

# ENGAGING DIASPORA in development

Tapping Our Trans-local Potential for Change

[www.sfu.ca/diasporas](http://www.sfu.ca/diasporas)

## Dialogue Program Improving Global Health

Wednesday, March 16, 2011, 6:30 - 9:00 PM

SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, 580 West Hastings Street

### Project Co-Directors

**Joanna Ashworth**

Centre for Sustainable Community  
Development, SFU

**Shaheen Nanji**

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### Dialogue Planning Committee:

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Researcher: **Douglas Olthof**

CUSO-VSO Intern: **James Christopherson**



### Dialogue Purpose

This dialogue is part of an ongoing public engagement series that examines the unique role of the diaspora resident in Vancouver who are committed financially and personally to development activities in the global south. Diaspora-driven development efforts have a powerful impact in the global south that reverberates here in Metro Vancouver. While often informal or grassroots, these initiatives demonstrate the benefits and unique strengths of the diaspora – cultural awareness of communities of origin and residence, fluency working in dual cultures, awareness of local issues and concerns (trans-local), and long-term personal commitment to projects and communities.

This dialogue foregrounds the many ways diaspora leaders and partners are transcending borders to improve health through innovations in research, clinical services, and population-based preventive health practices.

### Dialogue questions include:

- What are the unique skills and experiences of diaspora in improving global health?
- In what ways are initiatives experiences transforming health practices, and systems in the Global South?
- What are the current and potential impacts on people, health systems and institutions in both Canada and trans-locally?

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Canadian International  
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Canada

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Project partners:



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY  
MORRIS J. WOSK CENTRE FOR DIALOGUE™



BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION



with special thanks to Bruce and Lis Welch Community Fund.

## Program

6:30 pm      Welcome

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First Nations Welcome to the Territory

*Shaheen Nanji*, Project Co-Director and Director SFU International Development

*Joanna Ashworth*, Project Co-Director and Dialogue Co-Moderator

*Ajay Puri*, Coordinator, Ethno-Cultural Research Network and Dialogue Co-Moderator

### Global Health Defined

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*Jerry Spiegel*, Liu Institute for Global Issues and the School of Population and Public Health at UBC.

#### Dialogue:

- *What does health mean to you?*
- *What are the unique qualities that you bring to your understanding of health and how to improve global health?*

### Global Health: Diaspora Stories

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*Shafique Pirani, MD*, Royal Columbian Hospital

*Steven Pi*, President, Hands Across the World

*Marj Ratel*, Vancouver-based neuroscience nurse who founded Korle-Bu Neuroscience Foundation (KBNF) in 2000

*Derek Agyapong-Poku*, KBNF's Vice President; President of Excellence in Africa Neuroscience and Health and the Canada-Ghana Liaison

*Mohammad Zaman*, Executive Director, Society for Bangladesh Climate Justice

#### Dialogue:

- *What excites, inspires, or surprises you about what you have heard? What questions do you have?*
- *In what ways are these global health initiatives leveraging the trans-local potential of the diaspora communities in Vancouver?*

### Transcending North and South: The Potential of the Trans-Local

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*Lyren Chiu*, Founder and President of the Canadian Research Institute of Spirituality and Healing

#### Dialogue:

- *How are diaspora transcending boundaries and serving as a bridge between the Global North and South?*
- *What impact do these "trans-local" interactions have in transforming health practices, systems, and understanding in Canada?*

#### Dialogue: Final Reflections on the Dialogue

### Weaving: Parting Reflections and Implications for Practice and Research

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*Ashok Mathur*, Director, Centre for Innovation in Culture and the Arts in Canada, Thompson Rivers University

9:00 pm      Adjourn

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Reception to follow in atrium

## Speakers

**DEREK AGYAPONG-POKU** is KBNF's Vice President; President of Excellence in Africa Neuroscience and Health, an operating charity, and the Canada-Ghana Liaison.

**JOANNA ASHWORTH** is Associate Director for the Bolivia Community Economic Development project and advises community organizations throughout BC on multicultural dialogue planning. She is a senior research associate at the Centre for Sustainable Community Development. Joanna is also co-director of the Engaging Diaspora in Development: Tapping our Trans-local Potential for Change project.

**LYREN CHIU** is Founder and President of the Canadian Research Institute of Spirituality and Healing. He has 25 years experience and training in both mental health care and spirituality. <http://www.beautifulmindsconsulting.com/specialists/dr-lyren-chiu/>

**ASHOK MATHUR** was born in Bhopal, India, and immigrated to Canada with his family in 1962 when he was one year old. Journalism school followed high school, and by 1981 Ashok worked as a photojournalist and was active in Minquon Panchayat, an activist artist collective comprised of First Nations artists and artists of colour that addressed racism in the arts on a national level. Currently, he is the Director of the Centre for Innovation in Culture and the Arts in Canada at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, British Columbia.

