

*Prepared for the Rockefeller Foundation-Aspen Institute Diaspora Program (RAD)*

## The Kenyan Diaspora in the United States

June 2015 Revised

### Summary<sup>1</sup>

Approximately 102,000 Kenyan immigrants and their children (the first and second generations) reside in the United States, placing this population among the smallest, youngest, and most recently arrived of the 15 groups in the Rockefeller Foundation-Aspen Institute Diaspora Program (RAD) analysis.<sup>2</sup> Most Kenya-born people who acquired lawful permanent residence (known as a green card or LPR status) in recent years did so as the immediate relative of a U.S. citizen or as a beneficiary of the Diversity Visa Program. About 10 percent of the Kenya-born population in the United States is of Somali rather than Kenyan national origin.

The Kenyan diaspora population in the United States is well educated, economically successful, and has a labor force participation rate that far exceeds the national average. A larger share of Kenyan diaspora members in the United States holds bachelor's degrees and advanced degrees than the U.S. population overall, and over one-quarter of the population is in the nursing profession. The median annual income for Kenyan diaspora households in the United States is \$11,000 above the U.S. national median, and two in five are homeowners.

The Kenya-born population is scattered across many parts of the United States, with the highest numbers located in Texas and California. Among U.S. metropolitan areas, Dallas has the largest population of Kenyan immigrants.

Kenyan diaspora organizations based in the United States tend to be newer groups without full-time professional staff or significant revenue streams, reflecting the fact that the diaspora is relatively small and recently arrived. Only one of the 45 groups identified for this study reported having annual revenue above \$200,000, and most had much lower levels of revenue or none at all. Recognizing the potential of the diaspora to contribute to domestic growth, the Kenyan government has started actively engaging its diaspora, protecting the rights of its citizens abroad, and promoting diaspora networks.

In 2012, Kenya's total remittances receipts valued at \$1.2 billion and this monetary inflow made up 3 percent of the country's \$41 billion gross domestic product (GDP). The United States is the second-largest source of Kenyan remittances, having transferred approximately \$315 million to the country that year.

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<sup>2</sup> The RAD Diaspora Profile series covers U.S.-based Bangladeshi, Colombian, Egyptian, Ethiopian, Filipino, Ghanaian, Haitian, Indian, Kenyan, Mexican, Moroccan, Nigerian, Pakistani, Salvadoran, and Vietnamese diaspora populations.

## I. Introduction

The Kenya-born population in the United States has grown rapidly over the past two decades. Today the United States is the second most common country of destination for emigrants from Kenya, and Kenya's second-largest source of remittances. The Diversity Visa Program, which is designed to benefit migrant populations with a small presence in the United States, has been a particularly important entry channel for immigrants from Kenya. Until recently, Kenyans who left Kenya generally did so to pursue educational opportunities abroad, where they built skills and most often returned to the country. However, instability and economic troubles in the 1990s, combined with an intensified global competition for highly skilled professionals, altered the nature of Kenyan emigration. As the dominant pattern of circular migration gives way to one of permanent residence overseas, the government of Kenya is working to create effective knowledge- and skills-transfer programs in partnership with the diaspora.

## II. Population Profile of the Kenyan Diaspora<sup>3</sup>

Analysis of data from 2009-13 reveals a Kenyan diaspora in the United States of about 102,000 individuals, counting immigrants born in Kenya and U.S.-born individuals with at least one parent who was born in Kenya. In 1980, immigrants from Africa constituted only 1.4 percent of the United States' total foreign-born population, among whom fewer than 10,000 were Kenya born. By 2012 immigrants from Africa made up 4.2 percent of the U.S. foreign-born population, and the Kenyan immigrant population had grown almost eightfold from its small 1980 baseline.<sup>4</sup> Much of this growth in the Kenya-born population in the United States happened in the first decade of the new millennium, as evidenced by the fact that the bulk of this population (67 percent) arrived in the United States in 2000 or later. Of the 15 groups in the RAD analysis, Kenya had the largest share of immigrants arriving during or after 2000.

Ten percent of the United States' Kenya-born population is in fact of Somali, not Kenyan, origin: based on Kenya-born individuals in the United States reporting two Somali parents, nearly 8,000 Kenya-born individuals are Somali refugees. Kenya hosts nearly 500,000 Somali refugees (483,000 in mid-2013). Because of the protracted conflict in Somalia, Somali refugees have lived in Kenya for more than 20 years and have had children in that time. Among the tens of thousands of Somalis resettled from Kenya to the United States through the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, many were born in Kenya. The phenomenon also shows up as the high proportion of Kenya-born immigrants who are admitted as refugees, although few Kenyan nationals are refugees.<sup>5</sup>

3 Unless otherwise noted, estimates for the diaspora population and its characteristics are based on Migration Policy Institute (MPI) analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Surveys (CPS), using five years of pooled data (2009-13), collected in March of each year. All Census Bureau data were accessed from Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS); Steven Ruggles, J. Trent Alexander, Katie Genadek, Ronald Goeken, Matthew B. Schroeder, and Matthew Sobek, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 5.0 [Machine-readable database] (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2010), <http://usa.ipums.org/usa/>.

