



# The Ethiopian Diaspora in Germany

Its Contribution to Development in Ethiopia



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## Foreword

In May 2006, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH launched the Sector Project Migration and Development on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) at the GTZ Head Office in Eschborn. This project aims to devise and disseminate strategies and instruments to help key actors deal with the development potential of and minimise the risks posed by migration.

The advisory project acts as an interface among the realms of research, politics and practice. Its core tasks include both providing specialised advisory services to BMZ and mainstreaming the approach within GTZ and other German implementing organisations. An in-depth exchange of experience and cooperation with European partners is also an important part of the intervention. Cooperation with diaspora communities in Germany, which is an important field of project activities, aims first and foremost to acquire a better understanding of the ongoing activities of the various migrant organisations in their countries of origin. To this end, GTZ published a study in 2006 titled: “Egyptian, Afghan and Serbian Diaspora Communities in Germany: How Do They Contribute to their Country of Origin?”. Several other studies followed in 2007 and 2008 on the Moroccan, Senegalese, Vietnamese, Philippine, Ghanaian and Armenian diaspora communities in Germany. All of these publications helped close a gap in social research, since little was known at that time about the activities of migrants in their countries of origin.

The second step was to use these studies to identify cooperative approaches for the formulation and implementation of joint projects in the countries of origin. Within the framework of a GTZ pilot promotion programme on the cofinancing of investments in social infrastructure, which was launched in May 2007, a number of diaspora organisation projects are now receiving support in their countries of origin.

The present study on the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany continues to pursue this successful approach of getting acquainted with these communities and then exploring possibilities for cooperation between the diaspora and development cooperation.

*Regina Bauerochse Barbosa*

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## List of Abbreviations

<b>AAAAA</b>	Arbeitskreis (Working Group) Afrikanischer und Asiatischer Akademikerinnen und Akademiker
<b>AEEG</b>	Association of Ethiopians Educated in Germany
<b>APA</b>	Workplace equipment – Arbeitsplatzausstattung
<b>AZR</b>	Ausländerzentralregister
<b>ASU</b>	African Students Union
<b>AsylVG</b>	Law on Asylum Procedures/Asylverfahrensgesetz
<b>AufenthG</b>	Residency Law/Gesetz über den Aufenthalt, die Erwerbstätigkeit und die Integration von Ausländer im Bundesgebiet
<b>AuslG</b>	Foreigners Law/Ausländergesetz
<b>AWTI</b>	Arba Minch Water Technology Institute
<b>BMI</b>	Federal Interior Ministry
<b>BMZ</b>	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development -Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung
<b>CIM</b>	Centrum für Internationale Migration und Entwicklung
<b>DAAD</b>	German Academic Exchange Service – Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst
<b>DED</b>	German Development Service – Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst
<b>ecbp</b>	Engineering capacity building programme
<b>EEA</b>	Ethiopian Expatriate Affairs General Directorate
<b>EED</b>	Church Development Service – Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst
<b>EEPCO</b>	Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation
<b>EIA</b>	Ethiopian Investment Agency
<b>ESAAG</b>	Ethiopian Students and Alumni in Germany
<b>GARP</b>	Government assisted repatriation programme
<b>GRC</b>	Geneva Refugee Convention
<b>GTZ</b>	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit GmbH
<b>HIS</b>	Hochschul-Informations-System GmbH
<b>HLM</b>	Hiberet Lelema Ma'ekel
<b>HOT</b>	Hilfsorganisation für Tigre in Deutschland e.V.
<b>IOM</b>	Internationale Organisation für Migration
<b>KAAD</b>	Katholischer Akademischer Austausch Dienst
<b>MIDA</b>	Migration for Development in Africa
<b>MIDEth</b>	Migration for Development in Ethiopia
<b>MoCB</b>	Ministry of Capacity Building Ethiopia
<b>MoFA</b>	Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<b>NBE</b>	National Bank of Ethiopia
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organisation
<b>PCI</b>	Precise Consult International
<b>REAG</b>	Reintegration and Emigration Programme for Asylum Seekers in Germany
<b>PhD</b>	Doctor of Philosophy
<b>PPP</b>	public-private partnership
<b>PRF</b>	Programm Rückkehrende Fachkräfte
<b>PSD</b>	Private Sector Development
<b>RQAN</b>	Return and Reintegration of Qualified African Nationals
<b>TDA</b>	Tigray Development Association
<b>TPLF</b>	Tigrayan People's Liberation Front
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>USAID's VEGA</b>	USAID's Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance
<b>WUS</b>	World University Service
<b>ZAV</b>	Zentralen Auslands- und Fachvermittlung

## 1. Introduction

In the policy debates concerning migration and development, the diaspora communities throughout the world play a key role. This study examines the profile and structure of the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany. In this context it analyses the potential and resources of the Ethiopian community in Germany for the development of their country of origin. Furthermore the report looks at the policies of the Ethiopian and German governments and other relevant stakeholders towards the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany. This study is based on the comprehensive survey entitled “Mobilising the Ethiopian Diaspora” which has been carried out in close cooperation with the engineering capacity building programme (ecbp) and the GTZ Migration and Development Projekt.

With regard to methodology, the study is based on comprehensive survey field research in Germany and Ethiopia as well as based on a review of relevant studies and literature on the Ethiopian diaspora. The first step, based on in-depth Internet research<sup>1</sup> and discussion with experts, was the identification of key stakeholders focusing on the Ethiopian diaspora as well as important diaspora associations and organisations which were then brought together in a comprehensive overview.

In Ethiopia **semi-structured interviews** were carried out with the most relevant Ethiopian stakeholders dealing with the Ethiopian diaspora. Over twenty state, NGO and private sector institutions were interviewed in this context.

To gain insight into the structure of the Ethiopian diaspora community, interviews with representatives of Ethiopian and Ethiopian-German associations were carried out in Frankfurt, Cologne and Berlin during the field research in Germany and additionally by telephone or via a written questionnaire. To complete the picture on the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany, interviews with thirteen individual Ethiopian diaspora members living in Germany were carried out. Moreover, interviews with staff at German institutions and experts were carried out for analysing German policies towards the Ethiopian diaspora (including CIM, DAAD, DED, GTZ and BMZ). Furthermore, an interview with the Ethiopian consulate in Germany was conducted.

The study, which is based on qualitative research methods, does not claim to be representative or to give a complete picture concerning the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany. It provides initial insights and an overview of the Ethiopian diaspora community in Germany. Based on the findings in Germany and Ethiopia, recommendations for German development cooperation and Ethiopian diaspora organisations in Germany have been developed.

The term diaspora must first be briefly elucidated because of its central importance to this study.

Interest in diaspora groups has grown in the social sciences in recent decades and accordingly an increasing number of definitions are circulating in the academic discourse. So far no official definition of diaspora<sup>2</sup> has existed. A broadly accepted definition is that formulated by Gabriel Sheffer, who describes modern diasporas<sup>3</sup> as “ethnic minority groups of migrant origins residing and acting in host countries but maintaining strong sentimental and material links with their countries of origin – their homelands” (Sheffer: 1986). Other researchers conceptualise a diaspora as a community, bound on the basis of common cultural and ethnic references (Soysal: 2000). As regards the emergence of a diaspora, Robin Cohen differentiates between victim, imperial, labour, trade and cultural diasporas (Cohen: 1997). Often the definition of diaspora groups is linked to the concept of transnationalism, which generally refers to various links and interactions,

1 This research was restricted by the fact that many websites, especially of Ethiopian diaspora associations as well as Ethiopian diaspora discussion forums, are blocked and censored by the Ethiopian government, so that they cannot be accessed while visiting Ethiopia.

2 The term diaspora is Greek and means dispersal. Traditionally it refers to an area in which a faith-based or ethnic group is in a minority within another host country/area.

3 In contrast to modern diasporas, classical or archetypical diasporas are those whose status has resulted from forcible dispersal (e.g. genocide or other catastrophic events) as, for example, the traditional Jewish diaspora.

connecting people or institutions across the borders of nation-states (Vertovec: 1999). From this perspective, a diaspora is understood as a transnational social institution, relating both to the country of origin and the country of destination. This concept provides the possibility to examine how the migrant social, economic, political, and cultural networks involve both country of origin and country of settlement (Wahlbeck: 1998).

At the policy level in Ethiopia in general, every Ethiopian or person of Ethiopian origin living abroad is considered to be a member of the Ethiopian diaspora (cf. Meeting with EEA: 15.6.2008). Still, the Ethiopian diaspora is mainly envisioned as those who have studied abroad and/or gained some professional experience, thus being able to contribute to know-how and technology transfer (cf. Meeting MoCB: 30.5.2008). Thus they have intercultural experiences and usually have taken on some aspects of the culture of the destination country.

Beyond these scientific and policy-oriented approaches to the Ethiopian diaspora, it should be considered how Ethiopians staying abroad perceive themselves. Thus it is crucial to examine who of the Ethiopian citizens or persons of Ethiopian descent define themselves as members of the Ethiopian diaspora and who do not. Here ethnic and political affiliations play a central role. For example, many Ethiopians of Oromo ethnicity see themselves as Oromo and thus not part of the Ethiopian diaspora. Similarly most Germans of Ethiopian origin, due to political affiliations or other reasons, see themselves rather as citizens of Germany than as a part of the Ethiopian diaspora. On the other hand, a growing number of young people from the second generation, who have been born abroad and hold German citizenship, see themselves as part of the Ethiopian diaspora despite the fact that they have never visited Ethiopia. In other contexts, active engagement as well as an inherent interest in Ethiopia become the central criteria for being considered part of the Ethiopian diaspora. This engagement can have different facets including cultural tasks, such as support of the culture, the cultivation of traditions, etc. It can also involve certain social tasks (defence of social rights of an ethnic group, regulation of migration, employment, dealing with problems of citizenship, of racial discrimination and xenophobia etc.), political tasks (influence on the political life in the country of origin and in the host state, lobbying etc.), and economic tasks (creation of different industries where representatives of the diaspora can work, carrying out trade etc.).

When speaking about the Ethiopian diaspora, this study will follow the definition developed by Gabriel Sheffer as this includes the notion of self-definition, which only refers to those Ethiopians or persons of Ethiopian origin who have some kind of link to Ethiopia and thus an interest in Ethiopia. This definition is not linked to questions of citizenship, time spent abroad or ethnicity, nor does it limit itself to certain geographic regions or qualification levels.

## 2. Profile of the Ethiopian community in Germany

Regardless of its worldwide extent, this study focuses exclusively on the analysis of the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany. Nevertheless, it is important to know, that worldwide approximately **more than one million Ethiopians<sup>4</sup> are living abroad** and the numbers are still rising. However, due to a lack of systematic data collection and research<sup>5</sup> in Ethiopia as well as in the countries of destination, accurate statistics on Ethiopians abroad are not available. Furthermore, many Ethiopians living abroad have given up their original citizenship and data on naturalisation by ethnic origin is scarce. Data on the second generation of Ethiopians in particular is lacking. In 2005, according to World Bank data, the number of Ethiopian emigrants was 445,926, which is around 0.6 % of the total population in Ethiopia<sup>6</sup>. At the same time, the stock of immigrants was 555,045, around 0.7 % of the population (World Bank: 2008). Thus the net migration rate was -0.2 per 1000 residents (UN: 2006).

The top ten destination countries for Ethiopians include Sudan, the United States of America, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Canada, Sweden, Italy, United Kingdom and the Netherlands (World Bank: 2008), which means that countries in Africa, Western countries and the Middle East are among the top destination countries for Ethiopian emigrants (Tasse: 2004).

### 2.1. Causes and types of migration from Ethiopia to Germany

**Before 1974** there was nearly no migration of Ethiopians to Germany reported. Those who came during the time of the Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie (1930–1974), were **mainly Ethiopian students and academics** studying or doing a PhD in Germany in the framework of scholarships. The large majority of these Ethiopians returned to Ethiopia after having completed their studies or further education in Germany, as they had good job opportunities within the Ethiopian government. During this time only a total of eight political refugees from Ethiopia were registered in Germany<sup>7</sup>. Overall no more than 300 Ethiopians were registered in Germany in 1974.

**Since 1975**, the number of Ethiopian immigrants to Germany has increased. The Ethiopians arriving during the regime of Mengistu (1974–1991) were **mainly refugees who left Ethiopia because of political motives**, war and a general lack of prospects, especially for intellectuals and academics. These Ethiopians were mostly young males coming from urban areas. Until 1980 Ethiopian immigrants to Germany did not need a visa, which changed after 1980, making it more difficult for Ethiopian refugees to enter Germany. Most arrived by airplane in Frankfurt and Stuttgart, where they directly applied for asylum. Most of these asylum-seekers were granted asylum based on the Geneva Refugee Convention (GRC)<sup>8</sup>. In addition, a number of Ethiopians moved to Germany in search of higher education opportunities.

Thus by 1991 around 20,200 Ethiopians lived in Germany, including an undefined number of refugees from Eritrea. With the fall of the Derg regime and the takeover of power by the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF), a certain part of the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany returned with the idea of supporting their country's development.

4 Some estimate that there are between 1.5 and 2 million Ethiopians living abroad.

5 There are extremely few studies focusing on the Ethiopian diaspora. The only ones available are the study by Abye Tasse (cf. Tasse: 2004), focusing on the Ethiopian diaspora in France and the United States, an older study by the World University service focusing on the German Ethiopian diaspora (cf. WUS: 1992) as well as a more recent study by the Canadian NGO AHEAD focusing on the Canadian Ethiopian diaspora (cf. AHEAD: 2007).

6 In 2006 the Ethiopian population was estimated at 73 million; the Ethiopian census estimates the population in 2009 at 78 million.

7 cf. Telephone Interview Orbis Aethiopicus: September 2008.

8 They received an international passport based on the GRC, a permanent residence permit and unrestricted workpermit. During the asylum procedures, which lasted around three years, they had to stay at refugee centres. Furthermore, they were provided special German language courses and occasionally further vocational training.

**From 1991 onwards**, numerous Ethiopians who had been studying in states of the former Eastern Bloc, including East Germany, came to West Germany<sup>9</sup>. Apart from that, a growing number of Ethiopians fled poverty, internal conflicts, political repression or the fear of being recruited to the Ethiopian military and migrated to Germany, asking for asylum. Furthermore, family members of Ethiopians already living in Germany left their country in the framework of family reunification.

Overall it is estimated that around 5 % of the Ethiopian community living in Germany today arrived before 1974 due to academic reasons. Another 20–30 % came during the time of the Derg regime and have acquired German citizenship or a secure residence status in the meantime. The largest group, between 65–70 % of the Ethiopian citizens living in Germany and Germans with an Ethiopian background, came after 1991.

It should be noted that during the few last years, immigration in connection with an asylum request remained on a low level. Since 2000, fewer than 400 Ethiopians per year have entered Germany with a first-time asylum application. Only 2 % were recognised as political refugees (Art. 16 a GG) while a larger number received expulsion protection (§ 60 Abs. 1 AufenthG) for different reasons<sup>10</sup>. Thus Ethiopian asylum-seekers coming to Germany since the year 2000 do not play an important role within the diaspora.

The number of Ethiopian students in Germany was relatively low, with 418 students<sup>11</sup> in 2006. This number included 102 Ethiopian students born in Germany (without German citizenship) and 316 Ethiopian students coming from abroad<sup>12</sup>. Male students dominate, as scholarships in Ethiopia are granted mainly for engineering, technical or development-related subjects.

