ERRIN
european **return** and
reintegration network

ERRIN Technical Working Group on Reintegration & Development

Operational Framework

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Glossary

ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION (AVRR)	Administrative, logistical, financial, and reintegration support to rejected asylum seekers, victims of trafficking in human beings, stranded migrants, qualified nationals, and other migrants unable or unwilling to remain in the host country who volunteer to return to their countries of origin[1].
COUNTRY OF DESINATION	In the migration context, a country of destination is the destination where a person or a group of persons, irrespective of whether they migrate regularly or irregularly, resided[2].
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	In the migration context, a country of nationality or of former habitual residence of a person or group of persons who have migrated abroad, irrespective of whether they migrate regularly or irregularly[3].
DEVELOPMENT	Development in this framework is considered within, as well as beyond the context of migrant return and reintegration. The approach encompasses sustainable development as in development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs and assumes the conservation of natural assets for future growth and development[4]. At the same time, this definition incorporates human and community development, which posits the necessity of enlarging people's choices to lead a long and healthy life, will allow the acquiring of knowledge, and to have access to the resources needed for decent standard of living[5]. In addition to that, sustainable development specifically regarding migrant return and reintegration, and related aid effectiveness, focuses on the extent to which reintegration support contributes to the development of the origin country, and links countries of origin and destination not just through aid, but also through the transfer of both tangible and non-tangible assets that migrants carry and contribute. Indicators of sustainability under this perspective must be grounded on the specific socio-spatial contexts of return, and consider the impact on returning migrants, but also the impact of these processes on the community as a whole[6].

1 "Glossary on Migration" (Geneva, Switzerland: International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2019).
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
4 "OECD Glossary of Statistical Terms" (Paris: OECD Publishing, OECD, 2008).
5 Ibid.
6 OECD, "What Improves the Sustainability of the Reintegration Component in AVRR?" Migration Policy Debates 24, 2020.

FORCED RETURN	Enforcement of administrative, judicial act or decision, returning an individual without legal right to remain on the territory, against his or her will, to the country of origin, transit or to a third country that agrees to receive the person[7].
REINTEGRATION	A process, which enables individuals to re-establish the economic, social, and psychosocial relationships needed to maintain life, livelihood and dignity and inclusion in civic life. According to IOM, sustainable reintegration consists of three dimensions (social, psychosocial, and economic reintegration) and three levels (the individual, community, and structural levels)[8]. According to OECD, although all countries make a clear commitment to sustainable reintegration, there is no common definition of "sustainable return or reintegration" across countries visited in this project. The lack of definitions and established indicators for measurement makes comparisons across studies difficult. A common understanding is necessary, but raises the question about who these programmes should be sustainable for: the states administering return and reintegration, the origin countries and communities, or the individual returning migrants themselves.[9]
RETURN	The act or process of going back to the point of departure. For migrants, this typically means returning from a host country (either transit or destination) back to their country of origin, i.e., their original point of departure. There are subcategories of return, which can describe the means of return, e.g. voluntary, forced, assisted, and spontaneous return[10].
RETURNEE	A person who returns to their community after having moved away "from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons"[11].

7 "Glossary on Migration."
8 "The International Organization for Migration (IOM), Towards an integrated approach to reintegration in the context of return, 2017.
9 OECD 2017. "Sustainable Reintegration of Returning Migrants: A Better Homecoming." 2020. Paris
10 The International Organization for Migration (IOM), "Glossary on Migration,"2019.
11 Ibid.

Acronyms

AMIF	Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund
ATP	Anti -Trafficking Programme
BAMF	German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CIB	Caritas International Belgium
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
ERI	European Reintegration Instrument
ERIN	European Reintegration Network
ERRIN	European Return and Reintegration Network
ETTC	European Training and Technology Centre
EU	European Union
EURINT	European Integrated Return Management Initiative
EURLO	European Return Liaison Officer
FIS	Finnish Immigration Service
FRONTEX	European Border and Coast Guard Agency
GCM	Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration
GFMD	Global Forum on Migration and Development
GIS	Ghana Immigration Service
GIZ	German Corporation for International Cooperation
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRMS	Integrated Return Management System
KII	Key Informant Interview
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
MPI	Migration Policy Institute
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MS	Member States
NDICI	Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRW	North Rhine-Westphalia
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OF	Operational Framework on Reintegration and Development

