



International Organization for Migration (IOM)  
The UN Migration Agency

Towards an

INTEGRATED APPROACH

TO REINTEGRATION

in the context of return



Cover: A Sri Lankan farmer engaged in livelihood activity under reintegration support after returning from Guinea in 2016. © IOM 2016

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Increasingly, stakeholders agree that reintegration is a key aspect of return migration.<sup>1</sup> How such reintegration is approached and managed, however, remains a widely debated topic and the means of supporting reintegration differ consequently. This paper proposes that the complex, multidimensional process of reintegration requires a holistic and a need-based approach: one that takes into consideration the various factors impacting an individual's reintegration, including economic, social, and psychosocial factors across individual, community, and structural dimensions.

As such, this paper recommends that sustainable reintegration can be facilitated when the above factors are addressed in parallel, through:

- ① Individual assistance targeting the specific needs of returning migrants and households;
- ② Community-based support to foster a participatory approach in the reintegration process where families and communities are involved and their specific needs and concerns addressed; and
- ③ Structural interventions aiming at improving the provision of essential services for returnees and non-migrant population alike, and promoting overall good governance of migration.

It further recommends a strong component of monitoring and evaluation for evidence-based policy and action, and that complementarity and collaboration between different government departments, international organizations, civil society organizations and private sector actors at both national and subnational levels are fostered as they are essential to facilitating returnee reintegration in countries of origin.

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<sup>1</sup> While reintegration is a process taking place in different return contexts (for example following spontaneous, forced or assisted voluntary returns, or internal displacement), this paper focuses on reintegration assistance provided to migrants unable or unwilling to remain in host or transit country.

## 1. BACKGROUND

Return migration, associated with the process of going back to one's own culture, family and home,<sup>2</sup> is at times mistakenly oversimplified. The mere fact that someone returns to a country or place where s/he has previously been living does not mean that reintegration is seamless.

Reintegration in general is understood as the **re-inclusion or re-incorporation** of a person into a group or a process, e.g. of a migrant into the society of his or her country of origin or habitual residence.<sup>3</sup> It is a multidimensional process that requires the re-establishment of economic and psychosocial ties. As such, successful reintegration depends on various factors such as the migrant's time spent abroad as well as his/her personal abilities and resources; the acceptance by his/her family, peers, and community; but also on environmental and structural capacities as well as development and economic opportunities available in the country of origin.

Recent years have seen the rise of larger scale irregular migratory flows as a result of continually limited regular migration channels and unaddressed drivers of migration.<sup>4</sup> The numbers of migrants returning to their countries of origin under assisted voluntary return and reintegration programmes have grown too,<sup>5</sup> not only in the volume of migrants in need of assistance, but for diversity of actors involved and the intricacy of challenges. While some migrants return to welcoming contexts and reintegrate in a smooth manner, many face challenges they cannot overcome on their own, and need support in their reintegration. At the same time, communities, regions and countries to which migrants return may – sometimes also as a result of a great number of simultaneous returns – not have the capacities to provide an environment conducive to successful reintegration due to a lack of local infrastructure and resources.

In response to the need for this type of support, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has been operating its Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programmes for almost 40 years.<sup>6</sup> AVRR activities directly aim to improve the conditions under which return happens, including creating an environment where the migrant can take informed decisions, and supporting migrants in reintegrating in communities to which they return.

Support provided to returning migrants and their communities serves as the first stepping-stone in what is often a lengthy process of reintegration. Considering the investment in terms of time, efforts, emotions and resources that migrants make when embarking on their migratory journey, reintegration assistance is a key factor in minimizing migrant vulnerability upon return, protecting their rights, and supporting them to re-start their lives within communities of return. Due to

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<sup>2</sup> Migrants may not return to their own communities of origin but to other locations, which is why this paper refers to communities to which migrants return to.

<sup>3</sup> International Organization for Migration, *Glossary on Migration*.

<sup>4</sup> Drivers of migration include the underlying conditions of poverty, instabilities, and violence among other push factors, made up of a range of causal factors, structural conditions, events, incentives and motivations. Economic, political, security and social factors (poor governance, global disparities, food insecurity, unemployment, etc.) can produce push factors not unlike those found in displacement-inducing emergencies (conflict, natural disasters). See also UNESCO (2017), *Migration as a development challenge: Analysis of root causes and policy implications, Management of Social Transformations (MOST)*, available [here](#).

