international studies to serve the thesis objectives. The simple random sampling method was used over 150 people from Myanmar diaspora community in Canada. A well-designed questionnaire was used to learn respondents' views on Myanmar government's diaspora engagement efforts, relevant laws and regulations, and their views on proposed policies referenced from previous studies conducted around the world. They are also designed to examine their willingness, and constraints to engagement in socioeconomic development process in their homeland. This survey was conducted during August of 2019. Descriptive method was used to present the data collected from the survey.

1.4 Scope and Limitations of the Study

In order to develop effective and efficient diaspora engagement policies and programs, it is important not only to examine the theoretical field of diaspora engagement, but also to understand and analyze underlying factors of the Myanmar diaspora engaging efforts by both sides – Myanmar government and Myanmar diaspora communities. This study mainly focus on two areas: 1) Understanding Myanmar diasporas' willingness, efforts, knowledge of relevant information, challenges, and limitations to contribute to development back in Myanmar. For this purpose, a survey was conducted by using a questionnaire well designed by referencing questionnaire used in similar studies in other countries. 2) Understanding Myanmar government's implemented and pending diaspora engagement efforts, policies, and programs. For this purpose, secondary data will be collected from several sources – news, institutions, and including government's publications and announcements. Members of Myanmar community in Canada are targeted population to study. Therefore, Canada is the locale for the survey. Exclusion criteria for sampling – those who are under 18 were excluded. The study period is between March and August of 2019.

1.5 Organization of the Study

The thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 begins with an introduction to the background of the study. And it continues with a brief introduction to the historical and international theory paradigms revolving the connection between policies and diaspora/migrant contributions in international aspect. It then describes the specific research objectives, the scope and limitations, and methods used for this thesis paper. Chapter 2 presents a review of the literatures that examine the links diasporas and their homeland's development, academics' theories, policies currently implemented by countries, global mindset, network relationships and governments' diaspora engagement efforts for development. As observing to the policies and efforts of countries in regard to diaspora engagement, the examples of them will be presented in this chapter. Chapter 3 provides an overview of background of Myanmar's emigrants and diasporas around the world with historical and current factors of Myanmar migration. It also displays the examples of current diasporas engagements and their impact in development in Myanmar. Myanmar government's diaspora engagement efforts, policies implemented, and policies pending to be implemented were examined as well in this chapter. And it also outline diasporas' challenges, and constraints to engage in development in their country of origin. Chapter 4 describes the survey design and methodology used. It outlines the study's sampling plan, questionnaires, data collection process, and data analysis approach. It also i Myanmar diasporas' background-situation, relevant knowledge, challenges, limitations, opinions, and options by using Finally td Chapter 5 designated to present the study's summary of findings, conclusion, and recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview on Migration

The definition of the term “migration”, compared to other terms such as “development” and “diaspora”, is more straightforward. International Organization for Migration (IOM) defines it as “the movement of persons away from their place of usual residence, either across an international border or within a State”. It also separately defines both Internal migration and International migration. Internal migration is the movement of people within a state involving the establishment of a new temporary or permanent residence.

International migration is the movement of persons away from their place of usual residence and across an international border to a country of which they are not nationals (IOM, 2005). Other researchers shared their view on the term as well. Bakewell (2012) indicates migration to be ‘the observation of the physical movement of people across geographical space’. This definition explains the visible behavior of people moving across the world (Bakewell, 2012). As it is simple to understand the term, it needs to, however, recognize that there are two parts in the definition; cause and action. Action part of migration is that people moving to another place internally or internationally. The cause part is a little more than the action part. Yet it can still be recapitulated as ‘unsatisfying condition’ - the main cause to migrate. When one, more than one, or all of the conditions of security, healthcare, education, living standard, political situation are unsatisfying, in other word “not good enough to one’s standard”, he or she migrate. The Department for International development (DFID) states that ‘poor people often choose to migrate as a way of improving their lives’ (DFID, 2007). For a long time, international migration has similarly been seen as a means to secure livelihoods when there is a lack of jobs in countries of origin (Piper, 2009).

The statement of DFID may be partially true in the case of internal migration, but if the general assumption that ‘the poorer he or she is, the lesser educated and

knowledgeable he or she will be' is true, the statement by DFID would not be true in the case of international migration in few decades ago, unless third party involves – for example UN's refugee resettlement program. Because of globalization, nowadays borders are more opened and transportations have been much improved and accessible for poor people, migration across neighbors' borders become more common. People, of course, prefer going to developed countries rather than becoming migrant workers in neighboring countries. However international migration to developed countries is still beyond the reach of poor people since immigration policies of these developed countries are still too high for poor people from underdeveloped countries. That is where 'brain drain' comes in. Educated, experienced, connected, talented, and skillful people from poor countries are the only ones preferred by developed countries as newcomers, unless they are refugees who they usually accept by limited number.

According to the IOM report in 2018, 244 millions people are stalemated living abroad. Migration, People moving from the place of birth to another place for permanent resettlement or temporary settlement becomes more and more command and continue to grow. "In today's increasingly interconnected world, international migration has become a reality that touches nearly all corners of the globe. Modern transportation has made it easier, cheaper and faster for people to move in search of jobs, opportunity, education and quality of life. At the same time conflict, poverty, inequality and a lack of sustainable livelihoods compel people to leave their homes to seek a better future for themselves and their families abroad (International Migration Report, 2017).

As people migrate for many reasons, migrants can be generally categorized into four main groups; Economic Migrants, Political Migrants, Environmental Migrants, and Family Reunion. People who migrate to seek benefits from greater economy in term of better income, better education, better living standard, and so on fall into economic migrant group. Those who are forced to migrate because of a war, civil war or state policies which discriminate against particular groups of citizens or people who oppose those in power, and who sometime choose to migrate due to their political ambition to bring changes to their home country are considered political migrant group. Environmental migrants are people who involuntarily migrate from or flee their home region due to sudden or long-term changes to their local environment, which adversely affects their well-being or livelihood. This form of migration refers

to members of a family coming to join one of their relatives who is resident in another country. This commonly includes fiancé(e)s, (proposed) civil partners, spouses, or unmarried or same-sex partners, dependent children and elderly relatives. Migration creates diaspora. All migrants are not necessarily diaspora, but all diaspora are migrants.

Even though migration and development has always been closely linked, it was not until the middle of the 1990's that a rapidly growing interest about the links between development and migration among scholars arose. Migration becomes the interesting topic to some scholars as an agent of development, whereas as it was previously believed that emigration was a disadvantage (Boyle & Kitchin, 2014). Notions of diaspora will continue. Interpretations and perceptions will continue to vary.

2.2 Diaspora and Development

Link between migration and development leads to link between diaspora and development. Conceptual difference between migrants and diasporas can be developed by clarifying both terms. Migration and migrant have been discussed in previous section.

2.2.1 Diaspora

The term “diaspora” originates in Greek, descended from the word “*diaspeirein*” meaning “to scatter”. The origin of the word can be traced back to centuries. The capitalized term “the Diaspora” refers to Jews living outside Israel. However, referring to people, dictionaries define diaspora as group of people who live outside of their homeland. While the word is not as simple as just a mere synonym of any of terms: refugee, overseas community, exile, expatriate, immigrant, displaced or stateless person, and so on, but it encompasses all of them. Being Popular among academics and scholars, the concept is still causing debates (Vertovec 1997; Gilroy 1997; Anthias 1998; Tambiah 2000; Sheffer 2003; Shain and Barth 2003; Brubaker 2005; Cohen 2008; Egreteau 2012). In recent years, the notion of diaspora has become one of the main topics in the academic and policy discussion for development. As the term “exile” is too political, the word “refugee” sounds the echo of crisis, needs, troubles, or escaping, and at the same time the notion of “overseas” means nothing but the location. The term “diaspora” seems to cover everyone living

outside of their country of origin with all reasons, even including the decedents. Here to realize that the essence of the term ‘diaspora’ is the origin or root of one. However, the having an origin is not exclusive character that utterly defines the term. Frequent notion of the term by academics and scholars in debates and researches in vary areas has made the definition of the term become loose. Many academics have come to clarify the term afterward.

A point of view of diaspora raised by Gabriel Sheffer, a professor of Political Science at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, in his book “*Modern Diasporas in International Politics*” (published in 1986) was noted by Lisa Anteby-Yemin and Willam Berthomiere (2005) in their paper “Diaspora: A Look Back on a Concept”. They pointed three criteria can be used to test the community or an individual to be able to considered as diaspora:

1. To uphold and continue to practice collective custom, culture, and identity, yet to keep them develop within
2. To have own communities or organizations that reflects their identity and beliefs, still distinct from those in the host country or in the country of origin.
3. To have regular communications with the homeland in real term (i.e. travelling back, sending remittance)

Efforts of conceptualisation of the term “diaspora” did not stop, yet became more circumstantial and specified by bringing additional characters into the meaning. Many topologies were introduced in 1990s. William Safran, one of the first authors to be published in the review *Diaspora* edited by Kachig Tololyan, suggested that in his view the term diaspora could be consider as a “metaphoric designation” and could apply to various populations (expatriates, political refugees...). In his essays (1991 & 1999), Safran defined the diasporas as follows: expatriate minority communities:

1. that left original “location” to at least two “peripheral” places;
2. that maintain a “memory,” vision or myth about their original homeland;
3. that “believe they are not – and perhaps cannot be – fully welcomed by their host country;”
4. that see the home land as a place of eventual return when the time is right;
5. that are dedicated to the maintenance or restoration of this homeland, and;
6. of which the group’s consciousness and solidarity are “importantly defined” by this continuing relationships with the homeland. (Lisa Anteby-Yemini and William Berthomière, 2005). Basically there are two different approaches on

conceptualisation of diaspora, identity-base approach and intentional-base approach. The first approach believes that conservation and practice of homeland's traditions, customs, beliefs, and culture are essential to be considered as diaspora. However the second approach pay more attention on how migrants feel about the host country and homeland. To be considered as a member of diaspora community, one must have a country of origin or a root and feel that host country is just temporary and he or she will return to home one day. Notions of diaspora will continue. Interpretations and perceptions will continue to vary.

Nevertheless the term "Myanmar diaspora" is used in this thesis as "Myanmar nationals and their decedents who live outside of Myanmar temporarily or permanently regardless of their reason to leave Myanmar and their citizenship status".

