

Guyana Diaspora Engagement A Call to Action!

by

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The Fierce Urgency of Now (FUN) Blueprint for Guyana Diaspora Engagement - A Call to Action!

First, a word about the context and title of this paper is necessary. It was in April 1967, just a year before he was assassinated that Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. preached a sermon titled the "Fierce Urgency of Now." King called for Christians to break their silence about the atrocities uncovered during the war in Vietnam and join in the struggle for human rights and world peace. Many US citizens and other peace-loving supporters around the world joined in the struggle for equal rights, human rights and world peace.

This current "Call for Action" to the Guyanese Diaspora is motivated from a different context. The latter is context of the urgent need for affirmative or positive action to address and foster Guyana's national development. It prevails on all Guyanese, particularly those in the diaspora to rise to the challenge of "The Fierce Urgency of Now!" to participate in the development efforts for their country. In this context, two questions may be raised, "If not now, when?" and "If not you, then who?"

The uniqueness of this paper derives from the fact that it does not merely provide information that the reader is expected to learn or memorize. It is meant to stimulate action! It is A Call to Action! It is an appeal to all in the Guyanese diaspora, and others living in Guyana to summon their national affinity and civic pride for the Homeland and contribute to the continued development to their nation from wherever they reside.

Whether individually, in family groups, in clubs or associations, or as a task force, any group interested in Guyana developmental activities can use this model to structure, track and assess their activities with meticulous determination to ensure tasks that are completed in a sequential manner toward goal attainment. Before proceeding further however, it is essential to define some important terms and concepts for clarification.

According to the Merriam Webster dictionary the meaning of the word "Blueprint" is originally a photographic print in white on a bright blue background, used primarily as a guide for erecting buildings, structures and machinery. However, this meaning has expanded in contemporary usage to encompass other configurations and to serve as an illustrated model or guidance for using a series of steps to erect a physical or theoretical structure.

In short, a "Blueprint" illustrates a method for making, doing or accomplishing something of value. Consistent with its expanded use, the word is used figuratively in

this paper to mean a model for providing guidance, a plan, or schema toward the worthwhile important goals of engagement in national development.

This Blueprint for Diaspora Engagement is a structured, yet flexible methodology for the engagement of the Guyanese diaspora in national development. It illustrates a strategic approach with built-in sequences for revising and updating the original schema with new data and information as the engagement process unfolds. As the operations and goals set in advance are achieved, continuous outcome assessment becomes an integral part of the configuration of this "Blueprint" or model. In this manner, the results of these actions are constantly recycled into a continuous improvement process to strengthen the blueprint over time.

This paper represents logical sequential steps to stimulate thinking and action, while making it clear that these steps may be adjusted as the metrics of the development activities change. At each stage the experiential actions need to be assessed and sequenced back to increase the viability of the model as explained earlier. Diaspora engagement can be expected to differ by variables such as ethnic culture, language, the social-economic and political dynamics of diaspora members. In every instance though, diaspora participants are directed to ideals such as the improvement of the status quo in the targeted national arena.

MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE OF 'DIASPORA'

According to the Webster's and Oxford dictionaries, the word "diaspora" derives from the Greek language, and means a scattering or dispersion. It refers to a scattered

population group to larger geographic regions with origins within a smaller geographic location. The term diaspora is in addition the movement of a specific population from its ancestral land or the land of its birth. Examples of historical Diasporas include the forcible expulsion of the Jews from Judea, the exodus of Greeks after the fall of Constantinople, and the African Trans-Atlantic slave trade. At the time of writing, the world is witnessing the spread of another diaspora as citizens of war-torn Syria are leaving their homeland to seek asylum in other countries willing to accept them. Urged by United Nations High Commission on Refugees, countries worldwide are processing applications for settling Syrian refugees. These countries include the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, others in the Middle East, countries across Europe and others globally. Researchers and scholars have postulated that Diasporas may be divided into different types by their causes such as whether these were originated by imperialism, labor migrations, weather catastrophes, war or other means. Regardless of their origin or typology, many diaspora members have established and maintained strong societal and political linkage with their homeland; occasionally travelling back for familial and national events and at times for permanent residence. In this respect, the Guyanese diaspora is no different. It was created from national, political and economic strife and the struggle for better educational and other social opportunities.

As with other Diasporas, after the crises that prompted members to leave their homeland has abated, the homeland has eventually become a major magnet for diaspora members. Often it serves as a target for foreign direct investment (FDI) for diaspora investors, technology transfer, philanthropy, tourism, political contributions,

and intangible flows of knowledge, new attitudes, and cultural influences. So far, the concentrated and impenetrable web of links between the diaspora and Guyana is, in the overwhelming majority of cases, the creation of individuals and groups acting on their own initiative, irrespective of other initiatives of from the leaders of the nation.

The blueprint unveiled here, has the potential of bringing individuals and groups together to be engaged in national development. Typical groups may comprise family and extended family members, organizational members, ethnic or other affinity members, alumni cohorts, and religious members. Others may comprise members of professional associations, charitable organizations, development NGOs, investment group members, affiliates of political parties, humanitarian relief organizations, schools and clubs for the preservation of culture, virtual networks, and federations of associations.