<sup>5</sup> IOM (2017), *AVRR Key Highlights 2016*, available [here](#).

<sup>6</sup> While this paper focuses mainly on the AVRR context, reintegration support is equally relevant for those migrants who are returned by host governments or assisted to return in the context of humanitarian crisis.

differences in programme design and donor priorities, the resources that are made available for such reintegration support can vary greatly, however – from a support to individual returnees in the form of small cash grants for immediate needs upon arrival to more substantial assistance provided in kind, either to the returnee, or to the receiving communities, to address more medium-term needs (housing, income generation, education, health, etc.). Moreover, countries of origin may also have their own reintegration allowances and structures for their returning citizens and such services can vary greatly across countries.

Indirectly, and in the long term, reintegration assistance also aims to mitigate drivers that could eventually lead to the necessity to re-migrate. In such vein, reintegration assistance can contribute to removing obstacles that prevent returnees from achieving stability and enhance their access to opportunities. Moreover, some of the initial drivers may still exist or have even worsened, and need to be addressed to achieve this objective.

The notions of return and reintegration are intimately interlinked with that of **sustainability**.<sup>7</sup> While there is no universally agreed definition of successful reintegration, for the purposes of this paper, IOM asserts that reintegration can be considered sustainable when returnees have reached levels of economic self-sufficiency, social stability within their communities, and psychosocial well-being that allow them to cope with (re)migration drivers. Having achieved sustainable reintegration, returnees are able to make further migration decisions a matter of choice, rather than necessity.<sup>8</sup> To achieve this objective, it is necessary to approach migrant reintegration in a comprehensive manner, considering the factors that can affect reintegration and addressing them in a way to respond to the needs of the individual returnees as well as the communities to which they return in a mutually beneficial way, and address the structural factors at play. As such, this paper intends to highlight some of the variables affecting sustainable reintegration with the aim of providing tools for a holistic, integrated approach to reintegration.

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<sup>7</sup> Koser, K., Kuschminder, K. (2015), *Comparative Research on the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration of Migrants*, Maastricht Graduate School of Governance, available [here](#).

<sup>8</sup> This definition implies the absence of a direct correlation between successful reintegration and further migration after return. The latter can take place and can still be a choice regardless of whether reintegration is successful, partially successful or unsuccessful. On the other hand, returnees are unlikely to reintegrate if they find themselves in situations whereby moving again or relying on a family member abroad is considered necessary for their physical or socioeconomic survival.

The integrated approach supports governments in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and contributes specifically to the **SDG 10** – *Reduce inequality within and among countries*, and **SDG 17** – *Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development*.<sup>9</sup> It also builds on the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants<sup>10</sup> in proposing a holistic approach to addressing drivers of irregular migration within a framework of good migration management.

## 2. THE UNDERLYING FACTORS OF SUSTAINABLE REINTEGRATION

Various factors influence a person’s ability to reintegrate into their country of origin. This process can take time, as returnees may encounter a number of challenges which can impact their ability to readjust and reintegrate, equally impacting other members of their community. It is worth highlighting that the factors affecting the reintegration process and subsequently its sustainability are not dissimilar from those that resulted in the decision to migrate in the first place. They can be of economic, social, and psychosocial nature and they relate at the same time to the individual returnees,<sup>11</sup> communities to which they return, and to the structural environment.<sup>12</sup>

At the **individual level**, various factors can impact a migrant’s successful reintegration. These include personal characteristics as well as factors related to the overall migration experience, including the return process. Age, sex, gender, skills, family situation, knowledge, social networks, motivation, self-identity, personal security, own and family’s financial situation, status in society, as well as experiences, beliefs and attitudes, and the migrant’s individual emotional, psychological, and cognitive characteristics play a significant role in the reintegration process.

Equally important, however, is the nature of the returnee’s migration journey, or the circumstances of return. In this regard, the length of the migrant’s absence, conditions in the host country, conditions of return or the level of return preparedness, resource mobilization and/or access to adequate information, can also impact reintegration. Specific pre-existing vulnerabilities also need to be taken into account, and are particularly relevant for migrants with health and protection needs, victims of trafficking, unaccompanied or separated migrant children. Such pre-existing vulnerabilities require further support in certain areas – e.g. psychosocial counselling to address any trauma experienced – to even begin the reintegration process and empower the returnees to reach their full potential.

