

G 15: SUPPORT MIGRANTS' HOST COMMUNITIES



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WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The disruption and displacement created by conflicts or natural disasters can have a severe impact on the socioeconomic well-being of migrants' host communities. Consequences may be felt in the State of origin to which migrants may return en masse, creating pressure on scarce resources and opportunities. In host States from which migrants have fled, it may result in sudden skill and labour shortages; or in States of transit to which migrants flee, generating a burden on services and infrastructure.

Host communities may lack sufficient resources, services and infrastructure themselves and may be unable to support migrants. Assistance that migrants receive to the exclusion of members of host communities, may evoke perceptions of preferential treatment and result in tensions, discrimination, stigmatization or social exclusion. An inclusive approach to post-crisis action that incorporates the needs of host communities and migrants can foster community and social cohesion and stability in the long-term.

Effectively managing migration in the wake of a natural disaster or conflict is therefore important to limit adverse developmental impacts of crises. States can create flexible visa options to promote migrant return to host States to aid reconstruction or stimulate the local economy. States of origin may see value in facilitating diaspora engagement in post-crisis action and recovery.

[Lessons from returns to Ghana, 2011](#)

Ghana experienced massive returns of migrants from Libya and neighbouring countries with no other alternatives but to return home. In the aftermath of the 2011 Libyan crisis, 18,000 Ghanaians returned to the country. In previous decades, mass return of nationals from Nigeria, Liberia and Ivory Coast had already caused severe impact on households in return communities. In Ghana, the migrant hosting households of Brong Ahafo and Northern regions, who largely engaged in subsistence farming or petty trading, were unprepared by the sudden large-scale returns. Sources of income were already limited and some households were dependent on remittances or other financial support that was no longer available. Households were unable to cope with the additional financial burdens to provide food, shelter and clothing. In addition, infrastructure was stretched and health, nutrition and education of the whole community were impacted. Households' resilience towards future shocks was severely reduced.

ANALYSIS OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF RETURN

MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDERS

Research to assess, analyze, and understand the short, medium, and longer-term socioeconomic impact of return following crises can facilitate better targeted responses in future crisis situations. Research and analysis should consider the impacts at the local and national levels in States of origin and host States as well as on migrants, their families, and local communities.

Socioeconomic development implications of crisis-induced returns, Cameroon and Chad

International Centre for Migration Policy Development published a comparative study of crisis-induced returns from the Central African Republic following a coup d'état in the country in 2013. The study highlights the impact of policy and institutional frameworks that exist in countries of origin on medium- to long-term implications of sudden mass return. In Cameroon and Chad, return generated difficulties in migrant households for instance through increased financial burdens. Returnees faced challenges integrating professionally and struggled to obtain livelihoods. Whether they settled in urban or rural settings also had direct bearing on their prospects. The study finds a need to strengthen efforts and collaboration to transition from ad-hoc emergency response to sustainable reintegration.

Vulnerabilities, coping strategies and preparedness of communities affected by returns, Ghana

More than 18,000 Ghanaians were evacuated from Libya and neighbouring countries (Egypt, Niger and Tunisia), with assistance from IOM and the Government of Ghana in 2011. In support of returning migrants and their communities, IOM implemented a reintegration and assistance programme. Within the scope of the project, IOM also conducted a study to examine the impact of the massive return on communities in Brong Ahafo Region and Northern Region of Ghana. The study assessed the difficulties returnee households faced and what coping strategies they had adopted with the objective of informing effective and sustainable assistance programming that strengthen community resilience in emergencies and large-scale migration movements.

ENGAGEMENT OF AND SUPPORT TO HOST

POPULATIONS

MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDERS

The sudden return of large numbers of migrants from a country experiencing crisis can strain local resources and infrastructure and place pressure on host communities. Providing assistance for returnees to the exclusion of host communities may exacerbate tensions and result in discrimination and stigmatization of returnees. Social cohesion, community stabilization programs as well as the inclusion of consultation mechanisms with traditional and religious leaders, women and other representatives of host communities and local civil society, can help mitigate negative consequences of mass returns.

Support the reintegration of returnees programme, Ethiopia

In 2015, the ILO and the Ethiopian Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs launched a new EU funded project to "Support the Reintegration of Returnees in Ethiopia". The overall objective of the project was to improve labor migration governance by enabling returnees to engage in productive employment and decent work. With a particular focus on vulnerable women and girls, the project aimed to provide individualized and rights-based reintegration assistance to returnees. The programme also provided targeted assistance to vulnerable groups of the local communities, in particular unemployed youth, people with disability and women in vulnerable situations.

Return and reintegration programme, Ghana

To meet the needs of the migrants returning to Ghana from war-torn Libya, IOM, with generous support from the Government of Japan, implemented a project to strengthen the capacities of 161 returnees and vulnerable community members through the provision of business development and management training and in-kind support to start up business. The project also provided national health insurance to 2,108 returnees, their families and sending community members; as well as psychosocial counselling to 152 returnees.

INCLUSION OF RETURNEES' NEEDS IN DEVELOPMENT PLANS

STATE OF ORIGIN

States of origin may need to adjust development plans at national or local level to address consequences of mass return of their nationals from other countries. Over short periods of time, unplanned returns can strain local resources and infrastructure and negatively affect local labor markets. Development plans can seek to leverage resources and skills that returnees bring and States can seek to incorporate returnees in these plans to benefit States of origin and host communities.

