



# Diaspora Mapping and Engagement: Evidence from the Southern Africa Region

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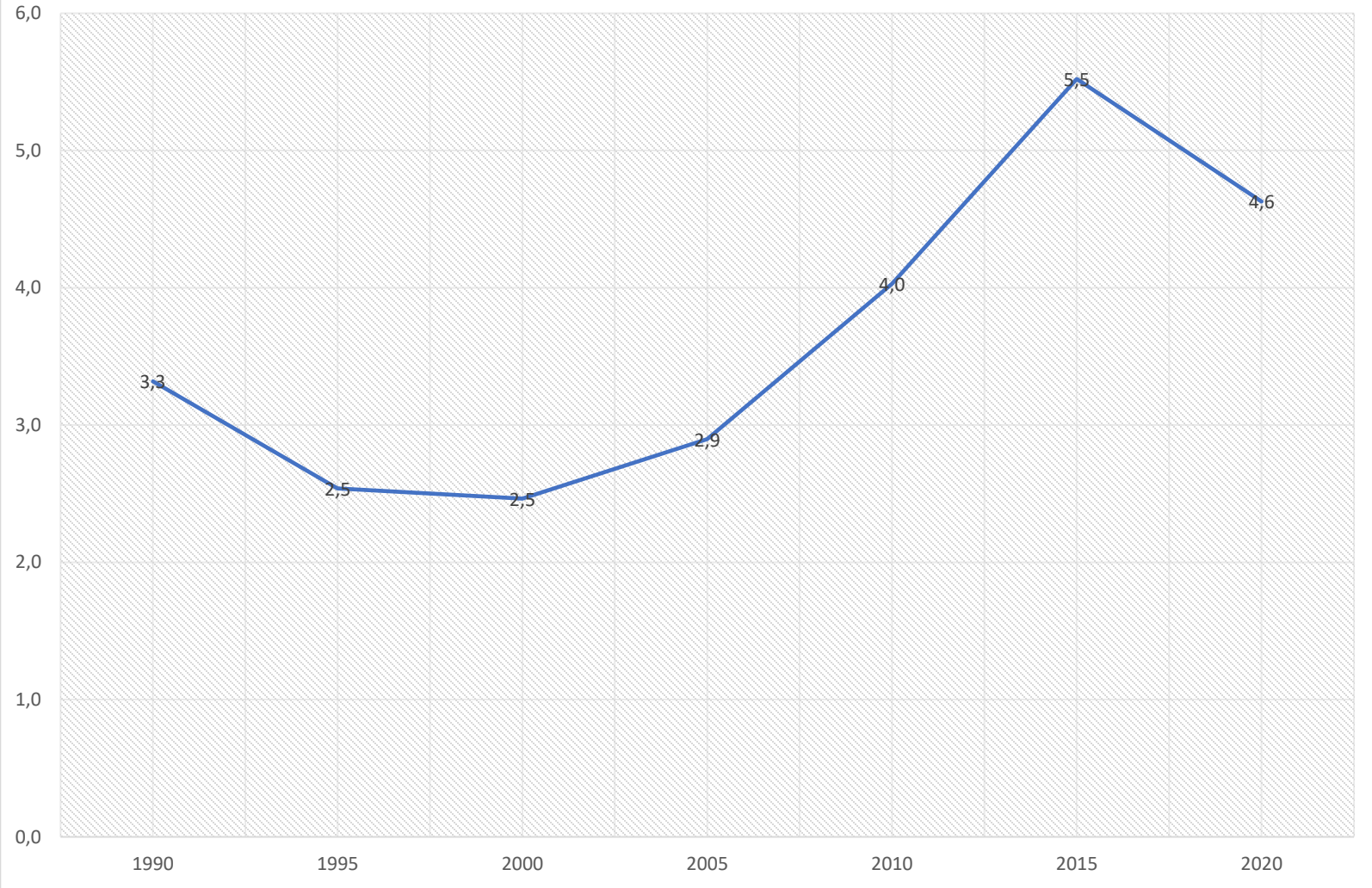
# Outline