4 Estimates based on MPI analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2010-12 American Community Surveys (ACS) and the 1980 and 2000 Censuses.

5 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "2014 UNHCR Country Operations Profile – Kenya," accessed March 28, 2014, [www.unhcr.org/pages/49e483a16.html](http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e483a16.html); and UNHCR, "2014 UNHCR Regional Operations Profile – East and Horn of Africa," accessed March 28, 2014, [www.unhcr.org/pages/49e45a846.html](http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e45a846.html).

### First Generation (Kenyan immigrants in the United States)

- An estimated 77,000 immigrants from Kenya resided in the United States. The Kenya-born population belongs to a rapidly growing cohort of African immigrants in the United States.<sup>6</sup>
- The median age of the Kenya-born population in the United States was 33, which made it the youngest first-generation population in the 15-group RAD analysis.
- Most Kenyan immigrants in the United States were working age (77 percent), but 20 percent were younger than 18.

### Second Generation (U.S. born with at least one Kenya-born parent)<sup>7</sup>

- An estimated 25,000 U.S.-born individuals had at least one parent born in Kenya, and it was the smallest and youngest second-generation group in the 15-group RAD analysis.
- The vast majority (92 percent) of the Kenyan second-generation population was under age 18, and its median age was 5.
- Sixty percent of second-generation individuals reported that both their parents had been born in Kenya, while 28 percent said that one of their parents was U.S. born.

## III. Immigration Pathways and Trends

### Historical Overview<sup>8</sup>

From the 1950s through the 1970s, Kenyan emigrants commonly left the country for higher education or advanced training, and returned to live and work in Kenya. Many of the country's current political elite were educated abroad, including two recent past presidents—Mwai Kibaki and Uhuru Kenyatta.

In the 1980s and 1990s, however, Kenya's dominant trend of circular migration shifted to one of permanent migration. Multiple factors, including a weak economy in the late 1980s and 1990s, violent conflicts that arose around national elections, and corruption, prompted many of the most educated members of Kenyan society to leave the country. The doctors, lawyers, university lecturers, and other highly skilled professionals who left would settle in Western Europe, South Africa, Botswana, Uganda, Australia, Canada, or the United States. Kenya's British colonial experience directed many Kenyans to the United Kingdom. Before this period, very few came to the United States. In 1980, the number of Kenya-born residents of the United States was less than 10,000.

<sup>6</sup> Randy Capps, Kristen McCabe, and Michael Fix, *Diverse Streams: African Migration to the United States*, (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2012). [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/CBI-african-migration-united-states](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/CBI-african-migration-united-states).

<sup>7</sup> U.S.-born is defined as born in the United States or born abroad to a U.S.-citizen parent.

<sup>8</sup> This section draws on Kenneth Okoth, "Kenya: What Role for Diaspora in Development?" *Migration Information Source*, August 2003, [www.migrationpolicy.org/article/kenya-what-role-diaspora-development](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/kenya-what-role-diaspora-development).

## Contemporary Entry into the United States and Legal Status<sup>9</sup>

During fiscal years (FY) 2002 through 2012, 72,000 persons from Kenya were granted lawful permanent resident (LPR) status in the United States, accounting for 0.6 percent of all those who were awarded green cards during this period. The majority (35 percent) of Kenya-born people who gained LPR status during this period did so as immediate relatives of U.S. citizens, which includes spouses and unmarried children under age 21 (see Figure 1).

Another important LPR admissions category for Kenyans during this time was the Diversity Visa Program, which is open to national-origin populations that are historically under-represented in the United States. Twenty-eight percent of Kenya-born people who were granted LPR status from the start of FY 2002-12 were beneficiaries of the Diversity Visa Program.

The United States began offering this type of visa in 1995 and makes 55,000 U.S. immigrant visas available through its annual lottery drawing. Only people from countries that have sent fewer than 50,000 immigrants to the United States in the previous five years are eligible for the program, and applicants must have a high school diploma or two years of work experience in a skilled profession. Immigrants entering through family sponsorship, employment, or as immediate relatives of U.S. citizens are counted against the 50,000 limit, but not refugees or those granted asylum, a caveat of particular importance to Kenya. Diversity visa beneficiaries tend to be younger than people who gain LPR status through other channels and are also more likely to be single and male.<sup>10</sup> The lottery is weighted on a regional basis, and no single country can receive more than 7 percent of the total number of diversity visas issued during a given year (3,500 visas).<sup>11</sup> Currently, 45 percent of diversity visas are earmarked for applicants from Africa, making this program an important entry pathway for Kenyan migrants.

