

# Capacity Building on Migrant Protection, Return and Reintegration

## Introduction and Background

Launched in December 2016 with funding from the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, the EU-IOM Joint Initiative (JI) for Migrant Protection and Reintegration was the first comprehensive programme to save, protect and assist migrants along key migration routes in Africa.

In the Horn of Africa (JI HoA), the programme was launched in March 2017, targeting primarily Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Sudan. Migrants are supported to return to and reintegrate into their countries of origin in line with IOM's Integrated Approach to Reintegration.<sup>1</sup> This approach is multidimensional, as it seeks to address returnees' economic, social and psychosocial needs, and it also prescribes a coordinated intervention at three different levels: **individual, community and structural**.

Reintegration assistance at the structural level works towards creating the overall political, institutional, economic and social conditions for sustainable reintegration programming.<sup>2</sup> This involves strategically engaging reintegration stakeholders, building and strengthening their capacities and establishing strong coordination mechanisms. The JI HoA programme has implemented initiatives to strengthen the capacity of the relevant government authorities in various aspects of migration governance, with a focus on migrant protection, return and reintegration assistance provision, and the establishment of referral mechanisms.

### Key areas of capacity-building activities in the JI HoA programme include:

	<h4>Policy Support</h4>		<h4>Process Strengthening</h4>
<p>Strengthening national policy frameworks to ensure that migrant protection and reintegration is embedded in national migration and development strategies and relevant sectoral policies in the country of origin. This includes support in the development and review of policies.</p>		<p>Supporting the nationalization of AVRR standard operating procedures, providing a robust framework for the delivery of return and reintegration assistance and enhancing referral mechanisms.</p>	
	<h4>Support to Coordination Structures</h4>		<h4>Digitalization and Migration Data</h4>
<p>Establishing and strengthening coordination structures to facilitate migrant protection and sustainable reintegration — at the regional, national and local levels.</p>		<p>Strengthening the skills, structures, processes or resources of key stakeholders to collect, manage and analyse return and reintegration data, to identify and articulate priorities to facilitate the sustainable reintegration of returnees.</p>	

<sup>1</sup> International Organization for Migration. Gravano, N., Götzelmann, A., Nozarian, N. & Jawadurovna Wadud, A. *Towards an integrated approach to reintegration in the context of return* (Geneva, 2017).

<sup>2</sup> See IOM's Reintegration Handbook. Geneva, 2019. Available from [https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iom\\_reintegration\\_handbook.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iom_reintegration_handbook.pdf).

## Key Results in Ethiopia

91%

Stakeholders declaring that they **are more engaged** in the field of voluntary return and reintegration assistance

11

**Strategies, policies and plans developed** and/or directly supported

90%

Partners reporting that data produced has **supported evidence-based policies, procedures & programme design**

3

**Field studies conducted** along with surveys and other research

656

Stakeholders **strengthened through capacity building** or operational support on reintegration

96%

Stakeholders declaring **increased knowledge** on return and reintegration issues

7

**National/regional/local networks and dialogues on migration** related issues newly established or functionally enhanced



ETHIOPIA Brook, a returnee from SNNPR, Ethiopia, in his barber shop funded through a grant by the EU-IOM Joint Initiative. He survived detention on his way to seek work in South Africa. © IOM



Ethiopia returnee, woodworker. © IOM



Gibe dam fish farming, community reintegration. © IOM

## Country Profile

Ethiopia is the second most populous nation in Africa (112 million people) and the fastest growing economy in the region. The country is located on important migration routes in the Horn of Africa and has a vast landmark territory (1.13 million km<sup>2</sup>) and four major languages (Amharic, Oromo, Tigrinya and Somali).

In 2021, conflict and violence triggered the highest number of new displacement ever recorded for a single country (5.1 million people).<sup>3</sup>

Economically, Ethiopia remains one of the poorest countries, with 925 United States dollars income per capita per year. The root causes of poverty in Ethiopia

include rapid population growth, declining land holding size, deforestation, soil erosion and rainfall-dependent agriculture coupled with erratic rainfall. Moreover, unemployment rates are high, and even for those employed, wages tend to be low or intermittent, thus making it insufficient to meet basic needs.