- Migration in Southern Africa
- Remittance Flows in the region
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- Research initiatives on Southern Africa Diaspora Mapping and Engagement
- Outcome of the MIDSA 2021 - Maputo Declaration and Diaspora-related recommendations
- Regional Diaspora Engagement Programme (The MIRAC Diaspora Project)
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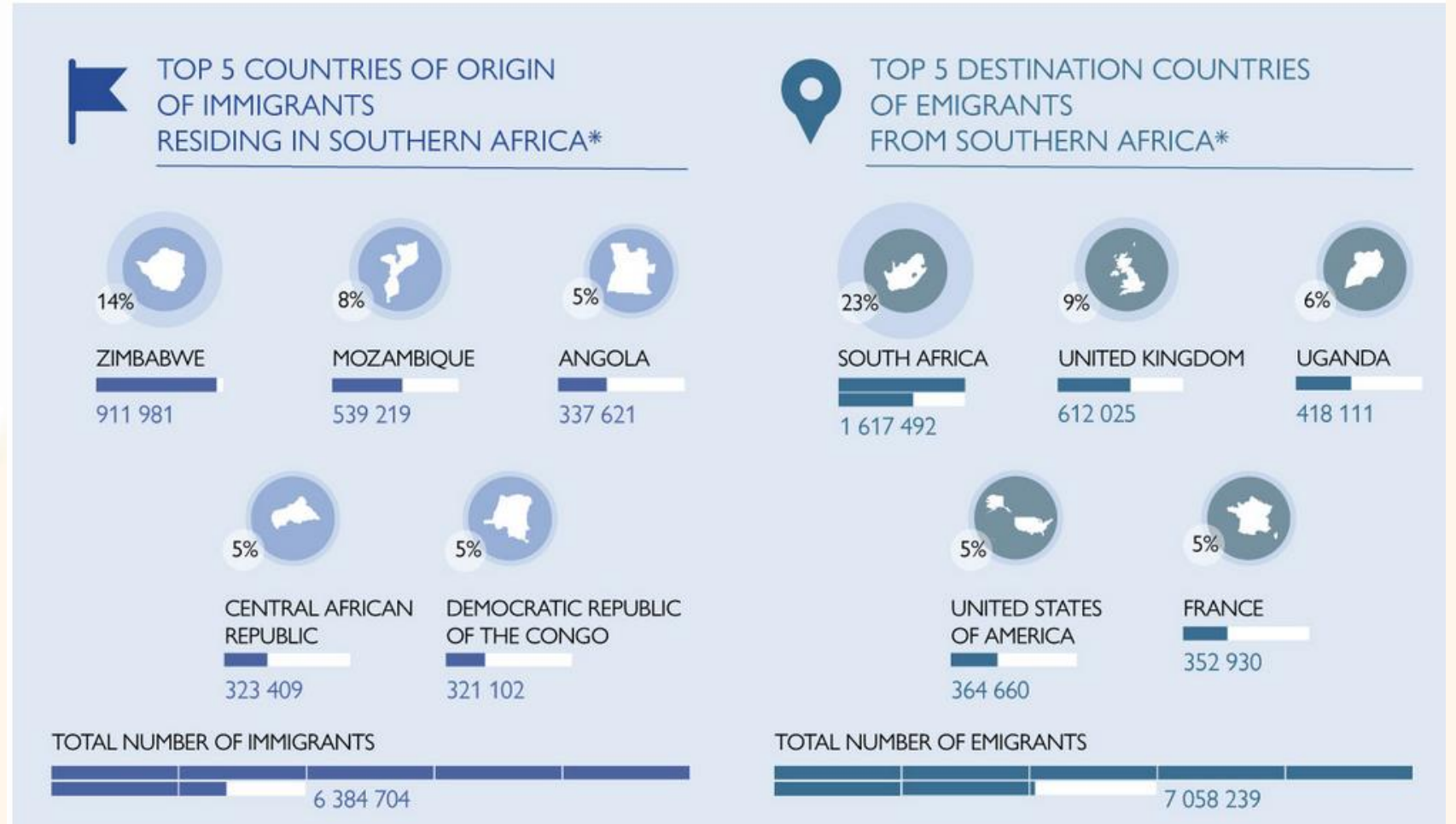
# Migration in the region: Contextual Overview