OFII	French Office of Immigration and Integration
PMU	Programme Management Unit
PPP	Public Private Partnership
R&D	Reintegration and Development
RIAT	Reintegration Assistance Tool
RSS	Reintegration Sustainability Survey
SRI	Sustainable Reintegration in Iraq
TWG R&D	Technical Working Group on Reintegration and Development
VoT	Victim of Trafficking

Key Points

- **Alignment.** The Operational Framework on Reintegration and Development (OF) aims to assist ERRIN Member States (MSs) in aligning their planning and activities undertaken in return contexts, from pre-departure to post-arrival. Increased alignment enables ERRIN MSs to better contribute to the sustainable reintegration of returning migrants within their communities and societies. In the past, due to a lack of agreed minimum standards, reintegration support has varied by context and by MS. The OF addresses this gap and aligns with previous standards laid out by the EU Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration[12].

- **Stages of planning.** The OF moves from the geographic phases of return and reintegration (pre-departure and post-arrival) to focus on the stages of operational planning (i.e. pre-design, design, implementation, and monitoring). ERRIN MSs can use the OF as a framework for planning each of these phases of referral mechanisms. These stages ensure a holistic design and implementation process, as well as adequate and independent monitoring of the mechanism. By identifying existing challenges and dilemmas, this four-phased approach to referral mechanisms also facilitates building on opportunities and good practices.

- **Principles.** The OF is a rights-based framework and principled framework. MSs should be responsible for protecting and assisting persons on their territory and accountable to supporting post-arrival outcomes in their country of origin. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM)[13] lays out the commitment to safe and dignified returns, flowing from obligations under human rights law. Further, the EU Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration similarly outlines an approach based on humane returns[14].

- **Partnerships and coordination with an ecosystem of actors.** The OF acknowledges that to succeed a range of actors need to be involved, including reintegration and development actors; international, national, and local actors; returnees themselves and their communities; and actors specialised in specific sectors (including education, health, livelihoods, among others) and in specific sub-groups (as for instance the reintegration of children and women or of victims of trafficking [VoTs]). The EU Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration recognised the importance of such cross-sectoral, multi-level cooperation by aiming to strengthen cooperation between and within reintegration and development sectors[15]. Such partnerships are to be sought from the start, with the ownership from local and governmental entities in the country of origin emphasised.

- **Referral mechanisms.** Central to this OF is the establishment of referral mechanisms that will aim to, beyond enable access to decent work and livelihoods, support the multi-dimensional

12 The European Commission. *The EU Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration*. 2021. *COM/2021/120 Final*.
13 United Nations General Assembly. *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration*. 2019. A/73/L.66
14 The European Commission. *The EU Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration*. 2021. COM/2021/120 Final.
15 *The EU Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration*. 2021.

needs of returnees within area-based development approaches. Referral mechanisms provide returnees a continuum of services across all dimensions while fostering ownership by country of origin actors. This implicitly recognises that there is not one organisation able to or mandated to meet all of the needs of returnees. Importantly, this is not specific to reintegration or to countries of origin - in all countries referral systems are the cornerstone of any case management. Referrals thus are an integral part of returnees' reintegration plans. Referrals, both internal and external, as well as those tied into national systems, will need to be adequately supported both technically and financially.

- **Funding streams.** The OF corresponds to the objectives of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI/Global Europe) and the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) that aim for a more effective funding framework surrounding voluntary returns. A more effective funding framework better contributes to fostering the sustainability of reintegration support and experience of ownership of countries of origin.

1. Introduction

This OF draws from the experiences, challenges, and lessons learned from reintegration and development actors who were part of the ERRIN Technical Working Group on Reintegration and Development (TWG R&D). It specifically draws from information obtained during the TWG R&D meetings (Annex 3) as well as conclusions reached in the Synthesis Report (Annex 1) entailing the findings of a research in Europe, and the Assessment Report (see Annex 2) which preceded the development of the OF.

The OF consists of:

- **Operational standards** for establishing effective referrals between reintegration and development initiatives and strengthening practical and operational links between the reintegration and development sectors;
- **Ecosystem of actors** that allows for stronger connections between reintegration and development actors and to bolster coherence and synergy between reintegration and development actors; and
- **Standardised processes** for learning from, operationalising, and delineating examples of good practices, lessons learned, and recommendations that can serve as a baseline for key indicators.

Structure of the document. The document begins by introducing the rationale, objectives, and scope of the OF. The concepts and principles underpinning the OF and the key dilemmas which the OF aims to address are then introduced. As the OF consists of three elements, the operational standards are first presented. The ecosystem of actors and standard processes designed to facilitate the implementation of such standards are then provided which make such standards a reality. The conclusion focuses on notes for further work.