Ethiopians represent the main migrant group on the move in the region, mostly along the Eastern Route, which goes towards the Arabian Peninsula and in particular the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. These migration flows are also bi-directional, involving not only outward migration but also significant return migration movements, which occur under varying degrees of voluntariness.<sup>4</sup>

**The EU-IOM JI programme in Ethiopia actively collaborated with several government institutions, which provided support to implement structural level programme activities:**

ENTITY	MAIN AREAS OF COLLABORATION
The National Partnership Coalition Secretariat on Migration (NPC) <sup>5</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The NPC leads a coordination platform comprised of key ministries, United Nations (UN) agencies and other local actors and functions under six working groups (Crime Prevention and Law Enforcement, Victim Protection and Reintegration, Diaspora Engagement and Development Affairs, Migration Data and Administration and Migration Study and Research). Even though the NPC reports to the Ministry of Justice on day-to-day activities of the secretariat, it is accountable to the National Council on Migration which is chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister. The NPC provides overall guidance and support on structural level programme interventions, mainly while engaging in the development of different legal frameworks, policies procedures and strategies related to overall migration governance including migrant protection and reintegration.</li> </ul>
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ministry is part of the National Partnership Coalition on Migration. Through its embassies, the ministry provides consular services to Ethiopian citizens abroad, including coordinating return assistance to Ethiopian migrants in vulnerable situations.</li> </ul>
Immigration and Citizenship Service (ICS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ICS supports with nationality verification and travel document issuance for returnees (in transit/destination countries) and registration of returnees upon arrival by air or land at points of entry.</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/ethiopia>.

<sup>4</sup> IOM. IOM Region on the Move report (2021). (<https://publications.iom.int/books/region-move-2021-east-and-horn-africa>)

<sup>5</sup> NPC is an entity established in 2020 under the Proclamation for the Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Persons (proclamation 1178/2020) and mandated to coordinate, guide and support Ethiopia's overall migration agenda.

ENTITY	MAIN AREAS OF COLLABORATION
Ministry of Women and Social Affairs (MoWSA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MoWSA is mandated to coordinate returnees' access to reintegration services through a referral system. The ministry is also responsible for registering returnees upon arrival, organizing data and referring cases to relevant government and non-government actors to access reintegration related services. IOM and the MoSWA signed a Cooperation Agreement in July 2020 to collaborate in the areas of family tracing and reunification of returnee children. Engagement of the ministry was vital to the provision of support to vulnerable women, children and their families.</li> </ul>
Ministry of Labour & Skills (MoLS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ministry is mandated under the national assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR) standard operating procedures (SOP) to provide economic reintegration support to returnees and is one of the main working partners of the programme.</li> <li>Thanks to the ministry's vertical structure,<sup>6</sup> IOM established a partnership with the regional Bureaus of Labour and Social Affairs (BoLSA), which are one of the mandated entities in Ethiopia on the reintegration of returning migrants. The partnership with BoLSA was done within the programme's objective to enhance the capacity of the local government structures to provide returnees with sustainable reintegration support.</li> </ul>
Refugee & Returnee Service (RRS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RRS and IOM signed a cooperation agreement in December 2020 to collaborate on issues related to the reintegration of returnees in vulnerable situations.</li> <li>RRS and IOM have been working together to support the government in the development of a national database/system on return and reintegration.</li> </ul>
Ministry of Justice (MoJ)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MoJ supported, in collaboration with relevant governmental and non-governmental institutions, in identifying ways to extend returnees access to justice, including free legal services, through existing means and new initiatives.</li> </ul>
Ministry of Health (MoH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MoH supported the programme in terms of general health checkups to identified returnees who needed special medical support and followed up to ensure the provision of medical checkups and delivery of medical support in various government-run or referral healthcare institutions. IOM and the ministry developed training manual on how to offer mental health and psychosocial support to vulnerable returnees.</li> </ul>
Ethiopian Statistical Service (ESS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ESS is the lead government agency responsible for statistical record and data reporting of the country. ESS chairs the migration data and administration working group established under the NPC.</li> </ul>