**SHAHEEN NANJI** is Director of International Development and Faculty Engagement at SFU. She co-directs Engaging Diaspora in Development: Tapping our Trans-local Potential for Change and oversees CIDA projects in China and Kenya. Shaheen is working on a Master of Arts in International Studies, with a focus on diasporic influences on development. Born and raised in Nairobi, Kenya, Shaheen moved to Vancouver in 1989 and has firsthand understanding of the ways diaspora communities seek to give back to their birth nations.

**STEVEN PI** is the President of Hands Across the World a Vancouver-based non-profit organization started by a group of university students who strongly believe that the young adults within their communities can make a large difference in the world. They have raised money to support victims of the 2008 Szechuan Earthquake, where more than 90,000 victims have been declared dead or missing in the last seven months, 19,000 of which were students and to raise awareness about HIV-AIDs stigma about to also impart knowledge and awareness of some of the serious issues that are plaguing this world today. <http://www.handsaroundtheworld.ca/about-us/>

**SHAFIQUE PIRANI, MD** has an Orthopaedics clinical practice at the Royal Columbian Hospital. His special interest is in Paediatric orthopaedics with an emphasis on clubfeet, paediatric hip abnormalities and the Ilizarov Method of treating musculoskeletal disorders. He is the principle organizer and driving force of the CAD \$1.8 million Uganda Sustainable Clubfoot Care Project (USCCP) funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and Enable Canada. The USCCP Goal is to reduce the consequences of disability from neglected clubfeet in Uganda with a public health approach by making available sustainable, universal, effective, efficient, and safe treatment (by the Ponseti Method) of the congenital clubfoot deformity. <http://www.ponseti.info/uganda/>

**AJAY PURI**, Coordinator, Ethno-Cultural Research Network and Dialogue Co-Moderator. Ajay is a Principal at Masala Consulting Services, Co-Lead and Co-Founder at Coop Culture, Co-founder at Rangichangi Roots, Doctoral Student at the School of Population and Public Health, UBC, lead at the Canadian Ethno-cultural Health Network and Research Associate at the Centre for Addictions Research of BC.

**MARJ RATEL** is the Founder of the Korle-Bu Neuroscience Project. The non-profit Korle-Bu Neuroscience Foundation was established in 2003 and Marj was the President since inception. She is also President of Korle-Bu Foundation, a public charity, since inception. Korle-Bu Neuroscience Foundation provides medical support for brain injuries and diseases to the people of Ghana and West Africa. KBNF is committed to assisting the people of West Africa for the long-term through the development of a world-class regional hospital and network, by providing specialist training to the doctors, nurses and other health care professionals who will work in their homelands, and by establishment of a neurological research unit. KBNF is also supporting health care infrastructure development for the West African region. <http://kbnf.org/>

**JERRY SPIEGEL, PhD** is an associate professor at the Liu Institute for Global Issues and the School of Population and Public Health at the University of British Columbia. His research focus is on the strengthening of capacities to address determinants of health – and he currently leads active collaborative projects in Ecuador, Cuba, and South Africa focused on environmental and occupational health risks. He was founding President of the Canadian Coalition for Global Health Research.

**MOHAMMAD ZAMAN, PhD** is a Social Safeguard/Resettlement Specialist and Executive Director of the Society for Bangladesh Climate Justice – a voluntary, non-profit, advocacy group in Vancouver – dedicated to climate change awareness and global “climate justice”. Dr. Zaman has published in many areas including climate change impacts, natural disasters, displacement, migration, and development. [http://www.bangladeshcalling.org/about\\_us.htm](http://www.bangladeshcalling.org/about_us.htm)

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## Photography

**NARRATIVE 360** is a non-profit organization advancing the role of the documentary arts in civil society and supporting their development in the areas of photography, audio and literary journalism. The organization is committed to intellectual discourse regarding media representation of societies, cultures and communities, and supports work in the documentary arts as a way of understanding the social and cultural fabric of humanity. Narrative 360's last project was *Kites, Guns and Dreams*, a documentary photojournalism exhibition on Afghanistan that was exhibited in Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax.

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## Suggestions?

### *Seeking stories of Trans-Local leaders*

Are you or someone you know doing exemplary development work in the Global South while based in the Metro Vancouver area?

Please email us at [diasporas-info@sfu.ca](mailto:diasporas-info@sfu.ca)

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## Next dialogue in the series:

### *Strategies for Education*

Wednesday, May 18, 2011, 6:30 – 8:30 PM

SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue

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