TRENDS OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

GLOBAL ANALYSIS OF 1000 INNOVATIVE ORGANIZATIONS: THE AFRO-DESCENDANT POWER IN THE WORLD
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“And I absolutely refuse
To be a part of those who
are silent, those who are
afraid, those who cry
(...)Because I believe that I
am Utterly free, Profoundly
Black, Extraordinarily
beautiful.”

Shirley Campbell Barr[1]
1. INTRODUCTION

Migration has been a fundamental component in understanding the inherited background of who we are as a people. This document is a quest that seeks to contribute to the potential foundations of the African diaspora in the world. Based on discourse and facts, we will corroborate the global power of the African diaspora and strengthen communication networks that encourage new ideas for a pioneering movement.

The present analysis is part of the Afroinnova program (2) of the Manos Visibles Corporation due in thanks to its established alliances with the Cooperación Española, Ford Foundation, and Halloran Philanthropies. These organizations have encouraged the development of forums with diverse leaders, experts, and innovators who are from the African diaspora and who are authorities in their fields. The goal has been to analyze their expertise and input on a global level. This international program has fostered interest in gaining new knowledge and connecting with Afro-descendant initiatives over the last four years. Our Directory of Who Is Who in the African Diaspora is a compilation and catalog of 1000 organizations from the entire world that offers a large database of organizations who contribute to the African diaspora community.

Within the framework of the Afroinnova agenda, three courses of action were proposed that have resulted in foundations for expanding fields and levels of intervention for populations on the African Continent and its diaspora. These are:

- Economic Capital and Entrepreneurship
- Innovation and Technology
- Narratives (Art and Culture)

Interest created by these policies aims to increase the power of these diaspora communities by developing working groups at a global level that can develop strategies to modify relationships of influence and authority in Afro-descendant populations within a world environment. In this context, the present analysis fulfills the objective of presenting and examining trends that serve as a path to advance the African diaspora globally. Exposing racism and inequality is the first step.

This paper is organized in three parts. The first section sets forth the methodological and analytical considerations used to view the importance of the African diaspora. The second part presents seven trends that are based on the analysis from the data gathered from the 1000 global organizations that participate in the African diaspora. Lastly, conclusions and suggestions are provided for this investigative process.

(2) For more information about AFROINNOVA Program, please visit: www.manosvisibles.org/programas/17-nuestros-programas/695.afroinnova
2. METHODOLOGY

Since 2015, Manos Visibles has built a database that includes 1000 organizations involved in the African diaspora. Using a series of criteria based on selected people, organizations, and groups that have worked from a transnational perspective, we gathered information digitally and categorized the information into 13 sections (3) that represented the diversity of interests of Afro-diasporic communities. Our research discovered shared patterns and strategies that demonstrated the power of the Sixth Region (4) on a global level.

When we compiled the database, we encountered several limitations that were due to language barriers and our inability to track local initiatives that did not have a web page or online social network. The lack of an online presence prevented us from acknowledging certain aspects of particular communities (mainly in the southern areas of the African continent) so that we could better analyze their interests, forms of entrepreneurship, and specific needs.

Our initial state-of-the-art project allowed us to look at various organizational patterns and models implemented by the African diaspora. This discovery reinforced our goal and determination to extend global alliances beyond obvious groups and people so that we, in the future, can generate strategic and far-reaching connections to consolidate maximum global power to reduce structural inequality that is still clearly present and felt by those of African descent.

(3) The sections developed for this analysis are: Research / Policy and Human Rights / Activism / Social Justice / Empowerment / Public Policy / Culture / Art / Entertainment / Fashion / Fashion / Audiovisual Content / Education, Development, Entrepreneurship / Business, Environment / Agriculture /

(4) From the perspective of the African Union, the Sixth Region refers to the African Diaspora at a global level.
“A singular history creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are false, but that they are incomplete. They create a story that is converted into only one history.”

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie[5]
3. INITIAL REFLECTIONS

As Chimamanda suggested, the African continent has been described from an external perspective as if it were some inaccessible and wild place fraught with unspeakable poverty and barbaric beliefs that limit the possibility of fostering diversity, creativity, and power that is currently generated in African territories. Likewise, these historical myths have extended among the sons and daughters of this continent who continue to experience and see the effects of racial discrimination and social injustice since colonial times to the present. The visibility of Afro-descendant leaders throughout the world is significant and their capabilities, expertise, and vision are the foundations that will guide the future of the Sixth Region and the African continent in the deconstruction of a one-dimensional history.

In continuation, we will define the meaning of “diaspora,” its historical origins, the interference of racial factors, and expose those who create them. We will provide evidence about how vital these diaspora populations are on a global level and how their historical connections have promoted community empowerment initiatives and worldwide influence.

3.1. DEFINITION OF DIASPORA

The term, diaspora, comes from the Greek word, διασπορά, and signifies dispersion. Examples of the most prominent migrations (6) in history are: Jewish, African, Chinese, Palestinian, Armenian, Canarian, Cuban, Galician, Greek, Moorish, Turkish, Basque, and most recently, the massive Venezuelan migration (Cohen, 1997).

