Capacity Building on Migrant Protection, Return and Reintegration

EU-IOM
Joint Initiative for
Migrant Protection
and Reintegration

Project funded by the European Union
Project implemented by IOM

IOM
UN MIGRATION

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.[1] 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.[2] 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:

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Policy Support

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.

Process Strengthening

Supporting the nationalization of AVRR standard operating procedures, providing a robust framework for the delivery of return and reintegration assistance and enhancing referral mechanisms.

Support to Coordination Structures

Establishing and strengthening coordination structures to facilitate migrant protection and sustainable reintegration — at the regional, national and local levels.

Digitalization and Migration Data

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.

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1   International Organization for Migration. Graviano, N., Götzelmann, A., Nozarian, N. & Jawadurovna Wadud, A. Towards an integrated approach to reintegration in the context of return (Geneva, 2017).
2   See IOM's Reintegration Handbook. Geneva, 2019. Available from https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iom_reintegration_handbook.pdf.

Key Results in Numbers

87%

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

2

Strategies, policies and plans developed and/or directly supported

136

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

6

Field studies conducted along with surveys and other research

665

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

97%

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

29

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

Key Achievements

Under the EU-IOM JI programme in the Horn of Africa region, IOM conducted a number of structural level interventions at the regional level, as follows:

Policy Support

- The EU-IOM JI in collaboration with IOM's Protection Division, the Immigration and Border Management Division in IOM's Headquarters and relevant regional and country offices held an inter-regional briefing and discussion session on the operationalization of the IOM return, readmission and reintegration policy.[3] Experts on return and reintegration from the Government of Ethiopia attended the meeting and participated in the discussions. The objective of the meeting was to present key actions in the operationalization of the policies that have been implemented in the context of return, readmission and reintegration with relevant government stakeholders, as well as share the scope, guiding principles and operational implications of these policies.

- The EU-IOM JI supported the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to develop a draft child policy and draft standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the protection of children on the move within the IGAD region. The policy and the SOPs were reviewed by Member States and other stakeholders including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and United Nations (UN) agencies. The main objective of the SOPs is to provide guidance for IGAD Member States and other relevant stakeholders to ensure a continuous, coordinated, timely, quality and comprehensive response to the protection and well-being of children on the move and minimize violation of children rights. The programme further supported IGAD in the development of a regional child policy to support the promotion and fulfilment of children rights within IGAD region. As a result of this process, the East African community (EAC) and IGAD developed an inter-Regional Economic Communities roadmap on strengthening national child protection systems and cross-border collaboration to respond to the needs of migrant and refugee children in the East of Africa and Horn of Africa.

- To enhance the African Union Commission's capacity on reintegration and migration, the EU-IOM JI seconded three experts (a Senior Migrant Protection and Assistance Advisor, a Senior Labour Mobility and Human Development Policy Advisor, and a Communications Officer) between September 2020 and March 2022. The seconded experts contributed to improving the migration governance and its coordination and organized a workshop to review the Continental African Union (AU) Guidelines on Return, Readmission and Reintegration Policy for the AU. The Senior Migrant Protection and Assistance Advisor led the drafting of the AU-EU Joint Declaration on Migration and Mobility, which was adopted at the Ministerial and Summit levels. The Senior Labour Mobility and Human Development Policy Advisor contributed to the AUC's efforts to advance the protection and promotion of migrants' rights and to develop policies and plans by drafting concept notes, organizing meetings and steering discussions. The Communications Officer produced press notes and social media posts for AUC, drafted the AU Commissioner's keynote speeches for various meetings, contributed to revising the AUC's Communications Strategy and developed its new implementation plan with the Migration Team. She also supported the AU Commissioner and the Department of Social Affairs in the initiatives they led, including the AU's COVID-19 response as well as vaccination strategy for refugees, internally displaced persons and asylum seekers in the African continent.

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3   IOM. IOM's Policy on the full spectrum of return, readmission and reintegration (n.d.). Available from www.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl486/files/our_work/DMM/AVRR/ioms-policy-full-spectrum-of-return-readmission-and-reintegration.pdf.

Process Strenghtening

- The EU-IOM JI validated framework SOPs for AVRR in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan by working with governments and relevant actors. The validation process involved consultations with federal and regional actors, UN agencies and civil society organizations to raise awareness on AVRR complexities and migrant protection and reintegration challenges. The validated framework SOPs in Ethiopia were adapted to each region and translated into local languages and formed the basis for the development of national and regional SOPs of the National Reintegration Directives.

- The EU-IOM JI trained participants from IOM, government and partner stakeholders in the region on the Integrated Approach to Reintegration based on the IOM Reintegration Handbook. A similar training was conducted in Somalia in early October 2022, in collaboration with Somaliland and in Ethiopia for federal and regional government stakeholders. In addition, the EU-IOM JI facilitated a virtual Reintegration Handbook training for government officials from Kenya, South Sudan and Uganda. Participants were introduced to the Integrated Approach to Reintegration and discussed ways to enhance policies, procedures and implementation. After the training, 80 per cent of the participants confirmed increased knowledge and planned to apply the skills gained to their work.