Diaspora members may make their contributions through these organizations, and use their group strengths and dynamics to make the climate more conducive for stimulating effective national development. Thousands of Guyanese migrants from diaspora populations have strong roots in their country of origin and want to assist in any way they can with national development commensurate with their knowledge, skills and capabilities. Their linguistic, cultural familiarity and outreach to national partners can be potentially effective and successful in assisting to make developmental projects successful. With respect to the current state of affairs in Guyana, diaspora volunteers can help to counter the effects of the “talent drain or brain drain”

experienced by the nation, as they become more active participants in national developmental initiatives.

The Guyanese Diaspora has emerged as potentially major developmental actors in an increasingly interdependent global arena. It is now widely comprised of persons of multiple professions and occupational categories – teachers, nurses, doctors, university professors, business owners and corporate leaders, financiers, bankers, investors, engineers, computer science specialists, scientists, international leaders, multi-talented affinity groups, and others. Some in this diaspora group have accumulated a variety of critical resources, social and financial capital and other strengths that are useful for making significant contributions to the political and socio-economic development of Guyana. Just as many others are employed in high skill sectors that are of critical importance to Guyana’s developmental aspirations. Many of these members have acquired requisite entrepreneurial ability and knowledge, both of which are needed for the successful establishment and management of new local and international business enterprises. A significant number have relationships and contacts with business partners and potential investors in the US, Canada and the UK, European and other countries. These actors are capable of assisting in facilitating investment in trade and, in large, medium and smaller production enterprises as well. Some operate in influential, societal positions that have become critical for engendering positive socio-economic and political outcomes in Guyana.

Additionally, diaspora members have a unique psychological connection to their homeland. This helps them to establish and sustain connections and involvement in their home country as noted by researchers like (Safran 83-99). It is in acknowledgement of this fact that some developing countries have passed laws to offer dual citizenship and encourage continuous relationships with diaspora members. In some instances formal political representation is desired and available (Lessinger 53-80, Guarnizo/Smith 3-34).

This paper provides a sequential approach to stakeholder diaspora engagement, beginning with empirical research, needs assessments, data collection and analysis. The survey of diaspora skills, capabilities and professions is an important component and starting point of the implementation of the blueprint, because the needs assessments and survey instruments assist in the accumulation of a solid database for decision-making. These are important for mapping stakeholders by their skills, occupations and capabilities; thus creating a repository or a manpower talent pool available for engagement in the painstaking work of development. An initial task is to accumulate and use the responses from the needs assessment and survey to classify and prioritize diaspora stakeholders using metrics such as their skills, knowledge, specializations, interests, willingness, and readiness to participate.

Diaspora engagement with FUN. The acronym FUN has a dual meaning. The most obvious is that it is an abbreviation for the Fierce Urgency of Now, and urges immediate action. However, it embodies an alternate psychological concept as well. The latter emerges from a deep conviction that diaspora engagement needs to be FUN and

reflect the joy diaspora volunteers experience from engagement in the purposeful and fulfilling work of contributing to the development of their homeland. The environment for engagement encompasses the emotive and spiritual component for national development; namely that sense of patriotism, national affinity, civic pride and fulfillment. These feelings naturally fuel the efforts of diaspora members as they are engaged in effective, meaningful development. It answers that important question of why does this matter? Or why should I be engaged in the work of national development?

On an existential level, one needs to be involved when the work of development is in alignment with one's innate creative strengths, or with those gifts and talents that spark genuine interest, passion, and motivation. This capability is different from things for which one has a special talent, but may not enjoy doing. Joyful engagement, or engagement with FUN, does not mean that volunteers should feel carefree about their development tasks; but instead, have positive feelings on a consistent basis about their tasks, and are intrinsically motivated to "go the extra mile" to complete them. In this way they are not only empowered by their engagement, but also by using their talents and potential fully. This emotive capacity to their involvement generates positive outcomes for both the individual and the diaspora engagement enterprise.

Critical strategic components of the FUN Blueprint for engagement

As noted earlier, this strategic approach to engagement begins with empirical data garnered from an initial comprehensive needs assessment survey of diaspora skills. The needs assessment survey will identify:

- a) Diaspora knowledge and abilities, occupational and professional skills
- b) Data for conducting, a situational inventory, environmental scan foresight analysis, and issue analysis;
- c) Information for formulating an engagement vision, mission, philosophy, goals, objectives, strategies, action-plans, resource allocation, assessment, accountability and feedback for the engagement enterprise and processes. These components are outlined further in the chapters that follow.

This FUN Blueprint for engagement is a tool for the application of a structured, yet flexible methodology for the engagement of the Guyanese diaspora in national development. It illuminates a strategic approach that is dynamic, as it is constantly updated with new data and information as the engagement process unfolds. As the engagement operations and goals set in advance are achieved, they will become milestones attained and an integral part of the "FUN Blueprint" or model.

