



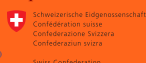
ACP OBSERVATORY ON MIGRATION
OBSERVATOIRE ACP SUR LES MIGRATIONS
OBSERVATÓRIO ACP DAS MIGRAÇÕES

South–South Return Migration: *Challenges and Opportunities*



*An Initiative of the ACP Secretariat,
Funded by the European Union*

*Implemented by IOM and with the Financial Support of Switzerland,
IOM, the IOM Development Fund and UNFPA*



Background Note

ACPOBS/2013/BN09

2013

ACP Observatory on Migration

The ACP Observatory on Migration is an initiative of the Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States, funded by the European Union, implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in a Consortium with 15 partners and with the financial support of Switzerland, IOM, the IOM Development Fund and UNFPA. Established in 2010, the ACP Observatory is an institution designed to produce data on South–South ACP migration for migrants, civil society and policymakers and enhance research capacities in ACP countries for the improvement of the situation of migrants and the strengthening of the migration–development nexus.

The Observatory was established to facilitate the creation of a network of research institutions and experts on migration research. Activities are starting in 12 pilot countries and will be progressively extended to other interested ACP countries. The 12 pilot countries are: Angola, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Kenya, Lesotho, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Senegal, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United Republic of Tanzania.

The Observatory has launched research and capacity-building activities on South–South migration and development issues. Through these activities, the ACP Observatory aims to address many issues that are becoming increasingly important for the ACP Group as part of the migration–development nexus. Documents and other research outputs and capacity-building manuals can be accessed and downloaded free of charge through the Observatory’s website (www.acpmigration-obs.org). Other upcoming publications and information on the Observatory’s activities will be posted online.

© 2013 International Organization for Migration (IOM)
© 2013 ACP Observatory on Migration

Document prepared by Maria José Oomen, former Junior Researcher at the ACP Observatory on Migration. This publication has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the authors and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the Secretariat of the ACP Group of States, the European Union, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and other members of the Consortium of the ACP Observatory on Migration, the Swiss Federation or UNFPA.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise without the prior written permission of the publisher.



ACP OBSERVATORY ON MIGRATION
OBSERVATOIRE ACP SUR LES MIGRATIONS
OBSERVATÓRIO ACP DAS MIGRAÇÕES

South–South Return Migration: *Challenges and Opportunities*

Among the different stages of the migration process, return is the one which is least well understood. The motives guiding return cannot be easily categorized and are highly context dependent (Bastia, 2011). Scholars and policymakers have focused on understanding and analysing decisions for departure, failing to acknowledge that migration is a multidimensional process involving not only emigration, but different stages which include settlement in the host country and the possibility of return. **Like departure, return also entails a complex decision-making process involving a wide array of factors.**

Following recent large-scale events such as the global economic downturn, which has affected mainly economically developed nations, and the humanitarian crisis in Libya, the return of millions of migrants to their homeland has raised the awareness of policymakers, scholars and civil society, including in ACP countries. This Background Note provides a concise overview of the process of South–South return migration. The first section focuses on the definition and background regarding the topic of return migration and provides different typologies of return migrants based on the work of Gmelch (1980). Section two provides an overview of return trends in ACP countries. The third section discusses the concept of sustainable return and reintegration in countries of origin and provides an overview of current policies and best practices. The last section describes the types of impacts of return migrants on their countries of origin and the background concludes with a list of policy recommendations for ACP and other countries.

Return migration is defined as ‘movement of emigrants back to their homeland to resettle’ (Gmelch, 1980) it must be distinguished from circular and re-emigration.

1. Definition and background

Return migration is defined by Gmelch (1980) as ‘**movement of emigrants back to their homeland to resettle**’. **It must be distinguished from circular migration and re-emigration.** Furthermore, most research on return migration has focused on North–South and North–North return; as it is a common assumption that South–North migration is more significant than mobility among the countries in the South. Still, South–South return migration is as important (Bastia, 2011).

Within the framework of South–South migration, clearly distinguishing between circular migration, re-emigration and return migration is a more complex process than in the case of South–North migration.

In the case of intraregional migration, clearly distinguishing between circular migration, re-emigration and return migration is a more complex process than in the case of South–North migration.

The high degree of ‘border porosity’ allows greater circulation rendering the process of return more common but also more difficult to differentiate precisely between return migration and circular migration.

Nation-state borders have structured how we conceive the process of return migration, and the definition proposed by Gmelch (1980) does not adequately grasp the entire process of migration in regions with highly mobile populations where migration is part of both cultural and historical traditions. The question is: what factors determine the degree of *permanency* of return migration and resettlement? Especially for intraregional mobility, this is a difficult question to answer and more research is needed on the topic.

The process of return migration is poorly understood due to three main reasons:

- (i) Urbanization processes around the world have lead to the assumption that migration is a unidirectional process involving movements only from rural to urban areas;
- (ii) Fieldwork carried out in a single place at a time portrayed the migration process as ‘static’; and
- (iii) return is not adequately quantified since most countries focus their efforts on collecting data on emigration and immigration of foreigners and do not count foreign citizens who return (Gmelch, 1980).

From a human development perspective, questions regarding the voluntariness as well as the sustainability of return arise, particularly when return takes place in response to humanitarian crises and violent conflicts.

Many recent studies and theories have shed light on the misconceptualization of return as the end of a migration cycle. When discussing return migration it is relevant to point out that one must distinguish between its impact on larger

processes of social development and those at the individual level. **Distinguishing between macro and micro-level impacts allows us to understand for instance, how motivations to return at the individual level interplay with those guided by events at a macro-level.** Besides focusing on micro and macro return motivations, **it is also relevant to focus on other aspects which influence return such as the maintenance of transnational linkages between receiving and origin countries.** In as much as social networks reduce the costs and risks of departure; they also support migrants in their preparation for return.