## 2.2. The Ethiopian community in Germany – Size and residence status

### a) Size of the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany

In comparison to other African communities, the number of Ethiopians living in Germany is relatively small, ranked tenth among all African countries, with Morocco (67,989), Tunisia (23,228) and Ghana (20,293) ranked as the first three in 2007. Compared to other Eastern African countries, however, Ethiopia has by far the largest diaspora community in Germany.

While in 1970 only 265 Ethiopians were officially registered in Germany, their number first increased tenfold by the beginning of the 1990s. Since 1995 the number of Ethiopians in Germany decreased from 15,305 Ethiopians registered in the AZR to only 10,203 in the year 2007. This decrease is linked to the number of naturalisations as well as the number of Ethiopians returning to Ethiopia or leaving for other countries around the globe. Furthermore, numerous Eritreans registered as Ethiopians in the German statistics returned to Eritrea after the country declared its independence in 1993.

Based on the data of the Central Register of Foreign Nationals (*Ausländerzentralregister*, AZR), there were 10,293 Ethiopian foreigners registered in Germany in 2007<sup>13</sup>. This number includes neither those Ethio-

9 Some of these were supporters of the Derg Regime who had been awarded scholarships in the Eastern Bloc and now feared persecution if they were to return to Ethiopia.

10 These humanitarian reasons can include HIV infection, illnesses such as diabetes which still cannot be treated adequately in Ethiopia, as well as female asylum-seekers fearing female genital mutilation.

11 Source: German Federal Statistical Office and HIS.

12 80 of these students have a scholarship from the Deutscher Akademischer Austausch-Dienst (DAAD). Others enter the country with the support of the Katholischer Akademischer Ausländer-Dienst (KAAD) and Church Development Service (EED) or other funding institutions.

13 Before the independence of Eritrea in 1993, refugees and other persons coming from Eritrea were registered as Ethiopians. While this is not the case for arrivals after 1993, there could still be some persons registered as Ethiopians who are Eritreans.

pians that have acquired German citizenship<sup>14</sup> nor Ethiopians living in Germany illegally and without any residence permit. Adding an estimated 8,000 Germans of Ethiopian background and around 2,000 second-generation Ethiopians with German citizenship, **the Ethiopian diaspora community amounts to around 20,000 persons<sup>15</sup>.**

Of the 10,293 Ethiopians registered in Germany in 2007, around 10 % (1,000) were born in Germany and thus belong to the second generation of Ethiopians in Germany. Those with one German parent usually have German citizenship while children of Ethiopian parents living in Germany usually decide to become naturalised when they turn 18. This group accounts for another 2,000 Ethiopian diaspora members. It is expected that the **second generation of Ethiopians** living in Germany will become **larger and more significant in the future.**

**Table 1: Ethiopians in Germany by year**

Year	Total	Year	Total
1970	265	2001	14 310
1980	4658	2002	13 826
1985	13576	2003	13 382
1990	17956	2004	11 390
1991	20200	2005	10 964
1995	20600	2006	10 609
2000	15 305	2007	10 293

Source: German Federal Statistical Office, 2008

In 2007, **the average length of stay** of Ethiopian diaspora members in Germany without German citizenship was **11.4 years<sup>16</sup>.** During their stay in Germany, most diaspora members undergo vocational training or obtain a university degree as well as gain professional work experience.

**Table 2: Duration of stay of Ethiopians registered in the ARZ on 31.12.2007**

Total	Under 1	1–4	4–6	6–8	8–10	10–15	15–20	20–25	25–30	30–35	35–40	40 and more
10293	519	1409	1233	878	623	2473	1701	888	436	94	30	9

Source: German Federal Statistical office, 2008

## b) Residence status of Ethiopians in Germany

**The majority (4,617)** of the Ethiopians living in Germany at the end of 2007 only had **temporary residence status<sup>17</sup>.** This group includes mainly asylum-seekers who have been granted expulsion protection or prohibition and are allowed to stay on humanitarian or political grounds; relatives of these persons and persons coming in the framework of family reunification (family-related grounds); as well as students with a temporary scholarship and Ethiopians with temporary working contracts. In addition, a total of **3,475**

<sup>14</sup> It should be recalled that Ethiopians born in Germany can decide before the age of 18 if they want to take on German citizenship. Those who have one parent with German citizenship are granted German citizenship at birth.

<sup>15</sup> It is estimated that the number of Ethiopians living illegally in Germany is relatively small. Most of them try to move on to Sweden, the Netherlands and the UK and try to obtain a residence permit in one of those places (cf. Written Statement Bauer: March 2009).

<sup>16</sup> cf. German Federal Statistical Office: 2008.

<sup>17</sup> Based either on the old Foreigners Act 1990 (AuslG) or the new Residence Law 2004 (AufenthG).

**Ethiopians** living in Germany had a **permanent residence permit** based on the AuslG or AufenthG.

Finally, there are three other groups: 1) A total of 795 Ethiopians live in Germany only with toleration status<sup>18</sup>. They have no right to remain in Germany as they have been ordered to leave<sup>19</sup>. 2) 362 Ethiopians reside in Germany with temporary permission to stay (§ 55 AsylVG), since they are still being considered for asylum and no decision on their application has been made. 3) Another 205 persons have currently applied for a residence permit outside the asylum procedure.

**Table 3: Residence Status of Ethiopians in Germany as of 31.12.2007**

<b>Permanent Status</b>	4617
<b>Temporary Status</b>	3475
<b>Toleration Status</b>	795
<b>Still in asylum procedure</b>	362
<b>Application for residence</b>	205

Source: German Federal Statistical Office 2008

### c) Naturalisations

During the last eight years, around 450 persons per year have given up their Ethiopian citizenship in order to obtain German citizenship. Thus a total of 3,667 persons acquired German citizenship between 1999 and 2006. Adding around 900 naturalisations for the years 2007 and 2008, as well as around 3,500 for the years 1980–1998<sup>20</sup>, one arrives at a total number of around 7,800–8,000 Germans with an Ethiopian background.

**Table 4: Number of naturalisations per year**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Naturalisation Rate</b>
<b>1999</b>	239	137	102	1,50%
<b>2000</b>	567	359	208	3,70%
<b>2001</b>	587	371	216	4,10%
<b>2002</b>	461	266	195	3,30%
<b>2003</b>	492	289	203	3,70%
<b>2004</b>	465	250	215	4,10%
<b>2005</b>	412	210	202	3,80%
<b>2006</b>	444	203	241	4,20%
<b>Total</b>	3667	2085	1582	

Source: German Federal Statistical Office, 2007

<sup>18</sup> Ethiopians with toleration status in Germany are living under very restricted conditions. Since 2005 these Ethiopians have not been granted a work permit, they live in accommodations, receive food packages and pocket money in the amount of 20 euro per month (cf. Bauer: 2005).

<sup>19</sup> Since they are not in possession of valid travel documents (e.g., Ethiopian passport or a Laissez-Passer) they cannot be returned to their country of origin by the German authorities. Currently the Ethiopian Embassy in Germany is not issuing passports or Laissez-Passer without a request from the respective compatriot.

<sup>20</sup> Between 1980 and 1989, a total of 1009 Ethiopians took on German citizenship (cf. WUS: 1992).

#### d) Return of Ethiopian diaspora members

A significant number of Ethiopians returned to Ethiopia between 1993 and 2000. It is estimated that during this time around 200–250 mainly highly educated Ethiopians and Germans with an Ethiopian background per year returned to their country of origin. This movement was mainly caused by the breakdown of the Mengistu regime in 1991. A significant proportion of the returnees were supporters of Meles Zenawi and therefore Ethiopians from the Tigray region. During the last six years the number of returnees to Ethiopia slowed down considerably, with only around 70–100 returnees per year. This tendency is expected to continue in the coming years<sup>21</sup>.

### 2.3. Social Structure

#### a) Ethnic and religious identity of Ethiopians in Germany

Concerning the ethnic composition of Ethiopians residing in Germany, no systematic data is available. It is estimated, however, that the Amhara are the biggest ethnic group, followed by Tigrayans and Oromo<sup>22</sup>, who are mainly concentrated in Frankfurt and Munich. Apart from these groups, there are smaller communities of Somali, Gurage and Harari living in Germany (WUS: 1992).

The majority (around 80–90 %) of the Ethiopians in Germany are members of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Furthermore, especially within the Oromo community are numerous members of the Protestant church. There are very few Ethiopian Muslims living in Germany. (cf. Meeting Ethiopian Orthodox Church Germany: 6.8.2008).

#### b) Age of Ethiopians in Germany

The average age of the Ethiopians living in Germany is 32. Overall Ethiopians in Germany are younger than the German population. Ethiopians under 20 are often members of the second generation of Ethiopians, who have been born in Germany. The dominant age group comprises those between 25–45 years old, which is also the age at which Ethiopians usually decide to become active in Ethiopia through initiatives, investments and the like.

**Table 5: Age of Ethiopians in Germany as of 31.12.2007**

Total	Under 5	5–10	10–15	15–20	20–25	25–35	35–45	45–55	55–65	Over 65	Average
10293	458	428	333	567	935	3077	2928	995	396	176	32,4

Source: German Federal Statistical Office, 2008

#### c) Family status of Ethiopians in Germany

The overwhelming majority of Ethiopians in Germany (55 %) are single (both men and women). This can be explained by the fact that most Ethiopians migrate as single persons to Germany and only those with a secure residence status are able to have their family members join them in Germany in the context of family reunification. Furthermore, the average age of Ethiopians in Germany is quite low. Concerning those Ethiopians who are married, it can be observed that more Ethiopian women than men are married, especially when it comes to marriages with German spouses. A substantial number of Ethiopians in Germany are separated (see Table 5).

<sup>21</sup> cf. Meeting AEEG: 31.3.2009.

<sup>22</sup> It is estimated that there are around 1,500 Oromo living in Germany. The group of Oromo in Germany has not been growing in the last few years. The overwhelming majority came as refugees. They are now well settled in Germany and have no interest in returning to Ethiopia (cf. Meeting Oromo Horn of Africa Center: 31.7.2008).

**Table 6: Martial status of Ethiopians in Germany as of 31.12.2007**

Year 2007	Total	Single	Married	Married with German partner	Widowed	Separated	Unknown
<b>Men</b>	5090	3341	1186	252	18	218	327
<b>Women</b>	5203	2488	1988	729	149	277	301
<b>Total</b>	10293	5829	3174	981	167	495	628

Source: German Federal Statistical Office, 2008

#### d) Schooling and education of Ethiopians in Germany

Ethiopian pupils in Germany who attended a German school in 2004–2005 were usually second-generation: they did not migrate to Germany, rather were born there. Most of them had attended elementary school (from age six to twelve). At the high school level, the majority of Ethiopian pupils in Germany attended the Hauptschule (209), followed by those in the Realschule (111) and the Gymnasium (80)<sup>23</sup>.

**Table 7: Education of Ethiopians in Germany 2004–2005**

Total	Preschool	Elementary School	Hauptschule	Realschule	Gymnasium	Special Schools
920	2	297	209	111	80	39

Source: German Federal Statistical Office, 2007

Overall **no systematic data** exists on the qualifications of Ethiopians and Germans with an Ethiopian background living in Germany. It is estimated that around 3,000–4,000 Ethiopians and Germans with an Ethiopian background (around 20 %) hold a degree at the bachelor's level or above. Apart from this, there are around 6,000–7,000 other Ethiopian diaspora members with vocational training in different sectors.

#### e) Working situation of Ethiopians in Germany

According to data of the Federal Employment Agency, 37.1 % of all Ethiopians living in Germany in 2007 were working as employees (see Table 7). This rate is higher than the overall employment rate of the overall African population in Germany, which was only 28 % in the same year. Apart from the Ethiopians working officially, it is estimated that some have taken up unregistered and illegal employment.

<sup>23</sup> In Germany adolescents have to attend school up to the age of 16. After the sixth grade (normally at the age of 12) pupils attend different schools based on their merits. The Hauptschule ends after the 9<sup>th</sup> grade with a practice-oriented degree and the Realschule after the 10<sup>th</sup> grade with a degree facilitating entrance into the German vocational training system. Those pupils who want to study have to continue up to the 12<sup>th</sup> grade and usually attend a -Gymnasium.

**Table 8: Employed Ethiopians with social insurance (legally working)**

Year	Total	Male	Women
1999	5.542	3.601	1.941
2000	5.390	3.452	1.938
2001	5.050	3.189	1.861
2002	4.815	2.985	1.830
2003	4.386	2.661	1.725
2004	4.247	2.526	1.721
2005	3.823	2.264	1.559
2006	3.727	2.164	1.563
2007	3.820	2.254	1.566
2008	3.927	2.275	1.652

Source: Federal Employment Agency 2009

Ethiopians living in Germany work in a wide variety of professions, however there is a **concentration in the service sector** (more than 50%, including skilled trades such as electricians, mechanics, leather producers, cooks) **and service professions** (office workers, IT professionals, accountants, sales persons, cleaners). Ethiopians also work in **manufacturing** (around one third) in jobs requiring at least three years of vocational training<sup>24</sup>, such as chemistry workers, synthetic material workers, metal workers, offset printers and technicians.

A smaller part is engaged in **academic professions** and consequently working as teachers, engineers, architects, agricultural specialists, economists, medical doctors, university lecturers and professors.

## 2.4. Geographical distribution of the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany

**More than 80 %** of the Ethiopians living in Germany live in four regional states: **Hessen, Bavaria, North-Rhine-Westphalia and Baden-Württemberg**. Furthermore, a substantial number of Ethiopians can be found in the city states **Berlin and Hamburg**<sup>25</sup>.

Within these four states, the Ethiopians are mainly **concentrated in big cities** such as Frankfurt on the Main, Munich, Cologne, Düsseldorf and Stuttgart as well as smaller cities such as Nuremberg, Offenbach, Mannheim, Bonn and Wuppertal. This situation is linked to the fact that employment and other vocational opportunities, educational institutions and further support structures for migrants are normally concentrated in the bigger cities.

<sup>24</sup> Dreijährige Berufsausbildung.

<sup>25</sup> Apart from this, Ethiopian asylum-seekers have been distributed to the new regional states, however most of them tried to move to the old regional states as they feared racism and attacks by violent right-wing-oriented Germans.

**Table 9: Geographical distribution of Ethiopians registered in the AZR as of 31.12.2007**

<b>Total</b>	<b>10293</b>
<b>Baden-Württemberg</b>	1281
<b>Bavaria</b>	2263
<b>Berlin</b>	624
<b>Brandenburg</b>	18
<b>Bremen</b>	74
<b>Hamburg</b>	207
<b>Hessen</b>	3658
<b>Mecklemburg-Vorpommern</b>	16
<b>Niedersachsen</b>	236
<b>Nord-Rhein-Westfalen</b>	1419
<b>Rheinland-Pfalz</b>	138
<b>Saarland</b>	28
<b>Sachsen</b>	116
<b>Sachsen-Anhalt</b>	121
<b>Schleswig-Holstein</b>	74
<b>Thüringen</b>	20

Source: German Federal Statistical Office, 2008

When the immigration of Ethiopians to Germany started in the 1970s, the regional distribution of the migrants was mainly influenced by their first point of entry to Germany, e.g., Frankfurt, Stuttgart or the Berlin airport. In addition, many refugees were sent to Bavaria since the Federal Agency for Migration and Refugees is located in Nuremberg. Ethiopians immigrating in the 1990s and later on often decided to settle in those cities where Ethiopians had already built certain communities.