Refugees and asylees also accounted for a substantial share (26 percent) of the Kenya-born population that gained LPR status from the start of FY 2002-12. As discussed earlier in this fact sheet, few Kenyan nationals are refugees or asylum seekers, but the country hosts a significant number of displaced peoples from East Africa, particularly from Somalia.

During FY 2002 through the close of FY 2012, Kenyans entered the United States 35,000 times on student visas and 10,000 times on temporary work visas. Individuals holding student or temporary worker visas may enter the United States more than once; therefore, the number of entries does not correspond to the number of people who came to the United States as beneficiaries of these visa programs. In the 2012-13 school year, approximately 3,500 Kenyan international students were enrolled in U.S. academic institutions.<sup>12</sup> U.S. colleges and universities awarded 66 doctoral degrees to international students from Kenya during 2012, and Kenya ranked as the 35<sup>th</sup> largest national-origin group among international doctoral awardees. Although a student visa to the United States does not directly

9 Admissions, legal permanent resident, and citizenship data are taken from MPI analysis of U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) data for fiscal years (FY) 2002 through 2012. DHS, *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (Washington, DC: DHS, Office of Immigration Statistics, 2002-13), [www.dhs.gov/yearbook-immigration-statistics](http://www.dhs.gov/yearbook-immigration-statistics).

10 DHS, *Characteristics of Diversity Legal Permanent Residents: 2004* (Washington, DC: DHS, Office of Immigration Statistics, 2004), [www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/FSDiversityLPR2004.pdf](http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/FSDiversityLPR2004.pdf).

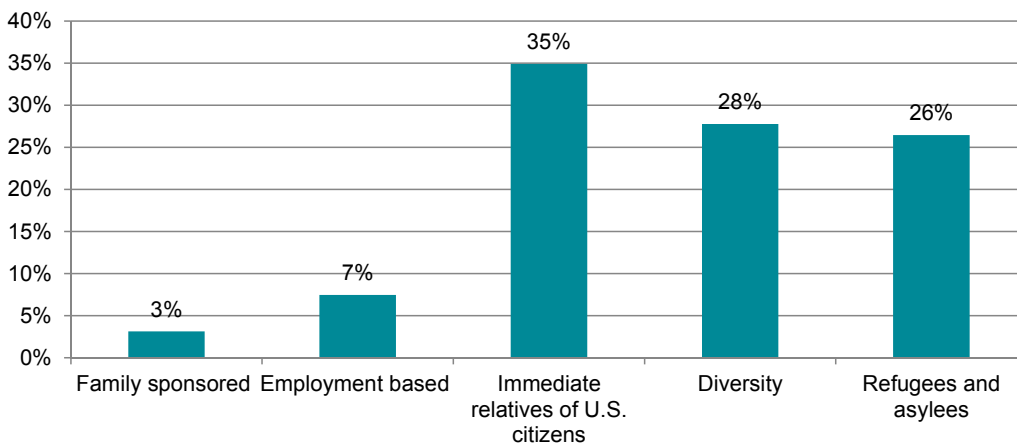
11 *Immigration Act of 1990*, Pub. L. 101-649, 104 Stat. 4978 (amending *Immigration and Nationality Act* Section 203(c)).

12 Institute of International Education, "International Student Totals by Place of Origin, 2011/12-2012/13," Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange (New York: Institute of International Education, 2013), [www.iie.org/Research-and-Publications/Open-Doors/Data](http://www.iie.org/Research-and-Publications/Open-Doors/Data).

lead to LPR status, many international students can qualify for other types of visas that allow them to remain in the country after completing their studies. The majority of Kenyan international students who received a PhD in the United States during 2012 planned to stay in the country after graduating (68 percent).<sup>13</sup>

A relatively small share (35 percent) of Kenyan immigrants were U.S. citizens, the third-lowest naturalization rate of the 15 groups in the RAD analysis, aside from Mexico and El Salvador, reflecting that the majority of the Kenya-born population in the United States arrived recently.

**Figure 1. Kenyans Admitted to the United States as Legal Permanent Residents, by Preference Category, FY 2002-12**



Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security Office of Immigration Statistics, Yearbook of Immigration Statistics, 2002-12 (Washington, DC: DHS Office of Immigration Statistics, various years), [www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics-publications](http://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics-publications).

#### IV. Geographic Distribution<sup>14</sup>

- Immigrants from Kenya were widely distributed across the United States. Texas and California had the largest populations of Kenyan immigrants, each with a population of about 10,000. The Dallas metropolitan area was home to about 8,000 Kenya-born residents.
- About 5,000 Kenyan immigrants lived in the metropolitan areas of Minneapolis-St. Paul, New York, Seattle, Atlanta, Washington, DC, or Boston.