Typologies of return migrants

On the basis of the work and research carried out by Gmelch (1980), **three main types of return migrants can be distinguished:**

- (i) Temporary migrants: returnees who intended temporary migration;**
- (ii) Forced returnees: returnees who intended permanent migration but were forced to return; and**
- (iii) Voluntary returnees: returnees who intended permanent migration but chose to return.**

In the first typology, migrants' time of return is determined by the objectives they have set as part of their migration project. This categorization is not exhaustive but remains broad enough to place different and new typologies which might emerge as a consequence of new migration patterns and trends.

In the case of the typology presented here, (ii) forced returnees and (iii) voluntary returnees tend to overlap due to the different definitions and understandings of what constitutes 'forced return' in specific contexts and circumstances. **The degree of agency (or voluntariness) with regards to the decision to return varies, and in many cases**

There are three main types of return migrants:

- **Temporary migrants: Returnees who intended temporary migration;**
- **Forced returnees: Returnees who intended permanent migration but were forced to return; and**
- **Voluntary returnees: Returnees who intended permanent migration but chose to return.**

It is difficult to distinguish when return is a conscious choice or it is forced upon the migrants by either the specific circumstances, such as economic or humanitarian crises, or governmental regulations.

Sometimes, the unexpected happens and migrants face return before planned, or in the case of those who intended to stay abroad permanently, they are simply forced to return. Recent as well as ongoing events such as the humanitarian crisis in Libya and the global economic crisis are relevant examples of circumstances which have led to large-scale and mainly unforeseen return. In other cases, such as post-war Angola, return is planned in response to high expectations for economic and human development.

A migration crisis describes large-scale, complex migration flows resulting from a crisis and typically involving significant vulnerabilities for the individuals and communities affected (IOM, 2012).

it is problematic to distinguish when return is a conscious choice or it is forced upon the migrants be it by either the specific circumstances, such as economic or humanitarian crises, or governmental regulations. The degree of voluntariness present in the decision to return and its underlying motivations is context dependent. In the case of the massive expatriation of Malian migrants due to the civil war in Côte d'Ivoire, for example, categorizing these returnees as 'return migrants' may be difficult due to the low degree of agency and choice exercised by these migrants with regards to their expel from Côte d'Ivoire (Calenda, 2012). This example illustrates the inherent difficulty of categorizations and how typologies and categorizations in general must always be referred to within specific examples, otherwise they lose both their analytical and practical value. Furthermore it is important to point out that this categorization is based solely on the motivations which guide return. These categorizations help us understand and analyse certain aspects of the return process, however, fail to acknowledge contributing factors and can lead to a biased understanding of this process.

Migrants who intended temporary migration (typology i) have generally embarked out on a journey with specifically set goals and with a clear idea of when they plan to return (Baalen and Müller, 2008; Dustmann, 2001; Stark et al., 1997; Djajic and Milbourne, 1988). According to these studies there are three types of return motives: first, migrants have preferences regarding the location where they have a higher wage differentials in their consumption patterns, this tends to be the home country. Their relative gains in monetary terms in the country of origin only increases with migration to a country where they have access to higher wages. The second return motive is based on the case in which migrants have moved to a country with higher wages in comparison to their

country of origin; through their access to higher wages abroad, migrants have a higher purchasing power in their country of origin whereby increasing their incentives to return. In the case of Angolan refugees which in recent years have returned to their country of origin (from 2002 onwards), the reverse happens. Their desire to return is very much related to a higher economic development in Angola in comparison to the refugee host countries¹ where they remained as a result of the civil war (Melo et. al., forthcoming). Finally, the human capital accumulated abroad, in most cases, has the potential of having higher returns on their home country. However, the case study on Turkish migrants in Germany by Baalen and Müller (2008) on return intentions, aims to account for the ‘dynamic inconsistency’ in the development of return intentions as well as compare intended versus actual return. They conclude **that an inherent and dynamic inconsistency with regards to motivations, preparedness and intentions to return is present among the majority of migrants in their sample.** Migrants tend to have high expectations regarding the amounts they can save abroad and the time they realistically need to attain these saving projections. In order to realistically accumulate these desired saving amounts they need to constantly re-evaluate their plans and in many instances postpone their return.

Sometimes, the unexpected happens and migrants face return before planned, or in the case of those who intended to stay abroad permanently, they are simply *forced* to return. **Recent as well as ongoing events such as the humanitarian crisis in Libya and the global economic crisis are relevant examples of circumstances which have led to large-scale and mainly unforeseen return.**

2. South–South return trends

Although in the last two years massive return has been taking place as a result of the Libyan crisis, South–South return trends not linked to humanitarian crises are visible in other regions.

This section will describe relevant return flows ranging from the case of Haitians in Dominican Republic, Angolan refugees throughout Africa, Sudanese displaced persons who faced return to their origin as a result of the division of their country, and Malian migrants returning from Côte d’Ivoire. **In the case of Latin America, where some of the most complex migration dynamics have been taking place, the return of Haitians from the Dominican Republic has increased since the beginning of 2012 in line with policies from the Dominican government as well as IOM in assisting their support and reintegration** (Velton, 2012). The earthquake which hit Haiti in January 2010

1 The refugee host countries where the majority of Angolan refugees went to were: Zambia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of Congo, Namibia and Botswana.

generated massive displacement of its nationals to the neighbouring country. **Although many contemplated settling in Dominican Republic, they have not found suitable employment and living conditions and face return.**

The end of the war between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Movement in 2005 as well as the subsequent division of the country into Sudan and South Sudan has generated massive return. An estimated 2.4 million displaced persons and refugees have returned to Southern Sudan and three areas in transition: Abyei, Southern Kodofan and Blue Nile (Pantuliano, 2009).

In the case of Angola, the civil war which lasted twenty six years finally ended in 2002, with an estimated 4 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 128,664 refugees in neighbouring countries up until April 2002 (Brinkman, 2003; Hansen, 1981). IOM reported on the large numbers who sought international protection due to the resulting humanitarian crisis, consequently an estimated 400,000 Angolan refugees were helped return and reintegrate into the socioeconomic welfare in Angola after the peace accords (Melo et.al., forthcoming). A recent study conducted by A. Melo et.al. (forthcoming) which maps and explores return and reintegration of Angolans stresses the importance which returnees place on the possibility of conducting activities which support their socioeconomic reintegration and well-being (ibid.).

