

AFRICA DAY 2024 CELEBRATION

01.06.2024 / 1:30 pm - 5:00 pm / , HAUS DER RELIGIONEN, EUROPAPLATZ 1, 3008 BERN

THEME: "DECOLONIZING AID": Decolonization for inclusive Development

As part of the activities for the celebration of the Africa Day 2024 marking the end of the 1st International Decade for People of African Descent, the African Diaspora Council of Switzerland (ADCS) and the African Foundation for Migration and Development (AFMD) in collaboration with the Swiss African Forum, are delighted to use this opportunity to advocate for a decolonized and inclusive society. Thus, the dialogue is featuring a round table discussion centered on "Decolonization for inclusive Development". The dialogue will examine among others

- the process of "decolonizing aid" for a balanced participation and enhanced space for Diaspora Engagement in International Development cooperation
- Networking, exchange of knowledge, experiences and best practices on dealing with diversity in international cooperation
- Empowerment of the Diaspora for sustainable development, human capital and remittances

The round table will highlight the concept of "White Saviour" complex in the light of Freire theory on international development cooperation. *"This idea that it is the role of the White outsider to 'lift' the poor and oppressed in developing countries seems universal in the Western world... this privilege often exhibits itself as a sense that we as Westerners have the unique power to uplift, edify and strengthen..".*(1) It further noted that, *"one song we hear too often is the one in which Africa serves as a backdrop for white fantasies of conquest and heroism Africa has provided a space onto which white egos can conveniently be projected. It is a liberated space in which the usual rules do not apply: a nobody from North America or Europe can go to Africa and become a godlike savior or, at the very least, have his or her emotional needs satisfied. Many have done it under the banner of 'making a difference'."* (2)

How has the idea of Western Civilization, as purveyed by colonialism, affected development cooperation and the psyche of people of African Descent in general? What can be done to challenge and adjust the resulting mindset and practices? This round table raises awareness of how cultural perceptions and power structures have shaped the racial society of today, and how they bear on our understanding of development aid practices, inclusion and diversity.

The organizers are proposing a frank and in-depth discussion and reflection on decolonization imperative; advocate for Diaspora engagement in development cooperation pursuant to the recommendations of the UN High Level Dialogue in 2013 which recognizes among others, the Diaspora as fundamental agent of development. Our panelists are composed of academics, international development experts, policy makers, the Diaspora and the members of the civil society. Participation with registration is free and open to all stakeholders: members and activists of the Diaspora community, development experts, diplomats, policy makers, the private sector and civil society actors, the intellectuals as well as the media. However, registration is obligatory. While the discussion is in English language, questions are also taken in French and German languages.

1. Straubhaar, Rolf; The stark reality of the 'White Saviour' complex and the need for critical consciousness: a document analysis of the early journals of a Freirean educator Rolf Straubhaar in Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education

2. Straubhaar, Rolf; op. cit.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU AT THIS EVENT

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THEME: "DECOLONIZING AID": Decolonization for inclusive Development

Draft Program, Saturday, 01.06.2024 / 1:30pm - 4:30pm / Haus der Religionen, Europaplatz 1, 3008, Berne

Time	Subject	Speaker
13:30 - 14:00	<i>Arrival of participants</i>	Moderator, Anna Samwel Manyanza , Political Scientist, Literally Analyst & Writer VWASU Expedition
14:00 - 14:10	<i>Welcome Remark</i>	Celeste Ugochukwu African Diaspora Council of Switzerland
14:10 - 14:20	<i>Opening Remark</i>	Member of the Swiss parliament (tbc)
14:20 - 14: 50	<i>Keynote Address: "Decolonizing Aid in a World not of Our Making"</i>	Prof. Elisio Macamo , Prof. of Sociology & African Studies University of Basel, BS
14:50 . 15:50	EXPERT PANEL DISCUSSION <i>Gain valuable Insight as our experts dissect Colonization and enhanced Engagement of the Diaspora and locals in International Development Cooperation</i> <i>1st Input: "Decolonizing Aid"</i>	Kimon Schneider International Development Expert Former Senior Lecturer, Nadel, ETH Zurich, ZH
	<i>2nd Input: "Decolonizing Aid" Perspectives from Arab world</i>	Cheija Abdalahe Human Rights Activist Founder , The Bridge Generation Libraries for Refugee Women, AG
	<i>3rd Input: Café Roundtable of People of African Descent</i>	Nana Haja Salifu Dagarti Co-Chair, UK chapter of Afrikan Congress, London, UK
15:50 - 16:30	Open Discussion on Diaspora Engagement in development cooperation <i>Discussions, Observations, Comments, Q&A</i>	Speakers and all participants
16:30	Closing remark	Dr Benjamin Sakem Project coordinator Swiss African Forum

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16:30 - 17:00	<i>Aperitif, B2B, Networking</i> <i>Visit to the African Market Festival</i>	All participants
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