13 National Science Foundation and the National Center for Science and Engineering Centers, “Table 25: Top 40 Countries or Economies of Origin of Temporary Visa Holders Earning Doctorates at U.S. Colleges and Universities, Ranked by Number of Doctorate Recipients: 2012,” and “Table 53: Doctor recipients, postgraduate commitments, temporary visa holders intending to stay in United States after doctorate, by country of citizenship: 2005-2012,” Doctorate Recipients from U.S. Universities: 2012 (Arlington, VA: National Science Foundation and the National Center for Science and Engineering Centers, 2013), [www.nsf.gov/statistics/sed/2012/](http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/sed/2012/).

14 These estimates are based on MPI analysis of the 2008-12 ACS. Note that geographic distribution is only analyzed for the immigrant population. Second-generation Kenyan diaspora members are not included in this section.

## V. Socioeconomic Characteristics

- The Kenyan diaspora population in the United States is well educated and economically successful. Its members participate in the U.S. labor force at a greater rate than the U.S. general public, and they are also more likely to hold a bachelor's or advanced degree than the U.S. population overall (see Appendix 1).
- More than one in four members of this population is in the nursing profession.
- Although a sizable share of Kenyans in the United States were resettled refugees, this does not have an obvious negative impact on the Kenya-born population's performance on a range of socioeconomic indicators.

### Educational Attainment

- Members of the Kenyan diaspora in the United States were well educated and more likely than the U.S. general public to have completed a university degree.
- Thirty percent of the U.S.-based Kenyan diaspora members age 25 and older had a bachelor's degree as their highest credential, compared to 20 percent of the U.S. population overall.
- Sixteen percent of the immigrants from Kenya possessed a master's degree, PhD, or an advanced professional degree, whereas 11 percent of the U.S. population overall held such a degree.

### Employment

- Kenyan diaspora members in the United States age 16 and older were far more likely than the U.S. general public to be in the labor force: 80 percent versus 64 percent.
- They also displayed the highest labor force participation rate of any of the 15 groups in the RAD analysis. Both Kenyan men and women were in the labor force at rates well above U.S. national averages.
- Ninety-three percent of the Kenyan diaspora population in the U.S. labor force was employed, a rate nearly equal to the U.S. average.
- Members of the Kenyan diaspora population were as likely to be in professional or managerial occupations than the U.S. general public: 31 percent for both groups.<sup>15</sup> These occupations include specialized fields (e.g. engineering, science, law, or education) as well as administrative and managerial jobs (e.g. finance or human resources).
- A substantial share of the Kenyan diaspora workforce reported working as "registered nurses" or "nursing aides:" 10 percent and 17 percent, respectively.

### Household Income and Assets

- Kenyan diaspora households in the United States reported a higher median annual income than U.S. households overall: \$61,000 versus \$50,000.

<sup>15</sup> This rate is calculated based on the share of all individuals reporting an occupation for their primary job at the time the CPS was administered, or for their most recent primary job.

- Kenyan diaspora households had 2.6 members, fewer than the other diaspora groups in the RAD analysis but similar to the U.S. average of 2.5 members per household.
- Kenyan diaspora households in the United States were more likely to be high income than U.S. households overall. Thirty-one percent of Kenyan diaspora households reported incomes higher than \$90,000 per year, the threshold for the top 25 percent of U.S. households. Thirteen percent of Kenyan diaspora households had incomes over \$140,000, the threshold for the top ten percent of U.S. households.
- Forty-three percent of Kenyan diaspora households in the United States owned their home, compared to 66 percent of U.S. households overall and 51 percent of U.S. foreign-born households. A number of factors specific to immigrants may affect home ownership within the Kenya diaspora population, particularly the fact that as a group they are so recently arrived in the United States.<sup>16</sup>
- Kenyan diaspora households were less likely to report annual income from investment sources—including dividends, rent, and interest—than U.S. households overall. A similar share of Kenyan diaspora and U.S. households reported income from dividends: 12 percent versus 15 percent. The share of Kenyan diaspora households reporting income from rent was negligible. Thirty-two percent of these diaspora households reported income from interest versus 43 percent of all U.S. households.
- Kenyan diaspora households received less interest income annually than U.S. households overall. Median income from interest was \$100 for Kenyan diaspora households, while U.S. households had a median income of \$157 from interest.<sup>17</sup> Thirteen percent reported interest income greater than \$500, a share similar to U.S. households (14 percent).

### Poverty Status

- Kenyan diaspora members in the United States were about as likely as the U.S. population to have family incomes below the federal poverty threshold: 16 percent versus 15 percent.
- However, the share of Kenyan diaspora members with family incomes between 100 percent and 150 percent of the poverty threshold was half the U.S. average: 5 percent versus 10 percent.<sup>18</sup> The poverty threshold is used to help determine eligibility for Medicaid and other means-tested government safety nets, for which some immigrant households may qualify.