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<sup>9</sup> The integrated approach to reintegration particularly contributes to Target 10.2 (*Empower/promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status*), Target 10.7 (*Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies*), Target 17.17 (*Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnership*), and Target 17.9 (*Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the sustainable development goals, including through North—South, South—South and triangular cooperation*).

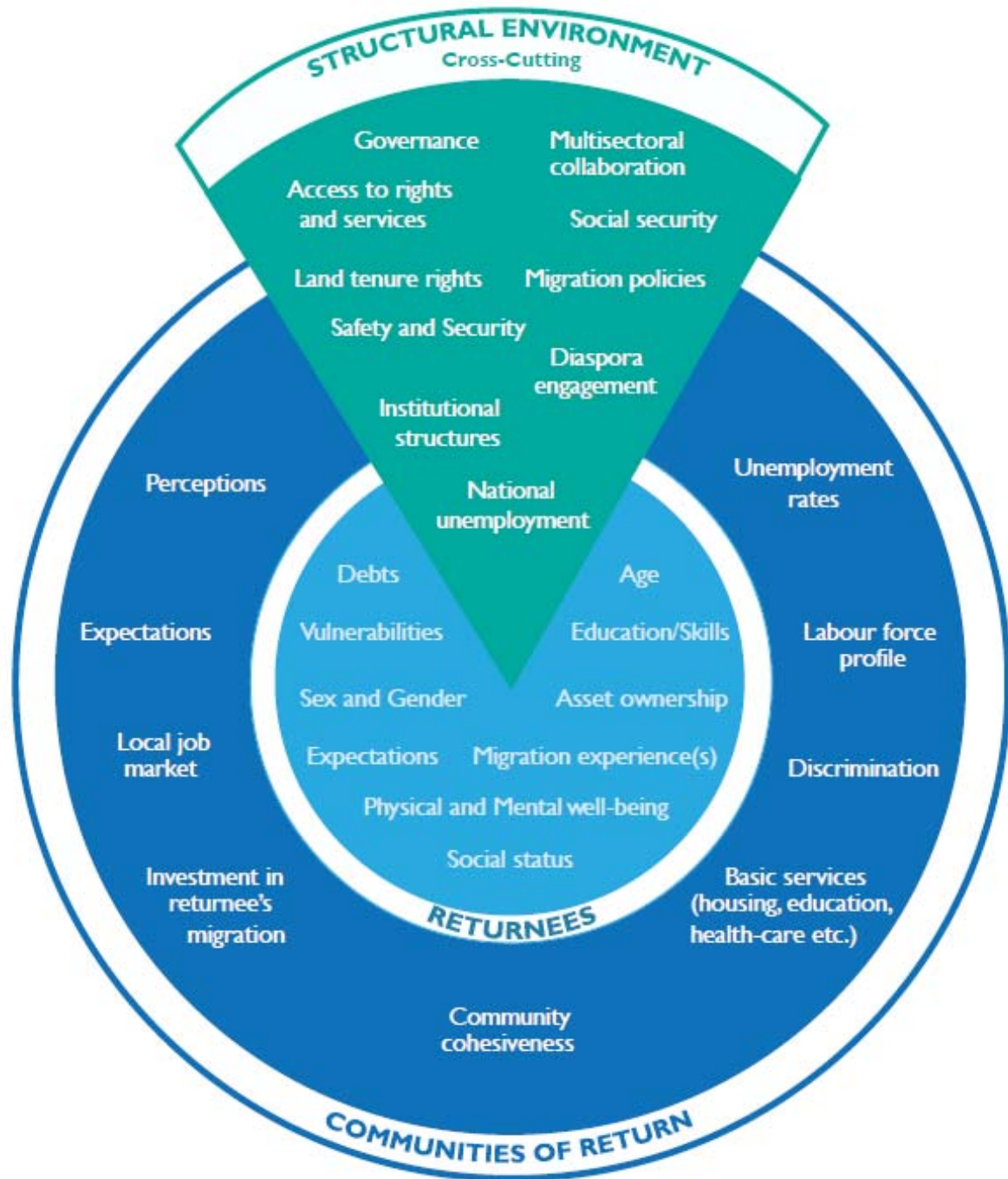
<sup>10</sup> Annex II, para 7, The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, 19 September 2016, available [here](#).

