**Somalia’s ‘Missing Millions’: Come and Connect**

**April 12, 2014 2:00-3:30pm**

**1931 South 5th Street, Minneapolis, MN 55454**

SFS-Leadership and Policy Institute kindly invites you to participate in a forum promoting a diaspora information sharing. We want to provide networking, share experiences, resources and exchange information, while at the same time highlighting and discussing the challenges and opportunities in the following areas:

Currently there are more Somali graduates and professionals in the western world than in Somalia. How can these young professionals help and secure employment with international organizations such as the UN, African Union, World Bank, Save the Children, Care, donor communities and other smaller NGOs, including health care and educational institutions? What are the challenges and opportunities facing those of us who are in the diaspora and want to go back and contribute to the reconstruction of their homeland while being compensated for it?

What are the opportunities and challenges local organizations in Somalia and organizations in the diaspora face in their attempt to secure grants and contracts from international organizations and donor communities?

The UNDP report on Somalia’s Missing Millions states: “The Somali diaspora makes a major contribution to the Somali economy and livelihoods through remittances, humanitarian assistance and participation in recovery and reconstruction efforts. Without this support, the economy of the country would have collapsed long ago.” Yet, at the same time, there are growing negative perceptions inside and outside Somalia, including in host countries, toward the Somali diaspora. Why is this case? Come and let us discuss what has worked, what went wrong and what we can do about it.

How could the diaspora play a more active and positive role in peace building and in state building and nation building?

**Please join us, engage, and share your ideas and experiences**

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