2.2.2 Development

The term 'diaspora' has been examined and reviewed different approaches. The definition, which is used in this paper, has also been clarified as well. What is development? SID (Society for International Development) defines development as "a process that creates growth, progress, positive change or the addition of physical, economic, environmental, social and demographic components". And it continued to share a view that resources of environment do not need to be sacrificed by raising the level and quality of life of people, and creating and expansion of local regional income and employment opportunities (SID, 2018). The simple take away from that point of view of development is that development is more than just a GDP growth or economic growth. It involves quality, sustainability, coherence, and collective progress for all.

Development became an international discussion point in the second half of the twentieth century. The realization that economic growth does not guarantee the quality of life for the people has developed (SID, 2018). As momentum of globalization is getting stronger with the help of advancement in technology, every corner of the world became visible from another corner of the world. Countries witness others' development. Thrust for development has risen. Many development theories have been conceptualized. Development indexes were introduced. Many development studies have been done. Education, trade, technology, political stability, energy and many more are marked as development agents. Diaspora engagement is

also considered one of the development agents especially for LCDs and developing countries that usually experienced heavy emigrations before.

2.3 Diaspora Engagement in Development

People normally do not tend to leave their countries of origin or homeland if everything is going well. There are several reasons why people leave the place they consider as home. People usually leave for places where economy is better. When their home countries are back in the game of global economic market after political or economic reform has taken place, the roles for the diasporas, who have been trained or educated abroad, to engage in development programs at their homeland are wide opened. Knowledge transfer, remittance, investments, and social capital as ingredients of economic development become the main focal interests under the banner of diaspora, especially in the countries where open market policy has been recently adopted after years of isolation and central-controlled economy.

That whether diasporas can contribute to the development of their home countries or not is a debate. The link between diaspora and development at their home countries has been proven by not only many studies but also the current diaspora engagement programs and policies created by many countries.

In 2013 The Diaspora Ministerial Conference on the theme “Diasporas and Development: Bridging between Societies and States”, organized by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), was held in Geneva. 55 high level government officials from 115 countries with about 500 participants in total attended The conference was the first of its kind to serve as an international platform for diaspora ministries and representatives to discuss the role and contribution of diaspora in development policy. The event was therefore a clear evident that governments’ interests are increasing to collaborate with diaspora communities to capitalize on their potential for development. Padufile (2013), one of the participants, shares the takeaways from the conference as:

Diasporas are considered as important agents of economic and social development in countries of origin, but governments often have no knowledge or capacity of engaging them effectively at scale.

Strategic cooperation between states, international organizations, civil society and private sector are essential to have a framework for diaspora engagement to facilitate transfer of resources and know-how sharing.

Government must create proper incentives and guarantees to attract financial (capital) non-financial (i.e. skills and expertise) diaspora resources.

Communication and strategic outreach are vital to effective implementation of programs and policies for diaspora engagement;

For an effective mechanism, recurrent request from policymakers to share best practices, such as a global database with up-to-date information on relevant evaluation guidelines, and diaspora policies and programs;

Recognition of diaspora's role in crisis situations, specifically their supporting role in post-crisis recovery processes.

Wide recognition of a need to apply human rights approach to migration.

When it comes to the contribution of diaspora, remittance is usually the main focal area of studying diaspora contribution. However diaspora's potential economic importance goes well beyond remittances. Chikezie (2011) who framed the 5Cs of Diaspora Capital to highlight the varied ways of diaspora engagement, which are financial, intellectual, political, cultural and social capital that diasporas can bring to their home countries. Author went on to share his view on the 5Cs; Financial capital remittances are probably the most tangible "currency" of the migration-development debate, Intellectual capital can be applied by tapping into the know-how and skills of members of the diaspora in more flexible ways that do not demand permanent return. Political capital is political influence on a range of issues with a bearing on development by members of diasporas. Cultural capital is the a set of values, norms, and perspectives that members of diaspora gained while abroad and usually they are different from those dominant in their countries of origin. That makes members of diasporas unique having "insider-outsider" perspective. The time innovation is in demand for development, new ways of seeing, being, working, and doing are arguably become essentials. Members of diasporas are often well placed to serve as a bridge between old and new ways of seeing and being. Social capital includes "the ties that bind," the glue, rationale, obligations, feedback, satisfaction, and even the channels and networks (Chikezie, 2011).

2.3.1 Countries' Experience in Diaspora Engagement Program

The role of diasporas for the development in countries of origin has long been a topic of research in the area of Migration and Development, and numerous tangible actions over the years have taught us valuable lessons for diaspora engagement (Wolff

2016). Newland and Plaza (2013) argue that the greatest areas diasporas can and, play an important role in the economic development of their countries of origin are trade, investment, and skills and knowledge transfers. They discussed because diaspora members create a bridge between consumers and producers in countries of origin and destination, trade increases between the countries, and there are demonstrable links between the presence of a diaspora and increased trade. Diaspora communities are consumers the products of their countries of origin and they bring these products to the markets in the countries of settlement. Diasporas invest directly in their countries of origin and persuade non- diaspora investors to do the same, boosting investor confidence in (and knowledge of) emerging and undeveloped markets. Tools such as diaspora bonds have helped mobilize diaspora wealth for development. Diasporas can also transfer their skills, experience they have gained during the time abroad by creating business and entrepreneurship, training, often gain valuable skills, experiences, and contacts abroad that they can “transfer” back to their country of origin by seeding businesses and entrepreneurship, training, and mentoring native workers and boosting emerging industries. They continued to point out that it is hard to measure the impact of diaspora engagement because it is not easy to quantify the impact of skills and knowledge transfers. But for government to minimize the challenges and create opportunities for diasporas to engage in economic development, governments need to know where and who the diaspora populations are, have a good relationship with diasporas partners and facilitate their involvement in countries of origin, consolidating their sense of belonging to the country, and build dedicated institutions to create effective policies (Newland and Plaza, 2013).

More convincing argument are found in *Diaspora Engagement on Country Entrepreneurship and Investment*, a background paper by Wolff (2016). He stated that policy makers, scholars, and academics usually considered Diaspora entrepreneurship and investments as drivers of economic development and positive change, and he continued to make an impressive argument by showing success stories: 80% of FDI in China is from the Chinese diaspora, Indian diasporas in the USA have played an instrumental role in building up India’s IT industry and creating a second ‘Silicon Valley’ in their country. And African diaspora actors are not different, he added (Wolff, 2016).

The theories on the role of diaspora engagement in the development their countries of origin have been established by examining circumstances and experience

of the diasporas communities' contributions in the development in their homelands. Now theories have been set and they are widely applied in many countries. It is estimated that more than 400 institutions in 56 countries engage diasporas through institutionalised programs or structures about a third of which have only started adopting policies for diaspora engagement over the past five years. In West and Central Africa, around half of the countries have developed or have started the development of national diaspora strategies under the lead of a diaspora-mandated Government office (Wolff ,2016).

The Engaging Diasporas as Development Partners for Home and Destination Countries: Challenges for Policymakers prepared by Ionescu (2006) for IOM, one of the best works done concerning with the link between diaspora and development, discussed the motivations, which support the involvement of diasporas in their home countries' development strategies as follow:

- 1) Engaging diasporas in the development process can limit the costs of emigration and mitigate brain drain
- 2) Emigrants improve their skills abroad which, on their return, should benefit the home countries
- 3) Engaging diasporas might have a beneficial trickle-down effect for home countries.

A survey, participated by 49 countries mostly low and middle income, conducted by IOM in 2005, showed that in respond to the question "Is your government engaged in activities directed towards your own diasporas abroad for development purposes?" ninety-two per cent of the respondents indicated that they had policies and programs targeting their own diasporas abroad (IOM 2005). It is a clear indication that low and middle-income countries are very interesting to utilize the potential of their nationals abroad, and it was a display of Countries' strong policy commitment towards collaboration with diasporas abroad. At the same time the different policies and programs were also observed. Few wide-ranging policy packages and programs by countries were also high lighted as follow:

The Republic of Benin developed a National Policy Plan for Beninese abroad, launched in 2001 and supported at the presidential level, which comprises a National Policy Declaration and establishes a new ministry in charge of relations with Beninese abroad, as well as a national agency of Beninese abroad.

Colombia: the new program “ColombiaNos Une” is monitored at presidential level and has achieved good results despite limited funds. Colombia also works with the countries that are host to Columbian diasporas, especially with the United States. A pilot project for a “Consular Registry Card” is being implemented in Washington.

The Ethiopian government established the Ethiopian Expatriate Affairs General Directorate in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ethiopian Expatriate Support and Coordination Office as part of the country’s capacity-building efforts. Establishing these programs within existing structures suggests a considerable policy awareness and interest.

El Salvador adopted a number of legislative decrees that introduced a “Migrant Week”, a “Convention for Migrant Workers”, visits from Salvadorians living abroad, tax-free goods for visiting diaspora populations. Executive decrees have consolidated the foundations for policies and programs, such as the creation of a Vice-Minister for Salvadorians Abroad, the creation of the General Direction for Salvadorians Abroad, the establishment of an inter-institutional network dealing with Salvadorians abroad and, more generally, made the diaspora issue an integral part of the country’s foreign policy.

Uruguay has an official governmental program, “Programa de Vinculacion con los Uruguayos Residentes en el Exterior” along with an internet website (www.vinculacion.gub.uy). Membership is on a voluntary basis and diaspora members are free to sign up to this program. Another interesting feature of this program is the Evaluation Committee which operates under executive authority and in collaboration with the Dean of the University of Uruguay. Events for diasporas are also organized under this program. Although the government does not collect data on the characteristics and qualifications of its diaspora community, it does maintain a skills/knowledge database of its diasporas through the “Programa de Vinculacion”.

Tunisia adopted an annual official program at the presidential level with a special diaspora chapter for 2005-2009.

It also informed the new or revised policy programs in respondent countries:

Algeria: A new government program targeting diasporas is being implemented.

Bangladesh: The governmental program being developed aims at identifying its most prominent diasporas.

Benin: A “Qualification Database” and an “Investment Code” targeting

diasporas is being developed.

Burundi: A “National Forum for Diasporas” has been created.

Chile : a new migration program and census have been launched together with the “Document on the Migratory Policies of Chile” (“Documento sobre Política Migratorias de Chile”).

Pakistan : A program including visits of expatriate Pakistani consultants on short-term assignments for the purpose of transferring knowledge and technology has been introduced.

Rwanda : Policies include the preparation of conventions targeting Rwandan diasporas living in West Africa.

Sudan : A capacity-building initiative has recently been introduced to raise both awareness and competence within the institutions in charge of populations abroad.

Ukraine : The “2010 Diaspora Program” has been launched to raise awareness and improve collaboration with diasporas by 2010.

Venezuela : Programs include a census of Venezuelan residents abroad (Censo de los Venezolanos Residentes en el Exterior, 2005) and a consolidated government program to implement the Electoral Presidential Program 2004-2005.