### 3. Forms of social organisation of the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany

The Ethiopian community in Germany is structured around **friendships and social networks**. Social networks consisting of Ethiopian and German persons are the most relevant support structures for the integration of Ethiopians in Germany but also play a significant role in the mobilisation of Ethiopians to become engaged in Ethiopia.

Overall, the Ethiopian community in Germany is **very heterogeneous** and **divided along ethnic lines** and political affiliations. Concerning the latter, Ethiopians in the diaspora can be divided into two main groups: those who are in line with and promote the current Ethiopian government and those who follow opposition parties. Nonetheless, it is estimated that the large majority of Ethiopians in Germany are not actively involved in political groups and activities, but rather try to stay out of politics and concentrate on their daily life in Germany. It can be observed that ethnicity is still of great importance to the Ethiopian diaspora associations and organisations. However, on the individual level, the ethnic group to which one belongs is losing relevance, especially for those who have been living a long time in Germany. The second generation of Ethiopians, like many Ethiopian diaspora members, start to see themselves as Germans, persons from Germany of Ethiopian descent or Ethiopian-Germans.

#### 3.1. Organisational level and capacities of the associations

Looking at the overall number of Ethiopian diaspora associations and German-Ethiopian associations, around **150 associations** can be found in Germany. In addition, several unofficial groups and organisations exist which are not organised as formal associations according to the German legislation and thus cannot be found in the official registers of associations. Of such organisations officially registered in Germany, **only about one third are currently active**<sup>26</sup>. Among the others, some have either ceased their work completely<sup>27</sup>, because their founders have left Germany and returned to Ethiopia or moved to another country. Others are currently not functioning because they are in a restructuring process, their members are too busy to engage in the association's work, or internal conflicts exist within the association<sup>28</sup>. Most of the Ethiopian diaspora associations are concentrated in those regions where the majority of Ethiopians are living. The majority of them were set up in the 1980s and 1990s, however, some associations were established in the last few years by members of the second generation. Most associations are set up by Ethiopian men and most boards of directors of these associations are also dominated by men. Women are usually only regular members of these associations or are linked to the associations in the wider family context.

Regardless of the type of association, **the central aim of most of the associations** is to promote the exchange of experiences and dialogue between Ethiopians living in Germany. In this context, the integration of Ethiopians in Germany and keeping the Ethiopian culture alive are important goals for the associations around which most of their activities are planned. While some associations offer counselling towards integration to their members, there is no Ethiopian diaspora association which is really focusing on social work, professional counselling concerning legal issues (e.g. residence status) or advice concerning psychosocial integration issues. Concerning these issues, Ethiopians in Germany have to seek the advice and support of German or other migrant support and counselling organisations. While there are also a number of political organisations, the current political situation in Ethiopia and politics in general play only a minor

<sup>26</sup> According to the Ethiopian Consulate in Germany, there are only fifteen active Ethiopian diaspora institutions in Germany. This can be explained by the fact that the consulate is only in contact with a few associations and has specific criteria as to which organisations are seen as Ethiopian diaspora associations (cf. Meeting Ethiopian Consulate: 29.7.2008).

<sup>27</sup> Another problem is that the political organisations try to infiltrate the different Ethiopian diaspora associations and win them over to their cause. Some diaspora associations consequently gave up their work in fear that it would be too much stress and hassle to challenge these political organisations. Others have now become extremely cautious and try to screen new members before they admit them as full members.

<sup>28</sup> After the 2005 elections in Ethiopia, a lot of internal conflicts started within the Ethiopian diaspora associations in Germany. Thus Ethiopian diaspora associations are currently in a crisis and starting to re-establish themselves (cf. Interview individual diaspora members Germany).

role for most Ethiopian associations in Germany. However, most of the associations follow the living conditions in Ethiopia and try to inform on recent developments in Ethiopia.

While there is a large number of highly educated Ethiopians in Germany, only very few professional and academic associations exist. The existing ones are still in the process of establishment and are thus often rather weak. The lack of professional associations can be linked to the fact that highly educated Ethiopians in Germany often want to organise with other Germans rather than with other Ethiopians and thus join professional German associations and organisations.

#### a) Size, leadership and financial situation of the associations

The size of the majority of Ethiopian diaspora and Ethiopian-German associations is **rather small**, having below fifty members. Few such organisations have more than one hundred members. The largest Ethiopian associations have between 300 and 500 members. Often the associations have a very hierarchic structure which relies on **strong leadership and some central activists** who are in charge of organising all the activities of the association. These activists usually work on a voluntary basis and are not remunerated for their work. It can also be observed that some founders of Ethiopian diaspora associations are well known persons in the overall Ethiopian community, while their associations are small and rather unimportant. These “key players” can take on a guiding role within the community and often have strong informal networks going way beyond the membership of their associations.

The main income of the associations comes from **membership fees** as well as **external funding for specific projects and events**. Individual membership fees are usually rather low and vary between €5–15 per person. External funds are usually received from local or regional administrations focusing on the integration of foreigners and multi-cultural affairs, church organisations or foundations. Those Ethiopian diaspora and German-Ethiopian associations which engage in development activities in Ethiopia also collect **donations** for their various activities. In general, the Ethiopian diaspora associations lack adequate financial resources to become fully operational and carry out all the activities they envisage.

#### b) Professional competences

While some of the Ethiopian associations have been active for many years, their professional competences in the area of fund-raising, public relations work, media competence and project development and management are moderate and could still be strengthened. Especially in the area of fund-raising most associations lack experience and information on existing possibilities. Similarly the presentation of the associations to a greater public is often weak, as the associations do not have a web presence or existing websites are outdated and low on information content. As most Ethiopian diaspora associations do not actively network with German associations and organisations working in similar fields, they also lack access to information, training courses, etc. which could help them to strengthen these competences.

#### c) Divisions and cooperation between diaspora associations

Most Ethiopian diaspora associations are divided along **ethnic lines or political affiliations**. This is true also to some extent for those associations which claim to be open to all Ethiopians. When looking at their members, one can find they are composed mainly of one ethnic group. There are only a few Ethiopian diaspora organisations which actively try to overcome these ethnic and political divides. As a result, there is **very little cooperation between** the various Ethiopian as well as German-Ethiopian diaspora associations. Instead there exists mistrust between the different groups and sometimes even open hostility. Only a few associations with the same overall interests are in contact and cooperate concerning individual events. Overall a central Ethiopian association or an umbrella association of Ethiopian associations is missing, which could represent Ethiopians in Germany and function as a common voice of the Ethiopians.

#### d) Reaching the Ethiopian community

It is estimated that only between **10–20 % of all diaspora Ethiopians are organised in Ethiopian diaspora organisations**. However, this does not mean that they are active members, but rather that they have become members of an association and participate in yearly meetings, social gatherings, etc. The Ethiopian Oromo in Germany show a higher degree of organisation and here it is estimated that up to 50 % participate in diaspora organisations. Nevertheless, most Ethiopian diaspora members know of Ethiopian diaspora associations in their city or region and would if necessary contact them for information or support. The associations are mainly seen as useful forums in which to discuss and solve the challenges of living in Germany<sup>29</sup>. Moreover, while most Ethiopian diaspora associations are of low importance for the Ethiopian community in Germany, **faith-based organisations**, especially the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, **are seen as the central contact points** for Ethiopians in Germany. Within these faith-based associations, Ethiopians from different ethnic groups and holding various political convictions can be found<sup>30</sup>. Similarly sports associations are important for the Ethiopian community as they do not focus on ethnic and political divisions but bring different Ethiopians together.

#### e) Role of the Ethiopian Embassy and Consulate in Germany

While the Ethiopian Embassy and Consulate have the mandate and aim of acting as a central contact point for Ethiopian diaspora associations in Germany, most of the Ethiopian associations are not in close contact with the embassy or consulate. The embassy or consulate are for the most part only contacted if associations need a contact to a state institution in Ethiopia. For example, members of an association apply for the Person of Ethiopian Identity Card or for other technical information. Only few Ethiopian diaspora associations have cooperated with the embassy and consulate in organising events and/or have invited staff from the embassy or the consulate to participate in their activities.

### 3.2. Types and relevance of associations and other organisations

There exists a vast variety of Ethiopian diaspora associations in Germany. Most of these associations and organisations are based on a common denominator such as ethnicity or religion.. Besides ethnicity-based and regional organisations, a wide range of geographically based, cultural and self-help associations as well as Ethiopian-German friendship associations can be found. Student, academic and professional associations, as well as youth and sports associations have been increasing and growing in relevance in recent years. A number of political organisations of the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany also exist as well as development-oriented groups trying to engage in Ethiopia. A central place is held by faith-based organisations and associations, which have the largest group of followers. A new phenomenon are virtual networks and internet portals, which bring together diaspora Ethiopians in Germany.

In the following section, the associations have been categorised according to their main denominators in order to provide a better overview of the different types of Ethiopian diaspora associations in Germany and demonstrate the great diversity of organisations and approaches. In addition, examples of active and important Ethiopian diaspora associations are presented in each category (see the boxes).

#### a) Ethnic and regional organisations

There are around eighty different ethnic groups speaking around seventy languages in Ethiopia. This ethnic composition can be found to some extent also within the Ethiopian community in Germany. Members of

<sup>29</sup> One interview partner called them “grandma’s kitchen” where wounds are healed and victories celebrated (cf. Interview individual diaspora member Germany: 4.8.2008).

<sup>30</sup> Ethiopian restaurants in Germany were – after faith-based associations – named as the second most important contact point for Ethiopians living in Germany. This is due to the fact that Ethiopians can meet other Ethiopians in these restaurants, have access to Ethiopian food and can participate in cultural events organised by these restaurants. Thus they function as informal meeting points and exchange platforms.

the same ethnic group or coming from the same region in Ethiopia such as Tigrayans, Oromo, Harari or Amhara organise themselves in associations in Germany. These ethnicity-based and regional organisations focus on maintaining cultural traditions and language in the diaspora, supporting members of their own group concerning daily life in Germany as well as actively linking up with their region of origin or other members of their ethnic group in Ethiopia or other diaspora countries. In this context, they engage in development or political activities. Some of these organisations work on the level of a German city or region, others are working throughout Germany. Examples of this type of organisation in Germany are the Tigray Development Association, Hilfsorganisation für Tigre in Deutschland e.V. (HOT), the German Tigray Cultural Organisation, the Oromo Hilfsinitiative Frankfurt e.V., Oromo Horn von Afrika Zentrum e.V., Afar Fürsorge Verein e.V. und Deutsche Harar Entwicklungsorganisation.

### **Box 1: Tigray Development Association (TDA) German Branch**

The Tigray Development Association (TDA) German Branch was founded in Germany in 1991. It has branches in Germany and all countries with major Ethiopian diaspora communities, such as the US, Canada, the UK and Sweden. The TDA originally had the aim of supporting Tigrayans living abroad and connecting them to their home country. Over the years it changed into a development association raising funds for development projects e.g. the building of schools, wells and hospitals in Tigray. In Germany the TDA has around three hundred members and organises different events such as concerts and cultural happenings in order to raise money for projects in Tigray. The different development projects are implemented by the central TDA office in Mekele, Tigray (see <http://www.tdaint.org>) which acts as the local partner of the TDA branches abroad (cf. Telephone interview member TDA: 4.8.2008).

### **Box 2: Oromo Horn von Afrika Zentrum (Oromo Horn of Africa Centre)**

The Oromo Horn of Africa Centre (<http://www.oromo-deutsch.de>), which is based in Berlin, was founded in 1978 as a meeting place for Oromo living in Germany and developed into a support organisation serving Oromo and other African refugees coming to Germany. Today the centre functions as a meeting, information and counselling centre for Oromo refugees in Germany as well as persons interested in the situation of the Oromo. In this context, it is collecting and disseminating information on the living situation of Oromo (via publications, seminars, information evenings) in their countries of origin and in Germany. The centre is focusing mainly on integration projects including the training of migrants as well as intercultural training seminars with the police and other public institutions. Most of the work of the association is carried out on a voluntary basis. However, some members of the centre are financed for carrying out specific projects which are funded by the Berlin City Administration, church-based organisations or state institutions. The Oromo Horn of Africa Centre is cooperating with other Oromo groups in Germany as well as in other countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States, with the aim of exchanging information and lobbying together for political change in Ethiopia. Currently the Centre is not directly engaging in Ethiopia as they feel that the general situation does not allow it (cf. Meeting Oromo Horn of Africa Centre: 31.7.2008).

### **b) Geographically based, cultural and self-help organisations**

As Ethiopians living in Germany are concentrated in different cities and regions, they have established a number of associations bringing together Ethiopians living in the same city or regional state. These organisations are usually open to all Ethiopians regardless of their ethnicity, religion or political affiliation. Their main aim is to support Ethiopians living in Germany in their daily life, provide information on the situation in Ethiopia, promote networking between Ethiopians in Germany and bring Ethiopians living in Germany together. Examples of these organisations are Äthiopische Gemeinde Rhein-Main-Gebiet, Äthiopische Selbsthilfe Organisationen in Baden-Württemberg, Äthiopische Gemeinde in Stuttgart und Umgebung and Äthiopische Gemeinde Berlin.

**Box 3: Äthiopische Gemeinde Rhein-Main Gebiet (Ethiopian Community Rhine-Main Area)**

The Äthiopische Gemeinde Rhein-Main Gebiet is a politically neutral and independent non-profit association founded in 1995 and based in Frankfurt. It is open to all Ethiopians as well as to Germans. The association is a platform for the exchange of Ethiopians living in the Rhine-Main area about their experiences in Germany and information on Ethiopia. The association seeks to promote Ethiopian culture in Germany and maintain Ethiopian traditions in the diaspora. To this end, different cultural events (e.g. on Ethiopian holidays) as well as Amharic language courses are carried out by the association. Furthermore, specialist conferences on Ethiopia and regular social gatherings (e.g. concerts, barbecues) for its members are organised. The association offers counselling concerning legal and social issues as well as problems Ethiopians living in Germany may be confronted with. The work of the association is funded through membership fees as well as small grants for specific events. Currently the Äthiopische Gemeinde Rhein-Main Gebiet has around one hundred members (Meeting member of Ethiopian Community Rhine-Main Area: 28.7.2008).

Cultural Ethiopian diaspora associations have been established in various German cities. They aim at keeping Ethiopian or ethnic (e.g. Tigrayan, Afar, Oromo) culture alive while at the same time acquainting Germans with Ethiopian culture and reaching out to Germans. Normally these associations are rather small and work on the municipal level. They participate in intercultural activities, and organise Ethiopian concerts and festivities (e.g. Äthiopischer Kulturverein e.V. in Hamburg, Deutsche Tigray Kulturelle Vereinigung, Äthiopischer Kulturverein Kassel). The association Orbis Aethiopicus stands apart from these cultural associations; while also focusing on Ethiopian culture, its main aim is the preservation of Ethiopian culture and cultural goods in Ethiopia.