Another case which has generated massive return has been the end of the war between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Movement in 2005 as well as the subsequent division of the country into Sudan and South Sudan. **An estimated 2.4 million displaced persons and refugees have returned to Southern Sudan and three areas in transition: Abyei, Southern Kodofan and Blue Nile** (Pantuliano, 2009). Although tensions at a local-level between different user groups were common during the war, **the presence of returnees has exacerbated these particularly with regards to land.**

In Mali, return has been viewed as an interruption of the migration process, something which negatively affects migrants' reintegration, since the majority does not count with the necessary social capital and resources.

In Mali, as mentioned earlier, return migration only became a relevant phenomenon in the sociopolitical agenda in the previous decade. The attention increased with the repatriation of Malians from Côte d'Ivoire in response to the civil war. For dominant migration discourses in Mali, return has been viewed as an interruption of the migration process, something which negatively affects migrants' reintegration, since the majority does not count with the necessary social capital

and resources. **A study by Outtara (2010) showed that the majority of those repatriated were trapped in the informal market and unable to transfer the skills they acquired as part of their migration experience.**

The political situation in Libya since the end of February 2011 has resulted in the worst migration crisis² in the region since the first Gulf War. According to IOM's 10 months report on the Libya Crisis (2012), at the end of December 2011, this massive exodus has had striking implications for Libya's highly dependent economy on foreign labour since up until the crisis there were 1.8 million migrant workers in the country. Furthermore, it also affected the neighbouring region as well as many sub-Saharan and Asian countries where many of the migrants originated from.

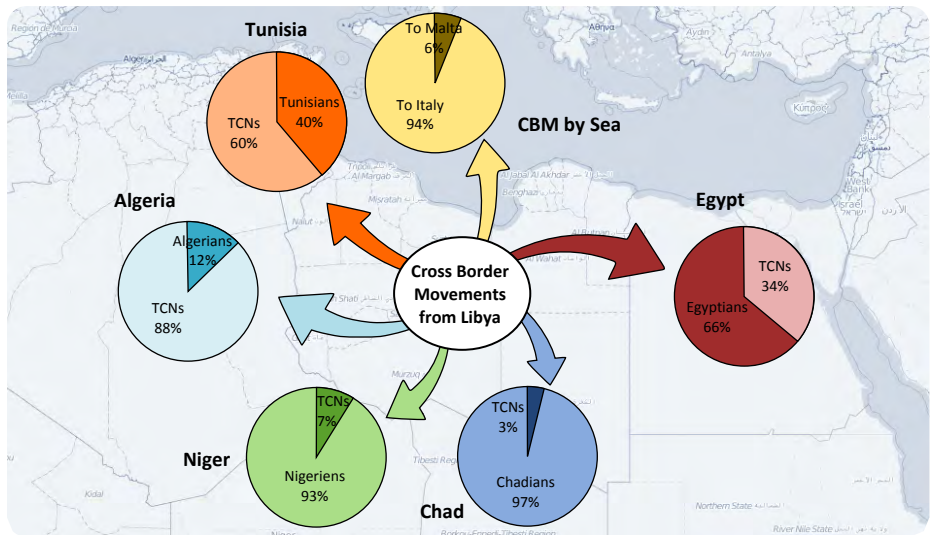
In recent years the number of total migrants in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA hereafter) region grew, with Northern African countries, which were traditionally sending and transit countries, increasingly becoming destination countries. In the case of Libya, migrants were estimated to represent 10.4 per cent of the total resident population in 2010, with an estimated 1 to 1.5 million irregular migrants in 2006 (Human Rights Watch, 2006; IOM, 2011). The majority of migrants originate primarily from West Africa and the Horn of Africa, although Egyptians, Tunisians, Algerians and Bangladeshis also represent an important share of the total migrant population (IOM, 2012).

Before the events of the Arab Spring, Tunisians and Egyptians constituted a major migrant group, however as of the first stock of migrants which fled Libya between 22 and 25 February, 81 per cent were Egyptian (IOM, 2012). The majority of returnees were the main breadwinners of their family, and 93.7 per cent stated they remitted money back to Egypt. After the crisis in Libya, the wide majority intended permanent return (ibid).

Tunisians also represented an important migrant group, with a total of 137,000 Tunisian migrants fleeing Libya up until January 2012. Tunisia has also been a main recipient of third country nationals (TCNs hereafter), since 43 per cent of all migrants fleeing Libya exited through the Tunisian border. **The largest group of migrant workers affected by the Libyan crisis however is made up of sub-Saharan Africans (see Map I for detailed statistics). As a whole there were a total of 215,106 returnees from sub-Saharan Africa,** among which the majority fled through the Libyan border directly to Chad and Niger (IOM, 2012).

2 The term 'migration crisis' is used to describe 'large-scale, complex migration flows resulting from a crisis and typically involving significant vulnerabilities for the individuals and communities affected' (IOM, 2012, p. 5).

Map I: Cross Border Movements in response to the humanitarian crisis in Libya



Source: Adapted from IOM, 2011.

The majority of migrants' home countries in Africa, such as Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali and Chad, are experiencing food crises and political instability (IOM, 2012).