2.4 Incentives for Diasporas

Diaspora engagement policies and success of these policies go beyond mapping out who and where they are. Incentives play a key role in a successful policy towards diasporas. Agunias and Newland (2004) explained how incentives, both materials and non-materials, were used in persuading nationals abroad for development programs in their piece of Developing a Road Map for Engaging Diasporas in Development.

Governments used incentive programs - such as subsidizing salary, covering moving costs, housing programs, providing financial aids for starting up a business and the like - to persuade successful identified-individuals to return to work for the government or establish their own firms (Agunias and Newland, 2004). The approach is not new. The Taiwan started using this approach as early as the 1960s.

Since 1960, Taiwan has created National Youth Commission (NYC), a cabinet-level government office to recruit scholars, and it offered scholars their dependents travel costs, including airfare and related allowances, and job placement

assistance. The efforts even got more significant over time. By the 1980s Taiwan government stepped up their attempts to persuade experienced diaspora members to start second careers in Taiwan by offering the same salaries they make abroad, subsidies for housing and children's education, and a working environment with state-of-the-art facilities, instruments, and equipment. In 1980 the Taiwanese authorities also created the Hsinchu Science-Based Industrial Park, whose goal was to build the Taiwan Silicon Valley, a replica of California's Silicon Valley, where many experts of Taiwanese origin work. The authorities provided a planned infrastructure for companies, including incentives such as subsidized Western-style housing, schools, and commercial services. More important, Taiwan Province of China offered venture capital funding to innovative diaspora-owned businesses. That project has been extremely successful and became an attractive destination for both foreign and diaspora-owned high-tech companies, by 2000, Hsinchu employed 102,000 people and generated \$28 billion in sales. US-based Taiwanese owned 113 of the park's 289 companies that year; 70 maintained companies in Silicon Valley as well. Returnees were highly educated, with nearly 500 of them holding PhDs (Agunias and Newland, 2004).

They kept on covering other countries actions that followed suit. China set up a center for returnees in 1989 and offered moving costs, no-tax purchases of office equipment, return airfare for self-financed students. Since the 1990s a number of science parks, special development zones, and high-tech complexes have been established in China's capital city, Beijing, as well as in most Chinese provincial cities as a part of attempt to attract Chinese abroad. Between 1994 and 1998, Jamaica started the Return of Talent Program with multiple generous financial incentives which covered a one-time reentry subsidy, a monthly salary subsidy, one-way airfare for the candidate and his or her immediate family, up to 50 percent of the cost of shipping of household goods, two years of medical and accident insurance, and even provision of the instruments and literature needed for the candidate's work. Similarly, in Uruguay, the Sectorial Commission of Scientific Research (CSIC) was founded in 1990 at the University of the Republic. Specific initiatives included a program for hiring scientists that gave preference to returnees, as well as an economic support program to facilitate returnees' adjustment to the university environment. Following the end of dictatorship in Argentina in 1983, the government spearheaded measures to encourage the return of exiles and build links with expatriates who could help in the

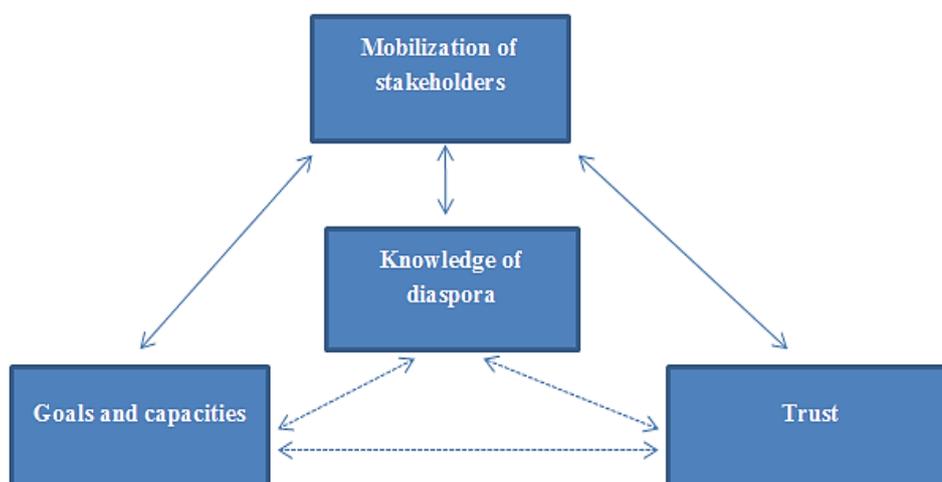
country's development efforts. In addition to this general policy, the National Council of Scientific and Technological Research (CONICET) implemented specific return-related efforts for the diaspora such as subsidizing airfare as well as the moving and setup costs of returnees and their immediate families. Other origin countries, such as Croatia and Thailand, have also recognized the importance of offering attractive benefits to lure back their diasporas. According to Alessia Pozzi, although Croatia has what she considered a "good scientific community," it is not on par with those in Germany and other developed countries in Europe. Croatia is therefore offering attractive financial instruments to encourage local research institutions to upgrade their facilities. Likewise, the Thai government is aware that its current incentive package under the Reverse Brain Drain program is not competitive enough for many prospective participants. According to Noppawan Tanpipat, the government is working to improve the program in order to recruit the talent the country needs (Agunias and Newland, 2004).

It is important to realize that types of incentives, especially material incentives, used in diaspora engagement efforts by countries may be more or less the same since human natures and needs are more or less the same, however Engstorm argued in her thesis paper, 'Diaspora Engagement: An Analysis of Mexico's Diaspora Engagement Efforts', that diaspora strategies cannot be copied from one country to another because situations of the countries are varied from one another (Engstorm 2018). Boyle & Kitchin (2014) highlight the five factors that influence countries when they formulate a diaspora strategy. Nature and history of country's state institutions is the first factor, the nature, scale, timing and geography of their diaspora is listed as second factor, the prior and existing relationships with their diaspora come in third, the capacity of domestic private, public, and community organizations is forth, and finally countries' geopolitical strengths, weaknesses, and challenges are the last factor that may influence when countries formulate and later implement their diaspora strategies (Boyle & Kitchin, 2014; Engstorm, 2018). There is simply no one-size-fits-all approach in the diaspora engagement strategies. The experience of the countries that engage with their diasporas affirms that there is no fixed way to formulate and implement a diaspora strategy (Engstorm, 2018).

2.5 Review on Previous Studies

Sara Kitten Engstrøm (2015), *Diaspora engagement: An analysis of Mexico Diaspora Engagement Efforts*, Development and International program at Aalborg University, Denmark. Relations program (2015). The objective of the study is to understand how Mexican diaspora engagement efforts have enabled and facilitated diaspora contributions, as well as the opportunities and limitations of these efforts. It also aims to contribute, by providing an overview of several of Mexico's diaspora engagement efforts, to an understanding of the accomplishments and limitations of several efforts undertaken by successive Mexican governments. This study was only a desk research with secondary data and did not conduct fieldwork to collect primary data. The study first clarified the concepts or terms such as migration, diaspora, development, and the link between diaspora and development. It browsed the roles diaspora play and impact on development. And it referenced the book 'Developing a Road Map for Engaging Diasporas in Development: A Handbook for Policymakers and Practitioners in Home and Host Countries' by Dovelyn Agunias and Kathleen Newland from 2012 and it evaluate the road map for diaspora efforts proposed in the book. Identify Goals and Capacities, Know the Diaspora, Build Trust, and Mobilize the Diaspora for Development. After that elaborate process for diaspora engagement efforts.

Figure (2.1) Road Map for Engaging Diasporas in Development

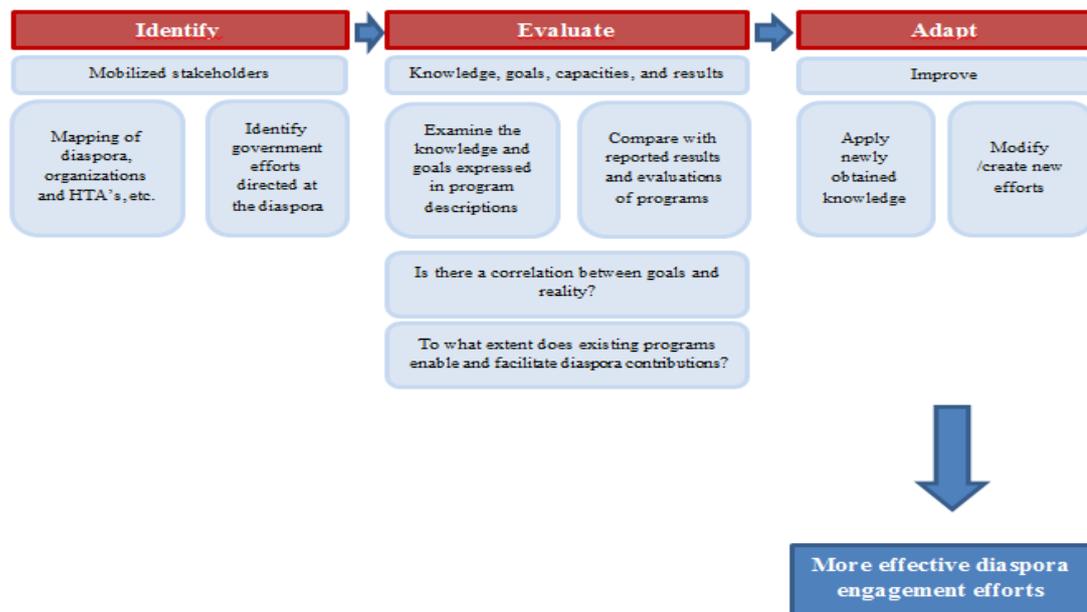


Source: Survey, Sara Kitten Engstrøm (2015)

After analyzing the concepts and theories set in previous studies, it went on to review background of Mexican diaspora and the Mexican’s various diaspora engagement efforts. The author recognized the vital role of The Mexican consular network in the United States in connecting with members the diaspora. The study concluded that three main efforts – Consular services that mainly contributed to effort mapping diaspora members with the result of increase the remittance money three-fold during 2000 to 2006, 3X1 program that is to 1) Supports the proposals of migrant groups; 2) Promotes and maintains identity ties; and 3) Promotes initiatives of shared responsibility between community and the government (SEDESOL, 2013), and the Paisano Program that involves the dispersal of information and training of civil servants which may assist and contribute to diaspora member’s safe returns to Mexico - have unquestionably had a considerable facilitating and enabling effect on the channeling of different types of diaspora contributions back to Mexico.