This 'Call' for the principle of urgency, or "the Fierce Urgency of Now", demands that priorities be determined and quickly addressed to create an essential development momentum, rather than suffer an endless "paralysis of analysis" that has characterized many earlier development initiatives in Guyana. It urges establishing clear priorities based on what is desirable in the present and future. Then, by acting on priorities quickly, directing maximum effort to utilizing the resources on hand immediately while the search for complementary resources ensues.

The principle of thoughtful expediency, or 'results, instead of endless studies' is encouraged. Lessons from the past have shown that never-ending debates about ideology, political rights, legal principles, administrative procedures, and precepts can easily become impediments. The goal should be to improve the material living conditions of as many people as possible, as quickly as possible. Delays in implementing a forward developmental thrust needs to be avoided. Development needs to be considered a clear and present priority for the nation.

This Call to Action recommends swift logical steps to stimulate thinking and action while strategies are adjusted as the metrics for development changes. As early experiential development actions are taken, assessed and fed back into the model, high standards can be maintained. Diaspora engagement can be expected to differ by the diaspora groups involved and the priorities identified. Generally though, in spite of the location of the diaspora resident or group, their commitment to national development is desirable. Thousands of Guyanese migrants comprising the diaspora have strong roots in their country of origin and want to know what they can do to help. They desire to rely on their professional expertise, knowledge, skills, and technical assistance to aid national development efforts. With their linguistic and cultural familiarity, that engagement can be effective and more successful than efforts that have in the past omitted them from national development efforts. Diaspora volunteers can help to counter the effects of the lack of qualified specialists that has become an all too familiar consequence of Guyanese migration abroad.

Voluntary national development programs have the promise of engaging volunteers and utilizing their perspectives as they engage in developmental projects for Guyana. The Guyana diaspora has become an available resource and a potentially major developmental actor in an increasingly interdependent global arena. It is now widely acknowledged that as international leaders, groups and communities, Guyanese living overseas have accumulated financial resources, and represent human and social capital that are capable of making significant contributions to the political and socio-economic development of Guyana. Additionally, many in the diaspora are employed in technical, medical, financial, educational, and other high skill sectors that are of critical importance to the continued development of Guyana.

Others have acquired much needed entrepreneurial ability and knowledge, greatly needed for the successful establishment and management of a variety of Guyanese business enterprises. Many have relationships and contacts with business partners and potential investors in the US, Canada and the UK and other countries and are capable of assisting in facilitating investment in trade, manufacturing enterprises and in small and medium-sized companies.

A number are in influential positions in the countries where they have settled and hold societal positions critical for engendering positive socio-economic and political transnational and multinational relationships potentially beneficial to Guyana. Swift action is needed for an injection of these much-needed manpower resources as partners, ready with a commitment to act, rebuild trust between diaspora and homeland parties, and create a much more favorable context for a national

development. Of fundamental importance is the capitalization of the skills and expertise of this group to support national development efforts as soon as possible.

There are critical economic imperatives for our country to continue its development through increasingly higher stages. These include the imperatives self-sufficiency and sustainability. There are also global imperatives. Guyana must become increasingly more developed and economically competitive in a fast paced the global environment. The nation must embrace structural changes in the processes of production, distribution and other business processes to meet global economic demands, to really become competitive with its peers and others in the global arena.

Diaspora International Center for Engagement (DICE)

The Fierce Urgency of Now (FUN) Blueprint for Guyana Diaspora Engagement is the nucleus of the recently established Diaspora International Center for Engagement (DICE). The Blueprint is the operational guide, engine or hub of the Center's programs and activities.

The Diaspora International Center for Engagement (henceforth referred to as DICE) is envisioned as a not-for-profit diaspora engagement, development, research and capacity-building organization dedicated to enhancing diaspora fueled development in Guyana. It is meant to occupy a pivotal point at the heart of ever-evolving strategies for the development of the national economy of Guyana. It is motivated by the urgency to implement bold measures and create effective, innovative development strategies, ventures and support development initiatives and projects.

We invite Guyana diaspora members and development scholars everywhere to join us as we bring together practitioners, economists, researchers, development strategists and leaders who are focused on creating innovative developmental strategies and initiatives.

THE STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE CENTER

The strategic plan of the Center is an organizational tool that provides guidance in fulfilling a vision, mission and focused goals and objectives with maximum efficiency, impact, and accountability. It articulates plans of action, describes action steps, and

resources needed to accomplish them. This strategic plan will be reviewed and updated at least once annually, and revised at least every three to five years.

Philosophy. The Center's philosophy on national development is that the sustainable improvement in both the material and the spiritual life of a nation need continual improvement, and is realizable in a manner consistent with the protection of human dignity. National development is so weighty, extensive and encompassing in nature, that it cannot be merely regulated to the government. To be truly successful, it needs the engagement of all citizens as willing partners. Every citizen of the nation can play an efficacious role, whether they reside in the diaspora or in the homeland, if guided by an engaging inclusive process. This viewpoint is one that also recognizes the leadership of the government as an important actor that represents the national posture in development to internal and external audiences and allies of the nation.

Vision. The Center is envisioned as a major catalyst for diaspora engagement, development research and capacity building; an organization dedicated to enhancing diaspora fueled development in Guyana. It is poised to assist the diaspora network and the nation of Guyana to continue to usher in a substantially developed society with a high standard of living. It envisions a society that is continuously engaged in the reduction of poverty and strongly supports the upward mobility of Guyanese.