1.1. Background and rationale

The increased influx of asylum seekers in Europe in 2015-2016 has placed greater emphasis on the return and reintegration of migrants. The European Union (EU) has implemented a series of policy measures aimed at the creation of a return framework, which is seen as an essential part of a comprehensive migration policy. Such policy measures include the European Commission's EU Action Plan for Return (2015), the Migration Partnership Framework (2016), the Regional Facility on Dignified Return and Sustainable Reintegration in Support of the Khartoum Process (2016) and the Renewed Action Plan on Returns (2017). The 2015 launch of the 'Integrated Return Management System (IRMS) by the European Commission has been a key component thus far of the EU's approach to improve practical cooperation among the EU MSs and with third countries in the context of return. The IRMS comprises three different networks: the European Integrated Return Manage-

ment Initiative (EURINT), the European Return Liaison Officers (EURLO), and the European Return and Reintegration Network (ERRIN).

As part of the IRMS, ERRIN began its operations in mid-2018, building on the earlier European Reintegration Network (ERIN) Specific Action Programme implemented from June 2014 to end of May 2017. The said Network strove to implement the sustainable return and reintegration of third country nationals in their country of origin, in cooperation with ERIN partner institutions from the 18 participating countries of destination. The ERIN Specific Action was funded by the European Commission AMIF, as well as by the partner institutions of 18 European countries. The ERIN Specific Action Programme took up where the European Reintegration Instrument (ERI), and the ERIN Projects (implemented from June 2014 to the end of May 2016) left off.

Recognising that policies in the field of return and reintegration have tended to be disconnected from development processes and priorities, throughout its operation, ERRIN has worked to facilitate the entire return process from pre-departure arrangements to post-arrival through integrating the reintegration and development fields.

Through its TWG R&D, ERRIN has enabled its members to work jointly on key reintegration related topics, alongside key development partners. The TWG R&D has been established by the decision of the ERRIN Management Board and is chaired by the Danish Ministry of Immigration and Integration, with the aim of finding and strengthening synergies between reintegration and (ongoing) development initiatives.

The TWG R&D has evolved in phases giving more shape to its purpose and objectives over time. It has raised more interest among MSs and development stakeholders to explore possibilities for incorporating reintegration into longer-term development planning. The TWG R&D presented itself also as an opportunity for its members to express their ideas on the subject matter, identify complementarities and, finally, align their objectives and strive towards a coherent programming approach to reintegration.

For the first phase, research was conducted to screen EU-funded and national programs of the ERRIN MS in the sectors of reintegration, as well as development aid. This was done to identify possibilities where and how the respective reintegration and development programmes could be bridged. Furthermore, the study searched for ways and provided recommendations on if and how both sectors, reintegration and development, could be linked. In this way, the research brainstormed challenges from different angles.[16]

In the second phase, in order to produce and assess tangible and realistic outcomes on the ground, three pilot-initiatives were launched and implemented in Bangladesh and Nigeria. The main purpose of these pilot activities was to test how such operational referral mechanisms will work, on a case-by-case basis. To this end, the implementation of the pilot initiatives aimed at mapping, linking and referring returnees to currently-implemented reintegration and development initiatives in these partner countries.

16 ERRIN/TWG R&D. “Results Phase 1 of the Terms of Reference (ToR): Research in Europe. Part I: Report,”

This exercise allowed the TWG R&D to test the level of cooperation between actors involved and identify best practices and bottlenecks concerning operational referral mechanisms. In order to learn which additional elements should be considered for future inter-sectoral project designs, the results of these pilot activities and other bridging projects as enshrined in the outline for the OF was to be evaluated. In this way, respective lessons learned could be integrated into the OF. The OF constituted the main deliverable of the TWG R&D.

Thus, in the third phase, the ERRIN Programme Management Unit (PMU) was appointed by the TWG on R&D to recruit and assign an External Expert to contribute to its set objectives. Within this context, ERRIN and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) commissioned Samuel Hall - a social enterprise specialised in migration research – to support the TWG R&D members in finalising the OF. The overarching objective that permeated this consultancy was to provide in-depth fieldwork-based support to the ERRIN TWG R&D in developing an OF for ERRIN, and thus draft a referral document for the TWG R&D.

