

Brief Introduction



After two insightful newsletters, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Belgium and Luxembourg is proud to deliver its third newsletter. This edition highlights the start of the Global Diaspora Confederation, the launch of our Diaspora Insights podcast, a story from IOM Rwanda on TVET and Youth Empowerment and looks into the possibility of setting up a Diaspora Advisory Board. Our [webpage](#) and social media accounts on [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) will be updated regularly with new events, calls and info relevant for diaspora residing in Belgium and Luxembourg. The last page will already include a selection of open calls and events by (and for) Diaspora residing in Belgium, Luxembourg and abroad.

With over 30 years of experience, IOM Belgium and Luxembourg is aware of the importance to establish links and to engage with diaspora communities as powerful actors of development and change. The expertise, commitment, knowledge and skills of diaspora make it essential for our office to give you a prominent place in the development and implementation of our project activities.

With the newsletter and renewed webpage, IOM Belgium and Luxembourg would like to set up a dialogue with you and create a platform that will benefit all. We hope to bring together various actors interested in diaspora engagement as well as to increase awareness on the wonderful work and huge potential of diaspora as actors of change.



A Diaspora Advisory Board: how do you envision this?

The IOM Country Office for Belgium and Luxembourg is looking into the possibility of setting up a **Diaspora Advisory Board** for our office's activities, and we would like your input. Interested in sharing your insights on what this could entail, how this could bring forward a sustainable collaboration, and much more? [Fill out the survey!](#)

Many thanks!

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination



The office of IOM Belgium and Luxembourg took a stance against any form of racial discrimination. With this year's theme "Youth Standing Up Against Racism", we showed support for the fight against

racism, and hope that our current and future projects help to create a more inclusive and fair society. Let's make sure we hear all voices! **Let's #FightRacism!**

The Global Diaspora Confederation is the world's largest diaspora-led civic society organisation that brings together a variety of diaspora organizations. The concept was introduced at the launch of 2020 Global Virtual Diaspora Exchange Conference organised by IOM and iDiaspora.

In April 2020, the coalition was eventually set up as a message of solidarity to diasporic victims of xenophobia and discrimination due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Through a collaboration with member organisation, humanitarian aid organization, national government and United Nations agencies, the **objectives** for this coalition are **to unite, support, develop and promote global diaspora communities.**

In 2021, together with IOM and iDiaspora, the Confederation is organising a new series gatherings experts on these topics to provide information on how to overcome common challenges faced by stakeholders engaging in transnational activities. The first virtual exchange on **Building trust** took place **April 27th**; **Mobilizing resources** takes place on **May 27th**, followed by a third exchange on **Ensuring sustainability** on **June 17th**. Keep an eye on the [iDiaspora website](#) for registrations for the next events. For more information on GDC, check out [their LinkedIn](#).



The first person to take the mic is the talented Salomé Omanga Ysebaert, an African researcher at the Afrikamuseum in Tervuren, Belgium and a member of the decolonization committee in Brussels. In this visual podcast, she answers questions such as what a diaspora means to her and what a platform such as Diaspora Insights can offer. "(A diaspora) is something important for people who have left their country to find their roots and regain their identity."

Want to check out what else she has to say? Head to the link [here](#).

Meet the diaspora team of IOM Belgium Luxembourg



Ange-Vanessa Nsanzineza

In April 2021, Ange has joined the Country Office as one of the new interns. She will be assisting both the diaspora engagement project and the [Equalcity project](#). With her curious vision on the minority rights and affairs, she will be helping with revising toolboxes and assist at workshops for the Equalcity project.

Increasing visibility of diaspora members in Belgium and abroad will be one of her tasks on the diaspora engagement project. She will also assist in co-creating the Diaspora Insights podcast.



Anke Van de Velde

Anke was hired as a project manager for the IOM Rwanda Diaspora Engagement project in August 2019. Since January 2021, she is managing [the U-CARE project](#) on alternative care for unaccompanied migrant children. As the diaspora focal point, she gives ad-hoc support to diaspora members and other IOM offices seeking to engage with diaspora in Belgium. She also makes sure to include diaspora interests in the development and implementation of new projects. Before joining IOM, she was working in New York and Mozambique on human rights in (post-)conflict situations and development.