Also anticipated is the transformation of the Guyanese economy from an agricultural and mining economy to an increasingly industrialized one led by modernized and highly productive sectors. Guyana will become substantially technologically advanced and rely more on natural energy sources such as hydro

electric, solar, wind, and other renewable sources of energy with supportive industrial and service activities in rural and urban areas. A priority of this developmental thrust will be a solid foundation for a competitive and dynamic economy with high productivity. Consistent with this vision, Guyana will be a nation imbued with major attributes such as a) An improving and sustainable high quality of living; b) Peace, stability and unity among ethnic groups; c) Strong and reliable governance; d) A competitive economy that produces sustainable growth and shared benefits; and, e) An economy with the attributes to meet future challenges. Education in Guyana education can be personal, flexible, and include lifelong learning. Additionally, education will be disseminated far beyond schools and universities, to become available to all Guyanese people with new ideas, and involve learners and parents as contributors as well as customers.

The Center's Mission. The mission of the Center is to inform, promote, connect and strengthen diaspora engagement in development initiatives in multiple sectors of the Guyanese society.

Who does the DICE Serve? DICE is an international membership center comprised of Guyanese diaspora members and their advocates.

Programs and Services Of DICE. DICE chooses to accomplish its mission in a number of ways, by:

- Advocacy for international and local engagement;
- Implementation of national development projects;
- Annual & periodic Conferences and meetings in diaspora engagement issues and perspectives;
- Training and skill building for diaspora members, volunteers and leaders engaged in national development;
- Public policy development education project engagement, and,
- Development research partnerships.

Goals of the Center

1. Write and obtain grant funding for development projects and initiatives.
2. Conduct annual and periodic fund raising projects and activities to provide funding for development initiatives.
3. Fund and strengthen the financial sustainability of development initiatives and projects.
4. Strengthen the relationships among diaspora members and increase Their knowledge, effectiveness and capacity for collective action.
5. Strengthen the relationships between diaspora members and Guyana development actors and increase the knowledge, effectiveness and capacity for collective action of both groups.
6. Build bridges between diaspora members and key Guyanese Institutions (business, local government, philanthropic and others) to increase partnership and cooperation.

7. Increase opportunities for the implementation of development programs, shared services and shared opportunities for capacity building.
8. Implement urgently needed priority development projects.

As work continues in developing the structure of the Center, actionable objectives will be adjusted and finalized collectively with the input of diaspora members and other committed membership.

Objectives. Measurable objectives for each goal will be formulated as specific, measurable targets for accomplishment. To discover "How do we get there?"

Strategies. The methods used to accomplish goals and objectives will be determined in specific understandable language.

Action Plans. Detailed descriptions of how strategies will be implemented on an operational basis. To determine "How do we measure our progress?" the FUN Blueprint builds in:

Evaluation & Accountability. These are the methods used to measure results, and the outcomes realized from the completion of goals and objectives.

Resource Allocation. Resource allocation is the method for determining the use of the available resources. Among these are human resources, financing, and other scarce resources among the various initiatives and projects.

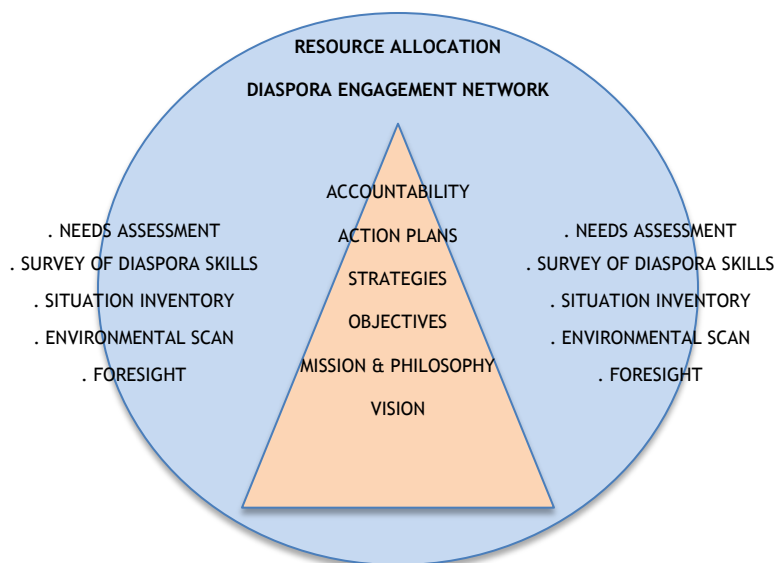
The process of resource allocation involves key diaspora team members and volunteers. By doing so, it guarantees transparency in decision-making. Using a clear Resource Allocation Matrix, results are presented in a clear visual of projects where engagement measures the criticality and success of projects. This assists in determining where engagement effort should continue, be increased or be postponed.

Part III.

Description of the Fierce Urgency of Now (FUN) Blueprint

The main visual feature of the blueprint is a triangle within a circle (as illustrated below). The component phases of the blueprint, as represented in the triangle, move upward from a broad base to an increasingly narrower focus.

