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## Multicultural communities give back – dialogue series

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Simon Fraser University is bringing together leaders of Metro Vancouver's diverse multicultural communities and the general public for a two-year public dialogue series beginning on Jan. 19, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at SFU's Wosk Centre for Dialogue.

The dialogues will focus on how many of these communities, known as diasporas, contribute or have the potential to significantly help with development issues in the countries of their origin. The goal is to tap their potential to bring about change.

"These are resourceful leaders; they've done everything from building schools in Pakistan and funding education in Namibia and Bangalore, India, to organizing Haitian relief and supporting peaceful social mobilization southern Sudan," says Joanna Ashworth, co-director of the project.

The dialogues will explore the impact of current initiatives as well as the potential for future endeavours. The first deals with innovations in poverty reduction and economic development.

Project co-director Shaheen Nanji says the dialogues will examine diasporas' local knowledge of the community and their potential to contribute to social, economic and ecological development. "This phenomenon is gaining attention internationally but there is much yet to be explored," she says.

The dialogues are organized around the UN Millennium development goals and will focus on initiatives that address poverty reduction and economic growth, health, education, peace and human security and diasporic contributions to development.

An interdisciplinary advisory group of SFU faculty, graduate students and community leaders will also provide input. CBC's Margaret Gallagher is moderating the Jan.19 dialogue and the event will be streamed on a live webcast.

To view the dialogue on Wednesday Jan. 19 6:30 to 8:30 pm (PST) live on streaming video webcast go to <http://www.lidc.sfu.ca/broadcast>. Note that Adobe Flash Player 10 is required to view.

Funding support provided by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and presented in partnership with SFU, CUSO-VSO and the BC Council for International Education.

For more information contact [diasporas-info@sfu.ca](mailto:diasporas-info@sfu.ca)

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

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