## VI. Diaspora Engagement

Many Kenyan immigrants, their children, and subsequent generations retain active ties to their homeland, and the government of Kenya encourages their engagement. The Kenyan diaspora in the United States is just beginning to establish a formalized network of organizations in the United States. Likewise, large-scale emigration is a relatively new phenomenon for Kenya, and the

<sup>16</sup> There are no restrictions on foreign buyers in the U.S. property market.

<sup>17</sup> Many people do not know their exact income from investment sources, and so may misreport it in government surveys.

<sup>18</sup> The poverty threshold varies by household size and the number of related children under age 18. In 2011 the threshold was \$18,106 for a three-person household with one child younger than 18 and \$22,811 for a four-person household with two children younger than 18; see United States Census Bureau, "Poverty," [www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/threshld/index.html](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/threshld/index.html).

Kenyan government has started to draft legislation and build programs and institutions to facilitate diaspora engagement.

## Diaspora Organizations

Kenyan diaspora organizations in the United States tend to be newer groups without full-time professional staff or significant revenue streams, reflecting the fact that the diaspora is relatively small and recently arrived. Forty-five Kenyan diaspora organizations in the United States were identified for the RAD analysis. The organizations generally are one of two kinds: charitable institutions that provide humanitarian assistance to Kenya's most vulnerable populations or social networking groups focusing on the diaspora itself. Some of these organizations have a Christian focus, including the one with the highest revenues: the Kenyan Christian Fellowship in America. Other notable groups are the Kwarula Society for Kenyan Education, the Association of International Kenyan Medical Professionals, and the Nuru Center. In addition, the Kenyan Diaspora Alliance, a nascent San Diego-based association, is trying to bring together Kenyan diaspora groups from around the world to advocate for diaspora voting rights in Kenyan elections. Most of the groups reviewed for this profile were based in and around Atlanta, although other small clusters existed in Delaware, Missouri, California, Massachusetts, the District of Columbia, New York, and Washington.

Among the 45 Kenyan diaspora organizations reviewed for the RAD series, only one reported having annual revenue above \$200,000, and most had much lower levels of revenue or none at all. The comparatively low share of Kenyan groups that have achieved 501(c)3 nonprofit tax status and the small levels of income which those that have report possibly indicates that leaders of these groups might benefit from technical instruction on nonprofit management and fundraising. Kenyans may also be active in East African and African diaspora organizations that involve groups of many national origins.

## Remittance Volume

Historically, Kenya has not been a large migrant-sending country and has not received large remittance inflows. However, with remittance receipts valued at \$1.2 billion in 2012 and a total GDP of \$40.7 billion, remittances now make up a significant share—about 3 percent—of the country's GDP.<sup>19</sup>

The United States was the second-largest source of remittances sent to Kenya, after the United Kingdom, and also the second most common destination country for Kenyan migrants.<sup>20</sup> In 2012, \$315 million in remittances were transferred from the diaspora in the United States to Kenya (see Appendix 2).<sup>21</sup>

19 Remittance and GDP estimates are from World Bank World Development Indicators. World Bank DataBank, "World Development Indicators, Kenya," <http://data.worldbank.org/country/kenya>.

20 United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "Trends in International Migrant Stock: Migrants by Origin and Destination, 2013 Revision (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2013)," <http://esa.un.org/unmigration/TIMSO2013/migrantstocks2013.htm>.

21 World Bank Prospects Group, "Bilateral Remittance Matrix 2012," <http://go.worldbank.org/092X1CHHD0>.



## Diaspora Policies and Institutions of the Government of Kenya

The government of Kenya is beginning to establish programs and institutions that are designed to facilitate engagement with the country's diaspora and amplify the nonresident population's contributions to Kenya's economic and human capital growth. Reaching out to the diaspora is a central tenant of the Kenyan government's foreign affairs strategy, with planning documents describing "diaspora diplomacy as one of the five key pillars of Kenyan foreign policy."<sup>22</sup> The growing importance of diaspora outreach was also recently underscored in a public address delivered by the country's president, Uhuru Kenyatta. Speaking to an assembly of diaspora members in February 2014, President Kenyatta emphasized the importance of the diaspora's economic and diplomatic support to Kenya, saying, "You are the single largest contributor to the country's development agenda through remittances and the face of Kenya in enhancing relations with the host country. We as a government will continue to engage with you."<sup>23</sup>

The Kenyan government has made a number of false starts on diaspora engagement. In 2004 it created the National Diaspora Council of Kenya, which has not been very active. An inter-ministerial commission, which involved representatives from the foreign affairs, interior, labor, and youth ministries as well as the central bank, consulted with the diaspora from 2002-07 on how best to facilitate engagement of the diaspora in the country's development. In 2007, the government created a diaspora technical team to prepare a report on maximizing the potential of the diaspora. It was meant to inform diaspora legislation, but the expected bill did not materialize.<sup>24</sup>