**Box 4: Orbis Aethiopicus – Gesellschaft für die Erhaltung der äthiopischen Kultur (Association for the maintenance of Ethiopian culture)**

Orbis Aethiopicus (<http://www.orbis-aethiopicus.de>) was founded in 1996 by Prince Dr. Asfa-Wossen Asserate with the aim of protecting and maintaining Ethiopia's cultural heritage, which had suffered in the Derg time. To this end, the association organises an annual 3-day scientific symposium focusing on various aspects of Ethiopian culture. Researchers, scientists and experts from Ethiopia, Germany and other countries participate in these seminars and the results are disseminated in publications edited by the association. In addition, Orbis Aethiopicus financially supports German archaeologists from the University of Jena who work on the reconstruction of a rock-hewn church in Wukro (Tigray). It has been involved in the lobbying process in Paris which allowed Lalibela to become a UNESCO World Heritage site.

The second goal of the association is to acquaint young Ethiopians living in the diaspora with Ethiopian history as often their parents lost this knowledge during the Derg time, when mainly socialism and communism were taught in Ethiopian schools. To this end, Prince Dr. Asfa-Wossen Asserate regularly holds lectures and talks focusing on Ethiopian history, culture and values for young Ethiopians living in Germany (cf. Telephone Interview Orbis Aethiopicus: September 2009).

In most German cities and regions where Ethiopians are living in larger numbers, they have founded small self-help groups and associations. For example, around three to four self-help groups (Iddir Clubs) can be found in Cologne, and similar groups exist in Frankfurt, Munich, Stuttgart, Offenbach, Berlin, Hamburg etc. These small groups are usually informal and are based on social and friendship networks. The self-help associations usually have between 30–40 members, but there are bigger groups with up to 200 members. Their main aim is for Ethiopians in the diaspora to support each other in difficult situations; e.g., if a member becomes sick and needs help with health care, hospitals or if somebody dies and the relatives want to transfer the body back to Ethiopia. In these cases, money is raised by the self-help group and other support is offered. The self-help groups usually also celebrate Ethiopian holidays together and organise social gatherings on these dates.

### **Box 5: Äthiopische Selbsthilfe/Iddir e.V. Frankfurt (Ethiopian Self-help Group Frankfurt)**

The Iddir e.V. in Frankfurt was founded in 2003 by different Ethiopians and Germans of Ethiopian background living in Frankfurt. These diaspora Ethiopians set up an association to deal together with problems they face in Germany and support each other. At the beginning, the association had only ten active members but now it has forty-six members. Together with the families of these members, the association encompasses around 200 persons. Most of the members come originally from Tigray, but the association is also open to Ethiopians from other regions. However, then the regional language can be an obstacle as often the members of Iddir e.V. speak Tigrayan with each other. The association is working on a voluntary basis and most activities are financed through membership fees as well as money donated by the members for specific occasions such as funerals, sicknesses, etc. Besides the individual support to its members in cases of problems, the association aims to facilitate an exchange of experiences among Ethiopians by arranging regular meetings. and organises language courses in Tigrayan as well as other events to promote Tigrayan culture (cf. Telephone Interview Äthiopische Selbsthilfe/Iddir e.V.: 4.8.2008).

#### **- Student and academic associations, and professional associations**

Ethiopian students and academics living in Germany usually organise themselves in general associations for African or foreign students and academics such as the African Students Union (ASU), the sections for foreign students of the student associations or church-related foreign student associations<sup>31</sup>. However, in 2008 the Äthiopischer Studenten und Akademikerverein (Ethiopian Student and Academic Association) was founded and is in the process of setting up a formal association (see below). There are no real Ethiopian professional organisations in Germany, but Ethiopians rather join other academic associations such as the Arbeitskreis Afrikanischer und Asiatischer Akademikerinnen und Akademiker (AAAAA) or the Afrikanisch-Asiatische Unternehmerinnen und Unternehmer in der Afrikanisch-Asiatischen Studentenförderung. There exists, however, the Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Medizin, Ingenieur- und Naturwissenschaften in Äthiopien e.V. which brings together Ethiopian and German academics from these fields who want to engage in Ethiopia. Apart from this, individual efforts have been made to set up an Ethiopian Professional Union in the future (Written Statement Ethiopian Professional Union: March 2009). These various associations and networks can be used as a first contact point for reaching Ethiopian academics and other Ethiopian professionals in Germany. In addition, most of the members of these associations have their own private networks through which they can disseminate important information.

31 All German universities and higher education institutions have so-called general students associations (Allgemeiner Studentenausschuss – AstA) which usually have a special office or section representing foreign students. Similarly the Protestant student community (Evangelische Studentengemeinde – ESG) has special programmes for foreign students as do the Catholic student groups (Katholische Hochschulgemeinde) in which Ethiopian students and academics can participate (see also D.2.).

**Box 6: Äthiopischer Studenten und Akademikerverein  
(Ethiopian Students and Alumni in Germany – ESAAG)**

Ethiopian Students and Alumni in Germany (ESAAG) (<http://esag.weebly.com/index.html>) is an association of Ethiopian students and academics living in Germany, Switzerland and Austria. It was founded in 2008 and aims at the establishment of a platform for students and academics enabling intercultural exchange, the promotion of bilateral relations in the areas of education, social issues and economy as well as counselling in these areas. To this end, the ESAAG is planning to: become active in networking, representation and mentoring for Ethiopian pupils, women and students at German, Austrian and Swiss universities as well as in facilitating internships and study visits to Ethiopia. In addition, it intends to engage in the organisation of cultural events, inform on the situation in Ethiopia and carry out research on Ethiopia and the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany. In the long run, the ESAAG perceives itself as a contact partner for the economy and is also planning to engage in Ethiopia. Currently ESAAG has around 150 members who are linked up through the virtual on-line Forum (cf. Interview Ethio Cologne: 6.8.2008).

**Box 7: Arbeitskreis Afrikanisch-Asiatischer Akademikerinnen und Akademiker (AAAAA Working Group of African-Asian Academics) and Afrikanisch-Asiatische Studienförderung (African-Asian Study Support Group)**

The Working Group of African-Asian Academics (AAAAA) (<http://www.gwdg.de/~aasf>) is an association of African and Asian academics who have received their higher education in Germany. It is currently led by an Ethiopian diaspora academic who is well connected to other highly educated Ethiopian diaspora members in Germany. The association is based in Göttingen and connected to the Afrikanisch-Asiatische Studienförderung (African-Asian Study Support Group). The African-Asian Study Support Group was founded in 1959 and the AAAAA in 1974. It supports African and Asian academics concerning their professional and social reintegration in their countries of origin and supports them if they want to implement projects at home. To this end, the AAAAA, together with the African-Asian Study Support Group, organises reintegration seminars, specialist conferences focusing on technical themes relevant to returnees and generally provides information on return and reintegration. In this context, there have been several Ethiopian experts that have participated as lecturers and speakers in these conferences. Furthermore, the association promotes the transfer of know-how and scientific publications. In the last fifteen years, more than 3,000 African and Asian students and graduates students have participated in the different seminars and specialist conferences which are mostly financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The African-Asian study support group has also initiated the project “Global Scouts” which brings together experienced professionals who want to engage in developing countries by initiating projects in the area of know-how transfer and analyse which projects in the area of investment could be implemented. Some of the Ethiopian academics engaged in the African-Asian Study Support Group are also planning to set up a specific group of Ethiopian diaspora academics and engage in development projects in Ethiopia (cf. Telephone interview Afrikanisch-Asiatische Studienförderung: 25.7.2008).

**c) Youth organisations and sports groups**

Ethiopians in Germany have established different groups for young Ethiopians which bring together young Ethiopians coming directly from Ethiopia and second generation Ethiopians. These associations are meeting points for young Ethiopians, and help them to integrate in Germany, but also help them become acquainted with Ethiopian culture and history. Some of these organisations also organise sports for young Ethiopians. For example, there are several Ethiopian soccer teams which have been set up in cities with bigger Ethiopian communities.

### **Box 8: Ethio Köln Sport and Kulturverein e.V. (Ethio Cologne Sports and Cultural Association)**

The Ethio Köln Sport und Kulturverein (<http://www.ethio-cologne.com/>) was unofficially founded in 2000 by some young Ethiopians, mainly from the second generation, who were playing soccer together but were also interested in cultural issues and integration. It became more formal in 2004 when it elected a board and laid down its statutes. Ethio Cologne is politically neutral and open to members of all ethnicities and religions. The association has 46 active members, a soccer team of twenty persons and reaches out to around two hundred persons concerning its different activities and events. Ethio Cologne is financed mainly through membership fees, but since 2006 they have also received outside funding for different events. The main objective of the association is to promote intercultural exchange as well as to present the variety of Ethiopian culture. To this end, the association organises concerts (modern and traditional), Ethiopian theatre and other cultural events. Another main topic is supporting the integration of Ethiopians in Germany. Regarding the sports activities, the association organises regular games with other German and foreign soccer teams, thereby setting up a network of intercultural soccer teams. As the work of the associations focuses mainly on the situation of Ethiopians living in Germany, they have not engaged very much in Ethiopia. (cf. Meeting Ethio Köln Sport und Kulturverein: 6.8.2008).

### **Box 9: Äthiopische Jugendorganisation Deutschland e.V. (Ethiopian Youth Organisation Germany e.V.)**

The Ethiopian Youth Organisation Germany (<http://www.ethiopia.cycc.de>) was founded in 1998 by young Ethiopians living in Frankfurt and the regions around it who met to play soccer together. They set up the Youth Organisation with the aim to carry out activities together, exchange their experiences on their life in Germany, and discuss integration problems and to keep in touch with Ethiopian culture and history. The association is politically neutral and is not based on a specific ethnicity. Currently the association has around 500 members from different cities including Frankfurt, Cologne, Munich, Berlin and Nuremberg and is thus one of the biggest diaspora associations in Germany. The association is funded through membership fees and grants for specific events. The main activity is to organise meetings (panel discussions, workshops), other events (parties, cultural performance, concerts) and sports games as well as provide counselling concerning all issues around integration in Germany. The association also actively participates in different intercultural events at which it presents Ethiopian culture, music, dances and cuisine. Once a year it organises a big event in Frankfurt which combines concerts, panel discussions and lectures and is usually attended by around 2,000 people. Up to now the association has not been actively engaging in Ethiopia, but only collected money for charitable activities there. However, in the future it is planned to take up collaboration with associations in Ethiopia and engage more actively in their country of origin (cf. Meeting Äthiopische Jugendorganisation Deutschland e.V.: 29.7.2008).

### **Box 10: Ethiopian football teams in Germany**

Based on Ethiopians and Eritreans tradition of playing soccer together in Germany, Ethiopian soccer teams have been established in most of the German cities with large Ethiopian communities. Only some of them are officially organised; most of them are a loose network of players. There exist more than ten Ethiopian soccer teams throughout Germany. Some of these soccer teams were set up many years ago, such as FC Walia e.V. and Stuttgart Blue Nile e.V., and Frankfurt Ethio-Addis. Of these teams, eight participated in the first Ethiopian soccer tournament which was organised in 2001 in Frankfurt. In 2002 the Ethio-European soccer cup was organised by the Ethiopian Sports and Culture Federation in Europe (**ESCFE**) (<http://www.escfe.com>). European tournaments followed in 2002 and 2003 in the Netherlands and in Stuttgart. Meanwhile the ESCFE has twenty eight members. (cf. Meeting Ethio Köln Sport und Kulturverein: 6.8.2008).

#### d) Political organisations

Various political organisations have been set up by Ethiopians and Germans of Ethiopian origin living in Germany. These include different associations and groups which lobby for democracy, sovereignty and good governance in Ethiopia such as the Äthiopischer demokratischer Verein (MEDHIN). In addition, branches of opposition parties try to support their counterparts in Ethiopia, such as a branch of the Ethiopian People's Patriotic Front (EPPF), the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP) and the Unity for Democracy and Justice Party (UDJP, former Kinijit). Other political organisations only existing in Germany include the Ethiopian Unity Patriots Front Germany, Ginbot 7 (May the 15th) and the Ethiopian Democratic Action League (TEGBAR). Furthermore, two support groups of the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), namely the Sagalee Bilisummaa Oromoo (SBO) and the Voice of Oromo Liberation (VOL), can be found in Germany. The Solidarity Committee for Ethiopian political prisoners (SOCEPP) is also active in Germany lobbying for the release of political prisoners in Ethiopia, while the Initiative der äthiopischen KriegsgegnerInnen (EWRI) tries to lobby for peace and anti-militarism in Germany. Some of these political organisations gained significance before the last elections in Ethiopia in 2005, but became very weak or even inactive afterwards. With the upcoming elections in 2010 in Ethiopia, Ethiopian political diaspora organisations are gaining strength again.

#### e) Development-oriented groups

There are a variety of Ethiopian or Ethiopian-German associations based in Germany focusing on Ethiopia's development<sup>32</sup>. Usually these associations focus on individual projects which they set up alone or with local partners in Ethiopia as well as support financially. Many of these associations focus on projects for children and orphans (e.g., Addis Hiwot Kindernothilfe, Heart for Ethiopia, Förderverein AGOS Äthiopien e.V.), others concentrate on education (e.g., Connection e.V., Verein äthiopischer Samariterbund in Deutschland), and health and poverty reduction mainly among vulnerable groups (e.g. Ethiopia Arise e.V., Nuro e.V.). There are also projects in the area of environmental protection (e.g., Hilfe zur Entwicklung der Hochebene Meno in Äthiopien, Initiative zum Schutz und Erhalt der tropischen Wälder ENAT AFER e.V.). These associations are usually founded by individual Ethiopians, groups of Ethiopian and German friends or German-Ethiopian couples who want to engage in Ethiopia. These persons travel regularly to Ethiopia to supervise projects and engage with other volunteers locally. The associations are usually rather small but might have large support groups.

#### Box 11: Addis Hiwot Kindernothilfe e.V. (Addis Hiwot Children's Support)

In 2005 the association Addis Hiwot (<http://www.addis-hiwot.org>) was founded by Ethiopian diaspora members living in Germany. The association has eight members and is a non-profit organisation registered in Berlin. Currently Addis Hiwot, which is only financed through donations, supports around ten families with more than forty children in Addis Ababa. These families receive financial support on a monthly basis. Furthermore, the children of these families receive lessons outside school. The interest on small-scale credits for seven of the families, granted by an Ethiopian bank, is being paid for by Addis Hiwot. In this context, the association has also placed a financial guarantee with the bank which supports the families with training courses and individual counselling. Addis Hiwot is collaborating with local partners in Addis Ababa; its members travel regularly to Ethiopia (cf. Written Statement Addis Hiwot Kindernothilfe e.V.: November 2008).

<sup>32</sup> Of course there are also many German associations founded by Germans who have been in Ethiopia or have some kind of interest in Ethiopia who engage actively for Ethiopia's development. Only those development associations are mentioned which have been set up with the active involvement of Ethiopians.