To achieve these aims, the Samuel Hall team worked in consultation with TWG R&D Members, while also carrying out interviews and field assessment of existing activities and practices across the target countries involved in ERRIN return and reintegration programmes. This consultancy builds on previously conducted quantitative and qualitative research within Phase 1 of ERRIN, as well as existing evaluations of ERRIN TWG R&D pilot and other activities.[17]

In this direction, the ERRIN TWG R&D has strove to:

1) find and strengthen synergies between reintegration and development initiatives,
2) understand how they can be connected, and
3) examine what the limits of R&D collaboration might be.

Ultimately, through its activities the TWG R&D hoped to allow returnees from EU MSs to access and benefit from programmes and services offered by development initiatives in countries of origin, not just reintegration programmes. In doing so, the TWG R&D understands that linking reintegration services with existing development programmes creates more opportunities to support sustainable reintegration and contributes to increased socio-economic development in countries of origin.

With increasing recognition of the need to and actions required to integrate the reintegration and development fields, this OF sets forth standards, an ecosystem of actors, and processes which can bolster the cooperation between the two via a key practical link – an effective referral mechanisms. Based on an assessment of TWG R&D activities, this OF aims to address the chronic and significant challenges faced when initiating, designing, implementing, and monitoring referrals and their outcomes. It thus fills a gap in the field regarding how the integration of the reintegration and development sectors ideally occurs in practice.

17 ERRIN/TWG R&D. “Results Phase 1 of the Terms of Reference (ToR): Research in Europe. Part I: Report,” (n.d.)

1.2. Objectives and scope

Creating an OF based on key findings and lessons learned from TWG R&D members and activities was the main deliverable of TWG R&D. The OF offers practitioners actionable and directly applicable guidance on how to strengthen the practical links between the reintegration and development sectors and to bolster coherence and synergy between reintegration and development actors through operational standards, an ecosystem of actors, and standard processes concerning referral mechanisms.

This OF aligns with changes in financing instruments. For example, the NDICI/Global Europe initiative that sets forward key objectives on return and reintegration, as well as on policy coherence. It also aligns with the EU Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration.

Referral mechanisms are a key practical link connecting the reintegration and development fields. By working through and reinforcing existing development structures and services which are available in communities and countries of origin, referral mechanisms reconcile the diverse reintegration and development approaches to returnees' post-arrival outcomes. However, the lack of clear vision thus far on how to link development and reintegration via such referral mechanisms results in weak links and deficient coordination between the two sectors. This in turn limits the effectiveness of existing programmes' and partnerships' outcomes. The OF addresses this challenge and constitutes a common denominator for future efforts in reintegration and development cooperation.

The Assessment Report (Annex 2) centred on discussions with practitioners around ways to improve key processes – including written agreements, pre-departure and post-arrival referral processes, coordination, and programming to ensure implementation is both long-term and realistic. These components are integrated in this OF, which responds to the key dilemmas identified by TWG R&D members.

The intended audience of the OF are thus the ERRIN TWG R&D members, as well as future programmes financed by the EU or its MSs beyond the lifespan of ERRIN. While the findings are grounded in the TWG R&D, they can thus also be applicable to other relevant contexts.

1.3. Evidence-base of the OF

The OF draws on primary and secondary research, consisting of a desk review and the review and analysis of programmes in five countries of origin, namely Bangladesh, Ghana, Iraq, Nigeria, and Tunisia, and five countries of destination, namely Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, and Germany. Key informant interviews (60) and a review of documentation constituted the bulk of the primary research, with an additional limited number of beneficiary interviews conducted in Bangladesh and Nigeria (6).

For an overview of the primary and secondary documentation reviewed, please see the Bibliography. For a detailed assessment of the activities, which informed the development of the OF, and the methodology involved in the Assessment, see Annex 2.