The long-term impacts of the unforeseen and massive return of migrants to their countries of origin are still to be seen. **Reintegration and readjustment in the countries of origin are among some of the immediate concerns governments face. Particularly in the case of forced return, these can be problematic and will be discussed in detail in Section 3.** The massive contraction in remittances, which have represented important shares of GDP in many sub-Saharan countries, are major concerns for many migrants' countries of origin, which are characterized by high unemployment and poverty rates. In the majority of the migrants' home countries such as Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali and Chad, are experiencing food crises and political instability (IOM, 2012). **The unexpected and sudden massive return of labour migrants will only add pressure to the vulnerable situations their countries of origin currently face.**

3. Sustainable Return and Reintegration in countries of origin

What does sustainable return entail? The most basic definition focuses on the absence of re-emigration or desire to re-emigrate once returned to the origin. In line with this approach, a comparative study on best practices regarding reintegration measures by **the European Commission Directorate-General Home Affairs (2012)** defines sustainable return as ‘the absence of migration after return because the returnee is fully integrated socially and economically in the home country’. However, in today’s globalizing world, where individuals, let alone entire communities are largely interdependent, this definition provides only an increasingly unlikely scenario and does not fully account for current trends of increasing degrees of mobility across the world. Most migrants maintain professional and social networks abroad and can thus be considered sustainable returnees, particularly if they draw upon their international contacts upon return and can have positive impacts on broader development of the community (Anarfi and Jagare, 2005). Although many factors have an impact on defining whether return is sustainable or not, a study by Black and Gent (2005) suggests that the most important factors are related to the degree of voluntariness of return and the socioeconomic environment in the home country. If return was forced, as in the situation of many of the migrants who fled the Libyan crisis, re-emigration is likely to take place.

Sustainable return is mainly related to the degree of voluntariness of return and the socioeconomic environment in the home country. If return was forced, as in the situation of many of the migrants who fled the Libyan crisis, re-emigration is likely to take place.

Research and experience from policymakers show that three key factors determine sustainable return: economic, social and psychosocial reintegration into the society of origin. If the social, economic and political environment at home is unfavourable, re-emigration is also likely. **In this context return is not sustainable, since the cause of re-emigration is due to the failure of reintegration.** Still, re-emigration for example in the context of circular migration need not be a sign of failure in terms of defining the sustainability of

The specific institutional, political and economic conditions returnees face at home will be determinant on the role migrants can play at home as positive agents of change or as perceived burdens to crippling economies.

return. Some communities, such as those pertaining to the Andean region in South America reflect mobility as an inherent part of their history. Recent studies emphasize on this intrinsic historical and cultural aspect as a major determinant on circular migratory movements from the Andean valleys of Bolivia, which have been major attraction hubs as well as sources for migration movements in Bolivia (Cortes, 2004; de la Torre, 2004, Hinojosa Gordonova, 2009). Hinojosa Gordonova (2009) describes circular migration of the Bolivian community as *habitus*³, a way of life, a worldview which allows for a more sustainable use of resources, and aimed not only for the maintenance and survival of a family, but for an entire community or society. In this regard, the definition of sustainable return on the basis of no re-emigration does not hold, since constant mobility, as a *habitus* can provide for expanding capabilities and better quality of life.

Upon return, the readjustment and reintegration of migrants can be problematic, particularly if their return is in response to unforeseen and unplanned circumstances, such as the case of the Libyan migration crisis. The specific institutional, political and economic conditions returnees face at home have an important and in many cases determining effect on the role migrants can play at home as agents of change. Whether or not migrants become agents of change is positively related to how well they are prepared to return (Cassarino, 2004). In order for return to be successful this preparation requires prior planning, resources and willingness. **Return is most successful for migrants found in typology (i), i.e. those which intended temporary return, since they have clear-set goals regarding from the moment of their departure. Particularly in the case of labour migrants their return is coupled commonly with productive economic projects in order to ensure their future livelihoods (ibid).**

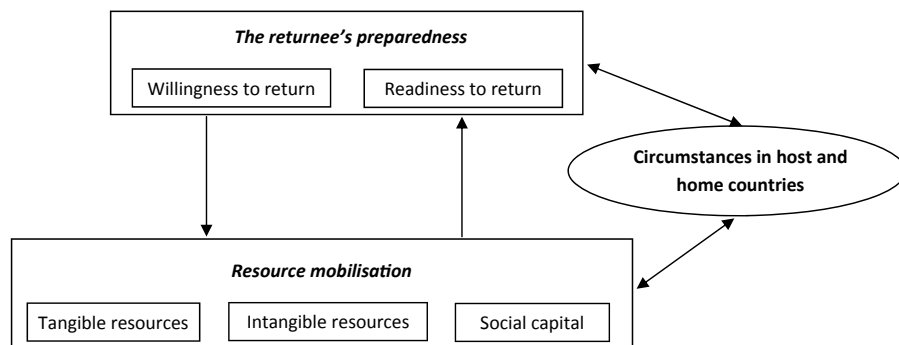
In order for return to be successful, at both the individual and wider socioeconomic level, migrants' preparation requires prior planning, resources and willingness.

Furthermore, there are different types of return preparation ranging from resource mobilization to preparedness. *Resource mobilization* refers to tangible (primarily economic) as well as intangible resources (social networks, knowledge and ideas) which can be used during the migration experience, and also includes resources migrants drew upon, such as their social capital, prior to the migration project. *Preparedness* refers to both migrants' willingness to return as well as the degree to which

3 Bourdieu's (1977) concept of habitus described a set of 'socially learned dispositions, skills and ways of acting' as a result of a complex interaction between an individual's social upbringing and their individual position within society.

they are actually economically and psychologically ready to do so. **Clearly, preparedness is intrinsically linked to migrants' desires and choice to return, and in the case of migrants who were forced to return, their degree of preparedness tends to be very low.** Figure I provides a visual explanation of the process of return preparation. **It shows how returnees' preparedness as well as their resources mobilization is interdependent on the circumstances present in both the receiving and origin countries.**

Figure I: Return Preparation



Source: J.P. Cassarino, 2004.

Emphasizing on migrants' willingness and preparedness to return adds another dimension to our general understanding of the process of return. Firstly, return is not merely a voluntary act, it also entails resource mobilization and time. Although migrants may express their desire to go back to their country of origin, this does not necessarily mean that they are ready to return (i.e. in terms of resources mobilization and preparedness both emotionally and psychologically). Secondly, focusing on returnees' role as agents for development, returnees' 'level of preparedness' for return varies both in terms of the type of migration experience they had as well as if the experiences was optimal or not. **For instance, a labour migrant who had a positive experience abroad will have a higher 'level of preparedness' than a labour migrant with the opposite experience.**

Return is not merely a voluntary act, it also entails resource mobilization and time. Although migrants may express their desire to go back to their country of origin, this does not necessarily mean that they are ready to return.