- *The migration in the Southern Africa region are complex, unique*
- *The population of the region is estimated to be **363.2 million** people and, the migrant population constitute around **6.4million (4.6%)** of the entire population of the region (UN DESA, 2020)*
- *Mostly driven by the quest for **better socioeconomic opportunities in a stable environment, politically stable economy with less or no environmental and climatic hazards.***

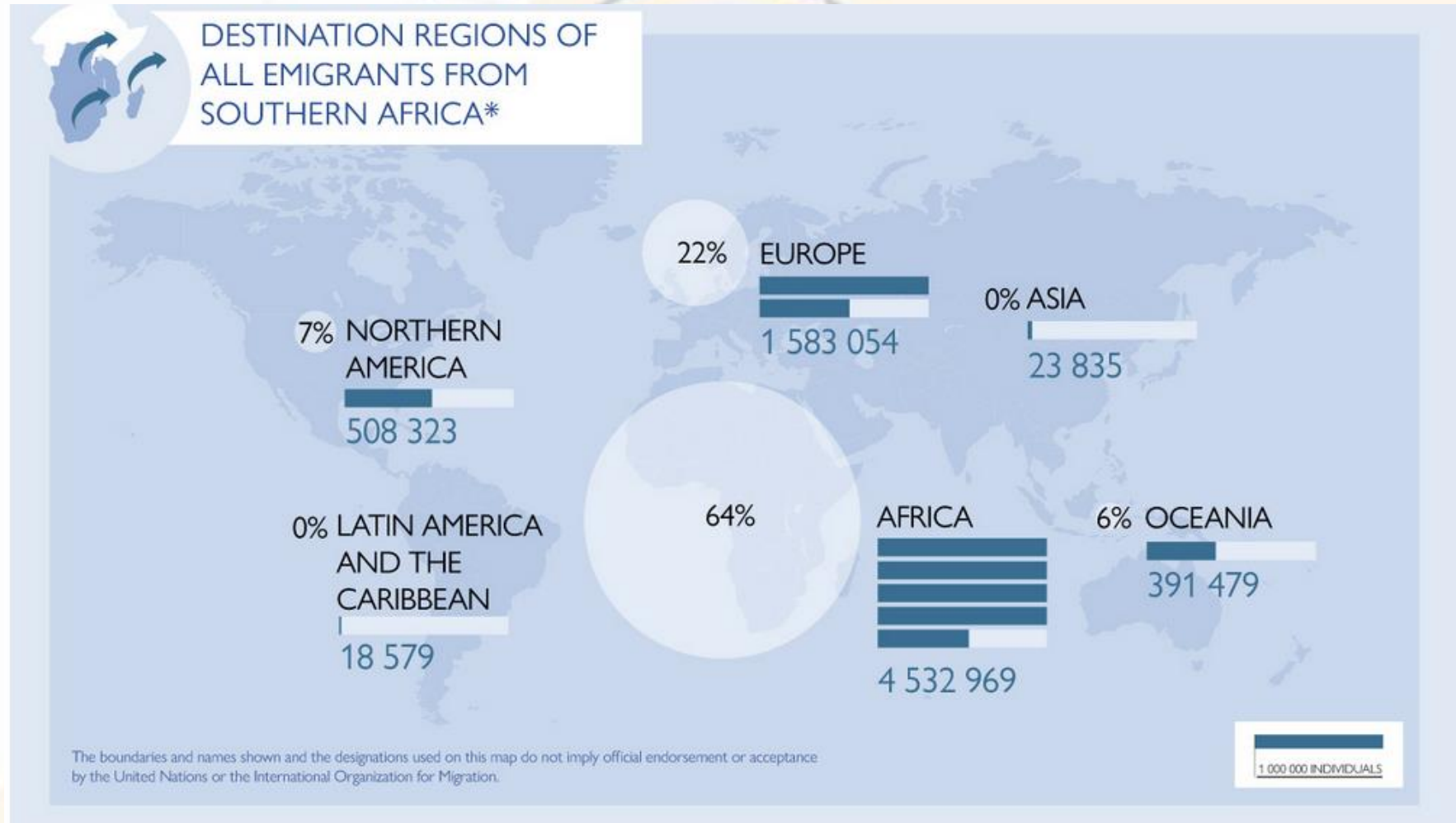
Figure 1: International migrant stock as a percentage of the total population in Southern Africa