At the time of publication, the Kenyan government was still in the process of finalizing a national diaspora policy. No dedicated agency or bureau is responsible for diaspora affairs. The Diaspora Committee of the Ministry of Planning and Development was moved in 2009 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which now holds the diaspora affairs portfolio. Within the Ministry, Kenyan embassies have a front-line role. The Embassy of Kenya in Washington, DC is particularly active. It hosted a Kenyan diaspora conference in 2013 (intended to become an annual event), and has held advocacy and skill-building workshops for diaspora leaders. The Embassy laid the groundwork for the establishment of two diaspora consultative bodies—the Kenya Diaspora Advocacy Councils of New England and Georgia—intended to unite Kenyans in the United States and encourage them to play a role in the development of their country of origin.

Some of the Kenyan government's greatest diaspora policy accomplishments to date came through the expanded nonresident-related rights offered by its new constitution, ratified in 2010. Among its other provisions, the constitution allows for dual citizenship and automatically grants citizenship to children born to a Kenyan parent, irrespective of place of birth.

Although nonresident Kenyan citizens have the right to vote in the country's elections, its overseas voting program still faces logistical and financial constraints. As a result, Kenyans

22 Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (Kenya), "Kenya Foreign Policy," accessed March 24, 2014, <http://mfa.go.ke/?q=node/62>; Embassy of the Republic of Kenya, "Concept Note: Kenya Diaspora Conference in the USA, December 12-15<sup>th</sup> 2013," accessed March 24, 2014, [http://kenyaembassy.com/pdfs/diasporaconf/Concept\\_Note\\_for\\_Diaspora\\_Conference\\_December\\_2013.pdf](http://kenyaembassy.com/pdfs/diasporaconf/Concept_Note_for_Diaspora_Conference_December_2013.pdf).

23 Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (Kenya), "Kenya Diaspora Key Asset, Says President," February 20, 2014, [www.mfa.go.ke/?q=node/171](http://www.mfa.go.ke/?q=node/171).

24 Dilip Ratha et al, *Leveraging Migration for Africa: Remittances, Skills and Investments* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2011), <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTDECPROSPECTS/Resources/476882-1157133580628/AfricaStudyEntireBook.pdf>.

living abroad were unable to cast ballots in the country's March 2014 presidential election.

Kenya has opened its financial sector to diaspora members, and the country issued a diaspora bond in 2011 to support infrastructure projects. Kenya has been a global innovator in the use of mobile money platforms, which have helped to reduce the costs of remittance transfers, and it has begun to liberalize banking regulations to attract diaspora savings to foreign currency deposit accounts. The Kenyan government also sees a role for innovative grant funding partnerships to help attract diaspora investment in local projects.

## VII. Conclusion

While the Kenyan diaspora remitted a relatively small amount compared to other groups in the RAD analysis, the \$1.2 billion sent to Kenya is significant in the context of a \$41 billion GDP and the diaspora population's small size. However, Kenya does not offer foreign investors and entrepreneurs a business-friendly environment. Electricity access, paying taxes, contract enforcement, and international trade are all barriers to business and investment activities in Kenya. For example, getting electricity in Kenya took an average 158 days and cost nearly 1,100 percent of the Kenyan per capita income, whereas the average time is 89 days in Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries and the cost is 79 percent of per capita income.<sup>25</sup>

Transparency International ranked Kenya 136<sup>th</sup> in its 2013 Corruption Perception Index—lower than neighboring Ethiopia or Tanzania—and 45 percent of the Kenyan population reported paying a bribe in 2010.<sup>26</sup> In the World Bank-International Finance Corporation's "Ease of Doing Business Index," Kenya ranked 129<sup>th</sup> out of 189 countries in 2014. Credit access was the only indicator in which the country was highly ranked, coming in at 13<sup>th</sup> place.<sup>27</sup>

Expectations that diaspora investment will spur business creation or economic growth should be tempered by the challenges Kenya faces, including poor infrastructure, a rapidly growing population, poverty, and corruption.

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25 "Getting electricity" is measured by the World Bank's "Ease of Doing Business Index" as the procedures, time and cost for the small to medium-sized business to get a new electricity connection for a standardized warehouse with standardized electricity needs; see International Finance Corporation and the World Bank, "Economy Rankings," in "Ease of Doing Business Index," June 2013, accessed March 26, 2014, [www.DoingBusiness.org/rankings](http://www.DoingBusiness.org/rankings).

26 Transparency International, "Corruption Perceptions Index 2013," Transparency International, accessed March 26, 2013, <http://cpi.transparency.org/cpi2013/results/>.