### **Box 12: Hilfe für die Entwicklung des Hochlandes Meno in Äthiopien e.V. (Support for the Development of the Meno highlands in Ethiopia)**

The association Hilfe für die Entwicklung des Hochlandes Meno in Äthiopien (<http://www.menolopho.de/>) was founded in 1996 by members of the Protestant church community Koblenz-Pfaffendorfs whose long-standing sexton, an Ethiopian diaspora member, had returned to Sidama. The association has around seventy members and is financed through membership fees and donations. The main aim of the association is to fight land erosion, improve cattle farming and support self-help measures in the Meno highlands of Ethiopia. In this context, different projects have been financed in Ethiopia in close collaboration with the Mekane-Yesus Church, which implements and monitors the projects together with the employees of the association abroad (cf. Written Statement Hilfe für die Entwicklung des Hochlandes Meno in Äthiopien: November 2008).

### **f) Friendship and German-Ethiopian associations**

There are also German-Ethiopian friendship associations which aim to bring together Germans and Ethiopians in order to promote intercultural exchange, inform about Ethiopia and support development projects in Ethiopia. These are usually founded by diaspora Ethiopians or Germans with a strong interest in Ethiopia. Examples of this type of association are the Deutsch-Äthiopischer Verein (DÄV) Deutsch-Äthiopische Gesellschaft (DEAG), the Deutsch-Äthiopische Freundschaftsgesellschaft e.V. (DÄFG) and the Deutsch-Äthiopischer Freundschaftsverein. There are also two German-Ethiopian city partnerships (Partnerschaft mit Alem Katema and Städtepartnerschaft Addis Ababa Leipzig) organised in the form of associations which promote cultural exchange and development projects in Ethiopia.

### **Box 13: Deutsch Äthiopischer Verein (DÄV: German-Ethiopian Association GEA)**

The German-Ethiopian Association (GEA) (<http://www.deutsch-aethiopischer-verein.de>) was founded in 1995 by former development workers who had lived in Ethiopia and members of the Ethiopian diaspora. The main objectives of the association are to promote good relationships between the people of Ethiopia and Germany and the exchange of ideas and improvement of the intercultural understanding between both countries. Overall the GEA aims at providing information in Germany and Ethiopia on important current issues, consulting and supporting projects and self-help groups in Ethiopia, and enabling an unprejudiced open-minded companionship between Germans and Ethiopians. To this end, it publishes a regular information letter (three times a year) which contains information on current developments in Ethiopia as well as longer background reports on main topics of the newsletter (e.g., education, Ethiopia and its neighbours, Ethiopian women). Apart from this, the GEA has established three working groups which focus on different development-related themes such as the use of the moringa plant for water purification, educational methods of solving conflicts peacefully in Ethiopian schools and ideas for implementing a brainstorming competition at an Ethiopian agricultural university. In 2000 the association also established its own website where one can find general information on Ethiopia, special subjects as well as a large link collection to other associations focusing on Ethiopia or engaging in Ethiopia. All activities of the association are financed through membership fees and donations.

### **Box 14: Deutsch-Äthiopische Freundschaftsgesellschaft e.V. (DÄFG – German-Ethiopian Friendship Cooperation)**

The DÄFG (<http://www.daefg.de>) is an association founded in 1994 to promote contacts and intercultural exchange between Germans and Ethiopians living in Darmstadt and the surrounding region. To this end, it brings together diaspora Ethiopians and Germans interested in Ethiopia in the context of meetings, cultural events and other types of gatherings. Furthermore, it organises information events on Ethiopia and its culture as well as supports diaspora Ethiopians concerning their integration in Germany.

**Box 15: Städtepartnerschaft mit Alem Ketema e.V. (Partnership Alem Katema)**

The association Städtepartnerschaft mit Alem Ketema (<http://www.vaterstetten-alemkatema.de>) was founded in 1994 as a city partnership between the German city Vaterstetten and Alem Katema. The NGO, which is financed only through membership fees and donations, has around 300 members who support the work of the association as volunteers through their financial contributions. The main aim of the association is to set up and support small-scale development projects which generate workplaces in Alem Katema and promote cultural exchange between Germans and Ethiopians. To this end, the association has established two day care centres and a library in Alem Katema which give work to 19 local employees. It is also planned to set up a partnership centre (combination of guest house, internet café and room for project work) in Alem Katema. In the context of its work, the association also tries to support diaspora Ethiopians who want to return to Ethiopia by integrating them in the association's work and provide them if possible with local opportunities in Ethiopia. (cf. Written Statement Partnerschaft mit Alem Ketema e.V.: November 2008).

**Box 16: Städtepartnerschaft Leipzig-Addis Abeba e.V. (City Partnership Leipzig-Addis Ababa)**

The association was established in 2002 and a city partnership between Leipzig and Addis Ababa (<http://www.leipzig-addis-abebe.de>) was established in 2004 by the city administration of Leipzig. The city had not had a partnership with an African city, but did have several contacts to Ethiopia. The small association, which has around forty members, aims at the promotion of intercultural exchange and cultivation of good relations between the peoples of both countries. To this end, the association has initiated various partnerships between schools in Leipzig and Addis Ababa as well as organises events in Leipzig focusing on Ethiopia (cf. Written Statement Städtepartnerschaft Leipzig-Addis Abeba e.V.: January 2009).

**g) Faith-based associations and organisations**

Since the beginning of the 1980s, faith-based organisations have been founded by members of the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany. They are usually organised as associations as German law does not recognise them as official churches. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Germany is the largest faith-based group in Germany; however, it is separated into two groups, those Ethiopian Orthodox Church communities linked to and collaborating with the patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Ethiopia and those linked to the exiled former patriarch in the United States<sup>33</sup>. Thus besides the official Ethiopian Orthodox Churches (see below), there are others such as the Medhanalem Church in Frankfurt, which collaborate with the patriarch in the United States and are in opposition to the current official Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Ethiopia.

Protestant Ethiopian diaspora members have set up various church communities such as the Harvest Äthiopische Evangelische Kirchengemeinde in Bonn or the Wort der Gnade Evangelische Gemeinde in Nürnberg. The Vereinigung Äthiopische-Deutscher Christen is a Protestant association supporting the Protestant Church in Ethiopia.

Apart from this, there also exist various new evangelical Ethiopian Churches such as the Freikirche der Siebenten-Tags-Adventisten, Äthiopische Gemeinde and the Ethiopian Adventist Fellowship in Munich.

As there are only a few Catholic Ethiopian diaspora members living in Germany, who are dispersed around Germany, there exists only one Ethiopian Catholic association in Germany, namely the Äthiopische Katholische Mission Stuttgart. The same is true for Ethiopian Muslims in Germany who do not have their own organisations but rather visit Islamic institutions of other ethnic minorities living in Germany. Some

<sup>33</sup> The Ethiopian Orthodox Churches in the main Ethiopian diaspora countries had contacts with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church during the Derg time. After the collapse of the regime and the establishment of the new government in 1993, a new patriarch was nominated, while the former moved to the United States. Since then some Ethiopian Orthodox communities abroad have followed the former patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in the US.

of these Ethiopian Muslims have organised themselves into European Ethiopian Muslim associations such as the Network of Ethiopian Muslims in Europe (NEME).

The Oromo diaspora members living in Germany have established their own faith-based organisations including the Oromo Christian Fellowships in Berlin, Frankfurt, Munich and Stuttgart as well as the Association of Oromo-speaking congregations Hermannsburg.

### **Box 17: Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Germany**

In 1983 the first Ethiopian Orthodox Church (<http://www.aethiopisch-orthodoxe-kirche-deutschland.de>) was set up in Cologne. Later other Ethiopian Orthodox communities were established in Munich, Frankfurt, Berlin, Stuttgart, Nuremberg and Wiesbaden. All of these communities have their own Ethiopian priest. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Germany is organised as a non-profit association which is financed through membership fees and support from various German churches. To ensure the collaboration between the different communities, an annual meeting among all Ethiopian Orthodox priests in Germany is organised. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Germany participates in inter-religious events and promotes a dialogue across the different religions and churches. To this end, representatives of the Ethiopian Orthodox church in Germany participate in events of the Protestant and Catholic Church in Germany. While pastoral work and the practising of the Ethiopian Orthodox faith are the central activities of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church communities in Germany, they also function as meeting places for Ethiopians in the diaspora and generally are open to all Ethiopians living in Germany. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Germany tries to support financially church-related schools as well as individual Ethiopian Orthodox communities in Ethiopia. The size of the Ethiopian Orthodox Communities varies according to the number of Ethiopians living in the specific city, with the Ethiopian Orthodox Community in Frankfurt and Cologne being the largest. During regular Sunday services around one hundred and fifty persons visit the church, while on the important Ethiopian church holidays such as Christmas, Easter and on the patron saint days, up to one thousand people attend the services (cf. Interview Ethiopian Orthodox Church Germany: 6.8.2008).

### **h) Virtual networks and internet portals**

In the last few years, Ethiopians living in Germany have also set up special websites promoting a dialogue among Ethiopians in the diaspora, informing on the current situation in Ethiopia and enabling an exchange among Ethiopians interested in the same topics. Some of these websites, however, face the problem of not being politically independent; they only provide information from a specific viewpoint. For example, the website “ethiogermany” which has been established by members of the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany provides information for Ethiopians living in Germany. Its main focus is on informing on the political situation in Ethiopia and activities of opposition groups in the diaspora<sup>34</sup>.

Apart from this, various virtual discussion groups exist that bring together Ethiopians in Germany. For example, within the internet portal “Studi VZ” which aims to bring together students from higher education institutions, there are three discussion groups which have been set up by Ethiopian students. The group “Ethiopia 13 months of sunshine” has more than four hundred members, bringing together Ethiopian students and Germans interested in Ethiopia. While the group “ESAI – Ethiopian Students Association International” has only around 150 members, the large majority of them are Ethiopian students from the second generation living in Germany, Switzerland and Austria. The group “All Habesha” is a general discussion group focusing on Ethiopia that has over 300 members<sup>35</sup>.

34 For more information, see <http://www.ethiogermany.de>.

35 For more information on these groups, see [www.studi-vz.de](http://www.studi-vz.de).

**Box 18: Goh e.V.**

The association Goh e.V. (<http://www.goinfo.com>) is a relatively new organisation founded as recently as in 2007 by a group of Ethiopian diaspora members located in and around Frankfurt who wanted to set up a virtual platform to promote the exchange, networking, dialogue and improved communication of Ethiopians in the diaspora as well as to provide information on the current situation in Ethiopia. The association also seeks to inform on life in Germany, thereby promoting the integration of Ethiopians in Germany. Goh is also planning to organise intercultural events and lectures focusing on issues related to Ethiopia. Currently the association has only around seven active members as it is still in the phase of establishment. Goh e.V. is politically neutral and is open to all Ethiopians in Germany as well as Germans (cf. Meeting Goh e.V.: 25.7.2008)

## 4. The policy of the German and Ethiopian governments and other relevant stakeholders towards the Ethiopian diaspora

With the growing institutionalisation of the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany and other countries since the 1980s, Ethiopian state and other institutions are starting to reach out to the diaspora. At the same time, Germany acknowledges the activities of diaspora groups and has developed different policies and activities in this context.

### 4.1. Policies of the Ethiopian government and other relevant Ethiopian stakeholders towards the Ethiopian diaspora

Since the mid-1990s a growing number of Ethiopian institutions have tried to promote the collaboration with the Ethiopian diaspora, supporting their return and reintegration as well as their investment in the country of origin. Some of these organisations are still relatively new or are only starting to focus on the Ethiopian diaspora.

Central in this context is the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), which started to focus on the Ethiopian diaspora in the mid-nineties (1994) and established the **General Directorate in charge of Ethiopian Expatriate Affairs (EEA)** in 2002<sup>36</sup>. The EEA not only provides information to the diaspora (e.g., on investment possibilities, trade, government affairs, first steps in Ethiopia), but also has a service section offering concrete support to returnees. Apart from this, it carries out research on diaspora issues and seeks to safeguard the rights and privileges of Ethiopian migrants and diaspora members. Most importantly, the MoFA pushed for the introduction of the Person of Ethiopian Origin Identity **Card** (Yellow Card) in 2002 which grants diaspora Ethiopians nearly the same rights as Ethiopians holding Ethiopian citizenship. Yellow Card owners are allowed to enter Ethiopia without a visa, live in Ethiopia without a residence permit and own residential property. Furthermore, they have access to employment without a work permit and to all economic, social and other benefits and services available to Ethiopian citizens. Moreover, they can invest as a domestic investor, only having to pay local fees and having the right to import personal belongings duty-free when returning permanently. Currently the EEA is working on an overall diaspora policy for Ethiopia as a holistic approach to cooperation with the Ethiopian diaspora is still lacking.

In order to promote an active dialogue with the diaspora, the Ethiopian government as well as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) focusing on the Ethiopian diaspora have organised meetings and conferences inviting the diaspora to discuss their role and involvement in Ethiopia. The EEA, for example, has organised an annual “**Diaspora Day**” in Addis Abba since 1998, which brings together returnees and visitors from the Ethiopian diaspora to discuss the improvement of diaspora collaboration. During the Ethiopian Millennium celebrations, the EEA organised a large information conference focusing on the Ethiopian diaspora in September 2007. Also organisations such as Hibret Lelema Ma’ekel (HLM)<sup>37</sup>, an NGO focusing on the mobilisation of diaspora resources with the objective of strengthening Ethiopia’s human resources and institutional capacity, have organised symposia and meetings concentrating on issues such as the engagement of the Ethiopian diaspora, the brain drain and resource mobilisation.

In Germany itself, the **Ethiopian Embassy** (Berlin) **and Consulate** (Frankfurt)<sup>38</sup> set up a special section

36 For more information on the objectives, visions and activities of the EEA, see [http://www.mfa.gov.et/Ethiopians\\_Origin\\_Abroad/Ethiopia\\_Origin.php](http://www.mfa.gov.et/Ethiopians_Origin_Abroad/Ethiopia_Origin.php).

37 For further information on the goals of HLM, see <http://www.hlmethiopia.org>.

38 See <http://www.aethiopische-botschaft.de>.

staffed with two persons focusing on community affairs in 2006<sup>39</sup>. Addressing the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany, they provide information on political, social and economic issues to Ethiopians in Germany. This is done through personal contacts, Ethiopian community associations, email and the website of the Ethiopian Embassy. Furthermore, the Ethiopian Embassy and Consulate in Germany plan to organise two diaspora meetings per year in different cities including Cologne, Düsseldorf, Munich, Stuttgart, Frankfurt, Nuremberg, Hamburg and Berlin. This activity has started already, but still has to be implemented on a more regular basis (cf. Meeting Ethiopian Consulate Germany: 28.8.2008). If Ethiopians want to return to Ethiopia, the Ethiopian Embassy supports them in getting in contact with the necessary institutions in Ethiopia and helps them to settle all bureaucratic issues related to their return. With regards to diaspora investors, information on the current investment climate, opportunities, incentives and procedures are provided.

Concerning the promotion of know-how and technology transfer, which is another central issue for the Ethiopian government, the Diaspora Coordinating Office of the **Ministry of Capacity Building (MoCB)** finances and supports different initiatives in the area of health and ICT to facilitate the transfer of knowledge from diaspora experts to universities, colleges, hospitals and other institutions in Ethiopia. In this connection it has recently evaluated the demands of universities and other academic institutions for diaspora engagement<sup>40</sup> in cooperation with the EEA.