<sup>11</sup> Depending on circumstances, families may be part either of the returnees target group (when they also returned from the host country with the main beneficiary) or the communities target group (if they remained in the country of origin).

<sup>12</sup> See figure 1 for a representation of some of these factors, noting that the list should be considered as non-exhaustive.



Figure 1: Factors affecting reintegration<sup>13</sup>



<sup>13</sup> The factors highlighted in this figure are examples of factors which can potentially affect the reintegration process and are not meant to be exhaustive.

At the same time, it should be recognised that returning individuals are situated within a broader physical and social community structure, and are affected by their position within their community's economic, cultural, and social tissue. The role that **communities** play in migrant reintegration can be manifold. When return is seen as a failure or the decision to migrate in the first place is seen as abandonment, leading to a more hostile environment, reintegration efforts will be negatively impacted. Migrants can often be stigmatized upon return for various reasons, including return being seen as a failure or a failure to return with adequate wealth/earnings. Furthermore, resentment among communities may also be generated if the reintegration assistance received by individual returnees is perceived as an undue reward to returnees as opposed to local populations that did not migrate.

However, the opposite is also true, as communities can provide a conducive environment for reintegration in terms of safety nets, strong social networks, as well as financial resources. When communities perceive return positively, this allows migrants to return without the risk of being stigmatized, enabling them to re-establish social ties, and facilitating re-insertion into society. In addition to communities' support being a key factor for migrants reintegration, the reintegration process should also benefit (or, at least, not harm to) communities through migrants' contributions, skills and experiences.

Finally, factors in the **structural factors in the external environment** also play a crucial role in the reintegration process. These include political, institutional, economic, and social conditions at the local, national, and international level. Structural factors such as cooperation between various government departments at the local and national level, returnee-oriented policies and legal instruments, but also the private sector and the diaspora, and access to employment and basic services (e.g. housing, education, health, psychosocial referrals, etc.), all greatly impact a returnee's ability to reintegrate successfully.<sup>14</sup> Having improved understanding of the structural factors, particularly if any are affecting migration patterns, will be important in being able to address them to facilitate sustainable reintegration.

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<sup>14</sup> While reintegration assistance within the integrated approach is part of development strategies in countries of origin, development aid should not aim at limiting further migration. It is acknowledged that improvement in development indicators generally leads to an increase of mobility in the short term, as a result of broadening opportunities and opening of regular migration channels. In the context of return, however, improvement of structural factors affecting reintegration allows individual returnees to make a free choice, rather than opting for (largely irregular) re-migration out of necessity. See also: United Nations (2017), *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Migration*, A/71/728, p. 14, paragraph 39, available [here](#); De Haas, H. (2010), *The internal dynamics of migration processes - A theoretical inquiry*, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*: 1-31, available [here](#), or UNESCO (2017), *Migration as a development challenge: Analysis of root causes and policy implications, Management of Social Transformations (MOST)*, available [here](#).





Female returnee in Niger

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### 3. TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO REINTEGRATION:

#### Policy recommendations

Various support schemes can offer relief to returning individuals as well as to the communities to which they return, particularly in settings where the above mentioned factors are not favourable to the returnees' reintegration. In line with its mandate and multisectorial expertise, IOM advocates for the adoption of an integrated approach towards reintegration that responds to economic, social and psychosocial needs while at the same time addressing cross-cutting issues such as migrant rights, partnerships and cooperation as well as data collection, monitoring and evaluation of reintegration. Such an approach typically falls under the responsibility of a variety of different stakeholders, having different roles in the subsequent interventions.