The Fierce Urgency of Now (FUN) Blueprint



THE FIERCE URGENCY OF NOW BLUEPRINT

The broadest focus is the all encompassing *Vision*, or desired future, representing development of the nation at the highest level, when the Blueprint is used as a guide for national development. Alternately, the Blueprint may be used to guide initiatives or projects at a lower level of organization. Next, as we move upward, are *Philosophy & Mission and Goals*. Likewise, these focuses may apply at the highest level to national projects as a whole or at lower levels to initiatives of limited impact. A similar pattern applies to other emphases like objectives, strategies, action plans and accountability. These sequential phases are intended to apply to all development initiatives whether they are national level projects, or at lower level, sectorial, initiatives or more comprehensive projects.

Within the circle, are other important entities; namely a Diaspora Engagement Network (DEN), and a Diaspora International Fund. Additionally, on the sides of the triangle are internal and external assessments, aided by an initial survey and needs assessment of diaspora skills, professions and interests, a situational inventory, a continuous environmental scanning process and foresight analyses. These sequences will provide the data and empirical information for decision making for development projects and initiatives. The blueprint is best viewed as a roadmap or guide for the implementation and progression of any typical initiative or project for development purposes when viewed comprehensively.

A circle indicates the boundaries of the Blueprint. This circle encompasses the emotive and spiritual component for national development. Namely the sense of patriotism, national affinity, civic pride and fulfillment that should fuel the efforts of diaspora members engaged meaningfully in development.

The blueprint guides strategic planning and implementation as essential components through the internal and external assessment phases. This assessment comprises an analysis and evaluation of interior and exterior data and factors that affect both priorities. It involves:

A Situational Inventory.—This is an assessment of the diaspora group’s position, performance, problems, and potential. It includes a values audit (an analysis of the group's organizational philosophy). It also includes analyses of national and international political, economic and cultural trends that may impact national development.

An Environmental Scanning Process.—The scanning process comprises an analysis of key external elements or forces (national and international) that affect the environment in which the diaspora collaborative group functions.

Foresight. Explicit efforts to systematically identify, monitor, and analyze long-term trends and issues that are likely to affect the collaborative group’s future environment and to examine the implications those trends and issues may hold for the group’s future.

Issue Analysis. An issue analysis includes an identification and analysis of strategic issues—problems or concerns of critical importance to the collaborative group and its stakeholders, and expectation groups. The blueprint’s strategic planning process is inspired by a shared vision of the future. This vision, along with the diaspora’s mission and philosophy, are part of the group's identity and "uniqueness." Therefore, the FUN Blueprint identifies the eight phases described earlier namely:

Vision. A compelling conceptual image of the desired future.

Mission. A broad, comprehensive statement of the group's purpose.

Philosophy. The organization's core values, describing how the organization conducts itself in carrying out its mission.

To answer the question "Where do we want to be?" the FUN Blueprint for strategic planning identifies:

Goals: The general end purposes toward which effort is directed.

Objectives: Specific, measurable targets for accomplishment. To discover "How do we get there?" strategic planning develops:

Strategies: The methods used to accomplish goals and objectives.

Action Plans: Detailed descriptions of how strategies will be implemented on an operational basis.

To determine "How do we measure our progress?" the FUN Blueprint builds in:

Accountability: The methods used to measure results. Finally, the blueprint guides:

Resource Allocation: The determination and allotment of resources necessary to carry out strategies and achieve objectives, within the priority framework established in the goal-setting process. The FUN Blueprint emphasizes the deployment of resources to achieve meaningful results. That is, planning drives budgeting.

Imperatives for Implementation. Implementing the FUN Blueprint for strategic planning at the Diaspora Collaborative Group level occurs within the following context: The group formulates their vision, policies, goals, and priorities by working in concert with national representatives assigned to this task.

FUN Blueprint and strategic action plans are formulated consistent with policies and priorities established by these two groups. Frequently, the mission of a national development program or activity undertaken by a department or agency is delineated in the enabling legislation or executive order for that activity or program. Guidelines and assumptions for programmatic planning may be provided to departments and agencies by the official administrative departments. Legislative Auditors may also provide guidelines for performance audits to departments and agencies. These stipulations and directives form the basis for needs assessments in major policy or functional areas, to be used for planning and budgeting with national and diaspora groups.

Blueprint Strategic Engagement & Planning Process. The Diaspora Collaborative Group (DCG) volunteer members participate because of their commitment to devote their time, effort, and specialized expertise. Therefore, the DCG would include

knowledgeable individuals from various national and diaspora programs or services relative to the demands of the national development program or initiative. Many national agencies already have executive management teams that routinely meet and handle development management issues. This group may serve as the nucleus of the planning team, along with any additional resource persons needed. These may include resources such as national program managers, supervisors, and others who use detailed involvement with a program to carry the planning process into the operational program level. They define program missions, philosophies, formulate program goals and specific objectives; build strategies to achieve objectives; operationalize strategies through action plans; establish and maintain accountability; and determine needed resources.