The study also discussed how to evaluate the process for diaspora engagement efforts. Following chart was used to clarify the process.

Figure (2.2) Evaluation Process for Diaspora Engagement Efforts



Source: Survey, Sara Kitten Engstrøm (2015)

Andrew T. Pham (2015), *The Returning Diaspora Analyzing overseas Vietnamese (Viet Kieu) Contributions toward Vietnam's Economic Growth*, London School of Economics Development Management MSc. The paper is to study the contributions of the Vietnamese Diaspora to Vietnam's economic growth by examining its unique formation and subsequent actual and potential impact on the emerging economy. First this paper explored and examined the Vietnamese diaspora communities. And then it looked into Vietnamese government's policies towards returning Vietnamese diaspora. After that the role of diaspora networks were studied and it concluded with sharing the view that how The Diaspora's contribution to the development of its country of origin has become highly popular topic due to economic growth in developing countries, which demand new sources to sustain the growth of their economy.

CHAPTER 3

MYANMAR DIASPORA

3.1 Histories and Nature of Myanmar Migration

Myanmar has not historically been acquainted with the term “exile”. However there was a rare and isolated case of Prince Myingun who fled the Mandalay NayPyiTaw, then capital, and sought political asylum under British colonial regime in Yangon after a failed coup-attempt against his father, King Mindon of the Konbaung Dynasty, in 1866. He became a political refuge under British colony. It would be hard to argue that he was an exile at that time. However, growing his popularity among local people had worried the British and he was sent to India temporarily to prevent the possibility that he would turn against them. When the whole country became British colony, he left for Saigon, a French colony at that time. Since then, he had been fighting against the British until he died in 1921. From there, he had led Burmese people and feudal lords in Shan state to stage anti-British movements. He sneaked back to Myanmar twice into supervise the fight against the British (Wai Yan Aung, 2019). He died as an exile in Vietnam.

No study or substantial evidence of Myanmar emigrants during colonial period has been recorded. It was also mentioned in EgretEAU’s piece that Myanmar never had political or economic migrants. Even during the colonial era, from 1826 to 1948 only few Myanmar traveled around British Empire unlike Nepali Gurkhas, Baghdadi Jews, Indian Chettyars or Chinese Hokkien migrants. Even Burmese nationalists attended the Western universities, but they did not choose to stay there and do the anti-colonial activities from distance in the early twentieth century (EgretEAU, 2012). Even if Myanmar have to leave the homeland, the reason has to be it is for the country and it usually set to be with a quick prestigious return, conventional wisdom seems to claim (Zaw Oo, 2006; EgretEAU, 2012). The “Thirty Comrades” led by Aung San best characterized the mentality. They left to return. When in 1941 they swiftly returned from Japan to form the Burma Independence Army and subsequently led the way to the country’s freedom (EgretEAU, 2012).

He also observed that the emerging of Myanmar diaspora communities around the world is a recent phenomenon, mostly the result of postcolonial political-instability and under-developed economy (Egreteau, 2012). After gaining Independence in 1948, that “leave to quick return” culture was over. An all out civil war broke out between government army and ethnic secessionist groups and communists rebellions right after independence, and created major displacement of population ever since. (Smith, 1999; South, 2008; Egreteau, 2012).

Myanmar political historical-landscapes can be classified into five eras: the era of Post-independence (1948 to 1962), Revolutionary Council (1962 – 1974), Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) (1974 – 1988), Military Regime (1988 – 2011), Quasi-Civilian Government under 2008 constitution (2011 – present). In each era, Myanmar migrants in different fashions were produced. During the post-independence era, the first wave of political migrants were produced by the civil wars, fought between the central government led by U Nu, the first and last civilian prime minister under democratic parliamentary system, and communist rebels and several ethnic-nationalist groups. The civil wars have driven non-Burmese communities across the country’s porous borders. During 1962 to 1974, fights between communist rebels and coup-government intensified. So did the fight with ethnic armed groups. Civil wars have continued through out all eras and kept creating political exiles, and refugees. Civil war played a major role of bringing the economy down. During the eras of Revolutionary Council and BSPP, economic emigrants were also created by underdevelopment and corrupted governance, which pushed the country all the way down to the bottom of list of the least developed countries. Emigrants created by civil wars usually take refuge in neighboring countries to escape from civil wars, most of them are usually minority ethnic nationals who live in the border-areas. During the same period, many Myanmar had left for developed countries as socio-economic emigrants. Due to the immigration standard they had to meet by those countries, usually called “points system”, most of them were educated, well experienced in government service, professionals, skilled workers, or well connected people. In the pursue of better quality of life in term of jobs, income, education, and health they left Myanmar for developed countries such as America, Australia, Canada, and England etc.

Another chapter of Myanmar migration came at the end of Burmese Socialist Program Party. After military crackdowns on people’s pro-democracy uprising in

1988, massive amount of Myanmar dissidents, including a vast number of university students, were forced into exile – regardless of their ethnic background. Above all, the result of cronyism, wide spread corruptions, mismanagement, self-isolation, and economic sanctions imposed by European and American countries, deteriorating economy and increasing poverty under military-run state have forced hundreds of thousands of Myanmar to seek better fortunes in neighboring countries or beyond (Egreteau, 2012). During post-1988, flow of both political and socio-economic migration have continued.

In general Myanmar emigrants can be classified into two groups: (1) socio-economic emigrants (2) political emigrants – exiles and refugees, or (1) forced emigrants and (2) voluntary socio-economic migrants. Egreteau also classified the emigration flows of Burmese origin, in the past few decades, into two broad types: (1) forced displacements of either Burmese elites looking for a more secure political environment abroad or uprooted ethnic people and religious minorities fleeing conflict zones, and (2) voluntary or forced socio-economic migrations of Burmese people in search of jobs and better educational opportunities (Egreteau, 2012). According to IOM, Myanmar has become to be the largest migration source country in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS).

3.2 Myanmar Diasporas Engagement

Egreteau (2012) claimed in his research paper “Burma in Diaspora: A Preliminary Research Note on the Politics of Burmese Diasporic Communities in Asia” that there is no research has been done in attempt to comparatively examine the size of the Burmese populations living abroad, not even in Asian countries. Existing data are scarce and unreliable, if not contradictory. At best, eclectic sources can be collected (academic papers, more or less reliable media reports, interviews among those in policy circles, NGO analyses, and fieldwork) in order to make an educated guess of the number of Burmese migrants or refugees in each Asian country. Combining sources, the best estimate this research note can propose is that there are roughly 3 million Burmese living in Asia. However, Myanmar Government estimate that there are 4.25 million Myanmar nationals living abroad. Regionally higher wages in neighbouring countries, conflict and environmental migration due to natural disasters are main reasons, among other factors, for migration (IOM n.d). It is also reported that up to 70% of migrants living abroad are based in Thailand, followed by

Malaysia (15%), China (4.6%), Singapore (3.9%) and the USA (1.9%). IOM estimates there could be as many as 3 million Myanmar migrants living in Thailand as at 2016. The highest numbers of migrants, according to the latest census, came from Mon State (427,000), Kayin State (323,000) and Shan State (236,000). The members of Burmese diaspora community (both forced and voluntary) are found in Thailand (probably approximately 2 million), with significant groups in Bangladesh, Malaysia and Pakistan, smaller communities in India, China and Singapore. Elsewhere in East Asia (Japan, South Korea) or the Pacific region, Burmese exiles constitute only marginal minorities (Egreteau, 2012). These numbers seems to be unrealistic to some. Mizzaa News Agency stated that the recent estimation of 4 millions Myanmar living out side of Myanmar as of 2012 by Myanmar parliamentarian discussions is quite exaggerated (Mizzima News Agency, 2012).

It is not strange to Myanmar that nationals abroad returned back to motherland to help promote political reform, economic reform, and other development programs. There are many inspiring stories about Myanmar nationals who came back from abroad and contribute to the development of the country they belong.

3.2.1 Myanmar Diaspora Engagement in Political Reform

As discussed above, due to long authoritarianism, sever economy, and civil wars, Myanmar created all kinds of migrants, and as a result quite a few Myanmar diaspora communities emerged in many countries. When 1988 uprising broke out, all Myanmar nationals abroad first became sympathizers and later became supporters of the fight for democratic reform back home. Lastly most of them found themselves in political activities regardless of their then-status and reasons they left the country. Lasting more than two decades, the struggle for democratic reform had added many more political exiles to diaspora communities abroad and even some of elected members of parliament became exiles after 1990 general election. Consequentially overseas political movements were intensified. Egreteau (2012) shared his view in his research. After the 1988 uprising, Myanmar communities living abroad have joined the fight for democracy and opened up new international movements for democratic dissent. Myanmar diaspora communities mainly used their relatives and friends to channel themselves to domestic social and political events. Extant research has showed how, worldwide, Myanmar exiled groups are mobilized around pro-

democracy discourses (Thawngmung 2005; Zaw Oo 2006; Dale 2011; Williams 2012; Egreteau, 2012).

Members of Myanmar diasporas joined the political reform movements from the host countries. However, few Myanmar exiles, former students, returned from Thailand in 1990s, and tried continued their political activism but the situation did not allow them to be able to do much. To return to Myanmar to take part in the fight for democracy was impossible at the time. The direction of political migration is one-way ticket– going out of the country, not coming back to country. However the story of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, a daughter of national hero, General Aung San, was special and different. With respect to hopes and changes she brought to Myanmar, she is the most outstanding example of diaspora engagement in reform process in the contemporary history of Myanmar. Aung San Suu Kyi herself lived abroad for 26 years, in India, Bhutan, Japan and the United Kingdom. She came back in 1988 to take care her late ill mother. The timing could not be more significant. At that time, the nationwide democracy uprising, so called “8888 general uprising”, was broking out, and country was in thrust for a leader who could lead and unite the people. They found the one. She was sucked into the cause. She chose not to return. Since then she has been at center of the fight for the democracy. Because this paper is not focusing on political circumstances, the struggles she had gone through will not be reviewed in detail. However, as a returnee, the magnitude of the political and social impact she has had on the country, and the degree of her political and social influence on the people are truly extraordinary. Currently she is serving as a state councillor.