27 International Finance Corporation and the World Bank, "Economy Rankings."

## Appendices: Tables, Graphs, and Maps

### Appendix 1. Summary 2009-13 Current Population Survey Results

	Kenyan Diaspora in the United States*	Total U.S. Population
<b>Household Income</b>		
Median household income	\$61,000	\$50,000
Average household size	2.6	2.5
Share of households with high incomes (\$90,000+)	31%	25%
Share of households with very high incomes (\$140,000+)	13%	10%
<b>Employment</b>		
<b>Total population age 16 and older</b>	65,000	239,386,000
Share in the labor force	80%	64%
... that was employed	93%	91%
... that was in a professional occupation**	31%	31%
<b>Educational Attainment ***</b>		
<b>Total population age 25 and older</b>	55,000	201,925,000
... with less than high school education	4%	13%
... with high school or some college education	50%	57%
... with a bachelor's degree	30%	20%
... with an advanced degree	16%	11%
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Total households</b>	32,000	119,173,000
... that own or are buying their home	43%	66%
... with income from dividends	12%	15%
... with income from rent	1%	5%
... with income from interest	38%	43%
Median income from interest (for recipients)	\$100	\$157
Share with more than \$500 in interest income	13%	14%
<b>Population Characteristics by Generation</b>		
<b>First- and Second-Generation Immigrant Population</b>	102,000	73,140,000
<b>First-generation immigrant population†</b>	77,000	38,468,000
... that was working age (18-64)	77%	81%
... that entered the United States before 2000	33%	64%
... naturalized as U.S. citizens	35%	44%
<b>Second-generation population††</b>	25,000	34,672,000
... that was under age 18	92%	46%
... that was working age (18-64)	8%	43%
... with only one parent from Kenya	40%	-

\* defined as all first and second generation.

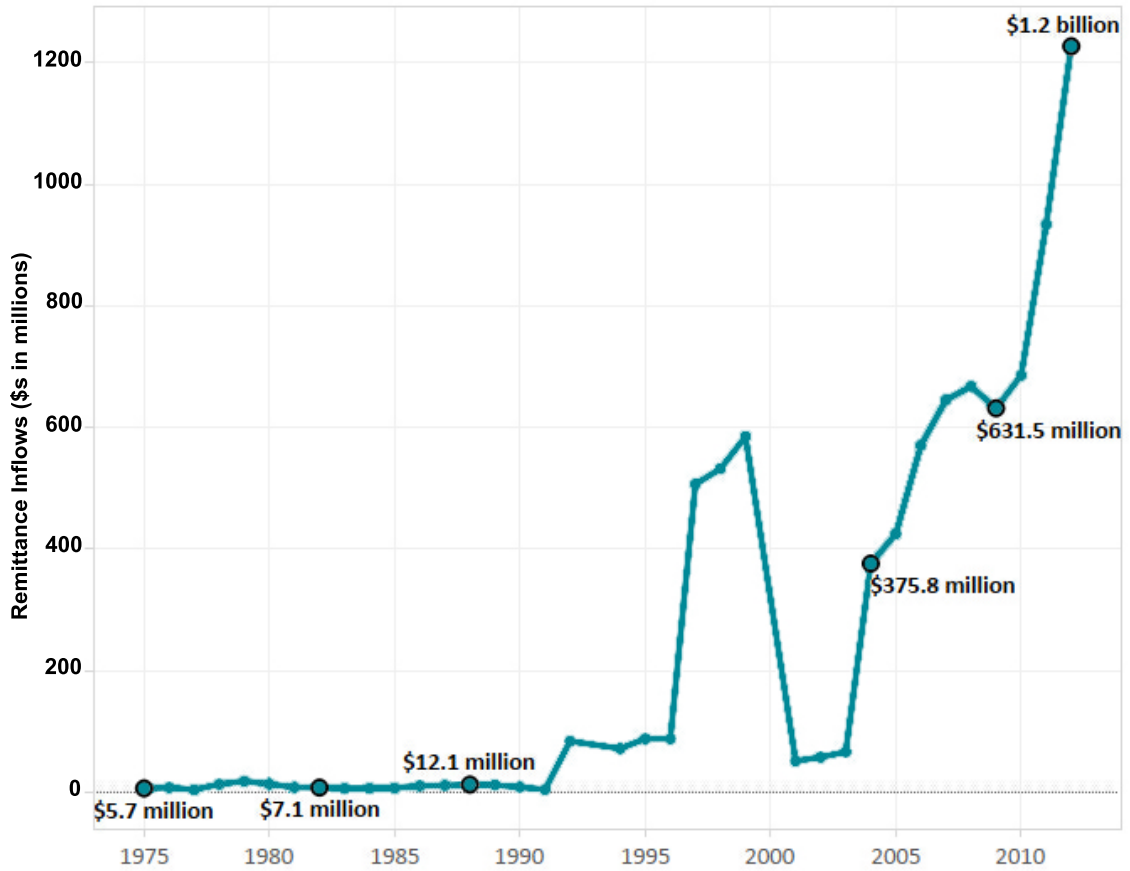
\*\* calculated based on the share of all individuals reporting an occupation for their primary job at the time the Current Population Survey (CPS) was administered or for their most recent primary job.