The DCG is best seen merely as a resource to assist in analyzing the overseas impacts of potential strategies, and use strategic plans to guide development of strategies to make the program or initiative understandable to overseas partners and audiences.

Funding sponsors, local and overseas banks and sponsors, may use strategic plans to guide development of capital outlay plans and budgets. The diaspora planning coordinator provides the coordination and tools for moving the initiative through the planning process. The planning coordinator develops the timetable for planning and organizes and documents the entire process. FUN Blueprint strategy planning (BSP) coordinators are part of the diaspora network. Training for BSP coordinators should be completed prior to their assignment.

A trained experienced facilitator from the diaspora network is needed to guide participants through planning sessions, assuring that all views are considered. This facilitator should be neutral; he or she does not express opinions but keeps the discussion flowing. ("Facilitator" is a functional title, not a position.) A facilitator may be someone from outside or within the diaspora network. Many organizations prefer to have an outsider facilitate their planning sessions, particularly high-level ones. Carrying the FUN Blueprint Strategic Planning Process to the Program Level requires this kind of technical assistance. "Budget unit" is a term used in budget development to designate the sub-group as the other authorized unit of the DCG.

Officially, a budget unit is any spending group declared to be a budget entity by administrations. Each budget unit may be divided into programs. A program is defined as a grouping of activities that results in the accomplishment of an objective or set of objectives for each activity within the program. A program must be delineated into activities, which are program components representing distinct subsets of functions or services. Strategic planning guides resource allocation through annual operating plans and budgets as well as capital outlay plans and budgets. For operational budget development, a budget request and operational plan should be submitted for each program activity, and operational funds may be appropriated by the leadership sub-group of the program. The capital outlay planning and budgeting process requires an explanation of the program impacts of each capital project being pursued. The FUN Blueprint strategic process should be carried down to the program level within each budget unit and must include the activities for each program.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Successful diaspora engagement efforts in national development are those that are driven by specific motivations and interests of diaspora group members. These are possible with the application of specific resources such as the diaspora members' skills, knowledge, specializations, interests, aspirations, willingness, and readiness to participate.

An additional motivation for development work emerges from a deep conviction reflecting contentment, purposefulness, and fulfillment that arise from contributing to the development of the homeland. The environment for engagement needs to be stimulating, and encompass the emotive and spiritual component for doing worthwhile work. This kind of work evokes a sense of patriotism, national affinity, and civic-pride that naturally fuels continuous effective, and meaningful development.

The most effective diaspora engagement programs are those initiated in response to the requests of diaspora members. These include diaspora volunteer engagement initiatives, networking alliances, technical assistance programs and other associated enterprises and partnerships.

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Appendix A.

Guyana Diaspora Needs Assessment/Survey

Kindle respond the following questions by filling in the correct response.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION				COMMENTS
Q 1. Name	First Name			
	Middle Name			
	Surname			
Q 2. Gender	Male			
	Female			
Q 3. Age	> 18			
	50-59			
	19-29			
	30-39			
	40-49			
	> 59			
Q 4. Marital Status	Single			
	Married			
	Divorced			
	Widowed			

Q 5.	How many Children do you have?	0		
		1		
		2		
		3		
		4		
		>5		
Q 6.	What is the highest level of education you have reached? What is your profession?	Primary		
		High School (Secondary)		
		University or College		
		University (bachelor's degree)		
		University (Master's degree)		
		University (Ph.D. degree)		
		Others, please specify		
	Unmarried (In a committed relationship)			
	Other			

Q 7.	What is your profession?	Accounting/Finance/Banking	
		Administration	
		Media/advertising/ entertainment	
		Finance/banking	
		Customer services	
		Community services	
		Construction	
		Consulting /corporate strategy	
		Education/training	
		Engineering	
		Government	
		Health care/medical	
		Hospitality/tourism	
		HR/ recruitment	
		IT/technology	
		Insurance/legal	
		Manufacturing	
		Mining/environmental resource management	
		Retail/consumer industry	
		Transport/logistics	
		Sales/marketing	
		Science/research	
		Sport/ health/cosmetology	
		Other, please specify	
Q 8.	What is your average annual income?	No income	
		< US \$10,000	
		\$10,000–\$20,000	
		\$20,000–\$30,000	
		\$30,000–\$40,000	
		\$40,000–\$50,000	
		\$50,000–\$70,000	
		\$70,000–\$100,000	
		>\$100,000	
		No response	
Q 9.	In what country were you born?	Guyana	
		USA (to Guyanese parents or otherwise)	
		UK (to Guyanese parents or otherwise)	
		Canada (to Guyanese parents or otherwise)	
		Other (please specify)	
Q 10.	What is your current nationality?	Guyanese	
		US Citizen	
		Canadian	
		British Citizen	
		Dual Citizenship (please specify)	
		Other (please specify)	