IOM's Diaspora Insights podcast

In January this year, IOM Belgium and Luxembourg launched its very own podcast series, "Diaspora Insights". Diaspora Insights is a platform by and for diaspora in Belgium where their work and key topics will be highlighted.

To watch list

Although COVID-19 has put many barriers into our daily ways of going about life, it has also offered plenty of initiatives. Whether it be through an initiative or a school project, plenty of members from diaspora groups created creative content that are worth checking out.

Green Ramadan

VOEM, Veggie = Halal, Green Deen and plenty of other organizations have joined forces for this year's Ramadan. They organize a variety of activities: iftar meals for those in need, discussion panels and challenges. Watch a short recap [here](#).

Marie-Pierre Nyatanyi

Marrie-Pierre Nyatanyi, author of **PluriElles**, CEO of **Djaïli Mbock** and former participant to **IOM's Women4Development Academy**, appeared on Cameroonian television to briefly speak about **her project Makeda Menoua**. Watch the video [here](#). For more information, check out PluriElles' Facebook-page or to read the article on the Women4Development project, visit the [diaspora engagement webpage](#).

FC United (2021) - CANVAS (in Dutch)

This **three-part documentary** exposes personal accounts of racism and discrimination within the **soccer environment** in Belgium. Watch it [here](#).

Da Yie (2019) - Anthony Nti (in Dutch)

This short film, that won several **prizes** and was **shortlisted for the Oscars**, tells a story of two children who go on a life-changing adventure with a stranger. Available via [VRT NU](#).

Diaspora podcasts

Podcasts are an interesting way to indulge yourself in your favourite topic. We have listed 3 diaspora podcasts that you may like!



Kwibuka Podcast

This podcast will guide you through the most pivotal points leading to the Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda back in 1994. The host of the podcast is Jean-Damascène Bizimana, a renowned researcher on the Genocide against the Tutsi and has been on two genocide-related commissions of inquiry.



The Afro Beets Podcast

What connects the African diaspora to food and gardening? Find the answer to this question, and much more.



Asian Provocation

This is a queer conversational podcast where you can explore stories and ideas, with a focus on Asian diaspora.

IOM Rwanda reports: *Diaspora Skills Transfer in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Youth Empowerment*

Since 2018, IOM has been working closely with the Rwandan diaspora for the successful implementation of IOM projects. The Rwanda Polytechnic (RP), in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MINAFFET) and IOM, have selected ten projects that will pursue ways on how to engage Rwandan diaspora in Europe to transfer their knowledge and skills and thus to support the development of Rwanda's TVET sector. Through this project, they will help co-develop and support ten business ideas that Rwandan students and professors have presented. Read the full article [here](#).

For more information, contact Alexander Twahirwa, IOM Project Officer for Labour Mobility and Human Development (LMHD) at atwahirwa@iom.int.



Let's celebrate and commemorate together! April 2021 - September 2021



- April**
- ° 07/04 - International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi in Rwanda
 - ° 20/04 - Chinese Language Day
 - ° 23/04 - World Book Day and Spanish Language Day
 - ° 24-30/04 - World Immunization Week (WHO)
 - ° 30/04 - International Jazz Day (UNESCO)

- May**
- ° 1-31/04 - European Diversity Month
 - ° 03/04 - World Press Freedom Day
 - ° 05/04 - African World Heritage Day (UNESCO)
 - ° 15/05 - International Day of Families
 - ° 17/05 - International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia
 - ° 25-31: Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-governing Territories
 - ° 13/05 - Eid al-Fitr/Lesser Eid

- June**
- ° 13/06 - International Ablinism Awareness Day

- ° 16/06 - International Day of Family Remittances
- ° 19/06 - International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict
- ° 20/06 - World Refugee Day

- July**
- ° 18/07 - Nelson Mandela International Day
 - ° 20/07 - Eid al-Adha

- August**
- ° 01-07/08 - World Breastfeeding Week
 - ° 09/08 - International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples
 - ° 19/08 - World Humanitarian Day
 - ° 21/08 - International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism
 - ° 22/08 - International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief

- September**
- ° 12/09 - United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation
 - ° 18/09 - International Equal Pay Day
 - ° 23/09 - International Day of Sign Language



Diaspora calls and events

Belgian-Congolese **Lieven Miguel Kandolo and Don Moussa Pandzou** published their very first book *Yaya na Leki* earlier this year. This book gives you an insight on how two men from Congolese descent experience and view topics such as religion, the Congocommission, diversity poverty and privilege. **Interested in hearing the dialogues?** You can re-watch the different sessions via [this website](#). (in Dutch!)