- The EU-IOM JI held a Regional Media and Communication Workshop in Nairobi, Kenya for journalists and IOM media and communication focal points from Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Sudan. The workshop sensitized participants on effective ways to share migrant stories and migration-related issues using social media, video, photography and story formats. The workshop also focused on reporting and media coverage on migrant protection and reintegration, as well as on developing accurate messages around return and reintegration and presenting them appropriately to the target audience.

- The EU-IOM JI and IGAD organized a joint technical workshop on return and reintegration in Addis Ababa to strengthen cooperation between IGAD Member States, exchange best practices, develop recommendations for capacity building and encourage institutionalization of the Revised Migration Policy Framework for Africa and its plan of action in the field of return and reintegration.

Support to Coordination Structures

- The EU-IOM JI actively participated in the Regional Child Protection Network, which membership comprises UN agencies and international NGOs operating in the East of Africa and Horn of Africa countries and whose mandate is advocacy, coordination and capacity building on child protection in the region.

- The EU-IOM JI supported the Migrant Response Centres (MRCs) through capacity-building initiatives on key themes including information management, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse and management of MRCs.

Digitalization and Migration Data

- The EU-IOM JI through the Regional Data Hub (RDH) contributed to enhancing the capacity of IGAD and EAC Member States to produce migration data and develop relevant reports and statistics through engagement at the regional level (IGAD and EAC) and through targeted capacity interventions in countries targeted by the JI. In particular, the RDH directly contributed to organize three IGAD technical working group (TWG) meetings in 2021 and 2022 (Ethiopia, Djibouti, Uganda), as well as the first EAC TWG meeting in the United Republic of Tanzania.

- Through RDH, the EU-IOM JI extended support to formalize and strengthen TWGs on migration data in Djibouti, Ethiopia and Somalia. These bodies aim to harmonize definitions and concepts of migration; standardize templates used for administrative data collection and reporting; design data sharing modalities and related normative frameworks; and establish automated migration data storage systems.

- The EU-IOM JI provided technical and financial support to the organization of the second IGAD Scientific Conference on Migration and Displacement (Ethiopia, 2021). Through the RDH, the EU-IOM JI provided technical support to the third IGAD Scientific Conference on Migration and Displacement (Nairobi, November 2022). The RDH set up an exhibition booth showcasing the RDH briefing papers, Region on the Move report series, and other publications related to the route research project.

- The EU-IOM JI collaborated with IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre and e-Campus to develop an online course on migration data, launched in March 2021. The course aims to improve knowledge of migration data production and dissemination for informed policymaking, covering key concepts, definitions, sources and best practices. Since its launch, 862 trainees subscribed to the course and 212 (25%) completed it.

- The RDH supported to roll-out the Migration Response Centres Information System (MRCIS) and trained the team on MRCIS use and functionalities related to case management.

- The RDH supported the National Displacement and Refugee Agency (NDRA) with the creation of a software application to issue registration certificates to returning migrants. These can be used by returnees to obtain a new national identification document free of charge. NDRA is also using the returnee database to refer vulnerable returning migrants to service providers and is planning to expand the range of services accessible registered individuals.

- The EU-IOM JI conducted the IMPACT Study, a flagship impact evaluation aimed at obtaining robust estimates of the impact of reintegration assistance provided under the EU-IOM JI, informing the definitions of a standard impact evaluation methodology for reintegration programmes and improving reintegration actors' understanding of sustainable reintegration metrics.

- Based on the experience of conducting the IMPACT Study, the EU-IOM JI also developed an online course for conducting impact evaluations of reintegration programmes, in collaboration with the EU-IOM Knowledge Management Hub. The e-course is hosted on the IOM e-Campus platform, is accessible to all users worldwide with no specific restrictions, is free of charge and is available in English, French and Arabic.

- The EU-IOM JI carried out additional studies and evaluation based on knowledge needs and gaps identified in consultation with reintegration practitioners. Studies included: MHPSS Research Report, Expert Review of the MHPSS Component of the EU-IOM Joint Initiative, Study on Retrospective Enumeration to Measure Reintegration, Study on Partnerships for Reintegration and Remigration Analysis.

- The EU-IOM JI held a Regional Stocktaking workshop on the evidence on migrant protection and reintegration to take stock of the research conducted and good practices gathered during the five years of implementation of the programme. The three-day workshop was held in Nairobi (Kenya) and provided a platform for over 70 technical level partners from government, NGOs, UN agencies, academia, and IOM representatives to engage in discussions and reflection. The workshop outcomes will inform future programming and research initiatives related to migrant protection and reintegration.