In 2011, U Thein Sein became the president after a general election held at the end of 2010. In early 2012 a handful of former student leaders of the 1988 pro-democracy uprising, for instance, returned to engage in political reform, including the founders of the Vahu Development Institute (*Agence France-Presse* 2012; *The Myanmar Times* 2012). In doing so, they followed the Timor-Leste model, which saw key Timorese leaders in exile returning to govern (Wise, 2004) a group of exiles came back abroad and participated in peace programs. They worked for MPC (Myanmar Pace Center). They greatly contributed to process of drafting the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) and other political reforms. Notable individuals are Dr. Min Zaw Oo, an expert in Myanmar affairs and has been involved in the ongoing peace process in Myanmar since its beginning, and currently working as executive director of Myanmar Institute for Peace and Security (MIPS), U Aung Naing Oo,

worked for the Myanmar Peace Center's peace dialogue program from 2012 to 2015 and contributed to the drafting of the nationwide ceasefire agreement (NCA), currently working as an executive director of the Technical Secretariat Center (TSC) of the Union-level Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee (JCM).

3.2.2 Diaspora Engagement in Development

Since military regime was still in power, before Myanmar officially adopted the market economy in 2011, economic reforms have been taking place in some sectors. Since then, many Myanmar diasporas have come back to engage in economic reform. Regardless of individuals' intentions, whether to engage in development program for the sake of country, or to take the advantages of emerging opportunities for personal interests, the contributions made by returnees, many of them were students and skilled professionals, cannot be anyhow discredited as they paved smooth transaction to the adopted market economy.

An example of returnees who helped economic development is U Zaw Zaw. He is currently a business tycoon. After years of working in Japan, he returned in 1993. He has set up the Max Myanmar Group of Companies, a major conglomerate in Myanmar. People used to consider him (some still do) as a crony due to having close ties with military regime then. Beside business, He has been chairing Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) since 2005 and recently he was re-elected for Voice-Chairman of ASEAN Football Federation (AFF) for another term. He has been actively working with youth. His contributions and achievements are remarkable as well. He could have chosen to stay abroad, but he chose to come back. He is another good example of diaspora engagement. There are many others success stories of diaspora engagement in development. They are involved in almost every sector. Good examples of returning diasporas in media sector are U Toe Zaw Latt, Myanmar Bureau Chief in DVB, U Soe Myint, Editor in Chief and Managing Director in Mizzima News Agency. Dr. Zaw Oo is a notable returning exile in government sector. In entertainment sector director and actors couple, Zan Ke and Christina Ke are well known. In research and academic sector, leading examples will be Dr, Min Zin from Institute for Strategy and Policy, U Aung Thu Nyein from Yaw Min Gyi ZA Yat talk show, Dr Min Zaw Oo worked for NRPC. In the private sector, there are too many success stories to select a few to use as examples. Hla Hla Win, founder of the 360ed, is another example of success stories in the private sector. Aung La Nsang, a world

champion of ONE' middleweight and light heavyweight classes, is another noble example of diaspora engagements. Aung La is a passionate advocate for Myanmar's wildlife and he has been a big supporter of Voices for MOMOS, a campaign against illegal wildlife trade, since its launch in November 2017. On 9 November 2018, World Wide Fund recently appointed Aung La as an ambassador of Fighting Wildlife Crime for Nature, Myanmar. He is also passionate to work with youths and he is opening martial art training centers in Myanmar.

These examples are not even a tip of the iceberg, but they are just a small piece of ice on the tip of the iceberg. Many returnees are getting involved in development of their ethnic regions as well. Contributions made by diasporas, either back in Myanmar or in host countries, to the development are undeniably tremendous. Yet their contributions should not be limited to what they have done. Their experience - the adjustments they had to make, the limitations and challenges, the level of supports they received from government or organizations, local colleagues' attitude towards them - can be very valuable contribution to government's future diaspora engagement efforts to map and affectively attract Myanmar diaspora communities around the world as well if they are collected and observed systematically.

3.3 Myanmar Governments' Position on Diasporas

Relationship between diasporas, especially political exiles, and Myanmar governments have been filled with distrust, resentment, anger and so on. Military government depicted political exiles as elements of destruction. Most of them were put as black-listed. Meanwhile, socio-economic migrants maintained normal relationship with governments throughout the history, unless they decided to openly join the opposition and became well known. However, military later softened their opposition on exiles and the recent post-junta transformations create new relationship between the Burmese post-junta state and the wider Myanmar diasporas including political exiles. After 2008 constitution was adopted by general referendum in 2008, and a general election was held in 2010. Since then, the government's position on diasporas has been changed. Elected President Thein Sein initiated reform programs after coming to power in 2011 (Callahan, 2012). Since He has appealed to the Burmese in exile to return and work for a "new Myanmar". In a speech delivered in August 2011 in NayPyiTaw, he said his government would like Myanmar oppositions in exile to "come home" in order to help contribute towards the national development

of their birthplace (Zar Ni, 2011). He also added that they will accept anyone who did not committed any crime, if anyone who committed crime and want to comeback, he or she will have to serve terms for the crime but his administration will be lenient (The New Light of Myanmar, English version, 2011: 8). But mistrust still remains, and diasporic discourses skeptical about the post-junta transition are dominant. Many still reluctant to return, even for temporary family-visit. Some diaspora communities in broad, dominated by political exiles, demand an official general amnesty as a grantee for their safety. But no general amnesty has been officially announced by either Thein Sein's administration or the current administration led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. In 1980 General Ne Win announced a general amnesty and allowed deposed Prime Minister U Nu to return from his Indian exile. The Minister for Health echoed his president by calling on trained medical professionals living abroad to return to Myanmar and contribute their services to improve the health sector (Myanmar Time, 2011). He said community development programs seriously need their skills and expertise but he also conceded that for many it would mean sacrificing higher-paid jobs abroad. In his article in Myanmar Time, Dr. Zar Ni criticized government for the lack of sincerity in welcoming returnees from exile to allow participating in development. He said without a negotiable or expandable political and societal space, a Myanmar exile or even a local resident could not affectively contribute his or her skills or talents in the country's development. He added there is no such space actually exists in reality (Zar Ni, 2011). Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has also reportedly urged Myanmar nationals to come back to contribute in rebuilding the nation in many occasions since 2013. Both previous and current governments have vocalized their support of welcoming exiles back. Without policy implementation of their position, their calls for members of diasporas to come back to participate in rebuilding the country were appeared to be just politically motivated words without action.

3.4 Myanmar Governments' Diaspora Engagement Efforts

In 2014, U Thein Sein's administration came up with a program allowing foreigners and former Myanmar citizens to have a permanent resident status in Myanmar, an attempt to attract more skilled experienced workers. It is called "The Permanent Residence of a Foreigner Rules (PRFR)". The PRFR gives 5-year stay permit to qualified foreigners and former Myanmar citizens. That allows them unlimited entries to the country without visa for 5 years. Due to paperwork-intensive

visa and stay-permit extension processes, this program have been useful for those who intend to stay long or need to come and go multiple times.

In the program rights for the certificate holder are included as incentives. The rights granted for the permanent-resident-certificate holders are stated in chapter 13, article 34 as follow:

Article (34) The person who obtains the permanent residence certificate:

- (a) has the right to do the apartment of the complex building bought by own name in accord with the existing laws;
- (b) may apply in order to make the household member list of the person who obtains the permanent residence in accord with the stipulation in the apartment of the complex building bought by own name to the Office of Township Departmental Officer-in- Charge in accord with the stipulation;
- (c) may have the right to enter into the household member list of the person who obtains the permanent residence to the next of kin as follows and may reside with visa without having the right to settle and have the right to reside by applying the renewal of visa if they are not the persons who obtain permanent residence:
 - (i) legal wife or husband;
 - (ii) legal parents;
 - (iii) legal off springs;
- (d) has the right to access several times into Myanmar by holding the permanent residence certificate and valid passport of the relevant country until the period before the expiry of the term of the permanent residence certificate;
- (e) has the right to apply to determine as Myanmar Citizenship together with admission to be relinquished the citizenship of other country if he/she is ex-Myanmar Citizen and regranted the citizenship after residing five years in Myanmar with the permanent residence certificate and may apply to permit to continue to enjoy the benefits of the permanent residence certificate if he/she is not determined as Myanmar Citizenship;
- (f) has the right to free of customs duties in accord with the existing notifications and directives of the Customs Department if his/her own properties are imported from abroad within 90 days after obtaining the permanent residence certificate;
- (g) has the right to stay and work in other areas except the restricted or prohibited

area officially declared by the State in accord with the existing procedures;

- (h) has the right to operate economic business in the businesses permitted to him/her in accord with the existing laws related to foreign investment;
- (i) has the right to take medical treatment as Myanmar citizens in Myanmar;
- (j) has the right to study in accord with the stipulation of the Ministry of Education.

According to U Soe Thein, a former minister Industrial Ministry and chairman of Myanmar Investment Commission from 2010 to 2013, the idea (the PR program) was originated in the meeting with George Soros during a trip to the United States. He said Georges Soros suggested him that it was necessary to attract already-trained people in the time of fast growing and shortage of skilled workers because developing or training people along would not meet the urgent need, it takes time.

It was a clear attempt to attract foreign expatriates and investors. The program title itself explains it. However it is questionable to consider it as a diaspora engagement policy for Myanmar nationals abroad. Permanent resident certificate is 5-years term, but it has to be renewed every year and for ex-Myanmar, annual fee for permanent resident certificate is 500 USD, compared to 400 USD for one-year business visa with multi-entry. Application requires 14 pages-long application forms and several supporting documents. The process takes, in general, at least 7 months. Yet it comes with few incentives programs such as unlimited in and out of country, right to buy the apartment in a complex building, duty-free for bringing personal belongings within 90 days from the day certificate was issued. How persuasive these incentive programs are is unknown. But compared to diaspora engagement programs in other countries, it does not seem to be that much persuasive.

After winning 2015 general election, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's government launched its economic policy framework, called "Economic Policy of Union of Myanmar" which includes 5 objectives and 12 policies:

1. Expanding our financial resources through transparent and effective public financial management.
2. Improving the operations of State-owned enterprises and privatising those State-owned enterprises that have the potential to be reformed, while promoting and assisting small and medium enterprises as generators of employment and growth.
3. Fostering the human capital that will be needed for the emergence of a

modern developed economy and improving and expanding vocational education and training.

4. Prioritizing the rapid development of fundamental economic infrastructure, such as electricity generation, roads and ports, and establishing a data ID card system, a digital government strategy, and an e-government system.
5. Creating employment opportunities for all citizens including those returning from abroad and giving greater priority in the short term to economic enterprises that create many job opportunities.
6. Establishing an economic model that balances agriculture and industry and supports the holistic development of the agriculture, livestock and industrial sectors, so as to enable rounded development, food security and increased exports.
7. Asserting the right of individuals to freely pursue the economic opportunities they choose, so as to enable private sector growth in line with a market economy system; formulating specific policies to increase foreign investment; and strengthening property rights and the rule of law.
8. Achieving financial stability through a finance system that can support the sustainable long- term development of households, farmers and businesses.
9. Building environmentally sustainable cities, upgrading public services and utilities, expanding public spaces, and making greater efforts to protect and conserve our cultural heritage.
10. Establishing a fair and efficient tax system in order to increase government revenues and protecting individual rights and property rights through enacting laws and regulations.
11. Establishing technical systems and procedures to support intellectual property rights that can encourage innovation and the development of advanced technology.
12. Identifying the changing and developing business environment both in ASEAN and beyond, so as to enable our own businesses to situate themselves to take advantage of potential opportunities.