The Panel of Experts from Afroinnova define the African diaspora as: “the result of diverse migratory processes that have taken place through three great waves of migration that globally unfurls a new vision of Africa. This diaspora generates multiple representations of the African continent where different ideas converge allowing us to speak of a creative power within and outside the region.” (Manos Visibles, 2017) (7)

In keeping with the present analysis, we will take into account the global African diasporas that have been involuntarily and massively displaced from their places of origin. For this reason, we will engage in a perspective that allows us to visualize diverse migrations because we are familiar and aware of the historical, cultural, political, and economic multiplicity that exists throughout the world. Our explanation is as follows:

(6) The first migration refers to the slave trade from 1500 to 1860 and a second dislocation that took place during colonialism where different groups of Africans were sent to large cities to receive an education. Later, this event contributed to movements for independence during the mid-twentieth century. Lastly, the third wave (contemporary) corresponds to populations that abandon the African continent because of internal wars, in search of better economic opportunities, and brain drain.

3.2. HISTORY OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORAS

The historical origin of Afro-descendant communities worldwide is from the African continent which is comprised of 54 countries (8), at present. During the colonial period, the principal boat migrations of African populations came from Sub-Saharan Africa and subsequently from Portugal and Spain.

From there, the primary exoduses went to Central and South America with populations of 11 million people who were uprooted from their homelands. From this group, 472,382 slaves arrived at the coasts of North America during six phases. Last of all, there were intercontinental movements of displaced Africans with 178,901 people from the coasts of Africa and 10,789 slaves who were sent to Europe between 1501 to 1866. (Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, 2018).

In this context, Susana Edjang, member of Afroinnova, explains that the populations from the African diasporas are comprised of approximately 1.3 billion people worldwide. The author defines this number as: “a fusion of the diasporas from 54 African countries and territories whose populations live in different countries other than where they were born within the African continent and countries of the world.” The table below shows the three diasporic waves:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wave</th>
<th>Century</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Country of origin</th>
<th>Country of destination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treatment of slaves</td>
<td>XV to XIX C.</td>
<td>Forced labor</td>
<td>Country unknown, the diaspora belongs to the whole continent</td>
<td>America ( North America, Caribbean, Latin America)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonia/post-colonial</td>
<td>XIX to XX C.</td>
<td>Colonial study &amp; work programs</td>
<td>Known country</td>
<td>Major Cities of Colonial Empire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present day</td>
<td>XX to XXI C.</td>
<td>Brain drain, war, refugees</td>
<td>Known country</td>
<td>Global cities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fuente: Susana Edjang. Africa and its diaspora: A new global power (9)

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(8) Central African Republic, Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Camaroon, Chad, Cote d’Ivoire, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Western Sahara, Senegal, Sierra Leona, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, and Djibouti.

(9) To review the full text, go to: https://issuu.com/manosvisibles/docs/africa_and__its_diaspora_susana_edj
In Table 1, we can see the diversity of the African diasporas in the world that show certain common characteristics that coincide with the era of dislocation. As explained below, skin color or whether one is considered to be African or Black, is not a general pattern describing the sons and daughters of these diasporas. To be a part of the African diaspora, people undergo stages of adopting historical and cultural heritages so that they can recognize themselves as members of a global collective. These populations are classified by the African Union as the Sixth Region.

### 3.2. RACIAL FACTORS

Peoples of the African diasporas have been the only groups who have been classified by the color of their skin. For this reason, many movements and organizations have pursued and focused on combating racial inequality. Structural changes within these establishments originated from the permanent struggle for justice in an attempt to counter the belief of racial superiority. The United States is home to the highest number of civil rights organizations in the world.

![Figure 1. Where is the African Diaspora?](source.jpg)

Similarly, the emergence of Pan-African anti-racism efforts during the mid-twentieth century was fundamental in creating a unified global perspective from diasporas located outside and inside the African continent. These movements gave promise and power to social, academic and political establishments. A few of the leading figures of these crusades were Marcus Garvey, W. E. B. Du Bois also known as Kwame Nkurumah, and Patrice Lubumba, among others. Lastly, these leaders representing the African continent and Afro-diasporas emphasized the importance of independence for their nations and peoples from the domination imposed by the northern world (Europe and the United States). The concept of Africa was to be seen not only as a territory, but as a people with a cultural and political legacy that categorically rejects any form of traditional and present-day enslavement.
The surge of global uprisings such as the efforts for the elimination of Apartheid in South Africa (1948 – 1992),
the rise of Nelson Mandela to the presidency (1994 – 1999), the emergence of the African Union (2002 to
present-day), and conferences against racism and xenophobia are all fundamental moments in time that
nurture movements worldwide. Multiple programs and infrastructures have evolved that have led to
international solidarity.