UCREATE, a project by four European artistic organisations in Europe, are looking for artists with a migration background to join their **residency** program in October. Are you between **19 and 25yrs old**, and do you have a talent for **music**? Apply for this residency of the International Yehudi Menuhin Foundation. More info can be found [here](#).

KU Leuven University is conducting research during the COVID-19 pandemic on solidarity and vulnerability in the **Congolese community**. Fill in the survey [here](#). For more information, contact Prof. Dr. Karen Phalet at karen.phalet@kuleuven.be.

The **School of Modern Languages and Cultures** ('Translation and Transcultural Studies') at Warwick University is looking for a **PhD candidate** to conduct research on the role of textual genre in the expression of philosophical meanings. **Fabula**, a research center for literature, offers the **ERC PhD Scholarship: African Literature across Languages and Genres**. **Deadline is June 21st**. For more information, visit this [webpage](#).

Are you interested in **starting a career in entrepreneurship** as an African in or outside the African continent, but need a little guidance? **Afripreneurial**, founded by Magnues Dikese and Nzeni Zamubundu, is a **platform** for African entrepreneurs in Africa and African diaspora worldwide. Visit [their website](#) for more information. The **first** consultation is **free** of charge!

100 X CONGO, an exhibition curated by political scientist Nadia Nsai, offers a historical perspective on **Congolese artifacts** that hare present in Antwerp, Belgium. **How** did they get here? **What** are their stories? And what does that say about the relation to Congolese communities? **Until 13/09/2021** you can book a [reservation](#) to visit or to have an online guided tour (in Dutch or English).

Diverse leraarskamer is an upcoming project from Orbit vzw, the City of Antwerp and the ESF, that attempts to **encourage youth** with a migration background to pursue a career in teaching. Do you know any youth between **15 and 20 years old**? Send an email to joel@orbitvzw.be, or visit [their website](#) for more information.

Interested in learning more about **African business**, its challenges and its opportunities? Check out the [one-year certificate program](#) in African Business Studies at Thomas More College.

Luc Ameye, beloved teacher and coach of IOM's Women4Development Academy, is organizing **new coaching sessions in May** on developing and implementing development projects and programs. For more info, check <https://belgium.iom.int/diaspora-engagement-english> or email luc.ameye@gmail.com for more info.



#Vaccines: did you know...

... the small pox only exists within laboratory environments? It is one of the two diseases that have been eradicated due to the vaccine against the virus.

... each year, the World Immunization Week takes place at the end of April? This health campaign, lead by WHO, aims at promoting the use of vaccines to protect people of all ages against diseases.

... that a third of the child mortality rates is preventable with a vaccine? Each year about 2.3 million lives are saved by vaccines against tetanus, the measles, diphtheria and whooping cough.

... IOM stands ready to support national authorities and other international organizations with the logistics of the vaccine distribution? The [#VaccinEquity campaign](#) calls out all authorities and organizations to equally distribute the vaccines, regardless of one's legal migrant status, because *no one will be safe until everyone is*.

... the [People's Vaccine Alliance](#) is a coalition signed by over 170 current and past nation -and government-leaders that strive for an equal distribution of all kinds of information on the vaccines? They advocate for the patents and intellectual property rights to be shared broadly so all communities can be ensured of the proper creation and distribution of them.



Call for Application Rwandan Diaspora

Are you part of the Rwandan diaspora, and would you be interested in getting engaged in the Rwandan TVET/health sector? Visit the [iDiaspora page](#) for the vacancy notice and keep an eye on our social media for the next awareness raising session!

Are you organizing an event in the coming months or are you seeking to engage with diaspora? Feel free to send it to us and we will feature it on our website/ newsletter!