Return and reintegration programmes

Return is being increasingly incorporated into migration management policies of governments across the world and has attracted much attention in the international policymaking discourse. This understanding of return reflects the idea that migration is a process which should be managed and reinforces the centrality of the state and its borders. For many state discourses return can be merely reduced to the process of removal of unauthorized migrants and rejected asylum-seekers (Cassarino, 2008). IOM and the governments of many host countries consider Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) to be more beneficial than deportation, since it involves the migrant in the decision-making process. In 2010, IOM ensured the return of 31,134 migrants, out of which approximately 50 per cent received reintegration assistance. The approach of the **AVRR programme involves a wide variety of migrant categories ranging from rejected asylum-seekers, refugees whose asylum has been rejected and victims of trafficking, unaccompanied minors and regular labour migrants.** The AVRR programme analyses the effectiveness of the return project on the basis of the sustainability of the migrant's return and their reintegration. Advice and counselling prior to return is offered to migrants either by IOM or its partners (IOM, 2011).

Although AVRR was conceived out of the European experience, it is increasingly being implemented in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and the Pacific.

Although AVRR was conceived out of the European experience and the majority of cases encompasses North–South return from the European Union (EU hereafter), Norway and Switzerland, there is evidence that it is also taking place in the context of South–South return. AVRR is increasingly being implemented in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, MENA , sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and the Pacific. **In the African continent, the two main host countries for AVRR beneficiaries are Morocco and the United Republic of Tanzania.** Morocco is an important recipient of migrants from sub-Saharan Africa due to its location as a transit route towards Europe. This is mainly related to the increasing pressure the Spain and the EU have exerted on Morocco and other North African countries to curb illegal immigration into Europe.⁴

4 Under a 1992 agreement between Morocco and Spain, Morocco agreed to take back immigrants who had illegally entered Spain from its territory. In practice, the agreement has mainly applied to Moroccans, however since 2002 there has been an increasing presence of sub-Saharan Africans entering Spain via Morocco (Goldschmidt, 2006).

In the case of sub-Saharan Africa, in 2011 3,658 migrants returned to their countries of origin through the AVRR programme, the majority returning from host countries within the region. The large numbers are mainly related to the AVRR programme implemented for irregular Ethiopian migrant in the United Republic of Tanzania (IOM, 2011).

Mexico, Costa Rica, Panama, Belize, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay are also experiencing the return of immigrants to their origin (IOM, 2012). The governments of Central America and the Caribbean are coordinating efforts to provide adequate return assistance to migrants originating from within the region. These initiatives are carried out within the framework of the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM) set up in 2003 (IOM, 2011). The return of migrants from other regions has been more difficult and there is a need for greater agreements among regions as well as funding. The Dominican Republic and Mexico are the main host countries amongst others, where AVRR was implemented. In the case of the Dominican Republic, AVRR was implemented solely to assist Haitians migrants. In contrast, in the case of Mexico, it involved migrants from several nationalities from within the region as well as some cases of extraregional migrants (IOM, 2011).

The UNHCR implements a Voluntary Repatriation Programme for refugees. **This programme aims to assist return of refugees in different vulnerable situations, such as those who wish to return after long periods of exile and ideally once there is no danger to their personal security, as well as refugees whose asylum has been denied and consequently must return to their countries of origin.** UNHCR has developed a 4Rs framework of repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction. **This framework emphasizes an integrated approach involving actors and institutions of all the different phases of the post conflict recovery. A good example of orchestrated efforts among governments, institutions and international actors is in the case of Angolan refugees mentioned. Adequate return and repatriation schemes have been possible through coordinated action between the governments of Angola and those of host countries as well as IOM.**

The UNHCR implements a Voluntary Repatriation Programme for refugees to assist return of refugees in different vulnerable situations; it has developed a 4Rs framework of repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Return is most sustainable when coupled with assistance mechanisms which support the creation of socioeconomic opportunities and prevent the exclusion and separation of returnees and non-migrant communities.

Despite much support for the work carried out in repatriation schemes, skepticism has risen with regards to repatriation of refugees to countries with ongoing crisis such as the recent case of repatriations of Afghani and Iraqi refugees from Iran to their countries of origin. Although many opt for voluntary repatriation, upon return to their countries of origin, they are often confronted with a situation of desolation, war, unemployment and insecurity. This questions the sustainability of repatriation schemes in relation to countries at war such as Afghanistan and Iraq (Van Engeland-Nourai, 2008).

International initiatives to support reintegration and resettlement are visible, particularly in response to the massive return of migrants in response of the Libyan crisis. In the case of Chad, ACTED (Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development) and ProNatura have launched a six month pilot project in support of the socioeconomic reintegration of Chadian returnees from Libya. It will set up farms in order to grow crops and train stakeholders in response to capacity building needs (ACTED website, 2012). The insurance and success of such initiatives depends on the close coordination between international agencies such as ACTED and ProNatura together with the governments of sending and receiving countries as well as those of donor countries.

The massive return of labour migrants in response to the crisis in Libya can pose issues with regards to space and settlement in their countries of origin which must be managed carefully in order to provide a fruitful environment which promotes human development.

Reintegration policies are considered most successful when they are based on the protection of returnees' rights and the provision of an environment which promotes their human and socioeconomic development; specifically policies which tackle the reasons for their departure in the first place. Return is most sustainable when coupled with assistance mechanisms which support the creation of socioeconomic opportunities and prevent the exclusion and separation of returnees and non-migrant communities. In this regard, ensure that returnees and non-migrants mutually benefit from each other's combined efforts, skills and experiences. **Besides the economic aspects of reintegration, sustainable return is also based on returnees'**

degree of social and political reintegration. Many policies which have been considered ‘best practices’ aim to link pre-departure and post-arrival situation in order to provide adequate assistance.