# Locating the Southern Africa Diaspora



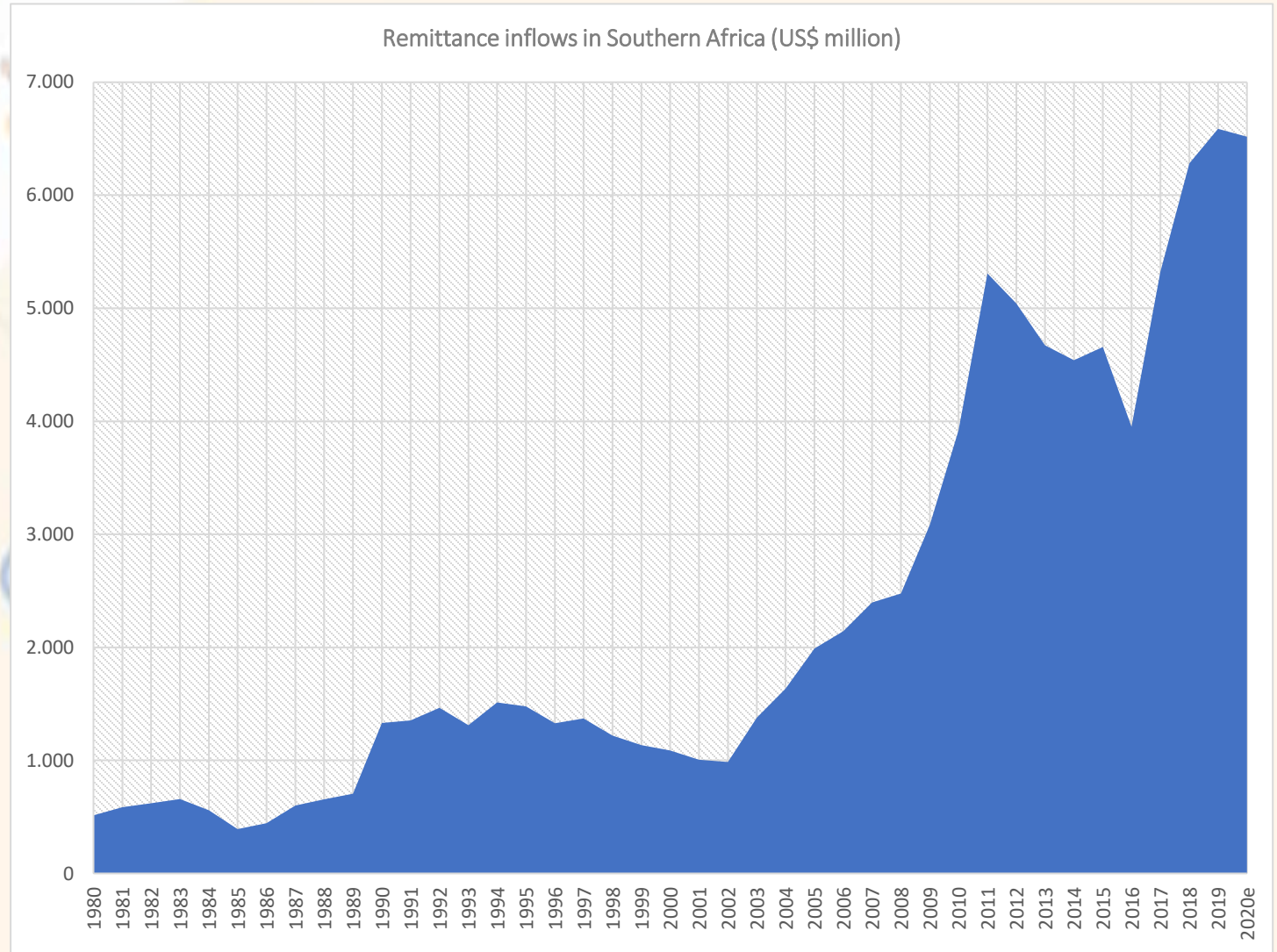
# Locating the Southern Africa Diaspora





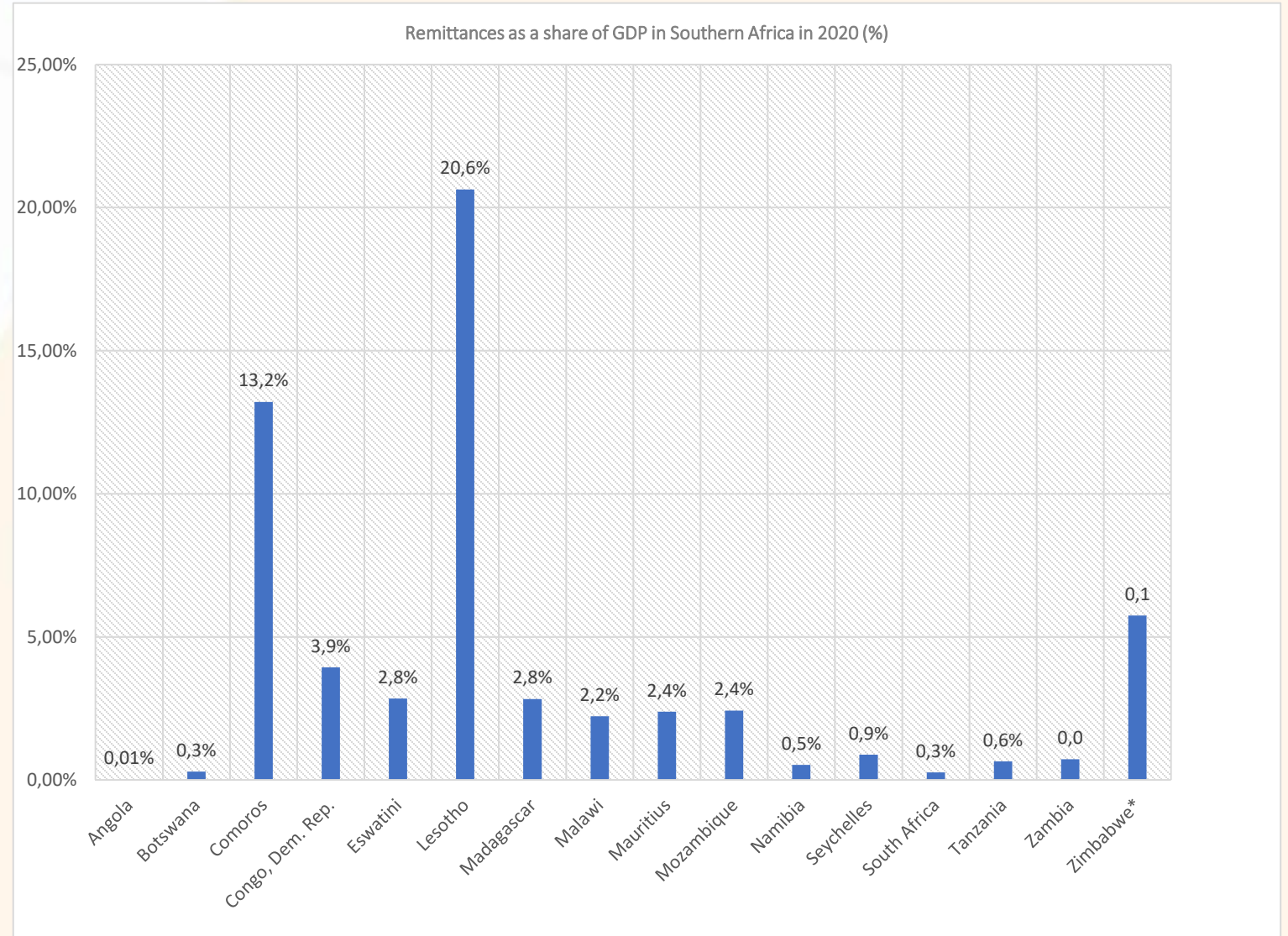
# Remittance Flow in the Region

- Within the context of the Southern Africa region, the trends of remittance inflows have been increasing in the region from 1980 to 2020.
- Remittance inflows serve as a major source of income for most countries as the region recorded an estimated \$6.5 billion of remittances income in 2019 (World Bank, 2020a).



# Remittance as a share of GDP

- *The share of remittances to GDP in the region is high for some countries.*
- *While there is no data on the projections for the region, it is important to highlight that the **COVID-19 pandemic** has significantly impacted the socioeconomic activities of migrants with a trickle-down effect on remittance inflows.*



# Engagement of Southern Africa Diaspora through Policy Dialogue

- Before the SDGs, the AU declared the Diaspora as the continent's sixth region in 2005, with one of the AU's objectives to:
- ***“invite and encourage the full participation of the African Diaspora as an important part of our continent, in the building of the African Union”***
- In 2012, the first Global African Diaspora Summit, held in South Africa, adopted among others;