Policy no. 5 clearly states the government’s policy on diaspora engagement in development plans. However the policy implementation for this specific policy of diaspora has not been seen yet.

In 2018, government has developed the “Myanmar Sustainable Development

Plan (2018 – 2030)” aligned with SDGs, and the economic policy launched in 2016. The MSDP is structured around 3 Pillars, 5 Goals, 28 Strategies and 251 Action Plans. Under the Pillar 3 (People & Planet), and Goal 4 (Human Resources & Social Development for a 21st Century Society), Strategy 4.5 is to protect the rights and harness the productivity of all, including migrant workers. Strategy 4.5.4 is to develop measures to encourage our diaspora's contribution to our domestic economy. As it has discussed in the previous chapters, to encourage diaspora’s contribution in economic development, it involves formulating strategy in accordance with situations diasporas and country itself. First step would be mapping diasporas abroad to know where they are and who they are. That will lead to what and how they can offer to the country’s development programs.

3.4.1 Review on The Permanent Residence of A Foreigner Rules (RPFR), Economic Policy of Union of Myanmar (EPUM), and Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP)

By the PRFR, total of 568 have been issued the permanent resident status so far under 4 different categories: ex-Myanmar citizens, foreign experts, foreign investors, and spouses and children of Myanmar citizens. About 200 of them are ex-Myanmar citizens. This PR certificated is 5-year term and it however needs to be extended once every year. And there is also fee applied. 500 USD per year for ex-Myanmar and 1000 USD per year for foreigners. Application requires 14 pages-long application forms and several supporting documents. The process takes, in general, at least 7 months. Some incentives are include as rights for the certificate holders, and some of them are notable. Right to buy apartment of the complex building is a right that foreigners without permanent resident certificate are not allowed. Right to take medical treatment as citizens would not attractive since even many Myanmar are using private healthcare services due to shortage of medications, facilities, equipment, and doctors in government healthcare system. Neither would right to study. Right to bring won properties free of customs duties can be somehow attractive because current custom duties for imported automobiles were very high. However compared to the PR programs in other countries discussed in previous chapter this program need to be modified if it was actually aimed to promote diaspora engagement in terms of skilled transfer members of diaspora abroad to return to engage in development programs.

As an effort for diaspora engagement, in Economic Policy of Union of Myanmar, one of the 12 policies of EPUM is to create employment opportunities for all citizens including those returning from abroad (not particularly for all returning diaspora). Economic reform policies and developments programs have been implemented since beginning of the adoption of market economy in 2011. PPP projects, industrial zones, new investment laws, and FDI promotion programs are among them. These programs, projects, and new laws must have definitely created employment opportunities for not only returning Myanmar citizen, but also all members of diasporas communities abroad. But it is really hard to measure the increase in diaspora engagements created by these programs, projects, and laws.

In MSDP (2018 – 2030) development in 2018, under the goal of human resource and social development, 5 strategies are set to achieve the goal and one of them is to develop measures to encourage our diaspora's contribution to our domestic economy. Since it is still a new policy and new strategy, It might well be in implementation stage, in progress of developing diaspora engagement programs, however no substantial progress has been reported yet.

Table (3.1) Diaspora Engagement Program in MSDP

Reference Number	Action Plans	Strategic Outcome	Relevant Agencies	12 points Economic Policy	Relevant SDG Targets
Pillar 3	People & Plant				
Goal 4	Human Resources & Social Development for a 21 st Century Society				
Strategy 4.5	Protect the rights and harness the productivity of all, including migrant workers				
4.5.1	Provide a legal identity for all, including birth registration	Increased portion of legal migration	MoHS, MoLIP, MoSWRR	EP 3	SDG 16.9
4.5.2	Promote legal, affordable and secure migration services	Increased contribution of migration towards development	MoLIP, MoSWRR	EP 3 EP 5	SDG 8.8
4.5.3	Provide improved cross-border financial service for migrant workers	Increased contribution of migration towards left behind families 'social resilience	MoLIP, MoSWRR MoPF, CBM	EP 3 EP 5	SDG 10 c
4.5.4	Develop measure to encourage our diaspora 'contribution to our domestic economy	Increased contribution to diaspora towards economic development	MoLIP, MoSWRR MoPF, CBM	EP 3 EP 5	SDG 10 c
4.5.5	Protect labor rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers	Improved and safe working environment leading to increased productivity	MoLIP, MoSWRR MoPF, MoIND, MoALI	EP 3 EP 5	SDG 10 c

Source: Ministry of Planning and Finance

CHAPTER 4

SURVEY ANALYSIS

4.1 Survey Profile

This survey was conducted in Canada, located in the northern part of North America, and it is the second largest country in the world by total area. There are ten provinces and three territories. The population of the Canada is 35 millions.

Canada is a parliamentary democracy and a constitutional monarchy in the Westminster tradition, with a monarch and a prime minister who serves as the chair of the Cabinet and head of government. A developed country, Canada has the sixteenth-highest nominal per capita income globally as well as the twelfth-highest ranking in the Human Development Index. It is rich in natural resources and part of the well-developed international trade networks. Canada is part of several major international and intergovernmental institutions or groupings including the United Nations, NATO, the G7, the Group of Ten, the G20, the North American Free Trade Agreement and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum. According to a 2019 report by the OECD, Canada is one of the most educated countries in the world. According to IMF, Canada is the world's tenth-largest economy as of 2018, with a nominal GDP of approximately US\$1.73 trillion. It is reported by KOF Swiss Economic Institute as one of the least corrupt countries in the world.

According to the last Canada Census taken in 2016, there are about 14,000 Myanmar-Canadian in Canada, and Female and Male are equally distributed. There are reasons to believe that Myanmar diaspora population can be bigger. A research done in Canada by Hyndman (1996), a student from British Columbia University, pointed out that some of the Myanmar landed immigrants to BC (British Columbia) have been unaccounted as Myanmar due to the technical errors by Canadian authorities in Thailand from where most of the Myanmar exiles and refugees migrated to Canada (Hyndman, 1996). Another reason was some Myanmar could have reported themselves as “Canadian” for some reasons – e.g. showing their appreciation for the

host country, or having felt they owe Canada a moral debt for welcoming them. According to the Myanmar diaspora groups in Canada, there are about 20,000 members of Myanmar diaspora community including second generations of Myanmar and Myanmar students studying in Canada. Detailed demographic data of Myanmar diaspora population such as ratios of education level, occupation, and age are not available. Leaving homeland due to under-promising economy and political circumstances Myanmar has landed in Canada since 1960s in pursue of betterment. However, Myanmar who arrived after 1990s, so called refugees or political exiles, shares sizable portion of the total diaspora population in Canada. Myanmar diaspora communities mainly concentrate in 4 provinces: Ontario, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, and Quebec.

4.2 Survey Design

This survey is to study the Myanmar diasporas in 3 areas: their willingness to comeback to Myanmar to engage in development process, their knowledge and opinion on Myanmar government's diaspora engagement efforts, and their constraints and challenges holding them back from returning to engage in development process in Myanmar. The findings of this survey are aimed to contribute to the formulating diaspora engagement policies and programs in the future. As mentioned in scope and limitation in the previous chapter, Canada is chosen to be the locale of the survey. The estimated population of Myanmar diaspora in Canada is about 20,000 including everyone (e.g. children, seniors, students). There are 10 provinces and 3 territories in Canada, but Myanmar nationals reside mostly in four cities in four different provinces. However Samples were randomly selected from the whole Canada in accordance with excluding criteria mentioned in scope and limitation. Study population was members of Myanmar diaspora communities in Canada, who can potentially contribute to the development back in Myanmar by means of investment, knowledge and skills transfer, social transfer, or entrepreneurship, other than remittance. In order to avoid misleading, misunderstanding, or undermining the chosen sampling method - simple random sampling, volunteer survey-conductors were properly explained and instructed.

To build questionnaire for this survey, previous studies and questionnaires were reviewed and used as references. At the same time, to assure the content

validity, proper and clear wording, covering concerned and relevant topics, and being understandable for the respondents, a pre-test was conducted before finalizing it. This survey questionnaire is consisted of four parts: 1) Respondents' characteristics. 2) Willingness and constraints of diasporas 3) Views on government's diaspora engagement efforts 4) Opinions and Suggestions.

Respondents characteristics: It includes gender, age, marital status, having children or not, years in Canada, reason for leaving Myanmar, and citizenship status, and professional information such as level of education, annual income, and occupation. Willingness and constraints of diasporas: In this part questions are designed to find out their willingness and constraints which are holding them back from returning. Views on government's diaspora engagement efforts: This section is to study respondents' views on relevant process, laws, regulations, and diaspora engagement programs. Opinions and Suggestions: Last part of questionnaire is to obtain diasporas' opinion on proposed diaspora policies.

4.3 Survey Results

Targeted sample size was 160 with 7% margin of error and 95 percent confidence level. From the study population, more than 200 samples were randomly selected and 158 people have responded, and 18 of them were cancelled because of incomplete or improper answers. Total 140 respondents' answers were studied and analyzed.

4.3.1 Demographic Characteristic of Respondents

The personal information data are presented in the following Tables. Out of 140 respondents, male respondents are as almost double of female respondents.

Table (4.1) Respondents' Social Characteristics

Gender		
	Respondents	%
Male	87	64.5
Female	53	35.5
Total	140	100
Age Range		
	Respondents	%
18 to 25	16	11.4
26 to 35	17	12.1
36 to 45	8	5.7
46 to 55	51	36.4
56 to 65	29	20.7
66 and older	19	13.6
Total	140	100
Married with Children		
	Respondents	%
Yes	87	62.1
No	53	37.9
Total	140	100

Source: Survey 2019

Almost 65% of them are male and female are only 53 (35.5%). This ratio probably reflects that fact that the numbers of male political-exiles, after military crash down on 1988 prodemocracy general strike, were far more than that of female. Consequentially male are more willing to answer the survey partially concerned with politics. It might also be the reflection of Myanmar culture – men are central figures of a household (See Table 4.1).