In post-conflict states such as Angola, Rwanda, Burundi and Southern Sudan, land and property rights are increasingly receiving more attention than ever before, especially in relation to the return, reintegration and resettlement of refugees and displaced persons (UN-Habitat/UNHCR, 2004; Huggins, 2009). Despite the fact that the cases of return of the countries Burundi and Rwanda do not represent the phenomenon of labour migration, the policies of reintegration and resettlement implemented by both its governments are worth mentioning. **In terms of reintegration and resettlement policies, it is important during land disputes to support reintegration of returnees, and peace in the case of post-conflict societies.**

Due to its violent history, millions of Rwandans have at one point or another faced displacement either within their country or to a second and/or third country. Some returned to the to the Eastern province of Umutara, others tried to go back to the land their family owned, choosing the most convenient land properties the Hutu vacated as they fled. **Hutu refugees which feared arrest or death could not return and remained in Rwanda in IDP camps together with the genocide’s militia. Rwandans refugees and asylum-seekers continue to return today both voluntarily and involuntarily** (Huggins, 2009). In 2006, thousands were evicted from Western Tanzania most of which have attempted to resettle with their kin, however the process remains that their land claims have a waiting period of a minimum of two years (Human Rights Watch, 2007).

In the Burundi conflict more than one sixth of its population has been displaced both inside and outside of the country. (Huggins, 2009). **The large majority of displaced persons remained in the vicinity of their place of origin and have managed to successfully reclaim their lands.** Decisions to stay vary; some worry for their security, others find higher living standards in the camps and are better off than elsewhere. Approximately 300,000 returned from Tanzania between 2002 and 2008 (Pagonis, 2008)⁵. In the majority of cases their land had been given to others by the government, or their relatives had sold it to others or even divided the land among those who remained. **Studies in 2006 show that only 25 per cent of the 44,915 people who returned faced many issues regarding resettlement and access to land** (Huggins, 2009; Umwari, 2007). The failure to adequately manage the massive return of its citizens is very much linked Burundian refugees’ forced repatriation schemes and the

⁵ Before the conflict ended and the peace processes began, there were more than one million Burundian refugees (UNHCR/WFP, 2007), the majority in Tanzania.

negative approach towards Burundian asylum-seekers, labeling them ‘illegal immigrants’. **A legal framework needs to be developed in order to adequately assist the return and reintegration of Burundians from Tanzania.**

4. Impact of return migration on home societies

The impact of return migration on communities of origin and larger development processes is increasingly gaining attention. **Policymakers have focused mainly on the transfer of human capital upon return, and although the potential of financial investments of returnees is also recognized, more emphasis and tailored policies must be developed to provide a climate of sustainable return in the countries of origin.** In the case of West Africa, particularly Ghana and Nigeria, return migration has become feasible only in recent years due to a change in the political and economic climates (Anarfi and Jagare, 2005). In order to foster a sustainable return of migrants, adequate policies must be set in place, this section will draw upon different cases in order to point out how policy implications can make return migration more attractive and sustainable.

The success of poverty-reduction projects involving funds from returnees is highly dependent on the willingness, contribution and leadership of local policymakers working together with and supporting returnees.

Remittances’ potential for economic development has been heavily cited, and in many cases considered a panacea for many developing countries. **Although their positive impact cannot be denied, it is important to bear in mind that remittances are private transfers, and although clever and well-directed policies can have positive effects for community development, there are limitations.** Similarly, returnees’ contributions to human development must be recognized. Planned return in many cases entails migrants bringing back to their home country some, if not all of their savings, which they can spend or invest in the home country. This can have a positive effect on poverty alleviation and improvement in the general economic environment in the country of origin. It is worth mentioning that it has been estimated that the international flow of remittances to home countries is almost equal to Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and development aid and according to research carried out by Sander (2003), already by 1995 remittance flows were higher than the total Overseas Development Assistance (ODA).

In this regard migrants' return, if in favorable conditions and coupled with them bringing back savings, can lead to economic growth and investment (Black et al., 2005).

Migrants' families generally play a determinant role in migration decisions, and many studies have shown how migration is considered a family-subsistence strategy. Remittances are mainly sent to family members back home, accordingly family-related motives are among the three most popular decisions to return (Amarfi and Jagare, 2005). For example in the case of Ghanaians returning from Côte d'Ivoire, 33 per cent of returnees decided to return in relation to family matters (Black et. al., 2003). The amount returnees manage to save and the nature of their investments tends to be highly influenced by family matters (Amarfi and Jagare, 2005). **Transnational migrants have shown to positively contribute to economic development in their home communities both during their time abroad as well as upon return.** The success of poverty-reduction projects involving funds from migrants or returnees is highly dependent on the willingness, contribution and leadership of local policymakers (Kakbi et. al., 2004).

Benefits returnees can bring to the home society need not only be monetary. In recent years governments have focused on the relevance of human capital returnees bring back home and benefit the home community. Although much was written on the troubles of 'brain drain', now emphasis has been placed on 'brain gain' upon return, particularly of the highly skilled. However, focus should be shifted to incorporate the 'brain gain' from the low skilled as well, since this stratum of the emigrant population has the potential to contribute to society if the right policies are in place. For example, in their study, Black et. al. (2003) found that around 70 per cent of less-skilled Ghanaian returnees studied during their time abroad. **Although indeed elite returnees tend to have gained higher levels of human capital during their time abroad, mainly in terms of education, the low-skilled have higher potential than what is generally recognized by policymakers, see Table I** (Amarfi and Jagare, 2005).

There can be 'brain gain' from low skilled returnees since this stratum of the emigrant population has the potential to contribute to society if the right policies are in place.