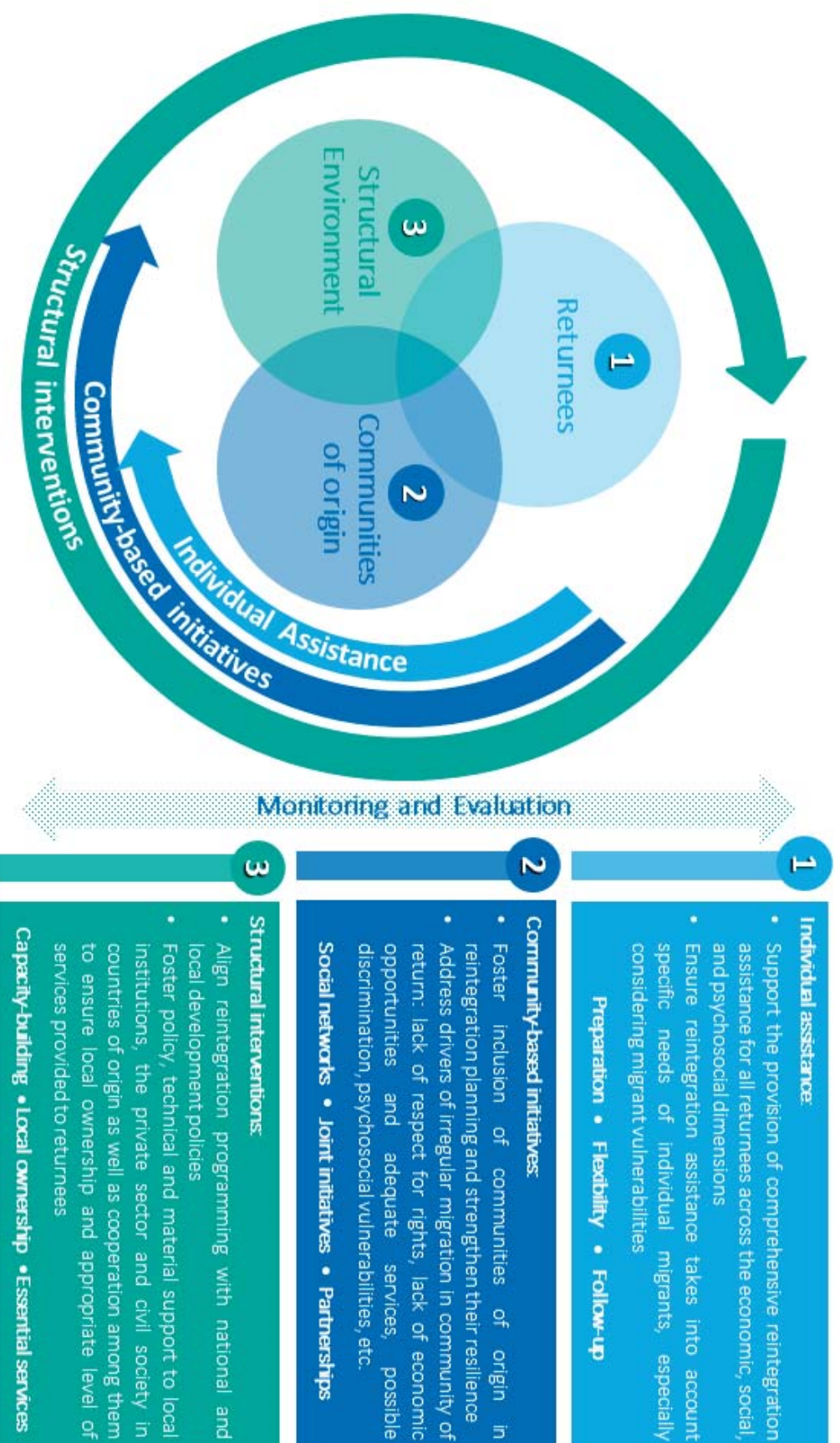
This support has to be based on a careful analysis of individual, community and structural factors to determine the level(s) of required intervention to create environments conducive to the returnees' sustainable reintegration. While funding availability may limit comprehensive reintegration assistance, community-based approaches and structural interventions should be promoted to the extent possible. Only if all levels are properly considered and relevant stakeholders work together, can a truly integrated approach to reintegration be achieved.

While each of the different levels of intervention follow their own objectives, they are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Therefore, **coordination, complementarity and coherence** across all involved governmental and non-governmental, public and private, local and international stakeholders should be ensured in host, transit and countries of origin. Synergies ought to be explored between different interventions by various stakeholders with often different mandates and priorities in the areas of **humanitarian assistance, community stabilization, migration management and development cooperation**.

Interventions on the individual, community and structural levels should promote a **whole-of-government approach**, enhancing cooperation across different sectors and between relevant ministries with different mandates (e.g. interior, foreign affairs, labour and social affairs) as well as non-state stakeholders to ensure effectiveness. Programmatic and funding instruments used to address return management and those supporting community stabilization, cooperation or development ought to be brought together to include migrant reintegration in sustainable development plans and national policies. Such a holistic approach will address the multidimensional process of reintegration, thereby directly and indirectly contributing to sustainable reintegration.