Most of the respondents are married and have children. 22 of them are singles and 106 are married, and 12 are others. That ratio is probably a reflection of the age ranges of respondents. 87 respondents have children (See Table 4.1).

At the same time, more than half of the total respondents are ages between 46 to 65 olds. They are % of total respondents (see Table 4.1). It also links to the fact that many political exiles and refugees migrated to Canada after 1990, as the result of military crash down and armed conflicts along the border, and most of them were age's range from 15 to 25 at the time. They are still profoundly patriotic and yet politically active.

The reason for leaving Myanmar is dominated by two main reasons, political persecution and lack of employment opportunity (See Table 4.2). That may be interpreted that most of the survey respondents are political exiles and socio-economic migrants. On the other hand, that shows their strong emotional bonds with the country they left decades ago.

More than 70% of the respondents have been in Canada for more than 20 years (See Table 4.2). Of which, more than 40% have been in Canada for more than 30 years. Canada. They must be those who migrated to Canada before 1988 due to lack of employment opportunity back home. They represent older age range and more likely higher educated group. More than 90% of the respondents are Canadian citizens and 8 people are still holding permanent resident status. Only 2 of them are student studying in Canada.

Table (4.2) Respondents' Reason for Leaving and Current Status

Reason Leaving Myanmar		
	Respondents	%
Family union	8	5.7
Pursued further education	12	8.6
Got job offer	5	3.6
Political persecution	50	35.7
Because of Armed conflicts	18	12.9
Lack of employment	45	32.1
Other reason	2	1.4
Total	140	100
Years in Canada		
	Respondents	%
10 >	19	13.6
10 to 20	20	14.3
20 to 30	59	42.1
30 <	42	30
Total	140	100
Citizenship		
	Respondents	%
Canadian Citizen	130	92.2
Permanent Residents	8	5.7
Myanmar	2	1.4
Total	140	100

Source: Survey 2019

4.3.2 Diasporas' Willingness and Constraints

More than 90% responded “Yes” to the question “Do you want to comeback to Myanmar to work, to do business, or to take part in development process if situations permit?” (See Table 4.3). At the same time the major constraints that holding them back from returning to Myanmar are financial issue, family issue, and worrisome of uncertainty of getting decent job in Myanmar (See Table 4.4). Having lived there for decades, they probably have financial obligations such as mortgages, student loans, or credit card payments, and 87 respondents have that issue. Meanwhile family issue is even bigger constraint and it is one of the issues holding more than 65% of the respondents (92 persons) back from returning. Uncertainty of getting decent job in Myanmar is another serious issue discouraging diasporas to return as well. Almost 60% of respondents have that thought. At the same time Government policy towards diaspora shares sizeable portion of constraints, and 36 respondents take it into account into thinking of returning back to homeland.

Table (4.3) Respondents' Willingness to Participate

Do you want to comeback to Myanmar to work, to do business, or to take part in development process if situations permit?		
	Respondents	%
Yes	127	90.7
No	13	9.3

Source: Survey 2019

More than 87 % said the main reason they want to go back to Myanmar is because they love Myanmar and it is their home. Almost 60% of the respondents said they want to use their skills, experience, or education they earned abroad for Myanmar. That also reflects their feeling about their country. About half of the respondents think there are business opportunities in Myanmar as a new emerging markets. And desire to reunite with the family left behind is also another reason for 32 % of respondents. Other reason of willingness to return denotes about 9% of respondents (See Table 4.5).

Table (4.4) Respondents' Challenges and Constraints

What are the challenges and constraints for you to return to Myanmar?		
	Respondents	%
Financial issue (e.g. Mortgage, student loan, or other payments)	87	62.1
Family issue (e.g. kids' education, cannot leave family behind)	92	65.7
Uncertainty of getting decent job in Myanmar	83	59.3
Government policy toward Myanmar exiles	31	22.1
Political situation in Myanmar	36	25.7
Other reason	18	0.0

Source: Survey 2019

Table (4.5) Reason to Go Back to Myanmar

Why do you want to go back to Myanmar to work, do business, or take part in national development processes?		
	Respondents	%
Because Myanmar is my home. I love Myanmar	122	87.1
Because I want to use my experience, skills, or education for Myanmar	83	59.3
Because there are many business opportunities as a new emerging market	64	45.7
Because My family are in Myanmar	32	22.9
Others	12	8.6

Source: Survey 2019

Table (4.6) Respondents' Professional Characteristics

Occupation / Job		
	Respondents	%
Own business	22	15.7
Unskilled work	43	30.7
Skilled or professional work	60	42.9
Retired	15	10.7
Total	140	100
Education Level		
	Respondents	%
Not finished high school	24	17.1
High school graduate	22	15.7
College diploma	43	30.7
Bachelor degree	42	30
Master Degree	8	5.7
Ph.D.	1	0.7
	140	100
Occupation / Job		
	Respondents	%
Own business	22	15.7
Unskilled work	43	30.7
Skilled or professional work	60	42.9
Retired	15	10.7
Total	140	100

Source: Survey 2019

4.3.3 Professional Background of Diasporas

The distribution of the education level shows that more than 65% of respondents have minimum college diploma, and 36% of respondents have at least bachelor degree, and almost 6% of respondents have master degree. This ration may not be true to the real ratio of education level of members of Myanmar diaspora in Canada because educated diasporas are usually more active in participating this type of survey.

Distribution of type of occupation closely mirrors education levels, 60 % of respondents are skilled workers or business owners, 15.7% and 42.9% respectively. A little more than 10% are retirees and most of them probably educated and well experience because they likely to be socio-economic migrants who came to Canada at least 30 years ago. Unskilled workers share 30.7 % in this distribution (See Table 4.6).

Annual gross income of most of the respondents, almost 70% of respondents, is between 40,000 CAD and 70,000 CAD. In Myanmar currency, it is between 47,000,000 Kyats and 82,000,000 Kyats, at current exchange rate (See Table 4.6).

4.3.4 Views on Government's Diaspora Efforts

More than 83% of respondents think Myanmar government is not serious about diaspora contribution in development process. Still some people agree and some strongly agree that government is serious about it, 5.7% and 3.6% respectively. Mean score of the respondents' answer was 1.8 (See Table 4.7).

Table (4.7) Views on Government's Seriousness in Diaspora Engagement

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below						
Myanmar government is serious about diaspora's contribution in development process						
	1	2	3	4	5	Mean Score
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree	
Respondents	75	39	13	8	5	1.8
%	53.6	27.9	9.3	5.7	3.6	

Source: Survey 2019

Responds to the statement of “It is easy to get visa and stay permit to go back to Myanmar” are almost evenly distributed between agreeing and disagreeing. It is probably the result of recent implementation of online visa application system. The application became relatively easy, however people are still showing their resentment due to their experience. Mean score of the respondents’ answer for this statement was 3 (See Table 4.8).

Table (4.8) Views on Visa and Stay Permit Application Process

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below						
It is easy to get visa and stay permit to go back to Myanmar.						
	1	2	3	4	5	Mean Score
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree	
Respondents	34	31	8	34	33	3
%	23.6	22.1	5.7	24.3	24.3	

Source: Survey 2019

Almost 80% of respondents strongly disagreed and 11% disagreed that it is easy to extend visa and stay permit for longer stay in Myanmar. Mean score was just 1.5. Agreeing with the statement does even have double digit, just 9 respondents agreed (See Table 4.9).

Table (4.9) Views on Process of Extending Visa and Stay Permit

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below						
It is easy and simple to extend visa and stay permit if you want to stay longer						
	1	2	3	4	5	Mean Score
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree	
Respondents	108	11	12	6	3	1.5
%	77.1	7.9	8.6	4.3	2.1	

Source: Survey 2019

Access to relevant information also seems to be another trouble respondents have. Only 10 respondents think relevant information is easily accessible. In contrast, 118 respondents disagreed the statement and 80% of them strongly disagreed. Mean score for this statement was 1.6 (See Table 4.10).

Table (4.10) Views on Access to Relevant Information

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below						
In regard to going back to Myanmar, relevant information is easy to access.						
	1	2	3	4	5	Mean Score
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree	
Respondents	95	23	12	8	2	1.6
%	67.9	16.4	8.6	5.7	1.4	

Source: Survey 2019

114 respondents (71.4%) disagreed that government have built a good relationship with diaspora communities around the world. Mean score was 1.8. However, 14 respondents, 10% of respondents, thought that government has done it. Some of them even strongly agreed with the statement (See Table 4.11).

Table (4.11) Views on Government’s Relationship with Diaspora Community

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below						
Myanmar government has built a good relationship with Myanmar diaspora communities around the world.						
	1	2	3	4	5	Mean Score
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree	
Respondents	79	35	12	8	6	1.8
%	56.4	25	8.6	5.7	4.3	

Source: Survey 2019

More than 91% of respondents disagreed that government has created incentive programs to increase Myanmar diasporas engagement in development

programs. Mean score, 1.3, reflects that respondents overwhelmingly rejected the statement. They do not seem to consider the PR program as an incentive program for diasporas (See Table 4.12).

Table (4.12) Views on Government's Incentive Program to Attract Diasporas

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below						
Myanmar government has created incentives programmes to attract Myanmar diaspora to engage in development						
	1	2	3	4	5	
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean Score
Respondents	106	23	7	4	0	1.3
%	75.7	16.4	5	2.9	0	

Source: Survey 2019

There is no much different about the responds for the statement that government has tried to reduce the challenges and difficulties of diasporas to return to get involve in development of their country of origin. Again mean score was 1.6, showing well majority of respondents disagreed with the statement. More than 90% disagreed and almost of 80% of them strongly disagreed. Just 2 respondents agreed with the statement. 8 respondents were not sure (See Table 4.13).

Table (4.13) Views on Government's Effort to help Reduce Diasporas' Challenges

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below						
Myanmar government has implemented diaspora engagement programmes and policies that will reduce the challenges and difficulties that members of diasporas may have						
	1	2	3	4	5	
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean Score
Respondents	102	28	8	2	0	1.6
%	72.9	20	5.7	1.4	0	

Source: Survey 2019

Total of 85.7% of respondents disagreed and 62.1% strongly disagreed with the statement saying that government has created ways for the diasporas to be able to participate in national policy making and local development activities. Only 8 out of 140 respondents (5.7%) agreed with the statement, and 12 respondents were not sure about it. Mean score was 1.6 (See Table 4.13).