Table I: Human capital gained by returnees

Human capital gained	Less-skilled	Elite
Studied abroad	206 (68%)	265 (88%)
Attended higher level of education than at home	94 (31%)	239 (79%)
Worked abroad	242 (80%)	258 (85%)
Reported gaining work experience	184 (61%)	254 (84%)





Source: Black et al. (2003).

5. Policy recommendations




Social Reintegration

-  In order to provide a successful reintegration on the long run, **examine the root causes of irregular migration**, in order to address these and prevent re-emigration in response to unanswered needs of the population.
-  **Structure projects which explicitly answer reintegration needs at an economic, social and psychosocial level.** Return and reintegration counsellors can assist.
-  **Aim to include and cooperate with other actors of civil society in policies of reintegration, in order to balance the assistance provided to returnees with that to the local community** and also to promote cooperation and social cohesion among the different groups.





Productive Return

-  **In the scheme of promoting 'productive' return, closely combine efforts and cooperation with agencies, non-governmental organizations and the private sector** on micro-credit schemes and business development.
-  Focus on ensuring the quality of immediate opportunities for returnees in their incorporation into the (formal) labour market, training courses in the fields of enterprise development, job-hunting as well as other programmes which may facilitate their reintegration into the labour market.
-  Ease the communication as well as access to communication technologies to migrants and their family and social networks in the country of origin.
-  **Aim to establish a policy based on transnational social work, or social work which goes beyond national borders, and aims to pool efforts between social workers in host and origin country** in order to smooth the difficulties of the return process and provide direct assistance during departure, upon arrival and also for reintegration.

Human Rights

-  **Humanitarian organizations involved in return and reintegration could provide support by ensuring that all legislative, judicial and administrative reforms are transparent** and guarantee genuine consultative processes with all stakeholders, and that all outcomes are in line with traditional community rights to land.
-  In November 2012, IOM adopted a Migration Crisis Operational Framework with the aim of institutionalizing IOM's capacity to respond to migration crises and to address current gaps with regards to migration in the international humanitarian system. This framework was born mainly in response to the Libyan humanitarian crisis and seeks to help States fulfill their roles and responsibilities in protecting mobile populations. This framework is a clear example of good practice which can be replicated in individual countries and regions. It aims to provide assistance to labour migrants found in vulnerable situations and not covered under current international protection because their displacement is not related to situation of extreme despair or war.
-  Legal, judicial and administrative land reforms need to advocate for and ensure that the legislative framework safeguards women's rights in accordance with international legal norms, particularly in the cases of inheritance and matrimonial law.

Land Tenure and Urban planning

-  Adequately addressing land issues is crucial for the entire reintegration and resettlement process and needs to be considered an immediate priority by all stakeholders. **Adequate legislative, judicial and administrative reforms must be developed. These must ensure respect for land rights of legitimate owners in rural and urban areas, and promote resettlement and reintegration and prevent future land disputes and provide adequate compensation.**
-  **Legal frameworks and close coordination between sending and receiving countries in order to manage return processes must be established.** These allow countries of origin to rightly assess, formulate and develop its policies of reintegration and resettlement.
-  **Coordinated and sustained efforts between the international agencies such as the UN and IOM, NGOs and donor governments** must be ensured in order to provide technical expertise with regards to land tenure.
-  **Adequate advice on urban planning** should be provided particularly in regions with high levels of return.

6. References

Agence d'aide à la coopération technique et au développement (ACTED)

- 2012 Supporting the socioeconomic reintegration of Chadian returnees from Libya and prevention of malnutrition in Batha. Available online at: <http://www.acted.org/en/supporting-socioeconomic-reintegration-chadian-returnees-libya-and-prevention-malnutrition-batha>.

Anarfi, J. and S. Jagare

- 2005 “Towards the Sustainable Return of West African Transnational Migrants: What are the options?” Arusha Conference, “New Frontiers of Social Policy”. December 12-15, 2005. Retrieved from the World Wide Web on June 5th 2012 from: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTRANETSOCIAL-DEVELOPMENT/Resources/Anarfi.rev.1.pdf>.

Baalen, B. and T. Müller

- 2008 Return intentions of temporary migrants: the case of Germany. Available online at: <http://www.cepr.org/meets/wkcn/2/2395/papers/MuellerFinal.pdf>.

Bastia T.

- 2011 Should I stay or should I go? Return Migration in times of crises. *Journal of International Development* 23: 583-595.

Black, R., G. Atfield, K. Koser, K. Munk, L. d’Onorio and R. Tiemoko

- 2004 “Understanding voluntary return”, Home Office Online Reports, Home Office, London.

Black, R. and S. Gent

- 2004 “Defining, measuring and influencing sustainable return: The case of the Balkans” Development Research Center on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty Working Paper, T7, University of Sussex, Brighton.

Brinkman, I.

- 2003a Refugees on Routes Congo/Zaire and the War in Northern Angola (1961 - 1974). *International Symposium Angola on the Move: Transport Routes, Communication and History*, Berlin.

Calenda, D.

- 2012 Return Migration to Mali: Explaining Definitions and Statistical Sources Analytical Note 2012/02. Available at: <http://rsc.eui.eu/RDP/files/2012/03/Davide-Report-Statistical-situation-in-Mali-01-03-REV-JPC-3-Rev-final.pdf>.

Cassarino, J.P.

- 2004a Theorising Return Migration: the Conceptual Approach to Return Migrants Revisited. *IJMS: International Journal on Multicultural Societies*. vol. 6, no.2, pp. 253-279. UNESCO. ISSN 1817-4574. www.unesco.org/shs/ijms/vol6/issue2/art4.
- 2004b The Conditions of Modern Return Migrants. *International Journal of Multicultural Societies (IJMS)* Vol 10, No. 2. Available online at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001812/181209e.pdf>.

Djajić, S. and R. Milbourne

- 1988 A general equilibrium of guest-worker migration, *Journal of International Economics* 25, 335–351.

Dustmann, C.