  - ***the production of a Skills Database of African Professionals in the Diaspora;***
  - ***the African Diaspora Investment Fund;***
  - ***a programme on the Development Marketplace for the Diaspora as a framework for facilitating innovation and entrepreneurship among African and Diaspora; and***
  - ***the African Institute for Remittances”***
- These measures demonstrate that the African Union acknowledges the significant role of the diaspora in development of the continent.
- In view of the significant role and contribution of the diaspora, IOM recognizes the diaspora as a key strategic asset in building national institutional capacities and should be recognized as one of Africa's main assets of social, financial, intellectual, and political capital who share a common vision and commitment for Africa's development and integration, in which this project is aligned.
- In parallel and at the continental level, IOM together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and African Union Commission (AUC) established the diaspora framework programme in 2021 that captures and leverages all diaspora related “capitals” towards national, regional, and continental development
- This was supported by member states at the 2017 Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA) Ministerial meeting which recommended “the development of programmes and innovative activities for the active engagement of Youth and the Diaspora to make a meaningful contribution to the social and economic development of their home countries as well as the SADC Community.”



# Regional Diaspora study (objectives)

- This study examines the existing practices on diaspora engagement and productive use of remittances in Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Member States.
- It further maps the southern African diaspora and analyzes existing regional and national coordination mechanisms and regulatory frameworks for engaging the southern African diaspora.
- In so doing, the study identifies gaps/challenges in current diaspora engagement initiatives for extending rights the diaspora and leveraging international remittances for development.
- 104 in-depth interviews carried out with various stakeholders, including diaspora communities, relevant government stakeholders (example diaspora offices), and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Central Banks, financial institutions including Banks, Money Transfer Companies (MTCs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and International Organizations, among others.