Similarly desirable are **exchanges of information and best practices among practitioners and all key stakeholders**, allowing for synergies and scaling opportunities through the implementation of joint initiatives at the transnational level, especially those that give a voice and leadership to countries of origin and returnees themselves. Bilateral coordination between host/transit and countries of origin are also of paramount importance, particularly for the sustainability of reintegration. The facilitation of interdisciplinary fora for exchange and discussion can be conducive in the identification of relevant potential for cooperation in order to ensure sustainable impact.

Figure 2: Integrated Approach to Reintegration: Policy Recommendations





## 4. TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO REINTEGRATION:

### Programmatic recommendations

#### *4.1 Individual reintegration support*

Since every returnee faces a particular reintegration situation due to their personal profile (age, sex and gender, experiences, etc.), individualized reintegration support is crucial in addressing otherwise overlooked individual challenges.

Individual reintegration support usually allows a certain degree of flexibility and is ideally tailored to the returnee's specific needs – taking into account specific migratory experiences, vulnerability factors,<sup>15</sup> acquired skills and the circumstances of return. Individual reintegration support is also the most direct form of assistance and can be administered within a short timeframe. Such personalized assistance empowers the returnees first and foremost, and creates an environment in which returnees take responsibility for the reintegration process and decide on the use of reintegration support. It allows for a certain level of control and flexibility in a situation which often makes returnees feel disempowered.

In the framework of AVRR programmes, this type of assistance is in most cases provided in the form of tailored packages granted to individual returnees and, where applicable, their family members, in either cash, in kind or a combination of the two. As much as possible, determining the type and content of reintegration support should follow evidence and a needs-based approach. In this regard, effective information provision and counselling at the pre-return and post-arrival stages allows to best tailor the assistance to the specific situation of each returnee. Some countries also provide assistance to their own returning citizens through different national and local structures, however, this type of assistance is not always systematized and may be given on ad hoc basis.

Whereas the level of support and the way the assistance is delivered differ from programme to programme depending on specific contexts under which returns happen and to where,<sup>16</sup> individual reintegration support can promote the returnees' economic self-sufficiency, for instance by supporting the set-up of small businesses, promoting the (re-)insertion in the local labour market and increasing returnees' skills through enrolment in education or vocational training courses and/or utilization of newly acquired skills and knowledge.

Such a tailored approach is particularly important in presence of specific vulnerabilities arising from family composition, age, medical conditions, and mental distress due to abuse, exploitation or violence experienced during the migratory process. Moreover, in instances where there is no critical mass in one particular area or region for larger scale intervention, individually tailored assistance allows the provision of direct support and assistance.

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<sup>15</sup> See IOM Thematic Paper: Effective protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of migrants, including women and children, regardless of their migratory status, and the specific needs of migrants in vulnerable situations, available [here](#).

<sup>16</sup> The type and level of support provided to returning migrants may vary depending on the host country's national AVRR programme and subsequently on Donors' requirements.

#### Examples of programmatic response: Individual reintegration support

- **Effectively refer migrants to available socioeconomic opportunities and psychosocial support** through systematic mapping and collection of information on reintegration stakeholders and type of specialized assistance offered. **Improve pre-return preparation** of the reintegration process to allow for returnees' ownership of their individual reintegration plan, empowerment and increased self-reliance.
- **Increase flexibility** of reintegration assistance schemes to allow adaptable provision of support to the returnee's profile, needs and skills, preferences and motivation, and to the return context. An adequate balance between cash and in-kind support should also be considered.
- **Ensure adequate follow-up** during the first 12 months following return to accompany beneficiaries in their reintegration process.

#### 4.2 Community-based reintegration initiatives

The extent to which reintegration will be sustainable is also intricately intertwined within the larger community. However, in some cases receiving communities do not have the capacities to facilitate reintegration because they lack basic infrastructure or facilities. Especially in contexts where the number of returnees is considerable, this may lead to tensions over available resources and significantly hamper the returnees' reintegration. As such, community-based approaches can address community level factors of reintegration and thus facilitate effective reintegration.<sup>17</sup> In implementing community-based interventions, it is important to identify the needs of the community itself and the impact of return migration on the community as a whole.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, such initiatives will help address any feelings of resentment or hostility that a returning migrant may face from members of the community for receiving assistance, or, on the contrary, for returning empty-handed.