Figure 1. Overview of assessed activities

PROJECTS	COUNTRIES	DONORS	IMPLEMENTERS
TWG R&D pilot project	Bangladesh	ERRIN	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC)
Private Public Partnerships (PPP) pilot project	Bangladesh	ERRIN	ICMPD Vienna and ICMPD Dhaka
TWG R&D pilot project	Nigeria	ERRIN	Caritas International Belgium (CIB) and Idia Renaissance
PROSPECT pilot	Nigeria	ERRIN	ICMPD Anti-Trafficking Programme (ATP)
Government to Government Initiative	Ghana	ERRIN and Federal Agency for Migration and Refugees (BAMF)	ERRIN Programme Management Unit (PMU), Ghana Immigration Service (GIS), FRONTEX, Ministry for Children, Family, Refugees and Integration of State of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF).
ERRIN Sustainable Reintegration Activities (SRI)	Iraq	ERRIN and Finnish Immigration Service (FIS)	Government of Finland, StartUp Refugees, European Training and Technology Centre (ETTC)
CAIR Danish Innovative Activity	Iraq	Danish development assistance facility (Flexible Return Funds)	ICMPD
GIZ-ERRIN Collaboration in Tunisia	Tunisia	ERRIN and German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)	German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ) Tunisia, Caritas International
OFII Mapping	Senegal, Mali, Cameroon, and Morocco	ERRIN and French Office of Immigration and Integration (OFII)	GIZ Mali and other development partners

Limitations

During the assessment of TWG R&D activities, which serves as the basis for this OF, there were limitations encountered in accessing key informants, beneficiaries, project documentation, and a reluctance to speak on funding streams. As a result, the perspectives of beneficiaries and development actors overall are underrepresented. However, these efforts are emblematic of the wider difficulties experienced in bringing together reintegration and development actors, where the voices of development actors, as well of beneficiaries themselves are underrepresented. In designing the OF, the limitations thus served as a key finding from which the OF also drew inspiration. A full set of limitations is provided in the Assessment Report (Annex 2).

Figure 2. Project-specific key informants by type

Project-specific key informants by type (n=56)

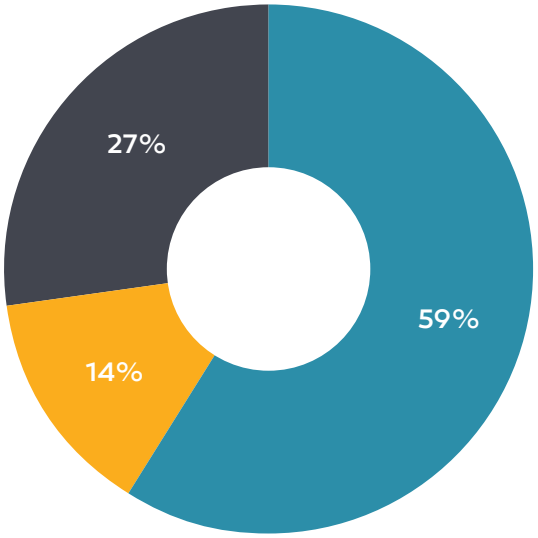
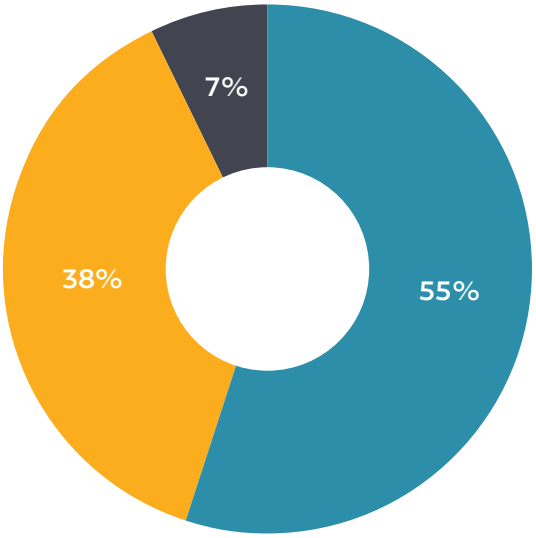


Figure 3. Project-specific key informants by location

Key informants by location (n=60)



2. Concepts, Approaches and Principles

2.1. Key concepts and approaches

What is meant by linking reintegration and development?

Historically, return and reintegration programmes have been focused on individual returnees while development programmes have focused on structural, area-based and community approaches. Across the last five years, the field of reintegration programming has evolved to understand the need to facilitate the reintegration of returning migrants at multiple levels – at individual, community, and structural levels. This requires planning and synergies across a range of actors, including those implementing returns and planning for individual reintegration (referred to in this document as 'reintegration actors') and those planning for structural access to services, jobs, and a decent life (referred to in this document as 'development actors'). Under the TWG R&D, both reintegration and development actors are concerned by **one common objective: minimising the negative impacts of return and enhancing the potential of returnees to contribute to their communities of return and countries of origin, and vice versa**.

Development funding has increasingly shifted towards activities overlapping with migration management, necessitating the involvement of development actors in return and reintegration policies and programmes[18]. Several targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[19], the GCM and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM), the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) highlight the interconnection between reintegration, and development, as well. Further, the EU Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration reiterates the importance of forging closer links between return and reintegration programmes and development initiatives[20].