# Findings from the Regional study

- The study found that while there is currently no regional diaspora policy framework or programme to ensure a comprehensive and coherent engagement of the diaspora in the SADC region, home countries in the region are making individualized efforts to engage the diaspora by setting up diaspora units, developing diaspora policies, organizing cultural conferences, instituting remittance linked products, as well as providing dual citizenship and enhancing the voting rights of people in the diaspora.
- Most of the contributions are achieved through the diaspora associations or the individual emigrant him/herself as well as through development partners.
- The study also finds that while some efforts are being made by member states to leverage the developmental potential of diaspora, state-led programmes that seek to encourage diaspora contributions are limited in the region. As a result of a lack of coordination mechanism to promote effective collaboration among stakeholders, diaspora engagement initiatives are ad hoc in nature.
- Efforts to mainstream diaspora remittances into productive use and socio-economic development are affected by a number of constraints, including high cost of sending or receiving remittances, bottlenecks in the payment system infrastructure, limited competition in the remittances markets, low financial literacy and a lack of effective regional programmes to guide diaspora remittance uses into productive investments, all serve as constraints to effectively mainstream diaspora remittances into productive use and development.

# Recommendations from the Regional Study

- Create and enhance existing institutional coordination mechanisms between and among the various state and non-state agencies dealing with diaspora issues.
- Develop diaspora engagement policies in line with regional and country national development plans.
- Strengthen diaspora engagement through establishing formal communication channels with the diaspora.
- Work directly with Banks/MTOs to reduce high cost of remittance transfer through formal channels, increase financial literacy and increase the number of remittance investment linked products.
- Make efforts to enhance competition in the remittances market by for example ensuring fair and equitable access to market infrastructure MTOs and limiting the imposition of exclusive conditions.
- Develop mechanisms to address issues of lack of trust between Member Government and the diaspora.
- Develop bilateral agreements with host country governments to facilitate effective labour recruitment and protection of diaspora members and;
- Facilitate state-led programmes to encourage diaspora contributions to development

# MIDSA 2021

- It is in the spirit of this recommendation that the 2021 MIDSA Ministerial endorsed the Maputo Diaspora Declaration to promote “regional integration and South – South cooperation amongst member states of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) through diaspora engagement as a practical approach towards operationalizing Migration for Development in the Southern Africa Region.”
- The Maputo Diaspora Declaration outlines a request for IOM, in collaboration with relevant UN agencies and partners, in coordination with the SADC member states and the Secretariat to develop a regional programme and a regional diaspora policy to facilitate the engagement of diaspora and transnational communities as agents of development among SADC member states.



# The Maputo Declaration



## MAPUTO DIASPORA DECLARATION

**WE**, the representatives of ministries with mandates on migration and related issues from the SADC member states including; Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe as well as the SADC Secretariat, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Partners met in Maputo, the Republic of Mozambique from the 25 – 28 October 2021; for the Sixth Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MDSA) Ministerial Meeting;

**RECALLING** the African Union definition of the Diaspora adopted in 2006 as "people of African origin living outside the continent, irrespective of their citizenship and nationality and who are willing to contribute to the development of the continent and building of the African Union (AU)";

**MINDFUL** of the AU Constitutive Act that declared that it shall "invite and encourage the full participation of the African Diaspora as an important part of our continent, in the building of the African Union";

**RECOGNIZING** the inherent benefits and the role played by the Diaspora in contributing to economies of countries of origin and destination, including; social and financial remittances, promotion of trade, business creation, and entrepreneurial growth as well as facilitating the transfer of skills and knowledge;

**RECALLING** the Global, Continental and Regional Frameworks on Migration and Diaspora including the potential contribution of migration to socio-economic development (SDGs) and the Objectives of the Global Compact on Migration (GCM) that calls on governments to; Enhance consular protection, assistance, and cooperation throughout the migration cycle (Obj.14); Create conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries (Obj. 19) and to Promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion of migrants (Obj. 20);

**COGNISANT** of the first Global African Diaspora Summit, held in 2012 in Sandton, South Africa, which adopted, among other recommendations; the production of a Skills Database of African Professionals in the Diaspora; the African Diaspora Investment Fund; a programme on the Development Marketplace for the Diaspora as a framework for facilitating innovation and entrepreneurship among African and Diaspora; and the African Institute for Remittances;

**MINDFUL** that the African Union acknowledges the significant role of the Diaspora in the development of the continent and has declared the Diaspora the 'continent's Sixth region';