\*\*\* highest level reported.

† all individuals who report Kenya as their place of birth, excluding U.S. births abroad.

†† all individuals who report having at least one parent born in Kenya.

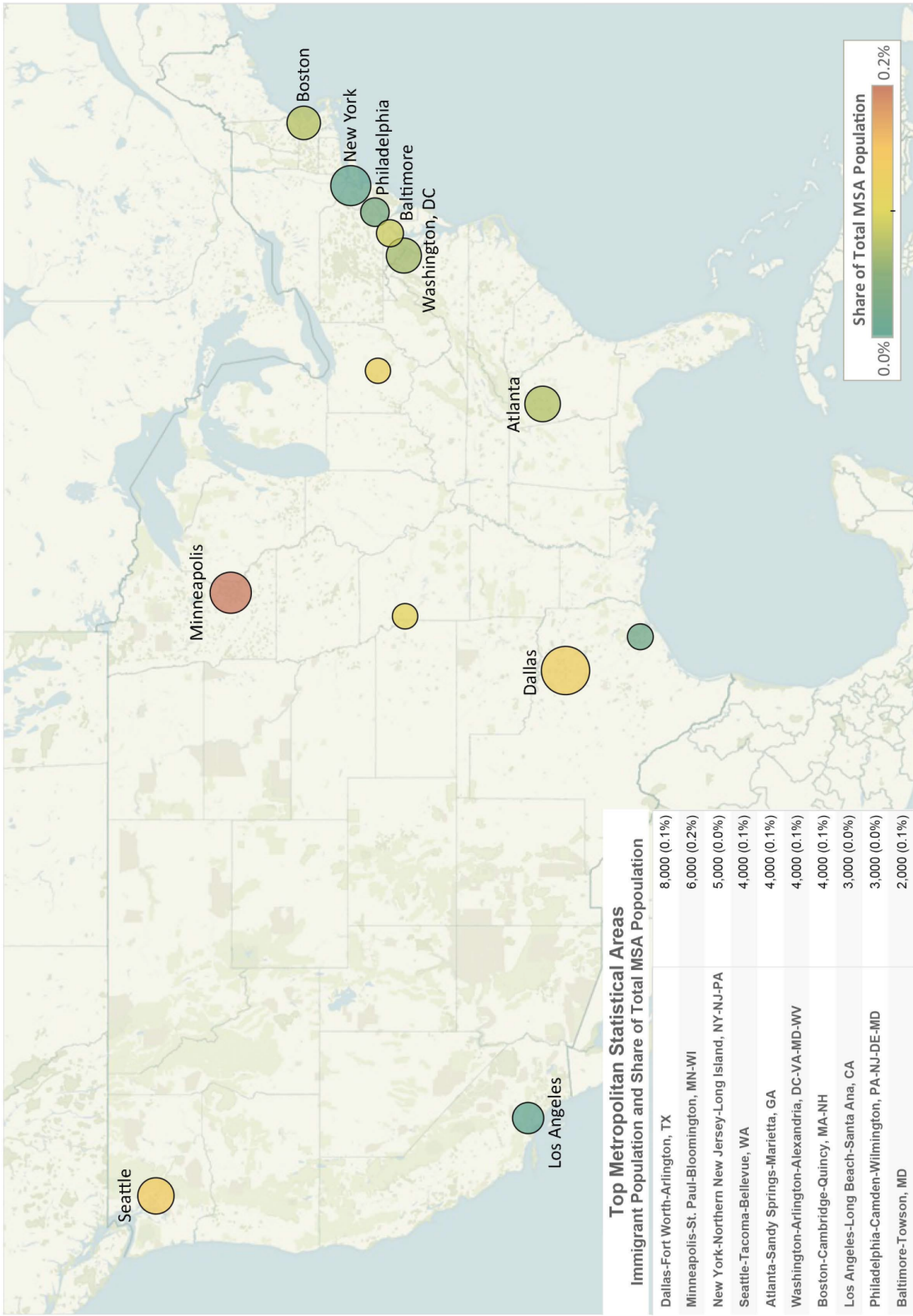
## Appendix 2. Remittance Inflows to Kenya, 1975-2012



Source: Remittance data are taken from World Bank Prospects Group tables for annual remittance inflows and outflows (October 2013 update), <http://go.worldbank.org/092X1CHHD0>.

Appendix 3. Geographic Distribution of Kenyan Diaspora in the United States

Immigrant Population from Kenya  
Displayed by Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)



Map based on Migration Policy Institute tabulations of U.S. Census Bureau 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Table B05006.

Source: MPI analysis of 2010-12 ACS, pooled.