Next, we will explore seven trends that are drawn from an analysis of the Database that feature 1000 African
diaspora organizations throughout the world. Classified into various categories, these Afro-descendant
businesses, organizations, and individuals will shed light on their search for unity, problem solving, and finding
solutions across the globe.
“I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities”

Nelson Mandela[10]
Figure 2 shows the areas of specialization of surveyed organizations. The highest percentage of organizational concentration (24.1%) is focused on cultural projects. By utilizing various methods of communication, these groups display their global influence by becoming a great source of historical knowledge. They recreate and generate a vital connection between the past and present culture. 22.5% of diaspora organizations are classified by their work in Politics, Human Rights, and Activism. Their efforts demonstrate the Afro-community’s global struggle for survival, better living conditions and human rights.

The category of Education represents 15% with a special focus on the quality of education in primary and secondary schools as well as with issues of illiteracy. The Research and Development grouping make up 7.1% in each category. Academic networks have been essential in creating educational programs that are international in scope and foundational in establishing new areas of knowledge and paths for change. There has also been enormous growth in fields such as entrepreneurship, tourism, and communication platforms. These international organizations demonstrate advances and a presence that can guide future programs in the coming years and help lead more mainstream institutions.
4.1. TREND 1: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL POWER OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

As shown in Figure 3, the organizations located on the American continent represent 57.7% of all groups surveyed. The United States has 76.6% of diaspora organizations that also have programs in two additional countries, principally in Africa. Their efforts to extend networks to other continents is a testimonial of their capacity to bring about change in the Afro-descendant world. Africa supports 22% (225) organizations.

Figure 3. Global locations of 1000 international organizations of the African Diaspora.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continent</th>
<th>Organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>America</td>
<td>577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Database of 1000 organizations produced by Afroinnova, 2018

“Do your little bit of good where you are; it’s those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.”

Desmond Tutu[^12]

[^11]: For example, World Learning of the United States, operates in 35 countries worldwide.
[^12]: Distinguished leader, clergyman, pacifist and South African activist against apartheid.
Figure 4. Country locations of 1000 organizations of the African Diaspora in North and South American Continents

Source: Database of 1000 organizations produced by Afroinnova, 2018

Figure 5. Locations of 1000 organizations of the African Diaspora in Africa.

Source: Database of 1000 organizations produced by Afroinnova, 2018
According to the data collected, between the decades of 1900 and 1950, we can see a particular homogeneity in the emergence of initiatives with the exception of slower growth between 1911 and 1920. Abolitionism was one of the historical factors that caused setbacks for these 28 organizations from this time period. During the previous decades (XIX c.) the liberation of African slaves was permitted.

**Figure 6. Organizations of the Diaspora by decade of growth (Before 1900 to 2018).**

During the period between 1951 to 1970, there was a 16.2% increase in the growth of organizations. Research centers that focused on the African continent were created and emphasized artistic dissemination and Afro-descendant political movements. These themes were linked to the global crusade against racism that would ultimately bring about Apartheid. During 1971 to 1990, organizations focused on development in African countries through international cooperation agencies. Most of these groups were headquartered in the United States and Europe and concentrated their efforts on the African continent. In essence, the civil wars erupting in African countries became the determinant factor in the creation of charitable networks that sought to reduce social unrest and humanitarian disasters since the 1970’s.

Figure 6 shows a notable increase in the establishment of new organizations since the 1990’s to 2018, with 70.3% of these groups associated with movements against racism (as mentioned on page 7). In addition, prominent African leaders emerged before and during the 1990’s and to this day, they still represent the vision and inspiration for existing organizations that we have surveyed. For example, the 2001 Durban Conference in South Africa sponsored by the U.N. became a profound stimulus and historical moment for Afro-descendant populations across the world.
Without a doubt, the growth of Afro-descendant organizations during the last decades has had its roots and focus on strengthening and empowering Afro-descendant communities and peoples across the globe. Institutions such as the Ford, Kellog, and Rockefeller Foundations have enlisted the cooperation of USAID (an international development agency) and Cooperación Española that provide exclusive programs to support and encourage Afro-descendant populations. Exchanges, networks, global internet, and the massification of social networks have been instrumental in creating unparalleled organizational structures, as we can observe in the Directory of Who is Who in the African diaspora 2019.
“I was there to convince them that our histories connected each and every one of us, and that they knew, through these connections, that it was possible to channel discontent and turn it into something useful.”

Michelle Obama[13]
4.2. TREND 2: CULTURE, COMMUNITIES AND EDUCATION: PRINCIPAL HISTORICAL COURSES OF ACTION TAKEN BY ORGANIZATIONS

Culture, social justice, and education are fundamental areas where it is possible to build a narrative about what it means to be an Afro-descendant in the world. These vehicles can change the way a story is told and put in place other languages that can revise and increase global dialogues. The principal trends in these categories show an ancestral African heritage that is displayed within cultural expressions such as the growing fashion movement; in community organizations that connect local struggles with those that are developing on the African continent, and research that analyzes Africanism within each context and classification. These three categories will be examined from an historical perspective to the geographical locations of the surveyed organizations.