6 National, regional, zonal, woreda and kebele levels.

ENTITY	MAIN AREAS OF COLLABORATION
Higher education institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within the objective of enhancing local capacity and building resilient and sustainable local structures, the programme also actively involved education sector institutions into its reintegration interventions. Two higher education institutions were involved in the implementation of individual and community-level reintegration projects in Ethiopia. Furthermore, monitoring and evaluation data collection and analysis were supported by public higher education institutions.</li> </ul>
Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TVET institutes at local levels provided support for the programme implementation by providing basic entrepreneurship and business skill training to returnees before reintegration counselling and in-kind support were provided. TVET institutes also provided ongoing mentoring and technical support to economically reintegrated returnees.</li> </ul>
Regional and local government structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close coordination and collaboration have taken place with the regional and local level government structures of the MoLS, MoWSA, MoJ and MoH. These institutions have provided technical support during the implementation of the programme, which contributed to ensuring sustainability of reintegration interventions. Furthermore, the programme signed several project implementation agreements with the BoLSA administrations in the Amhara, Oromia and Tigray regions and Dire Dawa City Administration and supported staff to provide a wide range of reintegration services to returnees in vulnerable situations in local communities.</li> </ul>

## Key Achievements

Under the EU-IOM JI programme in Ethiopia, IOM conducted a number of structural level interventions, as follows:



### Policy Support

- Led and funded the revision of the National Reintegration Directive (No. 65/2018) and ensured its consistency with proclamation on the “*Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Persons*” Proclamation (1178/202).
- Conducted consultations on the revision of the directive in Southern Nations, Nationalities and People’s Region (SNNPR) Amhara, and Oromia regions, where critical input was needed for the revision of the National Reintegration Directive was collected.



### Process Strengthening

- Supported the nationalization of the SOPs for AVRR. The developed SOPs provided a robust framework for the common understanding and consistent approach to the delivery of reintegration assistance to vulnerable Ethiopian returnees across all government institutions, UN agencies, and non-State actors. The SOPs were regionally adapted and validated in SNNPR, Amhara and Oromia regions.
- Supported the development process and adoption of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) Directive, in line with the *Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Persons* Proclamation No. 1178/2020. The NRM Directive defined the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in the overall referral pathway for delivery of assistance to returnees and other vulnerable migrants. The mandated organizations under the NRM Directive are responsible for providing a comprehensive and sustainable reintegration assistance to vulnerable returnees.

- Developed a *Training Manual and Facilitator Guide on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support for Ethiopian Migrant Returnees*. The documents will contribute to ensuring a consistent mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) approach and will serve as a primary reference tool for stakeholders who provide returnees in vulnerable situations with psychosocial support. Furthermore, to nationally accredit the guide for the Continuous Progress Development and ensure local ownership, the guide has two target groups: health-professionals and non-health professionals.



### Support to Coordination Structures

- Played a key role in supporting coordination and collaboration mechanisms of the Protection Working Group (PWG) under the National Partnership Coalition Secretariat on Migration. The programme provided technical, financial and operational support to the PWG.
- The coordination platforms, combined with capacity-building support provided to the PWG, enabled implementing reintegration programmes and fostering collaboration and synergies among State and non-State actors.
- Contributed to enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of return and reintegration programmes in Ethiopia.



### Digitalization and Migration Data

- The EU-IOM JI programme and the European Returnees Reintegration Programme (both implemented by the RRS) engaged relevant ministries and provided support to the Government of Ethiopia to develop the Return and Reintegration Central Database. The initiative aimed to ensure sustainable change to the migrant reintegration process and enhance the government’s ability to register returning migrants and record their data. Once the central database is established, MoWSA will be responsible for managing and running the database.