- 2001 Why go back? Return motives for migrant workers, in: Djajić, S., ed., *International migration: trends, policies and economic impact*, Routledge Contemporary Economic Policy Issues, London.

de Haas, H.

- 2005 *International Migration, Remittances and Development: Myths and Facts—Global Migration Perspectives*, Geneva: Global Commission on International Migration.

de la Torre, L.

- 2004 No llores prenda, pronto volveré. Migración, movilidad social, herida familiar y desarrollo. La Paz: PIEB / IFEA / Universidad Católica.

European Commission Directorate-General Home Affairs

- 2012 Comparative Study on Best Practices to Interlink pre-Departure Reintegration Measures Carried out in Member States with Short- and Long-Term Reintegration Measures in the countries of Return. Available online at: http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/doc_centre/immigration/docs/studies/ECHOMEREINTEGRATION_Final-January_2012.pdf.

Gmelch G.

- 1980 Return migration. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 9: 135–159.

Hansen, A.

- 1981 Refugee Dynamics: Angolans in Zambia 1966 to 1972. *International Migration review*, 15(1/2): 175-194.

Haver, K., F. Hatungimana and V. Tennant

- 2009 Money matters. An evaluation of the use of cash grants in UNHCR's voluntary repatriation and reintegration programme in Burundi. Available at: <http://www.humanitarianoutcomes.org/resources/UNHCRMoneyMattersJuly20092.pdf>.

Hinojosa Gordonava, A. R.

- 2009 Buscando la vida: familias bolivianas transnacionales en España. Buenos Aires: Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales - CLACSO.

Human Rights Watch

- 2006 Stemming the Flow: Abuses Against Migrants, Asylum Seekers and Refugees. Available at: <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2006/09/12/stemming-flow>.

Huggins, C.

- 2009 Chapter 8. *Land in return, reintegration and recovery processes: Some lessons from the Great Lakes region in Africa* in "Uncharted Territory. Available online at: <http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/docs/5555.pdf>.

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

- 2011 Humanitarian Emergency Response to the Libyan Crisis. Seven-month report on IOM's response: 28 February – 27 September 2011. IOM, Geneva. Available at: <http://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/shared/shared/mainsite/media/docs/reports/MENA-Seven-Month-Report.pdf>.
- 2011 Humanitarian Response to the Libyan Crisis. February–December 2011 Report. IOM, Geneva.
- 2012 Migrants Caught in Crisis : The IOM Experience in Libya. Available at: http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/free/MigrationCaughtinCrisis_forweb.pdf.

Kakbi, M., V. Mazzucato and E. Appiah

- 2004 “‘Wo benane a eye bebre’; The economic impact of Netherlands, based Ghanaian migrants on rural Ashanti” in *Population, Place and Space*, 10:2.

Melo, A., P.K. Sanza, J.T. Catito, M. Dominique and B.A. Alexandre

- Forthcoming The Integration of Recently Returned Migrants in Angola. ACP Observatory on Migration (Working Paper).

Outtara, B.

- 2012 “La réinsertion socioprofessionnelle des migrants de retour dans leur pays d’origine. L’exemple des migrants maliens de retour de Côte-d’Ivoire”. Rapport Final. International Labour Organisation, Geneva, 2010.

Pagonis, J.

- 2008 ‘Burundian refugee returns from Tanzania hit 300,000 mark’, UNHCR Press Briefing, Geneva, 1 April.

Pantuliano, S.

- 2009 Chapter 8. *Going Home: Land, return and reintegration in Southern Sudan and the Three Areas* in “Uncharted Territory”. Available online at: <http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/docs/5558.pdf>.

Raveinstein, E.G.

- 1885 “The laws of Migration”, Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, 48: 167-235.

Sander, C.

- 2003 “Migrant Remittances to Developing Countries - A Scoping Study: Overview and Introduction to Issues for Pro-Poor Financial Services.” Prepared for DFID. Available at: http://www.livelihoods.org/hot_topics/docs/Remitstudy.pdf.

Stark, O., C. Helmenstein and Y. Yegorov

- 1997 Migrants’ savings, purchasing power parity, and the optimal duration of migration, International Tax and Public Finance 4, 307–324.

Umwari, F.

- 2007 Etude Sur la Problématique Foncière Face aux Défis de la Réintégration et Réinsertion des Sinistres au Burundi: Rapport d’Enquête, République de Burundi/PEM Consulting, Bujumbura.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR)

- 2012 Housing, Land and Property Rights in Post-Conflict Societies: Proposals for Integration into UN Policy and Operational Frameworks Expert Meeting 10 and 11 November 2004- Geneva. Available online at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/425690684.pdf>.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

- 2004 Handbook for Repatriation and Reintegration Activities. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/411786694.html>.

Van Engeland-Nourai, A.

- 2008 Repatriation of Afghan and Iraqi Refugees from Iran: When Home is No Longer Home. “The Conditions of Modern Return Migrants”. International Journal of Multicultural Societies. 10 (2): 144-168.

Velton, R.

- 2012 Their Dominican dreams dashed, Haiti quake survivors return home. Available at: http://articles.cnn.com/2012-02-28/americas/world_americas_dominican-republic-haitians_1_dominican-border-town-dominican-republic-earthquake?s=PM:AMERICAS.

ACP Observatory on Migration

internal integration environment Kenya Lesotho urbanization Papua New Guinea

Nigeria East Africa Labour Senegal diasporas database Central Africa Haiti health Caribbean Southern Africa development

South-South Cameroon trafficking Tanzania migration rights Pacific gender statistics return Democratic Republic of the Congo Angola West Africa remittances Trinidad and Tobago

ACP Observatory on Migration

20, rue Belliardstraat (7th floor)

1040 Brussels - Belgium

Tel.: +32 (0)2 894 92 30 - Fax: +32 (0)2 894 92 49

ROBrusselsACP@iom.int - www.acpmigration-obs.org



An Initiative of the ACP Secretariat, Funded by the European Union

Implemented by IOM and with the Financial Support of Switzerland, IOM, the IOM Development Fund and UNFPA