Since 1995 another approach of the Ethiopian government is to facilitate temporary and permanent return as well as reintegration of the Ethiopian diaspora. To this end, the MoFA has been collaborating with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) Ethiopia in carrying out various programmes. For example, the Reintegration of Qualified African Nationals (RQAN), which was implemented in Ethiopia between 1995 and 1999, provided salary top-ups of up to US\$800 per month over the period of one year besides other general benefits to qualified Ethiopians willing to return. However, only a total of 65 persons returned within this programme to Ethiopia (cf. Meeting IOM Ethiopia: 1.6.2008)<sup>41</sup>. In 2004 the website “www.ethiopiandiaspora.org” was established as part of the Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) programme<sup>42</sup>. This website provides information for the diaspora on life in Ethiopia, available job opportunities and most importantly contains a data base for Ethiopian diaspora members interested in engaging in Ethiopia (cf. Meeting IOM Ethiopia: 1.6.2008). However, this homepage is little known in the Ethiopian diaspora (cf. Interviews in Germany and US) and due to its lack of dynamic contents, regular updating and detailed information, it is of little relevance to the Ethiopian diaspora. The “Migration for Development in Ethiopia” Programme (MIDEth)<sup>43</sup>, which will run for four years (2007–2011), aims at enabling Ethiopian state institutions to work with the diaspora and is being implemented by the IOM Ethiopia in collaboration with the EEA. A central objective of the programme is to directly engage the diaspora in Ethiopia through the means of virtual-/tele-work- or satellite-based technology systems (20 persons), sequenced/repeated visits (100 persons), permanent relocation (80 persons), and investments (20 persons). The engagement is to take place in four central areas identified by the EEA and IOM, namely education, health, agriculture as well as water and sanitation.

In its overall striving to attract foreign investors, the Ethiopian government is increasingly looking for investors within the diaspora communities. Not only has the Ethiopian government introduced different

39 The Ethiopian Embassy and the Ethiopian Consulate in Germany have a different regional focus. While the Consulate is responsible for Hessen, Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria and North-Rhine-Westphalia, the Ethiopian Embassy is responsible for the other parts of Germany. This division also applies to community affairs. As the biggest parts of the Ethiopian Community in Germany can be found in Hessen, North Rhine Westphalia, Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg, the Ethiopian consulate in Frankfurt is usually the central agent in this context.

40 Ethiopian universities are planning to set up special packages consisting, for example, of appropriate housing, health coverage and top-up salaries in order to attract highly qualified Ethiopians abroad to work temporarily at Ethiopian universities.

41 This low number of returnees within the programme can be mainly attributed to the intention of arranging permanent returns, which were not of interest to many educated diaspora members (cf. AHEAD: 2004).

42 For more information on the MIDA programme, see [www.iom.int/MIDA/](http://www.iom.int/MIDA/).

43 For details, visit [www.iom.int/unitedstates/Home/MIDEth%20brochure.pdf](http://www.iom.int/unitedstates/Home/MIDEth%20brochure.pdf).

measures to encourage foreign investment, including a 100% exemption from the payment of import customs duties and other taxes levied on imports, it also allows diaspora investors holding a yellow card to act as domestic investors and become active in most sectors of the Ethiopian economy<sup>44</sup> (e.g., Retail and brokerage, wholesale trade, import trade, export trade of certain raw products, etc.) that are closed to foreign investors. Furthermore, they do not have to invest a minimum of US\$100,000 for a single investment project in order to be eligible for an investment permit, as is the case for foreign investors (EIA: 2008a). In order to reach out to diaspora investors, Ethiopian Embassies and Consulates act as a first contact point for interested investors, supported by the **Ethiopian Investment Agency (EIA)**<sup>45</sup> and regional investment offices, which try to provide diaspora investors with the necessary information and support concerning investment in Ethiopia. Furthermore, regional diaspora offices which were established in each region and in the charter cities in 2006, have the task of supporting diaspora investors concerning all necessary bureaucratic procedures, the acquisition of land and the setting up of the necessary infrastructure. Apart from this, different **private sector organisations** such as Precise Consult International (PCI)<sup>46</sup> and Emergent Global Services LLC<sup>47</sup>, which focus on information provision, events for potential diaspora investors and concrete support of investors, play a crucial role in the mobilisation and concrete support of diaspora investors. In addition to this, **USAID's Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance (VEGA)**<sup>48</sup>, which is providing technical assistance and expertise to private sector development (PSD) in Ethiopia, started an outreach programme in 2005 to mobilise the Ethiopian diaspora to engage in trade activities with the aim of increasing Ethiopian exports to the United States. PCI, in collaboration with USAID VEGA, developed a concept for an Ethiopian Diaspora Business Center which should address all the investment and trade needs of the Ethiopian diaspora. To this end, the Center will host a website providing comprehensive and easy-to-understand information on all aspects of business regulations. Currently the Center is still being established. Furthermore, in 2008 a special Loan Guarantee Programme was established by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)<sup>49</sup> in cooperation with the Abyssinian Bank and the Nordic Investment Bank (NIB) in order for them to grant shorter and medium-term loans to diaspora and female entrepreneurs.

The significance of remittances sent by Ethiopians abroad is increasingly acknowledged by the Ethiopian government. The National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) is the central institution for developing frameworks and initiatives aimed at attracting remittances and increasing the general inflow of foreign currency<sup>50</sup>. To this end, it is overseeing the Ethiopian remittance policy, studying problems concerning remittances and seeking ways to improve the sending of remittances through official channels. Foreign currency accounts for non-resident Ethiopians and non-residents of Ethiopian origin were introduced in 2004 aimed at encouraging foreign direct investment, diaspora entrepreneurship and increasing Ethiopia's foreign exchange reserves. In addition, in 2008 corporate bonds aimed both at the Ethiopian diaspora and foreign nationals of Ethiopian origin were launched. The bonds provide funds to the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation (EEPSCO) for investments focusing on increasing the power supply in Ethiopia. The bonds, which are guaranteed by the Ethiopian government, will be issued for a minimum denomination of US\$500, maturing in five, seven or ten years (with interest rates of 4 %, 4.5 % and 5 % respectively). No income tax has to be paid on the interest earned. Furthermore, the bonds can be used as collateral for loans from Ethiopian domestic banks.

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44 Diaspora investors holding a yellow card cannot invest or set up a business in the financial sector (e.g. banking, insurance, micro credit and saving services), establish or buy broadcasting services (e.g. radio station, television station) or invest in travel, shipping agency or air transport services using aircraft with a seating capacity of up to 20 passengers, as these areas are exclusively reserved for Ethiopian nationals.

45 See <http://investethiopia.org>.

46 For details on the activities of PCI, see [www.diasproainvest.com](http://www.diasproainvest.com) and [www.PreciseConsultantinternational.com](http://www.PreciseConsultantinternational.com)

47 Detailed information on the services offered by Emergent Global can be found on [www.EmergentGlobal.net](http://www.EmergentGlobal.net)

48 For details, see [www.vegaethiopia.org](http://www.vegaethiopia.org).

49 More information on the Loan Guarantee Programme can be found at <http://ethiopia.usembassy.gov>.

50 More information on the policies of the NBE can be found on its website: <http://www.nbe.et>.

An Ethiopian organisation of specific relevance to the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany is the **Association of Ethiopians Educated in Germany (AEEG)**, established in 1994<sup>51</sup>. AEEG, which has around 600 members (Ethiopians who have studied or received vocational training in Germany and have returned), advises educated Ethiopian returnees from Germany and informs them about life in Ethiopia. It also reaches out to Ethiopian academics residing in Germany and seeks to function as a bridge between returnees, Ethiopians in Germany as well as institutions engaged in development cooperation in Ethiopia. To do so, AEEG promotes cultural exchange, economic cooperation and organises workshops, conferences and regular meetings.

#### 4.2. Policies of the German government and other German institutions towards the Ethiopian diaspora

In Germany, various institutions are focusing on strengthening the capacities of diaspora groups, promoting diaspora engagement in and return to their countries of origin. Measures carried out by these institutions range from the establishment of policy frameworks, research, the implementation of return and re-integration programmes, return advice and counselling, to programmes facilitating voluntary engagement. Also programmes for the sending of experts to developing countries as well as academic programmes are used as tools for diaspora mobilisation.

While these measures of course not only target Ethiopians, there is growing interest in the Ethiopian diaspora and its resources among German institutions. Most importantly, the positive role that the Ethiopian diaspora could play in Ethiopia's development is recognised by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), which is asking Ethiopian partners, in the framework of bilateral government consultations, to accept Ethiopians and Germans with an Ethiopian background as international experts within the development programmes implemented in Ethiopia. Based on this intervention by BMZ and other German stakeholders, it has been clarified in the protocol of the last government consultations taking place in June 2008 in Addis Ababa, that "The Ethiopian government encourages the diaspora to explore possibilities and windows of opportunities to participate in different development programmes including the ecbp."

Central activities and measures implemented by German institutions of potential importance to the diaspora include the following:

- The **Programme Returning Experts (PRF)** is implemented by the Centrum für internationale Migration und Entwicklung (CIM), an agency run in collaboration with GTZ and the Zentralen Auslands- und Fachvermittlung (ZAV), the international personnel agency of the German Federal Employment Agency (BA). It provides advisory and placement services to returning experts and supports them with professional and social networking in their country of origin. Furthermore, financial support (subsidies for travel and transport costs, salary top-ups, workplace equipment "APA" and specialist media) for positions important to development policy is granted<sup>52</sup>. In the context of the programme, which aims at the development-policy-oriented integration of returnees into the labour market of their countries of origin and their dissemination and expansion of know-how acquired in Germany, around 150 well educated Ethiopians returned in the last five years<sup>53</sup>. These were members of the Ethiopian diaspora holding Ethiopian citizenship who had finished their studies or vocational training in Germany or who had been working for at least two years in a qualified profession. Ethiopians who have taken on German citizenship are not eligible for the programme.

51 AEEG is one of the strongest alumni and professional associations for Ethiopians in the diaspora. More information on the activities of AEEG can be found on its website ([www.aeeg-ethiopia.org](http://www.aeeg-ethiopia.org)) as well as in a flyer published by AEEG.

52 The website of the programme provides information on the PRF, gives examples on successful returns and provides access to a database of employment abroad. See <http://www.zav-reintegration.de>.

53 Overall the number of Ethiopian returnees within the PRF has been decreasing in the few last years. While in 2004 there were 42 returnees, this dropped to 23 in 2006 and 17 in 2008.

- A similar programme is being implemented by the German church development service (EED). Within the **EED reintegration programme for experts from abroad** returnees are assisted in finding an adequate job with long-term prospects in their country of origin and are receiving benefits specified in an individual reintegration agreement<sup>54</sup>. The EED grants returnees a departure benefit, and covers travel costs, health and accident insurance for the first three months as well as provides financial reintegration support. Currently the EED finances five Ethiopians who have been returning with the programme.
- While the PRF and the programme of the EED target highly qualified Ethiopians, the **Reintegration and Emigration Programme for Asylum Seekers in Germany (REAG-1)**, which was extended in 1989 by the **Government Assisted Repatriation Programme (GARP)**, focuses on the voluntary return of specific target groups including asylum-seekers, rejected asylum-seekers, accepted refugees and other migrants. IOM Germany, commissioned by the Federal Interior Ministry (BMI), implements the German REAG/GARP programme, which is a humanitarian programme providing financial and operational support<sup>55</sup>. Within this programme, more than 200 Ethiopians returned between 2002 and 2008.
- Since 1999 the **World University Service (WUS)**, on behalf of CIM, has been carrying out workshops for potential Ethiopian returnees that focus on the current living conditions and professional environment in Ethiopia. They also provide insight into the development cooperation between Germany and Ethiopia. These seminars meet a quite high demand, as around one hundred Ethiopians per seminar are interested in participating<sup>56</sup>. Another activity towards supporting Ethiopian returnees is the provision of funds under the workplace funding scheme (Arbeitsplatz Ausstattung – APA) for those returnees who work in development-related activities in Ethiopia and have a workplace which is inadequately equipped. Since 1993 a total of 56 Ethiopian returnees have been granted funding.
- The Sector Project (**Sektorvorhaben**) **Migration and Development** of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ)<sup>57</sup>, established on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in 2006, is implementing a pilot programme aimed at strengthening the cooperation of diaspora associations in Germany involved in development activities in their countries of origin. Within this programme different Ethiopian diaspora associations started the application process. Another activity of the Sector Project is to strengthen the capacity of diaspora associations in Germany with the objective of enabling their members to engage in their countries of origin. Future workshops have been planned with diaspora organisations in areas such as project management in order to facilitate the engagement of such associations in their countries of origin (cf. Meeting Sektorvorhaben: 28.7.2008).
- GTZ, CIM, the German Development Service (DED) and the EED **send German and other experts to Ethiopia** in the context of development cooperation projects<sup>58</sup>. In some cases highly qualified Ethiopians can find a placement within these projects, however there are also some restrictions<sup>59</sup> and sending diaspora experts to Ethiopia may not always be accepted by the Ethiopian counterparts. However, in principle all German development agencies acknowledge the potential of the diaspora and returnees in

54 For further information on the EED, visit <http://www.eed.de>.

55 For more details, see [www.iom-germany.int](http://www.iom-germany.int).

56 The workshops for returnees are announced at German universities and through Ethiopian diaspora associations. Ethiopian experts, who have already returned to Ethiopia, inform their friends in Germany on the existence of the workshops. WUS Germany has a database on Ethiopian multipliers in Germany who are used to disseminate the information. For more detailed information on the activities of WUS Germany, see also [www.wusgermany.de](http://www.wusgermany.de).

57 For further information on the Sector Project Migration and Development, see <http://www.gtz.de/migrationdevelopment>.

58 For a description of the objectives, services and profile of these organisations, see [www.gtz.de](http://www.gtz.de); [www.cimonline.de](http://www.cimonline.de); [www.ded.de](http://www.ded.de).

59 Concerning a job placement abroad, the specific situation in the country of the assignment has to be taken into consideration. Therefore when employing an expert for an assignment abroad, the development agencies not only consider the qualifications of the person, but also look at other requirements, e.g., if the person can cope with stress, if they are used to working in an intercultural environment, if they can use their experiences abroad and if they are accepted abroad. This is a case-by-case decision depending on the individual placement and there are no general rules as to which criteria apply when selecting an expert for an assignment abroad (cf. Meeting GTZ: 30.7.2008).

development processes as they can take on a “bridging function” between Germany and their country of origin.

- Concerning scientific cooperation, academic exchange and the engagement of diaspora academics, institutions such as the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)<sup>60</sup>, the Catholic Academic Exchange Service (KAAD)<sup>61</sup> and the EED play an important role. These organisations not only offer **scholarships to Ethiopian academics**, but also promote their later return and reintegration, networking as well as know-how transfer. Furthermore, they support Germans with an Ethiopian background who want to engage professionally in their country of origin. The DAAD has focused on using the resources of the diaspora and believes that it is important to work with the diaspora within academic exchange programmes and in development cooperation. It is perceived as a problem that Ethiopian alumni, having studied in Germany, having German citizenship or having lived for a long time in Germany, are usually not accepted by Ethiopian partner institutions. Well educated Germans with an Ethiopian background or other highly skilled Ethiopians living in Germany would more likely be interested in lecturing at a regional university in Ethiopia than Germans or other European citizens (cf. Meeting DAAD: 16.5.2008). However, this potential often goes untapped.