Community-based reintegration support initiatives tend to require both short- and medium-term approaches. Depending on the local context and migration dynamics, community-based initiatives should seek to foster dialogue, social cohesion and empowerment – as well as measures to reduce vulnerability of the local population to external shocks (including addressing the drivers of migration at the community level). Moreover, it is important to ensure local ownership of initiatives and consequently sustainability after the assistance has ended. Activities can range from the set-up of trainings and job creation initiatives in partnership with the private sector, to the establishment of fora to promote dialogue, to the implementation of small-scale infrastructure projects (such as water irrigation, road construction, etc.)

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<sup>17</sup> This is particularly true for post-conflict situations, which require a great deal of assistance for reconstruction and stabilization, strengthening resilience of communities and their inclusion in reintegration planning. However, this approach is also equally important in non-conflict scenarios.

<sup>18</sup> For example, any specific dynamics including situations where communities have financed the returnees' migration and are expecting to be repaid or a return on their investment will be important elements to be considered.



Such interventions do not only contribute to a community's absorption capacity of their returning members but may also reinforce the links between return migration and local development. They encourage the participation of returnees and non-migrant population alike and thus support social cohesion between returnees and their communities. They allow the community to harness skills of the returnees, while also addressing issues that impact the larger community, including development needs.

While considering community-based interventions, it is important to identify the needs of the community itself and the impact that return migration will have on the community as a whole. Community-based reintegration assistance is therefore typically based on community profiling undertaken in the communities with high numbers of return and/or strong outwards migratory pressure. In addition to profiling, communities themselves should be included to the extent possible in the design of such initiatives, as well as the mapping of existing interventions and assessments. These exercises look at the existing return and reintegration programmes and gaps, as well as linkages to existing development programmes at national and local levels. Community profiles serve to support economic sector identification, analysis and development, including the analysis of labour market trends by sector (agricultural productivity, social enterprises, etc.) and provision of new opportunities for skilled and unskilled labour in both urban and rural areas. In such manner, they support the mapping of preferential economic sectors that are likely to offer the best opportunities for growth, expansion, and capacity to absorb returnees and help foster positive attitudes among the community for return.

A community-based approach can be used to maximize the impact of other reintegration interventions, through a "do-no-harm" approach to ensure that migrants and communities are not negatively affected by the actions taken.<sup>19</sup> It should also seek to engage with existing community platforms to ensure continuity and ownership.

#### Examples of programmatic response: Community-based interventions

- **Conduct assessments of the main communities to which migrants return** to ensure that reintegration activities respond to their needs and priorities.
- **Promote reintegration activities linking individual returnees with non-migrant populations** (e.g. joint income-generating activities, local employment schemes). Such initiatives could also be developed and implemented with the support and involvement of diasporas.
- **Encourage the re-establishment of returnees' networks** by actively involving family members, friends and the local community in the (psycho)social reintegration process.

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<sup>19</sup> Community involvement in intervention design can prevent misalignment in progress within complementary spheres of intervention. Investment into local education and skills-training facilities, for example, ought to be complemented by programmes of job creation or employment opportunities, especially in areas with high youth population.

### 4.3 Structural interventions

In countries of origin where capacities and infrastructure are not adequate to provide returnees (and local population alike) with an appropriate level of services, protection and assistance conducive to safe return and sustainable reintegration, policy, technical and material support to public institutions, the private sector and civil societies may be necessary. Furthermore, countries with a significant number of emigrants may also be in need of support to develop adequate policies and structures to address the specific needs of their nationals once they return.

Activities at this level include the analysis, revision or upgrade of policy frameworks, the support to national and local authorities in the development of return-friendly policies (e.g. by mainstreaming return and reintegration into local/national migration and development strategies as well as other relevant policies), as well as of standard operating procedures and protocols. In countries of origin, structural interventions may aim to strengthen national capacities to provide reintegration services to returning migrants through technical support and tools, facilitating cross-sectoral coordination, establishing national networks and referral mechanisms, and providing trainings and conferences to exchange lessons learnt and good practices. Such measures also entail working with the private sector and employers, as well as recruitment agencies (private and public) to support economic reintegration through employment.