Table (4.14) Views on Government's Efforts for Diaspora Engagement Programs

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below						
Myanmar government has created ways for the diaspora to be able to participate in national policymaking and local development activities.						
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean Score
Respondents	87	33	12	6	2	1.6
%	62.1	23.6	8.6	4.3	1.4	

Source: Survey 2019

4.3.5 Diaspora’s Opinion on Proposed Policies

In this section, participants were asked their stance on the proposed diaspora-policy statements. Respondents overwhelmingly agreed most of the statements. Highest mean score was 4.7 and even the lowest mean score was 4.2. Respondents clearly supported the proposed policies. Few of them were not sure about the statements. Six policies were proposed and out of 140 respondents, only 6 respondents did not agree with just one statement about creating ways for diaspora to participate in national policymaking and local developments activities. At least more than 80% agree with every statement (See Table 4.15).

Table (4.15) Views on Proposed Policies

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below						
Government should create a federal level department or a government body dedicated to facilitate mapping and engaging with Myanmar diasporas						
	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Respondents	0	0	6	36	98	4.7
%	0	0	4.3	25.7	70	
Govern should create a government body to coordinate government actions relating to the diaspora.						
	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Respondents	0	0	19	69	52	4.2
%	0	0	13.6	49.3	37.1	
Government should have separate policies and programs for Myanmar expatriates, different from the policies for foreign expatriates.						
	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Respondents	0	0	21	43	76	4.4
%	0	0	15	30.7	54.3	
Create ways for the diasporas to practically participate in national policymaking and local development activities.						
	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Respondents	0	6	13	54	67	4.3
%	0	4.3	9.3	38.6	47.9	
Create incentive programs to attract diasporas abroad to return and engage in economic development.						
	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Respondents	0	0	2	53	85	4.6
%	0	0	1.4	37.9	60.7	
Facilitate Diaspora Direct Investments (DDIs) and Diaspora Bonds.						
	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Respondents	0	0	19	68	53	4.2
%	0	0	13.6	48.6	37.9	

Source: Survey

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Not Sure, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This study mainly focuses on four areas: First, related theories and concepts about the link between diaspora and development, diaspora engagement efforts by international governments, previous studies, Second, Myanmar diasporas abroad, Myanmar government's stance on diaspora engagement, Myanmar government diaspora engagement efforts and policies, Third, Myanmar diasporas' views and opinion on government's policy, programs and efforts, and finally, challenges and constraints for Myanmar diasporas to engage in development programs. In attempt to gain the better understanding in the areas mentioned above, international studies, theories, scholars' works, and previous studies were examined, Myanmar government's diaspora engagement efforts and programs implemented and in progress were reviewed, and a survey was conducted in Canada. Followings are the findings of this study.

5.1 Findings

First of all, it was found that theories on the link between diaspora and development of country of origin have been well established. The impacts of diaspora's contributions in socio-economic development have been documented and acknowledged by governments, policy makers, scholars, academics, and institutions. Many countries, especially LDC and developing countries, have been effectively capitalizing contribution of their nationals abroad, diaspora communities, for development at home. Second, both previous and current Myanmar governments have expressed their willingness to have diaspora engagement in their development and reform programs. In almost 10 years, previous government formally created only one program partially concerned with diaspora. It is called "Permanent Resident of a Foreigner Rules (PRFR)" giving 5-years term permanent resident status to qualified foreigners including ex-Myanmar citizens. However there is no monitoring program to evaluate its effectiveness with respect to goals set.

Under current government, no program has been so far created or implemented to attract diasporas abroad and to increase diaspora engagement in development process. However, launched in 2015, the “Economic Policy of Union of Myanmar”, an economic policy framework of the current government, contains a policy to create employment opportunities for all citizens including those returning from abroad. The policy is concerned with only returning citizens, not all members of diaspora abroad. Current government has intention to use diaspora contribution as one of the strategies to meet the development goals set in the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (2018-2030), which was launched in 2018. Implementation of either policy has not been observed yet. Third, Myanmar diasporas abroad are willing to come back to participate in development process, and there are still strong emotional connection with their motherland. The major constraints that discouraging them to return are: financial obligations they have in host country, leaving their family in host country, and uncertainty of getting a decent job in Myanmar. Fourth, Current process, producers, information accessibility, or policies in regard to returning diasporas need to be upgraded. They need to be easier, shorter, more accessible, and more specific and effective respectively. Fifth, There are potential diaspora contributions for development in Myanmar. Government needs more efforts to realize these potential contributions.

5.2 Recommendations

The thesis question is “How to increase or maximize diaspora engagement in development process?” Due to the theories, concepts, real cases, countries’ experience, recommended strategies, and previous studies, specific steps, strategies, and coordinated efforts are required to develop an effective diaspora engagement program.

Recommendation: Myanmar government should officially create a team, consisting government representatives, scholars, representatives from institutions, and members of diasporas, which is dedicated to diaspora engagement in socio-economic development in Myanmar.

First and foremost, the team would be able to do following fundamental steps:

- 1) Studying other countries’ diaspora engagement policies, programs, incentives, strategies
- 2) Mapping Myanmar diaspora communities around the world.

3) Coordinating government policies towards diaspora engagement

After mapping members of diaspora communities around the world in term of where they are and who they are, a good communication with diaspora communities will allow to gain better understanding, and that will lead to tapping on potential contribution of diaspora engagement. Developing strategies to increase diaspora engagement in economic development may include creating the ways, which allow those who have constraints to be able to work for their country from where they are, without going back.

5.3 Recommendation for Further Study

Further studies are recommended to explore the challenges encountered and adjustment needed to make by returning diasporas during their time back in Myanmar. Also recommend studying the developing measures to monitor the progress made by diaspora contribution in development. Those studies will greatly contribute to the developing effective and realistic diaspora engagement programs in the future.

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APPENDIX

Hello! My name is Yaung Ni Oo, and I am studying a master program of public administration at Yangon University of Economics. Currently I am working on my thesis paper, a requirement for completion of the program, about diaspora engagement in development process in Myanmar. I would truly appreciate if you could participate in my survey by answering the questionnaire, which comprises 31 easy questions.

You do not need to give your name or contact details

1. Do you give your informed consent to take part in this research?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If Yes, state the date below (DD/MM/YYYY)

2. What is your Gender?

- a. Male
- b. Female

3. What is your age range?

- a. 15 - 25years
- b. 26 - 35years
- c. 36 - 45years
- d. 46 - 55years
- e. 56 - 66years
- f. 66 and over

4. What is your country of birth?

- a. Myanmar
- b. Another country (If another country please specify)

5. What is your marital status?

- a. Married
- b. Divorced
- c. Single
- Other, please state your status below?

6. Do you have children?

- a. Yes (if Yes, go to question 7)
- b. No (If No, go to question 8)

7. How long have you been in Canada?

- Under 5 years
- 5 to 10 years
- 10 to 15 years
- 15 to 20 years
- 20 to 25 years
- 25 to 30 years
- 30 to 35 years
- Over 35 years

8. What is your current status in Canada?

- Canadian Citizen (If this is your answer, skip question 9)
- Permanent resident
- Legal temporary resident (Staying with work permit)
- Student
- Other; please state your current residence status:

9. What is your current citizenship?

- a. Myanmar
- b. Currently I do not have any citizenship

10. What was the main reason you migrated to Canada?

- a. Join partner or family
- b. Pursue further education
- c. Received job offer
- d. Suffered from political persecution
- e. Suffered from armed conflicts in the region
- g. Lack of employment opportunities in Myanmar
- h. Other; please state main reason why you migrated Canada.

11. What is your highest level of formal education? (Please tick the equivalent level)

- Not finished high school
- High school Graduate
- College diploma
- Bachelor degree
- Master degree
- Doctorate degree (Ph.D)
- Other; please state your highest level of formal education below?

12. Are you currently employed?

- a. Yes (If Yes, go to question 13)
- b. No (If No, go to question 14)

13. How would you describe your job?

- a. Unskilled or low-skilled work
- b. Mid-level supervisory work
- c. Highly skilled, professional work
- a. Self-employed / Own Business
- d. Other; please describe the nature of your work

14. Have you ever revisited or returned to Myanmar since you left?

- a. Yes
- b. No

16. Do you want to go back to Myanmar to work, to do business, or take part in development processes if situations permit?

- a. Yes (If yes go to question 27)
- b. No (If No please go to question 28)

17. Why do you want to go back to Myanmar to work, do business, or take part in national development processes?

(You can choose more than one)

- a. Because Myanmar is my home. I love Myanmar.
- b. Because I want to use my experience, skills, or education in Myanmar
- e. Because there are many business opportunities as a new emerging market
- f. Because My family are in Myanmar
- g. Other reason

18. What are the challenges and restraints for you to return to Myanmar?

(You can choose more than one)

- a. Financial issue (e.g. Mortgage, long term payment)
- b. Family issue (e.g. kids' education, cannot leave family behind)
- c. Uncertainty of getting decent job in Myanmar
- d. Government policy toward Myanmar exiles
- e. Political situation in Myanmar
- f. Other reason

19. What is the reason you do not want to return to Myanmar? (You can choose more than one)

- a. Have a good job here in Canada
- b. Have a family here
- b. I have good living standard in Canada
- d. Do not like the situation in Myanmar
- e. Other reason

Views on government diaspora engagement efforts

20. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below: (please write the associate number beside the statement)

1) Strongly agree 2) Agree 3) Not sure 4) Disagree 5) Strongly disagree

- a) Myanmar government is serious about diaspora engagement in development process.
- b) It is easy to get visa and stay permit to go back to Myanmar.
- c) It is easy and simple to extend visa and stay permit if you want to stay longer
- d) In regard to going back to Myanmar, relevant information is easy to access

- e) Myanmar government has built a good relationship with Myanmar diaspora communities around the world.
- f) Myanmar government has created incentives programmes to increase Myanmar diaspora engagement in development programs.
- g) Myanmar government has implemented diaspora engagement programmes and policies that will reduce challenges and difficulties that members of diasporas may have
- h) Myanmar government has created ways for the diaspora to be able to participate in national policymaking and local development activities.

Opinions and Recommendations

21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach on how Myanmar Government should work with the diasporas? (please write the associate number beside the statement)

- 1) Strongly agree 2) Agree 3) Not sure 4) Disagree 5) Strongly disagree
- a) Government should create a federal level department or a government body dedicated to facilitate mapping and engaging with diaspora organizations or individuals abroad.
 - b) Government should create a government body to coordinate government actions relating to the diaspora
 - c) Government should have a separate policies for Myanmar expatriates, different from the policies for foreign expatriates,
 - d) Government should create ways for the diasporas to practically participate in national policymaking and local development activities
 - e) Government should have incentive programs to attract diasporas abroad to return and engage in economic development
 - f) Government should facilitate Diaspora Direct Investments (DDIs) and Diaspora Bonds.