Figure 7. Organizations that have experienced growth by decade in culture, communities, and education

![Figure 7](image)

Source: Database of 1000 organizations produced by Afroinnova, 2018

Figure 8. Organizations of culture, education and communities by continent.

![Figure 8](image)

Source: Database of 1000 organizations produced by Afroinnova, 2018
CULTURE

There are two historical moments that mark the increase of cultural organizations: 1981 to 1999 and during the first decade of the year 2000. The Black culture encounters that determine and influence the creation of racial social movements not only in the U.S. but in the world. The second critical moment was without a doubt, the global phenomena of the internet has determined the beginning of an international cultural agenda that has shared and influenced artistic and aesthetic campaigns throughout African diasporas.

For the present survey, 60% of cultural organizations are primarily located in the North and South America. The United States has 54% (14), 14% are in Brazil (15), and Colombia has 9.6% (16).

19% of charted organizations are located in Africa. From this group, Nigeria (film and television) and South Africa (fashion and artistic entrepreneurship) share 48.4% of the organizations. Kenya has 13% with a focus on education and literature.

Europe has 16% of the world’s diasporic organizations. 37% of these establishments are found in Spain (17), 24% are located in England (18), and 17% in the European Union (19).

COMMUNITIES

Initiatives that work with particular populations such as women, girls, youth, and LGBTQ communities represent 28% of all organizations. Since the 1980’s, it is apparent that the creation of these community-focused groups gained momentum from the 1990’s with a noticeable surge in 2010. This increase can be explained and associated with the Conference in Durban, South Africa, against racism and discrimination in 2001. At the same time in many Latin American countries, national constitutions acknowledged the importance of ethnic and cultural diversity. The recognition of the Feminist Movement and LGBTQ community worldwide encouraged the development of new organizations that advocated diversity and pushed for equality.

One of the most relevant aspects of the “Community” category is the effort to empower work groups in local and global networks. Likewise, the recognition of human rights and demands through constitutional amendments in various countries has paved the way for social change. This particular category falls under Development and Human Rights and it has fomented the improvement of community conditions from a local and national perspective (20).

(14) With trends toward museum work and distribution of African cultural representations.
(15) With interests linked to local Afro-identity music and museography.
(16) With focus on identity in regards to music, dance and community film.
(17) Where there have been extensive image campaigns of the Afro-community (both in Spanish-speaking countries and in Africa) breaking stereotypical representations primarily in film. Examples are the Afro-Conscience Festival, African Film Festival FCAT, and PotoPoto, among others. (See the directory of Who Is Who In The African Diaspora)
(18) A small segment of cultural undertakings tends to focus on crafts and music with African populations. Afro Retro, True Africa, and African Fashion Week are examples that represent the legacies of the African Continent. (See Directory)
(19) Where they work with writers and television shows within an African context. COMMONWORD, New African Woman Magazine and None on Record are examples of this genre.
(20) Some of the most notable examples in this category are Ace Africa, African Think Tank Ink, AMCAF and Southern African Development Community, are among various organizations that work to defend the rights of diverse Afro-descendant communities around the world.
EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

There is significant change in the increase of organizations associated with education during three distinct phases that are divided as follows: before 1900 to 1960, 1961 to 1990, and 1991 to 2018. Prior to 1960, only four registered organizations in the United States focused on empowering African American communities within academic environments. These establishments created positions of power and solid support networks at a national level for African Americans in education. In England, an organization called the Africa Educational Trust generated international support networks, strengthened student competencies, and supported academic systems in the African continent all through donations.

During the second period between 1961 and 1990, the United States was home to 15% of academic organizations worldwide. These institutions included student associations with African and Afro-descendant students. Organizational growth continued as each community developed specific educational tools that would go on to influence global academic initiatives.

Between 1991 and 2018, 112 academically oriented organizations were registered marking this era as having the most educational programs in over a century. During the 1990’s, the emphasis and development of ethnic studies increased diversity awareness in all students, brought attention to student’s uniqueness and needs, and influenced the political formation of educational policies. This event is reflected in the subsequent decade between 2001 and 2018 where a total of 52 organizations developed programs for African studies, diaspora education, and support agendas that focused on increasing educational levels in the African continent and in Afro-populations around the world.

Geographically, North and South America lead these initiatives. From our survey, there is a total of 99 organizations with 47 headquartered in the United States, 16 in Brazil, and 10 in Colombia. Africa is in second place with programming and emphasis on educational improvement and academic research in various topics. Within this same category, South Africa has 6 organizations; Ghana and Nigeria each have 4, and Kenya is home to two. 15% of educational organizations are located in Europe with Spain having the highest number of establishments. England has 7 academic initiatives.
“In the global world, the main factor of competitiveness is innovation, as one of the fundamental manifestations of human creativity that converts information and scientific and technological knowledge into added value for society”

Eastmond, G. [21]
4.3. TREND 3: ENTREPRENEURSHIP, DEVELOPMENT, POLITICS, POTENTIAL FOUNDATIONAL TRANSFORMATIONS WORLDWIDE

As Eastmond mentions, innovation is one of the fundamental pillars for social transformation. It is a tool that, although used by all organizations, is only strategically and deliberately implemented by a few institutions. Within this context, we will examine entrepreneurship, development, and the politics of the diasporas.