Q 11.	In what country do you currently live?	The United States of America (US)	
		United Kingdom (UK)	
		Canada	
		Other Caribbean Country	
		Europe	
		Other (Please specify)	
Q 12.	When did you leave Guyana to reside in the diaspora?	Less than 6 months ago	
		6–12 months ago	
		3–5 years ago	
		10 years ago	
		More than 10 years ago	
		Other (Please specify)	
Q 13.	What was your primary reason for leaving Guyana?	To pursue further education	
		To pursue better Employment opportunities	
		To open a business abroad	
		I moved with my family as a child or a dependent	
		Because of my marriage to someone living in the diaspora	
		For political/asylum	
		Other (Please specify)	
Q 14.	If you are married or have a long-term partner, what is the nationality of your spouse/long-term partner?	Guyanese Citizen	
		US Citizen	
		UK Citizen	
		Canadian Citizen	
		Other Caribbean country	
		Other (Please specify)	
Q 15.	Are any of your immediate family members (spouse, children, parents) with you in the country in which you currently live?	No	
		Yes – Spouse	
		Yes – Children	
		Yes – Parents	
Q.16.	Are any of your immediate family members (spouse, children, parents) still in Guyana?	No	
		Yes – Spouse	
		Yes – Children	
		Yes – Parents	
Q.17	Is dual citizenship an attractive option for you?	Yes	
		No	
		Of no Interest	
--- COMMUNICATIONS & MOBILITY PROFILE ---			
Q 18.	On average, how often do you return to Guyana?	More than once every 6 months	
		Once a year	
		Once every two years	
		Once every three years	
		Never	
		Other (Please specify)	

Q 19.	On average, how often do you stay when you visit Guyana?	Less than 1 week	
		1–2 weeks	
		2–4 weeks	
		1 –2 months	
		3–6 months	
		6 months–1year	
		More than 1year	
		Other (Please specify)	
Q 20.	For what purpose do you visit Guyana?	Holiday	
		To visit friends and family	
		For Business	
		For Educational purposes	
		Other, (Please specify)	
Q 21.	Do you intend to return to Guyana permanently ? future?	Yes	
		No	
		Not sure	
		In the next six months	
Q 22.	If yes, how soon do you expect to return?	In 6 months to 1 year	
		In 1–2 years	
		In 2–5 years	
		In more than 5 years	
		Not sure	
		Yes	
Q 23.	Are there any barriers to your return?	No	
		Not sure	
		Other, (Please specify)	
		Financial constraints	

Q 24.	If yes, what are the barriers to your return?	Work commitments	
		Accommodation/housing	
		Political/legal	
		Other, please specify	
		Yes	
Q 25.	Would you be interested in returning to Guyana temporarily as part of a "skills transfer" program?	No	A skills transfer program it enacted would enable skilled, experienced and educated Guyanese living abroad to return on a volunteer basis to assist with developing human skills and institutional capacities
		Not sure	
		Other, please specify	
		Less than 2 weeks	
Q 26.	If yes, how much time would you be willing to spend in Guyana on a "skills transfer" program?	2 weeks to a month	
		1-2 months	
		3-6 months	
		7-12 months	
		More than a year	
		Not sure	
		Telephone	
	How do you maintain contact with friends and family in Guyana?	E-mails	
Q 27.		Twitter	
		Facebook	
		Letters	
		Word of mouth	
		Newspapers	
		Other, please specify	
Q 28.	How do you get information on what is happening in Guyana when you are not there?	Telephone	Specify all that apply
		E-mails	
		Letters	
		Internet (Guyana websites)	
		Twitter	
		Facebook	
		Regional radio broadcasts	
		Word of mouth	
		Guyana High Commission/Embassy	
Other specify			

--- FINANCES AND DONATIONS ---			
Q 29.	Since being in the country of your current residence, have you ever sent finances to family members or friends in Guyana?	Yes	Finances are money transfers initiated by foreign workers who send part of their earned income to their country of origin.
		No	
Q 30.	To whom do you send finances?	Children	Weekly Specify most appropriate response Monthly Quarterly Annually Other, please specify
		Parents	
		Dependents	
		Extended family members (i.e. aunts, uncles, cousins, grandmother, grandfather)	
		Friends	
		Churches	
		Community organizations	
Q 31.	How often do you send money?	Weekly	
		Monthly	
		Quarterly	
		Annually	
		Other, please specify	
Q 32.	How much do you send on average per transaction?	< US \$100	
		US \$100–300	
		US \$300–500	
		US \$500–1,000	
		US \$1,000–2,500	
		US \$2,500–5,000	
		US \$5,000–10,000	
		> US \$10,000	
		Other, please specify	
Q 33.	How do you remit funds to Guyana?	Bank transfer	
		Western Union	
		MoneyGram	
		Quick pay	
		Independent money brokers	
		Internet-based transfer services	
		In cash form through friends or family	
		Other, please specify	
Q 34.	Why do you send finances to Guyana?	Financial support for family or friends	Specify all that apply
		Contributions for development projects	
		Personal investment	
		Debt service	
		Personal obligation	
Q 35.	What is the average cost of sending finances?	US \$1	
		US \$1-\$5	
		US \$6-\$10	
		US \$11-\$25	
		US \$26-\$50	
		US \$51-\$100	
		>\$100	
Other, Specify			
Q 36.	Do you believe the financers contribute to the development of the following? (Specify all that apply)	Education	
		Health care provision	
		Infrastructure development	
		Churches or faith-based organizations	
		Women's associations	
	Childcare		