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<sup>60</sup> For more information on the DAAD, see <http://www.daad.de>.

<sup>61</sup> For further information on the KAAD, see <http://www.kaad.de>.

## 5. Contributions of the Ethiopian Diaspora to Ethiopia's Development

### 5.1. Links to Ethiopia

Generally many Ethiopians in the diaspora still feel a connection to Ethiopia. Regarding their interest in returning, one can distinguish between two main groups within the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany. The **first generation of Ethiopian diaspora members** are a kind of temporary community, of which some are politically active; most of them have the wish to return home. The second group comprises those of the second and third generation born abroad who usually have assimilated and feel only a weak connection to Ethiopia. The first generation still has strong linkages to their country of origin as they usually also have close relatives and friends in Ethiopia. Despite their wish to return, there are still many obstacles preventing them from doing so. Work-related, personal and political reasons are the main factors keeping Ethiopian diaspora members from returning. While work-related reasons can be tackled by focusing on general labour market improvements which will be beneficial to all Ethiopians, it is much more difficult to deal with the personal and political reasons. While many Ethiopians do not consider moving back to Ethiopia immediately, a larger group is considering doing so in the next three to five years. Even more are considering returning in a longer time frame of five to ten years (cf. Interviews with individual diaspora members). As regards the **second generation of diaspora Ethiopians**, while many of them do not want to return to Ethiopia, they are interested in getting to know Ethiopia and they follow the situation in their parent's or parents' country of origin. Many want to learn more about Ethiopia not only by visiting Ethiopia, but also through active temporary engagement, e.g., in the form of volunteering, internships and other temporary assignments (cf. Interviews individual diaspora members Germany).

Thus while currently returning to Ethiopia is not an option for most members of the Ethiopian community in Germany, Ethiopians in Germany contribute by different means to development in Ethiopia. Not only a great part of the Ethiopian community sends **remittances** to Ethiopia, there is also a growing number of diaspora Ethiopians starting to **invest in small and medium-sized businesses in Ethiopia**, engage in trade activities between Germany and Ethiopia or buy real estate and property in Ethiopia. Since the mid-1990s there is also a growing number of diaspora Ethiopians from Germany regularly travelling to Ethiopia in order to become familiar with the situation in Ethiopia, explore possibilities for investment, entrepreneurship or philanthropic activities and engage in networking. Similarly the number of Ethiopian diaspora associations in Germany actively implementing **charitable and philanthropic programmes in Ethiopia** has been increasing in the last few years. Diaspora Ethiopians engaging in these associations carry out different forms of voluntary short-term assignments in Ethiopia, contribute financially (regular or individual donations) to these associations or engage for them in Germany through fund-raising activities, administrative or advocacy work.

### 5.2. Remittances: Amount and average sums remitted

Ethiopia has recently been experiencing an increasing inflow of remittances. According to statistics of the World Bank, Ethiopia's remittances grew from US\$18 million in 2001 to US\$174 million in 2005, **increasing more than 300 %** (World Bank: 2006). In 2007<sup>62</sup> remittances officially recorded reached US\$1.2 billion and **in 2008 US\$1.7 billion** (National Bank of Ethiopia: 2009). As it is estimated that only 50 % of the remittances are sent through legal channels and the rest through unofficial means, the real amount of remittances is much higher. After the income from exports, remittances are the second largest source of income for Ethiopia.

There is no official figure on the amount of remittances Ethiopian diaspora members living in Germany send to Ethiopia on a yearly basis. However, based on a survey done by the Ethiopian Embassy in

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<sup>62</sup> The Ethiopian calendar year starts in September.

Germany, it has been estimated that **Ethiopians in Germany send up to €6 million per year** to Ethiopia (Teferi Mequanite Tensay and Asmellash Hadgu: 2008). Taking into account the size of the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany, it would mean on average between €200–500 per Ethiopian living in Germany are remitted per year. This is backed by other experts, who estimate that not all Ethiopians in Germany are sending home money regularly, but those who do remit between €1,200 and €2,400 per year. Generally it can be found that the amount of money remitted by Ethiopian diaspora members on a monthly basis is small, however larger sums are remitted on special occasions (e.g., Christmas, Easter) and for the support of specific undertakings of relatives (e.g., setting up a business, building a house).

As regards the concrete impact of remittances on Ethiopia's development, there exists no general consensus. There is evidence that shows that remittances can reduce poverty and vulnerability, especially among urban households. Data also suggest that remittances in Ethiopia are used in large part for private consumption and only secondarily for investment and community development<sup>63</sup>. Thus with this limited data on the use of remittances, it is not possible to determine if remittances reduce poverty in a sustainable way, accentuate existing inequalities or contribute significantly to job creation and Ethiopia's economic development.

### 5.3. Investment: Sectors and amount of investment

Regarding investments by diaspora Ethiopians in Germany, a distinction between those Ethiopians who have invested in buying property and building their own house in Ethiopia, which they usually are renting to other people, and those who are investing in their own business or the businesses of relatives and friends in Ethiopia. The **investment in houses** in Ethiopia increased considerably after Ethiopia introduced the Person of Ethiopian Origin Identity Card and facilitated the process of setting up collective housing co-operation. Due to the liberalisation of the real estate market, diaspora Ethiopians in Germany can get in direct contact with a developer and build a house without even coming to Ethiopia themselves<sup>64</sup>. The primary purpose of these purchases is not so much their future residence in Ethiopia but an investment which they believe will have good returns in the form of rental incomes.

With regard to those Ethiopian diaspora members in Germany **investing in businesses** in Ethiopia, no concrete figures are available. Most investments are made in the construction sector and in the leasing of construction materials. However, there are also individual Ethiopian diaspora members in Germany making investments in the area of agriculture (e.g. poultry and cattle farms), health provision (e.g. clinics), tourism and gastronomy (e.g. hotels, restaurants, micro brewery) as well as manufacturing.

#### Box 21: ECOPIA

ECOPIA (<http://www.ade-hassoro.org>), an Ethiopian enterprise started and directed by Ethiopian diaspora members from Germany, is the first Ethiopian enterprise producing ecological products such as jam, juice and soap for the local and German markets. ECOPIA additionally tries to act as a consultant and incubator for other small-scale businesses in the area of food and natural cosmetic production. To this end, it has started in collaboration with the University of Bahir Dar, Department of Food Technology, providing graduates of the university with two weeks of training at ECOPIA focusing on food processing and the creation of new food products. After the training, the graduates go back to the region and try to set up a small-scale enterprise which forwards its raw products or manufactured products to ECOPIA, which then sells them to its clients. When the start up is more mature, it can become independent from ECOPIA.

<sup>63</sup> It is estimated that 50–60 % of remittances are spent on current consumption and only about ten % go into investment. Much of the remittances are used for the repayment of loans, or for daily expenses such as food, clothing, child education, healthcare and basic subsistence needs. Funds are also spent on building or improving housing, buying land or cattle, or on durable consumer goods such as washing machines and televisions. Remittances are also utilised for financing the migration of other family members, social ceremonies and community development activities (cf. Khurshedi: 2008).

<sup>64</sup> Developers of higher end housing state that 60–80% of their sales are to the diaspora (cf. Written Statement Emergent Consult: March 2009).

The amount of money invested starts from small sums of around €10,000 to €100,000 or more. On average, Ethiopian diaspora investors from Germany invest around €30,000, while large-scale investments are rather the exception (cf. Data EIA and meeting with the Ethiopian Consulate Germany: 29.7.2008). Not all Ethiopians or Germans of Ethiopian origin who want to invest in Ethiopia are planning to return or stay in Ethiopia; many keep on living in Germany and direct their businesses from Germany in collaboration with relatives or friends in Ethiopia.

Overall, it is estimated that the number of Ethiopian diaspora members in Germany wanting to set up businesses and invest in Ethiopia is much larger than those already active in Ethiopia. This has to do mainly with the lack of capital necessary for starting a business, a lack of know-how in the area of entrepreneurship, a lack of information and the overall investment conditions in Ethiopia. The main problems with investment by diaspora investors from Germany can be summarised as follows:

**Table 10: Problems related to investment by diaspora members**

<b>Information</b>	<p>The lack of and access to adequate and precise information, e.g. on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– how to do business in Ethiopia;</li> <li>– existing business opportunities;</li> <li>– The structure and character of different economic sectors,</li> <li>– financing possibilities;</li> <li>– The non-existence of a central information point and comprehensive, up-to date information on the Internet.</li> </ul>
<b>Financial sector</b>	<p>Problems in the general financial environment, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– a weak banking sector that is still strongly state controlled;</li> <li>– a lack of a stock exchange;</li> <li>– the limited liberalisation of the financial sector and thus problems with transferring profits and capital abroad (e.g., in case of enterprise closures).</li> </ul> <p>Concrete Financing problems include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– difficulties in securing necessary loans and capital for start-up businesses<sup>65</sup>;</li> <li>– a lack of necessary financial guarantees and collateral;</li> <li>– limited financial instruments such as share, venture capital;</li> <li>– a lack of access to the foreign currency necessary for importing goods.</li> </ul>
<b>Bureaucracy</b>	<p>Problems with the bureaucracy involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– difficult and slow custom clearance procedures;</li> <li>– slow and inefficient administration in regions.</li> </ul>
<b>Land/ Office space</b>	<p>Investors also face problems such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– a lack of suitable and affordable land and office space in Addis Ababa;</li> <li>– difficult procedures for obtaining land in the regions;</li> <li>– a lack of infrastructure for land acquired in the regions.</li> </ul>

<sup>65</sup> Regarding the amount of capital needed for starting a business, it depends of course on the type of enterprise or undertaking. For very productive investment consultant agencies, it is suggested that at least US\$200,000 is necessary. Some US-Ethiopian returnees said that US\$500,000 is necessary to invest on a large scale.

The issue of inadequate or lacking information on investment issues is crucial in this context as well as the difficulties around securing the necessary financing for the business.

#### 5.4. Know-how and technology transfer

A number of highly qualified members of the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany are active in know-how and technology transfer by organising training, lectures and workshops at Ethiopian universities, hospitals and for private sector organisations. Mostly this kind of activities are organised by individual diaspora members themselves as still no systematic frameworks exist for know-how and technology transfer.

##### **Box 19: Training Courses at Addis Ababa University**

Two Ethiopian German engineers, now working at Airbus in Hamburg, have carried out a training course entitled “Methods of Modern Design principles in Mechanical Engineering” for staff (Bsc and Msc) at the department of mechanical engineering of the University of Addis Ababa. They have set up the contacts with the university themselves and will carry out similar courses in the future. The University of Addis Ababa paid for the flights and accommodation of the engineers, who took their vacation to come to Ethiopia. Through ecbp they also got in contact with the University of Bahir Dar, where they want to carry out a similar training programme. Also they would like to carry out training courses at other regional universities in Ethiopia, if they could obtain some financial support (cf. Interview individual diaspora members, Germany).

Some Ethiopian academics living in Germany were able to become active in German-Ethiopian bilateral university cooperation, providing them with an institutional framework for their academic engagement in Ethiopia.

##### **Box 20: Cooperation University Siegen and Arba Minch Water Technology Institute**

Between 1990 and 2007 the University of Siegen (as implementing partner of GTZ), Germany and the Arba Minch Water Technology Institute (AWTI) of the Arba Minch University cooperated in the framework of an international project aimed at strengthening the research and training potential of the AWTI (cf. GTZ: 2007). In the framework of this successful cooperation, Ethiopian lecturers received further training in Germany, German students and lecturers visited seminars and workshops in Ethiopia and research was carried out collaboratively. Through this project, AWTI has gained so much experience, that today it can offer an internationally recognised programme for water technology (cf. Meeting Bode, gtz, 25.8.2008). Also some German academics with an Ethiopian background participated. This was not intended from the start of the project, but developed rather by chance (cf. Interviews with returnees).

Generally it can be observed that those Ethiopians that are well integrated in Germany and have a secure legal status or even have German citizenship are more interested and willing to engage in their country of origin, than those with an insecure status or those who have only come recently to Germany. Furthermore, well educated Ethiopians and Ethiopian academics from the second generation living in Germany are also increasingly becoming active towards Ethiopia's development. Those Ethiopians who are very actively engaged in political parties and associations, in opposition to the current government, are less likely to engage in Ethiopia than those who try to ignore politics and intend to act politically neutral. Overall many Ethiopians in Germany feel some commitment to Ethiopia and thus, through individual engagement or participation in diaspora associations, try to contribute to Ethiopia's development.

## 6. Conclusions

In the last five years the number of Ethiopians coming to Germany has decreased. Those who are coming are students with scholarships, asylum-seekers, relatives of Ethiopians in Germany as well as Ethiopians working for Ethiopian or international institutions in Germany. Some also come to Germany as tourists or for other short-term visits and then decide to stay. At the same time, the second generation of Ethiopians living in Germany (with German or Ethiopian citizenship) is increasing. These young people born in Germany are often highly educated and still show an active interest in Ethiopia's development. Those Ethiopians who have German citizenship are usually well integrated but often still have strong links to Ethiopia. Due to their secure legal status, they become more interested in engaging in or even returning to Ethiopia as they always have the possibility to come back to Germany. Due to the size of the Ethiopian community in Germany and, more importantly, the high qualification of its members and their general interest in contributing to the development of Ethiopia, German development cooperation should make use of these resources and enhance collaboration with the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany.

As regards the politics of the Ethiopian government towards the diaspora, systematic cooperation is still lacking between the different institutions focusing on the Ethiopian diaspora. Moreover, no strong institution exists as yet with the mandate to effectively reach out to the diaspora and with sufficient resources to do so. Often measures directed to the Ethiopian diaspora are not sufficiently known by the Ethiopian diaspora or show other deficiencies. Therefore, it is still necessary to improve and coordinate these measures as well as implement further ones in order to fully tap into the potential of the diaspora.

Within **German development cooperation**, the nexus between migration and development has been recognised. This has resulted in a growing number of measures supporting return and reintegration, especially for highly educated Ethiopian diaspora members. However, these measures lack political will and due to several restrictions are not taken on by the Ethiopian diaspora. Overall there is a great variety of public and church-based institutions involved in the mobilisation of the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany. While the institutions know about each other, cooperation is still limited and often does not go beyond informing each other about their own activities. Thus there is no real mainstreaming of the different measures towards the mobilisation of Ethiopian diaspora groups in Germany and the synergies that could evolve from increased cooperation are limited.

As the Ethiopian government recognised that the Ethiopian diaspora can be a very important agent with the capacity to strongly contribute to the development of Ethiopia, facilitating and supporting the engagement of the diaspora can be an efficient and cost-effective tool in the context of development cooperation. Therefore Germany is currently looking into the possibilities of making the Ethiopian diaspora engagement part of their overall development policy and trying to design different measures and programmes to this end. Ethiopia can benefit from these activities and should bring the topic of diaspora mobilisation up in discussions about the bilateral cooperation with Germany.