In accordance with and from the perspective of the African Union (2017), it is necessary to evaluate public policies that are being developed worldwide in favor of African diasporas that further positive outcomes and leadership competencies at a global level. In this sense, although community initiatives have a great potential for building networks, governmental support is essential to increase their opportunities and impact.

The particular trend of these organizations is associated with the development of networks that promote innovation and new perspectives from a social, political, economic, and environmental analysis. From this viewpoint, specific initiatives have made connections with international organizations that have supported significant change in global diasporas. These programs have revised existing views by developing local proposals and projects that will generate new policies in favor of Afro-descendants within the spheres of power across the globe. This perspective will be explained in depth in our next section.

Figure 9. Organizations of Development, Entrepreneurship, and Politics by Year of Establishment
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

In Figure 9, we can see a notable increase in the category of entrepreneurship that demonstrates its growing importance within the African diaspora. The upward trend towards alliances focused on the formation and exchange of knowledge allows for a better definition of particular characteristics of Afro-descendant communities. It also helps analyze the specific markets for each enterprise and encourages the development of worthy projects that create a local and global dialogue.

During the first two periods between 1910 and 1960, and 1961 and 1990, there were organizations that focused on the development of communities through the support of entrepreneurship initiatives sponsored by institutions such as the Rockefeller Foundation. They also promoted the progress and well-being of African communities. Organizations like Ogilvy, for example, concentrated their energies on the development of ventures that highlighted the interests of local people with the goal of connecting communities with their leaders.

From 1981 to 2000, 17 organizations developed approaches that encouraged women’s enterprises, grassroots organizations (primarily in Latin America), and the promotion of platforms where global Afro-communities could display their marketable products with the support of professional training programs from an economic development and community improvement perspective at a global level.
During the years 2001 to 2018, there were 62 organizations representing the highest number of entrepreneur-oriented establishments. One of the major trends during this time focused on the development of new technologies and platforms that connected diaspora communities globally encompassing concepts of Afro-futurism (the development of African diaspora culture with technology). Platforms and the formation of new ideas were shaped around the development of new products and innovative solutions concerning the impacts of global warming.

North and South America are headquarters for 44 business/tech oriented organizations. Training and networking programs for Afro-entrepreneurship, innovation, and product development platforms are the main focus of these groups. The United States has 16 organizations that aim to increase efforts to reach all Afro-descendants at an international level (22).

DEVELOPMENT

71% of all organizations have interests that emphasize the promotion of improving the living conditions of diverse communities throughout the world. The majority of these institutions are located in the Americas and Africa and their goal is to change existing environments through ethnic development.

Some organizations such as The African Development Bank of Côte d'Ivoire, the Economic Commission of the United Nations for Africa based in Ethiopia, and the Diaspora for African Development of the United Kingdom promote developmental advances through global alliances by implementing programs to improve the social, economic, environmental, health, and education conditions on the African continent. European organizations focus on improving the lives and conditions of Afro-European and African migrant populations. These programs aim to develop networks of cooperation between European countries and Africa by employing a gender and diasporic approach.

POLITICS

The central focus for this category is based on global efforts to empower Afro-descendant communities by creating coalitions that seek to defend and demand guarantees for human rights that have historically been denied. These political organizations also work to develop projects that expand community leadership within the context of government and strengthen the political power of cooperatives to bring about change in the spheres of power so that history can be re-written.

As shown in Figure 9, there is a substantial increase in organizations associated with politics and empowerment since the 1970’s. The beginning of these political and social movements led to the dissolution of Apartheid in South Africa, and the rise of distinguished leaders such as Mandela.

Our recent survey shows that 72% of the world’s political organizations with the highest global impact are located primarily in the United States and Brazil.

(22) Such as programs associated with product design, economic improvement services, legal advice, and support programs for economically disadvantaged communities to increase success rates for small businesses.
“Work without rest and never resign yourself to fear”

Denis Mukwege[23]
4.4. TREND 4: AREAS OF VITAL IMPORTANCE FOR GLOBAL CONTRIBUTIONS: HEALTH, NUTRITION, ENVIRONMENT AND AGRICULTURE

Following the civil wars that took place on the African continent during the 1970’s, organizations such as WHO and FAO developed programs that focused on health and nutritional needs in African countries primarily in the sub-Saharan region. Harsh environmental conditions in this area led to higher incidences of malnutrition, poor health, epidemics, and increased mortality rates. One can also see similar challenges in the Americas, particularly with the case of Haiti, where poverty has exacerbated health risks for their communities.