		Other areas of development (specify)	
		Not sure	
--- NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT/INVESTMENT ---			
Q 37.	Do you have any properties/ assets in Guyana?	Yes	
		No	
Q 38.	Do you have any private investments in Guyana?	Yes	
		No	
Q 39.	Are you interested in private investment in Guyana?	Yes	
		No	
		Not sure	
Q 40.	If yes, what type of investment would be of interest to you? (Specify all that apply)	Manufacturing	
		Financial services	
		Agriculture/horticulture	
		Transport	
		Mining	
		Tourism	
		Import-Export	
		Other, please specify	
Q 41.	Are you currently interested in contributing or donating to development projects in Guyana?	Yes	
		No	
		Not sure	
Q 42.	What types of development projects are you interested in supporting? (Specify all that apply)	Education	
		Health care provision or Childcare	
		Infrastructure development	
		Microfinance initiatives	
		Churches or faith-based organizations	
		Women's associations	
		Other areas of development (specify)	
Q 43.	What type of support can you contribute? (Specify all that apply)	Financial	
		Material	
		Skills transfer	
		Other, please specify	
Q 44.	Which parts of Guyana would you be interested in helping to develop? (Specify all that apply)	Georgetown (and Greater Georgetown)	
		Linden	
		New Amsterdam	
		East Coast (Specify Demarara or Berbice)	
		West Coast (Specify Demarara or Berbice)	
		Skeldon	
		Bartica	
		Others, please specify	
Q 45.	Are there any barriers or restrictions that exist that could stop you from contributing to national development?	Yes	
		No	
		Not sure	

Q 46.	If yes, what are these barriers? (Specify all that apply)	Financial constraints	
		Work commitments	
		Political/legal	
		Other, please specify	
---- DIASPORA NETWORKS -----			
Q 47.	Do you belong to a diaspora network (formal or informal)? (Specify all that apply)	No	
		Academic Work-based	
		Guyana Association	

		Internet-based social networking groups	
		Other, please specify	
Q 48.	How is information shared among members of the diaspora? (Specify all that apply)	Meetings	
		E-mails	
		Websites	
		Twitter	
		Facebook	
		Newsletters	
		Word of mouth	
		Other, please specify	

Q 49.	How often do you meet?	Every two weeks	
		Monthly	
		Fortnightly	
		Quarterly	
		Every six months	
		Yearly	
		Other, please specify	
Q 50.	Is there a contact person/ focal point for your diaspora network?	Yes	
		No	
Q 51.	If yes - please indicate contact details		
	Name (specify)		
	Address (specify)		
	Phone number (specify)		
	E-mail		
Q 52.	Would you be interested in receiving additional information about projects for Guyanese diaspora in the future? - If yes, please indicate your e-mail address	Yes	
		No	
		Email Address:	
Q 53.	Would you be willing for us to contact you to provide additional information on the above questions? If yes, please indicate your e-mail address	Address:	
Q54.	What is your preferred method of communication	Phone	
		Email	
		Other, Please specify	

Thank you for taking time to complete this survey!

APPENDIX B.

Interview Schedules

Interview Questions and Guidelines

Interview with Guyana High Commission in the United States

- 1.a) How many diaspora associations are there in the USA?
b) Which ones are the main ones?
2. What activities/services are they engaged in?
3. What resources are there in the diaspora that may contribute to Guyanese development efforts?
4. Are there any development and investment/trade initiatives in Guyana driven by the Guyana High Commission in the US?
(Please describe any efforts to encourage the diaspora to return to participate in development initiatives).
5. Are there any development and investment initiatives/activities in Guyana driven by the diaspora?
6. What are the major challenges faced by the diaspora in terms of participating in development efforts in Guyana?
7. What are the major constraints related to engaging the diaspora in national development?
8. What strategies are/can be used for engaging the diaspora in national development?
9. What are the major challenges the diaspora face in their bid to return home?

10. What would the diaspora like to see changed or addressed to help with their long- and short-term return plans to participate in national development?

11. Please state any issues you would like addressed by current diaspora engagement strategies?

12. Is there a compelling rationale for diaspora engagement in the development of Guyana?

Interview with diaspora associations in the US

1. What are the main activities of your association?
2. How many members do you have?
3. How do you do your networking and what challenges do you face in that regard?
4. What skills and resources are available in your membership? Profile of members.
5. Is the association or any of its members involved in any development and investment/trade initiatives in Guyana? If yes, what are they?
6. What constraints exist in engaging the members in development activities in Guyana?
7. Are there members who wish to return to Guyana on a short-term or long-term basis? If so, what are the major challenges they face in this regard?
8. Would you participate in an initiative to encourage your members to return to Guyana on a long-term or short-term basis?
9. What measures would encourage members to engage in investment/trade or development activities in Guyana?
10. Are there any areas in which the diaspora have expressed interest in terms of investment in Guyana?
11. Please state any issue you would like addressed in a diaspora engagement initiative.
12. Is there a compelling rationale for diaspora engagement in the development of Guyana?