While most **Ethiopian diaspora associations show an interest in Ethiopia and its development**, currently only few organisations engage actively in Ethiopia<sup>66</sup>. These are either associations focusing on **individual development projects in Ethiopia or associations** aiming at promoting know-how transfer and intercultural exchange. Nevertheless, there are a growing number of Ethiopian diaspora associations, especially those which have been established recently, which plan to set up linkages with Ethiopian institutions and engage actively in Ethiopia in the areas of higher education, health, vulnerable groups and overall poverty reduction. Some of the Ethiopian diaspora associations with an interest in becoming active in Ethiopia simply lack concrete project ideas and adequate local partners in Ethiopia. Others wanting to engage in Ethiopia fear that they will meet many bureaucratic obstacles and problems when becoming

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66 Of course, the majority of Ethiopian associations have been collecting money to send to Ethiopia in times of severe crisis. Apart from this, other Ethiopian associations regularly collect money which they donate to Ethiopian or German development aid organisations engaged in Ethiopia.

active in Ethiopia, and believe that their engagement in Ethiopia will not be welcomed by the Ethiopian government. This stands in contrast to the experiences of most Ethiopian diaspora and German-Ethiopian associations which have been carrying out development-related projects or are engaged in other activities in Ethiopia. Most of the associations felt that their engagement was highly welcomed in Ethiopia and they underlined that they did not meet many bureaucratic problems. Of course, some mentioned that the weak infrastructure posed an obstacle for the implementation of projects, but overall the majority of Ethiopian associations engaging in Ethiopia have shared positive experiences.

**Remittances** sent by diaspora Ethiopians living in Germany can be also a useful resource for the development of Ethiopia. However, as there is no systematic information on how these remittances are used in Ethiopia, it is difficult to know what concrete impact they have. Therefore, it is not only important to increase remittances but also to channel them into productive investment and other meaningful activities. The **investment** activities of Ethiopian diaspora members in Ethiopia have also been increasing in the last year. While Ethiopian diaspora members from Germany are usually small-scale investors, their activities are nevertheless important for the creation of jobs, the transfer of know-how and technology as well as for innovation.

## 7. Recommendations for action

The Ethiopian diaspora in Germany holds different resources which can be beneficial to Ethiopia's development. Therefore the Ethiopian community should be supported by German development cooperation in becoming active in Ethiopia and fully using its potential. They should be seen as important stakeholders in the context of overall German development goals and linkages to German development cooperation should be established where possible. This could be done especially through the following measures:

### **Strengthening and capacity-building of Ethiopian diaspora associations in Germany**

- To enable Ethiopian diaspora associations in Germany to exploit their full potential, they should be provided with training concerning fund-raising, project design and project management. In order to make their work and projects more visible, they should be also strengthened concerning the usage of new media as well as concerning their overall media competence. As many Ethiopian diaspora groups still are organised informally, interested Ethiopian community members should also be supported in setting up their own associations and institutions.
- As some Ethiopian diaspora associations wanting to engage in Ethiopia lack concrete project ideas, examples of projects could be presented to these associations. Furthermore, in cooperation with different German development associations active in Ethiopia, project ideas for diaspora associations could be identified and collected in a database accessible to Ethiopian diaspora associations and individuals interested in becoming active in Ethiopia.
- Especially newly established Ethiopian associations are lacking concrete contacts to Ethiopian counterparts, which usually are necessary to implement projects in Ethiopia. German development cooperation should therefore support them in finding suitable partners in Ethiopia by introducing them to their own project partners and using their local networks. Furthermore, the German House in Addis Ababa or a similar German development cooperation institution should act as a first contact point in Ethiopia, channelling demands for partnership voiced by Ethiopian diaspora associations in Germany. Also locally active German development cooperation organisations should be motivated to act as partners for Ethiopian diaspora associations in Germany and carry out projects in partnership with them.
- It is also important that German development cooperation provide Ethiopian diaspora associations as well as the overall Ethiopian community with objective and neutral information on the current economic and social situation, engagement possibilities as well as on the activities and policies of German development cooperation in Ethiopia. This could be done through a regular newsletter or a specific website. Improved information on Ethiopia will allow diaspora associations to become active in the right context and help them to avoid problems and unexpected situations. Information on German development cooperation activities in Ethiopia will enable the associations to link up to different projects and engage within the overall framework of German development cooperation.
- As many Ethiopian diaspora associations do not know each other or generally are sceptical towards networking with other Ethiopian organisations, German development cooperation should use its neutral position towards the associations to bring them together in a networking- workshop or meeting to discuss common interests, differences, synergies as well as future projects which could be organised in cooperation with different associations.

## Support for return and reintegration

It can be observed that members of the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany who want to engage in Ethiopia do not necessarily want to return permanently to Ethiopia, but rather to live there for a temporary period or to travel back and forth between the countries (circular migration). Similarly, Germans with an Ethiopian background who plan to become active in Ethiopia usually do not want to give up their German citizenship and thus often do not qualify for support under general return and reintegration programmes. This should be taken into account in implementing the various support measures and programmes targeting the Ethiopian diaspora.

- A programme should be developed facilitating the temporary return, for example, for one or two years, of Ethiopians or Germans with an Ethiopian background. Within this programme, returnees should be offered job placement services, skills training and job opportunity assessments. The existing PRF programme could be widened to include temporary returns as well as to accommodate circular migration.
- In addition, short-term stays as a volunteer, intern, senior expert (retired diaspora members) and similar short-term assignments should be promoted by German development cooperation. Here German development cooperation could cooperate with local German projects within the non-profit, public as well as private sectors.
- One-time visits for Ethiopian diaspora members planning to return permanently or for a longer period (at least three years) would provide the Ethiopian diaspora the possibility to explore if they can return as well as to prevent their later failure and return to Germany.
- Highly educated Ethiopians wanting to engage in Ethiopia could be provided with the possibility to work within German development cooperation in Ethiopia. This could be done by assigning diaspora members as assistants and counterparts for German development experts. While the German experts would leave Ethiopia after some time, the diaspora members could take over the assignments and stay onthere. Also highly educated diaspora members should be sent where possible as international experts to Ethiopia, thereby using their language and cultural competences. In this context, German development cooperation should make its local Ethiopian partners aware of the benefits of employing an Ethiopian diaspora member.
- A central contact point in Germany should be set up for those Ethiopians interested in engaging in or returning to Ethiopia. Here information on different support programmes and the possibilities for return and engagement should be collected. In addition, contacts to relevant institutions in Ethiopia and Germany should be provided. This contact point could also provide information on the experiences of other returnees, existing obstacles as well on national and international jobs in the private and public sectors.
- More workshops and information events such as those currently organised by the WUS concerning the situation in Ethiopia and possibilities for engagement should be arranged for Ethiopians wanting to become active in Ethiopia. These events should not only focus on highly educated Ethiopians but reach out also to those with professional training and some years of working experience in Germany.
- It should be considered also to design special measures for unskilled Ethiopians who do not have opportunities on the German labour market and are interested in engaging in Ethiopia. These Ethiopian diaspora members could be provided with skills training in areas needed in Ethiopia.

## Support for potential Ethiopian diaspora investors

As investment and entrepreneurship in Ethiopia is seen as an essential contribution which could be realised by the Ethiopian diaspora, a strong focus should be placed on supporting Ethiopian diaspora investors as well as small and medium-sized enterprises.

- Potential diaspora investors and entrepreneurs should be provided with **detailed information on investment opportunities, the investment environment and procedures**. This information should be made accessible through websites, information brochures, a common information centre or handbook, etc. Here German development cooperation organisations already focusing on PSD should identify interested Ethiopian diaspora investors in Germany especially in the area of small and medium-sized businesses and help them to become active in Ethiopia.
- Ethiopian diaspora investors should be approached as partners for **joint ventures** as well as brought together with Ethiopian businesses (matchmaking) in different areas as exporters, importers and retailers. Similarly **public-private partnerships** (PPPs) should be supported with respect to interested diaspora investors, by making them aware of the possibilities of PPP and funding available in this context.
- Practical business support, assistance and training should be provided to diaspora investors and entrepreneurs while still abroad as well as when coming to Ethiopia. This practical support should encompass all steps for establishing a business or investment starting from initial market research, to how to obtain the necessary start-up capital, licences and permissions, to marketing and final sale (value chain). Especially those diaspora investors willing to invest and set up businesses in their country of origin<sup>67</sup> should be assisted as here the overall infrastructure and frameworks for investment are still weaker. German development cooperation can rely on projects already under way in Ethiopia and link up to activities of the PSD.
- Ethiopian diaspora members wanting to set up a business in Ethiopia and returning temporarily (e.g., for one year) or permanently should be provided with financial support within the Programme for Returning Experts (PRF). This could be monthly financial support similar to a subsidy for entrepreneurs in Germany or a onetime grant as a kind of start-up-fund. In this context German development banks such as the DEG should also offer start-up loans or guarantees for credits from Ethiopian banks to Ethiopian diaspora investors engaging in Ethiopia. Similarly advice should be provided on different instruments for raising the necessary capital, including shares, venture capital, hedge funds, micro-finance, etc.
- The experiences (positive and negative ones) of successful diaspora investors (**success stories**) **should be made accessible** to potential investors. This can be done through a booklet, in the framework of a website focusing on diaspora investment, or in ensuring their participation in workshops or information events directed at diaspora investors in Germany.

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<sup>67</sup> The research has shown that diaspora investors are generally interested in investments in their country of origin. This has to do with the fact that they want to invest in the areas where they originally come from. Others are afraid of a weak infrastructure and slow bureaucracy, but see the potential in investing in the region (cf. Interviews with returnees and diaspora individuals).

## Promotion and support for Know-how and technology transfer

- There is a large number of highly qualified diaspora members employed at universities and research institutions abroad or working as independent researchers or consultants, who are interested in engaging in Ethiopia. These highly educated persons should be targeted by the German development cooperation in the general framework of **establishing academic collaboration and research cooperation between German and Ethiopian institutions**. Highly educated Ethiopian academics in Germany should be identified and brought together in a meeting to explore together possibilities for international research collaboration and individual engagement.
- German development cooperation, in collaboration with academic exchange institutions, should **promote student and researcher exchanges** between Germany and Ethiopia also focusing on the involvement of the second generation of Ethiopians in Germany. This will allow these young academics to become acquainted with Ethiopia and explore future forms of engagement.
- The networking between highly educated Ethiopian diaspora members and academics in Ethiopia should be promoted by supporting them in **setting up adequate networks or alumni associations**. These networks can create synergies allowing highly educated Ethiopian diaspora members to become together active in Ethiopia and engage in know-how transfer. Increased collaboration with AEEG in Ethiopia could also be envisaged.
- As many highly skilled Ethiopians in Germany only want to engage temporarily in Ethiopia (e.g., during their holidays or for a period of one year), opportunities for **short-term assignments** should be identified by German development cooperation in collaboration with its local partners in different areas. A **special fund** for financing travel costs, accommodation and some kind of per diem for these short-term assignments should be set up, for example, in collaboration with Ethiopian universities.
- Various forms of **virtual engagement** for those highly skilled Ethiopian diaspora members not able to engage directly in Ethiopia should be explored. They could be involved in the development of e-learning courses, participate in virtual expert platforms or in similar activities.
- Ethiopian diaspora academics in Germany should be actively targeted for academic placements as visiting professors or lecturers in Ethiopia within programmes of the DAAD or similar institutions. Here German development cooperation should ensure that educated Ethiopians or Germans with an Ethiopian background fulfilling the necessary conditions and bringing with them adequate qualifications are not turned down by their Ethiopian counterparts.
- Strengthening and supporting **business incubation** can be a further measure to enhance technology and know-how transfer. Here the involvement of diaspora entrepreneurs, academics and firms can bring in needed ideas and knowledge as well as help to provide the necessary venture capital. Therefore, German development cooperation should support Ethiopia in the **establishment of incubation centres** which might attract highly qualified Ethiopian diaspora members in Germany to engage in Ethiopia.

## Dialogue with Ethiopian government

- German development cooperation should lobby the Ethiopian government to make it aware of the resources and potential of the Ethiopian diaspora. The Ethiopian government should be convinced of the benefits of collaborating with and engaging diaspora members as international experts, consultants and within development cooperation.
- The Ethiopian government should be made aware that it is necessary to establish communication with all kinds of segments of the Ethiopian diaspora regardless of their ethnicity or political affiliations.
- German development cooperation should **function as a bridge** between different Ethiopian government sectors and the diaspora (e.g. by bringing up the topic of diaspora mobilisation in bilateral talks and by providing counselling on this issue) in order to facilitate a neutral dialogue and reconciliation between the Ethiopian diaspora and the Ethiopian government.

Overall it is necessary that German development cooperation develop measures and tools that are flexible enough to accommodate the needs of the different segments of the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany. In this context, it is important that not only German development cooperation become active, but also that the Ethiopian community in Germany itself pursue active cooperation with German development cooperation and explore the existing possibilities. Here Ethiopian diaspora associations could play a key role by linking up to German development cooperation, improving networking with other Ethiopian and African diaspora associations and strengthening the capacity of their own institutions.

At the same time, the Ethiopian Embassy and Consulate in Germany as well as the Ethiopian government should increase its efforts to cooperate with Ethiopian diaspora associations in Germany and support them in engaging in Ethiopia. If these institutions start an open dialogue independent from political differences with the Ethiopian diaspora in Germany and demonstrate to them that their contribution is welcomed in Ethiopia, more Ethiopians will be willing to engage for Ethiopia's development. Therefore, various levels of the Ethiopian government as well as the diaspora and their organisations should be brought together to discuss partnership and practical ways forward.

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## Links

*Please kindly note that in addition to the websites below, the links to the websites of the presented diaspora organisations can be found in chapter 3.2 in the respective boxes.*

**[www.aethiopien-botschaft.de/](http://www.aethiopien-botschaft.de/)**

Website of the Ethiopian Embassy in Berlin and the Consulate in Frankfurt

**[www.addis.abeba.diplo.de](http://www.addis.abeba.diplo.de)**

Website of the German Embassy in Addis Ababa

**[www.nbe.gov.et/](http://www.nbe.gov.et/)**

Website of the National Bank of Ethiopia

**[www.dbe.com.et](http://www.dbe.com.et)**

Website of the Development Bank of Ethiopia

**[www.ecsc.edu.et](http://www.ecsc.edu.et)**

Website of the Ethiopian Civil Service College (ECSC)

**[www.aau.edu.et](http://www.aau.edu.et)**

the official Website of the Addis Ababa University

**[www.ethiopianchamber.com](http://www.ethiopianchamber.com)**

Website of the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Associations

**[www.mfa.gov.et/Ethiopians\\_Origin\\_Abroad/Ethiopia\\_Origin.php](http://www.mfa.gov.et/Ethiopians_Origin_Abroad/Ethiopia_Origin.php)**

Website of the Ethiopian Expatriate Affairs (EEA) within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA)

**[www.ecbp.biz](http://www.ecbp.biz)**

Website of the Engineering Capacity Building Programme (ecbp)

**[www.geba-addis.org](http://www.geba-addis.org)**

Website of the German Ethiopian Business Association (GEBA)

**[www.diasporainvest.com](http://www.diasporainvest.com)**

Website of Precise Consult International containing information on investment opportunities

**[www.hlmethiopia.org](http://www.hlmethiopia.org)**

Website of Hibret Lelimat Ma'ekel, an NGO involved in diaspora cooperation

**[www.nesglobal.org/](http://www.nesglobal.org/)**

Website of NES Global, an NGO involved in diaspora cooperation

**[www.aeeg-ethiopia.org](http://www.aeeg-ethiopia.org)**

Website of the Association of Ethiopians Educated in Germany (AEEG)







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