In response to these devastating events, the organizations that we surveyed have developed innovative solutions for environmental protection, increased agricultural yields, and health programs by cooperating internationally with groups that work directly with African and Afro-descendant communities. With the help of global technology, these communities have led the fight for better living conditions with their individual projects, plans, and products.

Source: Database of 1000 organizations produced by Afroinnova, 2018

Source: Database of 1000 organizations produced by Afroinnova, 2018
Next, we will examine the importance of these humanitarian-focused categories and the organizations that have advanced and developed health related care among African diasporas worldwide.

**HEALTH AND NUTRITION**

In the “Health” category, we will highlight various health-related initiatives that connect Africa with the rest of the world. Global contacts and relationships have been built that enable medical specialists to practice and share their expertise in Africa and throughout the diaspora. Medical research programs continue to drastically reduce diseases that afflict African populations, and new projects connect donors to aid the elimination of famine in affected areas.

As we can see in Figure 11, health organizations have grown exponentially between 2001 and 2010. This increase is due in part to the WHO that published a report in 2005, entitled, Millennium Development Goals in Health. The report calls for promoting connections that improve health on a global scale, reducing the impacts of economic globalization on deprived populations, promoting a sustainable environment, reducing HIV, and eliminating maternal and infant mortality. These topics are the main focus of 14 organizations (36%) that have been surveyed in this category. The contributions that have been made by these groups consist primarily of creating global networks and working in Africa.

One of the most remarkable programs (Zimbabwe Health Training Support), sponsors the training of doctors at an international level to care for and administer medicines to patients with HIV and cholera in Africa. Likewise, other organizations offer opportunities for international medical practices and encourage them to train local medical professionals. Modern medical education and practice allow for new approaches and treatments that benefit all Afro-descendant populations.

From 1971 to 2000, there has been a concerted effort by collaborative alliances to eradicate famine, develop health programs, and reduce malnutrition and poverty in Africa. These organizations (mainly from the U.S.) focus their attentions primarily on health services that are affected by the lack of development and poverty specifically within the African continent.

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(24) The Africa School House develops study programs for boys and girls and provides nutritional support. The African Services Committee supports health initiatives by working with migrant populations in Africa to reduce mortality rates.

(25) Continent with high levels of malnutrition and mortality rates from curable diseases. (WHO, WB, and UNICEF)
ENVIRONMENT AND AGRICULTURE

Trends of the organizations in this category were difficult to analyze in our database because there was insufficient information. We therefore, turned to documents produced by various groups to examine their work in the African diaspora. In connection with topics of health, 16 organizations also focused their resources and energies on the environment and agricultural practices.

As seen in Figure 11, the number of organizations grew between 2001 and 2010, thanks in part to the World Earth Summit held for the third time in South Africa in 2002. 180 countries participated and conferences featured discussions about environmental challenges surrounding sustainable development and the importance of prioritizing the reduction of poverty throughout the world. Alliances between governments and organizations were encouraged to better track their goals and achievements.

During this time period, two organizational paths emerged. The first one promoted better agricultural practices in an effort to reduce environmental impacts from pesticides. The second focus of attention was on sustainable energy to help reduce carbon footprints and improve water resource management (26).

From 2010 to 2018, the organizations we surveyed concentrated on developing international cooperation networks to improve environmental conditions and increase awareness about climate change. The UN Conference on Climate Change was held in 2017, and raised alarms about the human impact on our planet. The meeting stressed the need to develop environmental programs and education on individual and governmental levels.

From a geographical perspective, 52% of environmental and agricultural oriented organizations are located in Africa. Their first priority is to reduce poverty by investing in small sustainable farms (27). In North and South America, various groups and associations promote new forms of energy that have the least impact on the environment.

For future analysis, we will be seeing and tracking more organizations that are involved with the environment and agriculture. Their vital presence will allow us to examine the crucial work that they do within Afro-diaspora communities worldwide.

(26) Examples: Carbon Roots International; Haiti and Imagine H2o.
(27) UN Assembly for the Environment, Kenya, 2017. Kenya has been impacted the most by climate change. It has suffered through long periods of drought and reduced agricultural production.
“In the midst of these tensions, I think it is even more important to individualize stories that give meaning to causes. Personal histories give hope a chance, and allow people to believe that anything is possible if human beings are valued above all else.”

Paula Moreno Zapata[28]

4.5. TREND 5: CHANGE IN IMMEDIATE NARRATIVES: JOURNALISM AND TOURISM

Although the history of Afro-descendant communities has been written by those who had the power to tell the official version, in today’s world, globalization has made it possible to connect humankind using information platforms and advanced technologies.

The strategic use of networks strengthens connections throughout global diasporas. Modern technology allows history to be written using one’s own words and gives voice to movements activated by Afro-descendant communities. Communication platforms have the power to transform antiquated beliefs and constructs about discrimination and inspire different perspectives about how history can be told in the future. In this section, we will demonstrate the value of journalism as an agent for change. Tourism gives people intimate opportunities to learn, see, and alter pre-conceived ideas about their fellow man and environments. Stereotypical views held by tourists vanish with travel.