Reintegration support on the structural level needs to be shaped in line with the needs and priorities identified by governments and civil societies in countries of origin. This should take into account both the development plans as well as any migration strategies at the national and local levels, in order to increase effectiveness and ownership of processes and activities.

#### Examples of programmatic response: Structural interventions

- **Engage countries in reinforcing local capacities** to deliver reintegration-related services through technical and institutional support: legislative reviews, adoption of guidelines, set-up of interministerial committees, and establishment of referral mechanisms.
- **Reinforce the provision of essential services** and fulfilment of rights in key areas such as education, health, psychosocial support, employment and housing for returnees and non-migrant populations alike.
- **Increase sustainability** of reintegration interventions by promoting their **ownership** by local/national authorities and stakeholders in countries of origin.

#### 4.4 Monitoring, evaluation and learning

Given the range of individual, community, and structural factors at play during the reintegration process, the impact of assistance on drivers of migration may be slow and difficult to measure. Nevertheless, monitoring and evaluation will be key in determining the impact of voluntary return programmes on the sustainability of reintegration. Reintegration assistance programming at all three levels of intervention (individual, community and structural) needs to include systematic monitoring (both at the programme implementation and beneficiary level) and long-term evaluation in order to assess effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, impact, sustainability and coherence. In particular, the data collected on direct assistance to returnees, including their feedback, provides an important source of information on the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of measures implemented. Long-term monitoring will also help to assess the impact of the different types of reintegration support on the individual returnee and the community as a whole.

It is also important to consider feedback of receiving communities not only regarding the impact of return migration, but also regarding the support for reintegration received at both individual and community levels. Such feedback will be crucial in informing future reintegration assistance, and also in identifying the correct balance between individual and community-based support.

Additional qualitative and quantitative research, including comparative analysis can help strengthen the interpretation of the gathered information. Data collected through these exercises should be carefully analysed and shared with relevant stakeholders to contribute to strong evidence-based policy and programme development in the future.

Data collection and findings from other related areas should also be taken into account in evidence-based programming.

##### Examples of programmatic response: Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Promote evidence-based reintegration programming** by encouraging long-term and systematic implementation of **comprehensive and harmonized data-collection and monitoring and evaluation** schemes. This will allow for the assessment and comparative analyses of the relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of reintegration assistance programming at all three levels of interventions (individual, communities and structural).

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

As part of its comprehensive approach to return migration, IOM recognizes that return and reintegration policies are more effective when linked with the protection of migrant rights and development of opportunities in the country of origin, particularly those that address the drivers of irregular and forced migration. It is critical that any approach to individualized assistance is balanced with community-based initiatives in the country of origin, so that all the key factors affecting reintegration are addressed and long-term solutions have a positive impact on the community as well. Individual assistance also has to be combined with more structural reforms addressing the underlying drivers of migration (and also be aligned with policy priorities of beneficiary countries) if it is to lead to broader and sustainable impact.

An integrated approach towards reintegration can only be truly effective when it is accompanied by comprehensive long-term monitoring and evaluation initiatives. Such initiatives will help determine which interventions have the maximum impact on sustainability of reintegration in the diverse contexts of return and provide a baseline from which to learn, adapt, and refine reintegration initiatives that are migrant and community-centered.

Ultimately, reintegration of an individual does not take place in a vacuum. Any activities supporting reintegration should therefore not only be cognizant of the space in which reintegration will occur but also actively address the broader structural factors that impact local populations' self-sufficiency, social stability and psychosocial well-being.



International Organization for Migration (IOM)  
The UN Migration Agency

Established in 1951, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) is the principal intergovernmental organization in the field of migration. IOM is dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all. It does so by providing services and advice to governments and migrants. IOM's mandate is to help ensure the orderly and humane management of migration, to promote international cooperation on migration issues, to aid in the search for practical solutions to migration problems, and to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, be they refugees, displaced persons or other uprooted people. The IOM Constitution gives explicit recognition of the link between migration and economic, social and cultural development as well as respect for the right of freedom of movement of persons. IOM works in the four broad areas of migration management: migration and development, facilitating migration, regulating migration, and addressing forced migration. Cross-cutting activities include the promotion of international migration law, policy debate and guidance, protection of migrants' rights, migration health and the gender dimension of migration. IOM works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners.

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