**ACKNOWLEDGING** that the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has increasingly recognized the developmental potential of a well-managed migration and being among the few Africa Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to have drafted a regional migration policy with an implementation plan to regulate migration and engage the Diaspora;



**FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING** that the solidarity and shared vision of SADC and its Member States continue to be the driving force towards regional integration and overall socio-economic development at the national and regional level;

**UNDERSCORING** the recommendation of the 2017 MDSA Ministerial Meeting in Ezulwini, Eswatini "to develop programmes and innovative activities for the active engagement of Youth and the Diaspora to make a meaningful contribution to the social and economic development of their home countries as well as the SADC Community";

**MINDFUL** that almost all the SADC Member States are desirous of engaging their Diaspora and have made specific requests to IOM to support and assist with Diaspora mapping for the active engagement of their Diaspora towards national development agenda;

**Therefore, hereby agree to establish a Southern Africa Regional Diaspora Engagement Programme, with the aim to:**

- I) Effectively ENGAGE Diaspora;**
- II) *ENABLE Diasporas* to reach their full development potential;**
- III) EMPOWER them to make a difference in the countries of Origin and Host countries (Destination) as agents of development;**
- IV) *PROMOTE cross-regional skills, experience, and knowledge transfer* to foster regional integration and South-South cooperation between and amongst the SADC Member States.**

**Request the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in collaboration with relevant UN Agencies and partners, in coordination with the SADC member states and the Secretariat to develop a regional programme and a regional diaspora policy to facilitate the engagement of the Diaspora and transnational communities as agents of development among SADC member states;**

**Encourage SADC Member States that have not yet done so to approach IOM for support in the development of appropriate national diaspora policies and diaspora programmes and further request IOM to assist in that regard.**





# MIDSA Recommendation

## **Stream 4: Unpacking the Integrative and Mobility Agenda for Socio-Economic Recovery (Diaspora Engagement & Skills Mobility)**

### **Recommendations:**

1. Recognize the untapped intra-regional diaspora and transnational communities abroad as critical development actors, that if leveraged effectively, can contribute to regional integration, through the transfer of diasporic capitals inclusive of skills, remittances, and socio-cultural elements at local, national and regional levels.
2. Support the aspirations of the Regional Diaspora Declaration and the development of a Regional Diaspora Policy and Programme to guide the mobilization and utilization of diaspora resources to enhance intra-regional cooperation and regional integration in the SADC region.



# Regional Diaspora Engagement Programme (The MIRAC Diaspora Project)

- To contribute to an enabling environment to maximize the socio-economic development potential of diasporas by strengthening relevant regional cooperation and sustainable development

# The Southern Africa Diaspora Page

## Regional Diaspora Engagement in Southern Africa

Are you a member of or work with the diaspora community of the Southern Africa region? Would you like to engage with other members, organizations, experts and institutions and find opportunities to leverage your work? Would you like access to diaspora success stories, best practices and relevant policies from across the region? Would you like to voice your opinions and contribute to the discourse on national and regional initiatives, including development programs and skills mobility partnerships?

Get Started



EXPLORE BY COUNTRY



Angola



Botswana



Comoros



Democratic Republic of the Congo



Lesotho



Madagascar



Malawi



Mauritius

# Future initiatives on the Diaspora – IOM/UNDP Joint Project

- The project will contribute to the **effective engagement of key member states in the Southern Africa Region with their diaspora in design and implementation of relevant strategies facilitating enhanced and expanded diaspora financial transfer, in particular towards investment to:**
  1. Bring together and convene key national and regional stakeholders through a whole-of-society approach, with the mandate and expertise of working on diaspora engagement matters, to create synergies and complementarities, working towards the sustainable development in the region, through the financing for development perspective.
  2. Integrate diaspora engagement related strategies, policies, and regulations (including remittances related) as part of the National Level Comprehensive Financing Strategies (and upcoming financing reforms).
  3. Test and enhance tools, methodologies and networks developed for diaspora engagement and start creating synergies and scale at both international and country levels; and





Thank you.  
Q&A