Figure 13. Tourism and Journalism Organizations by Decade of Establishment. (1940 to 2018)

Source: Database of 1000 organizations produced by Afroinnova, 2018

Figure 14. Journalism and Tourism Organizations by Continent

Source: Database of 1000 organizations produced by Afroinnova, 2018
JOURNALISM AND NEWS

Over the years, journalism has had the power to tell stories from different perspectives according to the viewpoints of publications, writers, and their audience. The subject of multiculturalism is playing a more prominent role in journalism and it is having an impact on public discourse within diaspora communities. Afro-humanism, a view that seeks to decolonize spheres of power, is becoming a journalistic trend worldwide.

In the category for Journalism, 41 organizations are currently active. We are not able to identify the particular trends of each diaspora, but we can connect our findings with various journalistic viewpoints that have surged and changed over the decades depending on their place of origin.

Between 1961 a 1980, various organizations were registered and focused on the dissemination of news related to the economy. These networks also provided a place where Afro-professionals could meet to discuss the advances and requirements of reporting and broadcasting.

From 2001 to the present, one can see a significant increase in news organizations. The information networks that were developed in Africa feature multiple points of view and are primarily virtual platforms where people and communities can voice their concerns, ideas, and political inclinations. Organizations in Africa and the United States are redefining traditional colonial narratives and in other countries, alternative media and journalists emphasize the needs and particular interests of their local communities that include information about art and culture through information networks.

As shown in Figure 14, the United States (29), Brazil (30), and Colombia (31) are home to 37% of news media organizations that work with virtual broadcast platforms and television.

Africa has 32% of these types of organizations and they circulate their information to a global audience from a more continental perspective especially since the formation of the African Union. In our database, South Africa (32) has the highest number of journalistic initiatives followed by Nigeria (33) and Kenya (34).

Europe is headquarters for 10 (18%) media organizations with most located in England. They promote and share information related to cooperative alliances and networks that bring Europe and Africa together.

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(29) United States has 65% of these organizations. The focus is on journalistic education and cultural visibility.
(30) Brazil creates visibility platforms and reclaims the identity of Afro-Brazilians in socio-political realms.
(31) Colombia has similar initiatives as in Brazil, but focuses more on cultural aspects of the country.
(32) South Africa emphasizes continental unity.
(33) Nigeria has similar goals as South Africa, but their approach is based more on local issues.
(34) Kenya focuses on economic news and continental trade.
TOURISM

Recognition of diverse cultures and peoples takes place when we visit countries and see first-hand how others live. By travelling, our perspectives change. Afro-tourism is a recent effort to expose tourists to African destinations using a comprehensive approach through direct experience with local culture, natural landscapes, languages, and history. Ethno-tourism is a specialized form of cultural tourism where tourists seek to experience the lifestyle and cultural practices of local communities by embracing their cultural heritage.

Figure 13 shows us the exponential growth of the tourism industry from 2011 to 2018. Tourism in Africa, however, has the least number of tourists (less than 4%, in 2016, based on data from World Bank) and only 3.5% of economic earnings came from tourism in Africa. (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2018).

This is one of the areas for potential growth in the coming years. Strategic planning to develop and promote tourism, will be essential to improve local conditions, economies, and the environment. Ethno-tourism and eco-tourism will be the wave of the future in the tourism industry in Africa and throughout the diaspora. The tourism industry will improve the living conditions of local communities and their residents and it will be essential that they form alliances with tourism agencies, airlines, governments, and local organizations (35).

In Figure 14, 42% of tourism companies are located in the Americas. Their goal is to attract an international public to local venues that feature native culture. Most of these organizations are located in the U.S. (36).

Africa has 28% of travel and vacation enterprises. The promotion of safaris in sub-Saharan Africa is the primary focus of large-scale tourism programs. South Africa is home to 50% of these businesses.

(35) Iverca of Mozambique, sponsors local tourist guides who represent their communities and introduce cultural traditions, thus changing stereotypical perceptions of Africa.
(36) U.S. organizations that develop internet platforms where travelers can find remote destinations or make vacation plans that center around Afro-Latin cultures or Afro-American venues.
"Globalization means we have to re-examine some of our ideas, and look at ideas from other countries, from other cultures, and open ourselves to them. And that’s not comfortable for the average person."

Herbie Hancock[37]
4.6. TREND 6: INFORMATION NETWORK AS A GROWTH POTENTIAL

Social networks have become the space for the greatest exchange of information worldwide. The development of strategic social networks for members of diaspora organizations has been instrumental in making their presence known and for increasing communications between world communities. Although most surveyed organizations in the Who is Who Directory have social networks, the most successful institutions have implemented a knowledge management system and language production focus oriented towards a specific audience. These two strategies have allowed certain organizations to rise above other groups and become world leaders in the distribution of information among all the diasporas.

