DEMAC Phase I – Key Outcomes

The Diaspora Emergency Action & Coordination (DEMAC) is a Consortium consisting of the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), African Foundation for Development (AFFORD) and Berghof Foundation. The DEMAC project evolves around two central themes: diaspora and humanitarianism & offers a space to link diaspora organisations with the traditional humanitarian system for the benefit of affected communities. DEMAC Phase I was a wide-ranging project spanning from Sierra Leonean, Somali and Syrian diaspora-based relief organisations and initiatives based in the UK, Germany and Denmark. DEMAC Phase I sought to contribute to communication, coordination and coherence between conventional and diaspora-led humanitarian actions. In its first phase, DEMAC achieved overall objectives around:

- Acting as the go-to place for humanitarian actors and agencies interested in including diasporas.
- A research report on Diaspora Humanitarianism outlining features of formalized collective interventions by Sierra Leonean, Somali and Syrian diaspora-based relief organisations and initiatives to the humanitarian crises in their countries of origin/heritage and neighbouring countries.
- A research report on Diaspora Drought Response providing findings on the Somali diaspora response to the regional drought/crisis that affected Somaliland and Puntland in early 2016.
- Three successful thematic humanitarian workshops and consultation meetings, and six community workshops were held in London, Copenhagen and Berlin involving 170 implementation-level actors from diaspora organisations, UN agencies and INGOs.
- An improved common understanding to work towards a common ground including diasporas in several other working groups– such as the IASC Task Team for Accountability for Affected People.
- Profiling the role of diaspora on the ground, with the vocal participation of 18 diasporas from DEMAC & 5 diaspora speakers at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) and in the localization of aid discussion.
- Increased trust between diaspora, DEMAC and other humanitarian agencies, by facilitating open dialogue around issues of neutrality and impartiality.
- Advocating for a strengthened collaboration in operations, leading for instance to the creation of an OCHA diaspora liaison officer in Mogadishu.
- The final conference in Copenhagen, October 2016: A Missing Link? Diaspora’s Place in an Enhanced International Humanitarian System brought together 110 participants from EU and international representatives from government, civil society, diaspora organisations, humanitarian organisations and research institutes to discuss and explore opportunities and strengths related to diaspora humanitarianism.
- The conference results, along with the learning from all other deliverables were incorporated into the final report, published in December 2016, which outlined all findings and recommendations. Alongside the final report, a checklist was produced as a practical tool for diaspora organisations and actors in the formal humanitarian system designed to improve operational and strategic communication and coordination.