[My Joint Migration and Development Initiative Toolbox, JMDI](#)

The Joint Migration and Development Initiative (JMDI) is a global inter-agency programme implemented by UNDP in joint collaboration with six United Nation agencies. “My JMDI Toolbox” was developed to offer a flexible and comprehensive tool for local stakeholders to harness the potential of migration for local development planning. The toolbox contents were designed in direct response to the specific needs identified by local stakeholders and practitioners working on migration and development issues. In six chapters the toolbox examines a broad range of topics, including on partnership and cooperation, job and opportunity creation and how integration and re-integration policies can impact on development. The materials are accessible as [e-learning](#).

[Mainstreaming of Migration into the Development Plan, Philippines](#)

The Development Plan 2011–2016 serves as a guide to the Government of the Philippines in formulating policies and implementing development programmes for the respective time period. The plan enables the government, in partnership with the private sector and the civil society, to work systematically to give the Filipino people a better chance to find their way out of poverty, inequality and the poor state of human development. Sixty provisions on Migration and Development were included in seven out of nine chapters of the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2011–2016.

PROMOTION OF DIASPORA CONTRIBUTIONS

STATES OF ORIGIN

Diaspora' can contribute in significant ways to address the effects of crises on to their fellow migrants, their communities and States. Their engagement to invest in host communities can be fostered through the provision of matching grants and other incentive schemes. Providing work permits and flexible re-entry arrangements may enable diaspora to address essential needs, such as medical and psychosocial services. Other ways to promote their contributions are customs waivers to facilitate financial and in-kind support as well as to allow them to create employment opportunities for returning migrants. The role of celebrity diaspora can be utilized to facilitate awareness raising.

[Program 3x1 for Migrants, Mexico](#)

The Program 3x1 (“Programa 3x1 para migrantes”) aims to encourage Mexican migrants living abroad to contribute to the development of social infrastructure in their hometown communities. The programme provides a useful tool for federal, state and municipal governments to channel collective-remittances towards social-development projects that benefit migrant communities with high levels of poverty or marginalization. Contributions sent by migrants through hometown associations to finance local development projects is multiplied by three by the Federal, State and Municipal governments. It also aims to strengthening civil society-government partnership and to reinforce Mexican communities’ networks abroad with their hometowns.

[Philippine Philanthropic Fund \(PPF\), Philippines](#)

Following Typhoon Haiyan, the Aspen Institute Diaspora Investment Alliance (DIA) partnered with Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) America and the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) to launch the Philippine Philanthropic Fund (PPF). Through the donor-advised funds, Filipino diaspora can send tax-deductible donations to Philippine NGOs. In general, given their tax-effectiveness, flexibility and convenience, these donor-advised funds can represent an untapped source for diaspora communities to contribute to economic growth and development in their countries of origin. The PPF enables the Filipino community to engage in both strategic grant making and indirect investing by making grants to local NGOs, regardless of income level.

SELF-GUIDED COURSE ON MIGRATION AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE JOINT MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (JMDI)

Given the global context of increasing human mobility, urbanization and decentralization, it is cities, local and regional authorities that are finding themselves at the forefront of managing both the positive and negative impacts of migration, including when mass return of migrants can impact developmental gains.

The Joint Migration and Development Initiative (JMDI), developed an [e-toolbox](#) on migration and local development which is a flexible and comprehensive e-course for stakeholders working on migration and development at the local level (local and national authorities, civil society, migrants' associations, academia, international organizations, etc.) on how to better mainstream migration into local governance for enhanced local development and protection of migrants.

The course integrates the expertise of the JMDI partner agencies and was developed by IOM and ILO's International Training Centre (ITC/ILCO), in close cooperation with UNDP.

Module 5 of the Toolbox in specific, focuses on integration and reintegration - which are both key factors in the mobilization of migrants' capital towards local development. The module draws attention towards a better understanding of migration trends. It also illustrates how local authorities can impact developments through the design of pertinent policies and practices that strengthen migrants' resilience.

Modules at a glance:

- Core Module: Introductory module on migration and local development
- Module 1: Managing the link between migration and local development
- Module 2: Establishing partnerships, cooperation and dialogue on M&D at local level
- Module 3: Empowering migrants at the territorial level
- Module 4: Creating jobs and economic opportunities through migration at local level
- Module 5: Increasing the impact on development through integration and reintegration policies

General Objectives of this Module are to:

- Explain the direct relationship between integration and reintegration, and their impact on local development;
- Identify the actors with a role to play in integration and reintegration policies;
- Understand the way migrants' profile and personal history affects their ability to successfully reintegrate.

The Module covers three topics:

- The paradigms and challenges of migrants' integration and reintegration and their impact on development;
- The role of local authorities in facilitating the integration of migrants;
- The role of local authorities in facilitating the reintegration of migrants.

The Guidelines in Action present implementation examples and tools to support the operationalization of the MICIC Initiative Guidelines to Protect Migrants in Countries Experiencing Conflict or Natural Disaster. Practices and tools may be relevant for one or more stakeholders. Find more examples of practices in the MICIC Guidelines and in the online Repository of Practices on our website. Contact: [✉ micicsecretariat@iom.int](mailto:micicsecretariat@iom.int) [🌐 micicinitiative.iom.int](https://micicinitiative.iom.int)
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