The strategic use of these types of human interaction has become a fairly recent field of study within academic communities. The accelerated change in daily interactions demonstrates the need to process circulated information. Studies associated with the field of neurology (R. Kanai, B. Bahrami, R. Roylance, G. Rees, 2011) have detected changes in brain structures of people who use social networking as a means of communication. In other words, human relations are developing faster than the interactions that preceded them.

Online networks are essential in the expansion of communication barriers that are hampered by geographical locations. With advances in internet technology, human relationships can have better access to new interactions and ways of exchanging ideas, especially in disadvantaged communities. The organizations in our survey and their online presence hold the future for improving the lives and communities of diasporas worldwide.

The organizations that we surveyed are involved in topics such as the politicization of social networks (38) that provide a place to express systemic tensions and irregularities in local politics, and the development of market transactions (39). But, as mentioned by O.C. McSwite (2009), social networks can also be understood as providing a space where the information superhighway has developed a model for the evolution of human self-awareness in Post-modern times.

(38) Examples: Insubmissive Dialogues of Brazil, Colorado Black Women for Political Action of the United States, Assatas Daughters.

Pie Chart 1. Trends in Social Networks.

Source: Database of 1000 organizations produced by Afroinnova, 2018
For this reason, it is essential to recognize that these internet networking relationships are platforms for disseminating information that connect Afro-diasporas with the outside world, increase local knowledge, and share global languages with communities of African heritage. Social networks open a new realm for stories that have yet to be told and provide a space for dialogue, expression, and identity for all Afro-descendants and their cultures.
“(...) The history of the black community is to make possible what seems impossible.”

Richard Wright[40]

[40] Afro American writer, poet and novelist
4.7. TREND 7: THE GLOBAL POWER OF PLACE

By communicating with societies in which they live, local communities exposed to global practices, education, and technology demonstrate the value of diversity in building durable solutions for the world’s diasporas. Conversely, developing countries are currently facing an emigration of highly trained and qualified people in search of a better standard of living, quality of life, higher salaries, access to advanced technologies, and more stable political conditions outside of their native countries.

As Hirschman (1970) mentions, the departure of talented professionals can also represent a gain for their communities of origin. These people have the potential to change stereotypical perceptions in their adopted countries by developing networks of cooperation and shifting political climates in favor of their local communities. Strict migration policies in developed countries, however, can also deter social, economic, technological and institutional transformations for migrant professionals and their homelands.

As we can see in the above pie chart, 68% of these organizations (677) concentrate their efforts on strengthening their countries of origin by utilizing global connections with world organizations.

There has been a significant increase in transnational connections after the 1970’s, because of the expansion of partnerships with existing organizations and the formation of virtual global networks. For example, companies like Facebook, have played a huge part in creating social networks that introduce organizations like Afrofeminas and other fashion-based enterprises on a global level.

Lastly, we encourage further studies that expand our present analysis with the objective to connect Afro-organizations across the world. By promoting virtual and personal dialogues, we can influence and take part in innovation as well as strengthen political, cultural, and intellectual power throughout the diasporas. Global communication between all societies will create a future of equality.
“The great task and future agenda for Afro-descendants are to move from the power of resistance to the power of transcendence.”

Edgard Gouveia[41]

[41] Brazilian. Panel of Experts member for Afriinnova.
The number of Afro-diasporic communities in the world have increased during the last few decades. The impetus behind their growth has been the creation of communication networks established by initiatives set up by organizations such as Afroinnova. Dialogues, alliances, and new friendships have brought change to Black populations and communities worldwide.

Student initiatives and academic research centers have sought to open the halls of academia to better serve all of society and change perspectives about African diasporas. By expanding their energies to new areas of education, students and teachers can offer self-reference knowledge as well as fresh ideas that redefine of Africans and Afrodescendants to set their space in the world and build intentional global connections.

Culture, on the other hand, is the leading light. Experiencing communities through the lens of ethnic societies tells a more diversified story. The creation of international festivals that feature music, film, gastronomy, art, and dance illustrates the impact of ethnic mosaics. Culture introduces the world to multiculturalism critical for new owned development models and creates opportunities for entrepreneurship in Afro-diasporas.

Empowering and providing platforms for women on a global level will be essential in the coming decades. By supporting organizations, social movements, and sexual and gender diversity, perspectives and conversations will change giving a new strength to diasporas worldwide.

Increasing awareness and a deeper analysis about organizations associated with the environment, agriculture, tourism and journalism will allow for more strategic planning in the future throughout Africa and the diasporas.

In conclusion, a larger survey is needed of organizations that focus on global internet projects and innovation technologies so that they may communicate and show the challenges and conditions local communities face. Technology will give a voice to and be a tool for improving the world’s diasporas.

We are facing the opening of a new phase of racial equality and connection between Africa and its diaspora to become a major force for global equality. The main challenge ahead is not just to read the reality, as we tried in this document, but also create the new scenarios with a global perspective. AFROINNOVA in its new phase has this major challenge, to see how it foresee and build a new reflection and moment for the next generation in a global scenario.
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