However, complicating this merging of sectors, reintegration programmes are often narrow in scope and have typically focused on individual and on short-term assistance. In contrast, development initiatives are structural and longer-term[21]. For example, a development perspective on reintegration contextualises reintegration within the larger development of the country of origin. Thus, while the reintegration of the individual returnee is considered, the macro-level impact of reintegration programmes in terms of returnees' economic benefit for the countries of origin, reintegration programmes' alignment with their development goals, and returnees' impact on social cohesion be-

18 OECD 2020. "Sustainable Reintegration of Returning Migrants: A Better Homecoming."
19 UN General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. 2015, A/RES/70/1.
20 The European Commission. *The EU Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration*. 2021. *COM/2021/120 Final*.
21 OECD 2020. "Sustainable Reintegration of Returning Migrants: A Better Homecoming."

tween migrants and non-migrants,[22] is preferred. Merging reintegration with development sectors, the current individual assistance provided to returnees thus contrasts with the community-oriented practices of development actors.

For reintegration and development actors to coordinate, there must thus be a structural shift in perspective on return and reintegration assistance and returnees. Facilitating this shift are practical links, such as referral mechanisms.

Based off practitioners' perspectives, referral mechanisms, as they involve the transnational and cross-sectoral collaboration of both reintegration and development actors, are based on a mutual understanding of reintegration consisting of three elements, namely that returnees' sustainable reintegration

1. **contributes to inclusive and cohesive societies,**
2. **is multi-dimensional, and**
3. **is based off local ownership**[23].

What is meant by establishing a system of referral mechanisms?

Referral mechanisms are a process of cooperation - systematic, structured, and regularised - that bridges the gap between reintegration assistance and ongoing or planned development projects. Referral mechanisms thus provide returnees a continuum of services across all reintegration dimensions while fostering ownership by country-of-origin actors. Referral mechanisms need to meet four requirements:

- **Written agreements,** with a focus on standard operating procedures.
- **Coordination** across an ecosystem of actors, with a focus on **local ownership**.
- **Pre-departure and post-arrival** linkages, with a focus on **planning and eligibility guidelines**.
- **Multi-dimensional programming**, with an emphasis on **monitoring**.

A comprehensive approach to reintegration and development covers these four components. These four components are thus the common denominators that stakeholders consulted for this OF have broadly agreed upon. Their operationalisation is the focus of this OF.

- **Written agreements.** The TWG R&D members identified, and the Assessment Report details, key recommendations to harmonise approaches adopted by reintegration and development actors in the field of reintegration with a clear ask for clarity on processes and standard operating procedures (to clarify 'who does what when and how'). These need to be clarified in writing to understand when and where the work of reintegration actors ends, and when

22 Ibid.
23 Key informant interview (KII) 1, KII2, KII3. Note, these are indicative references rather than exhaustive.

and where the work of development actors begins, with transparency on areas of overlap. As it emerged from the assessment of the TWG R&D pilot activities in Bangladesh and Nigeria, one key obstacle remains the different eligibility criteria amongst programmes and the lack of interest of some returnees in attending trainings, given what is often a different set of needs and profiles from those of the local population[24]. Written agreements will serve to outline a strategy to address these challenges with responsibilities on financing approaches that will need to be shared. However, such written agreements should not overwhelm small, highly-localised civil society organisations (CSOs) on the ground – who are key partners in referral mechanisms' inception, design, implementation, and monitoring.

- **Coordination**. The Assessment Report clarifies the positive impact that coordination can have on reintegration even when limited resources are available. One of the good practices reviewed is the establishment of a national coordination mechanism for international, national, and local reintegration and development actors to coordinate both programming and capacity building efforts. In Iraq, this approach was recommended to contribute to a de-siloisation of actors currently working on return and reintegration in the country.

- **Pre-return and post-arrival linkages**. The Assessment Report reviewed the ERRIN project's aim of connecting actors transnationally in the referral process – with pre-departure and post-arrival referrals. One of the key challenges to this coordination has been on eligibility criteria – of individual returnees, as well as families, identified for example in the pilot activity in Nigeria[25]. Coordination will then need to focus on providing accurate information, establishing clear roles, building robust communication challenges, providing a budget which values communication (e.g. for the hiring of skilled counsellors in charge of on the ground coordination), etc. Importantly, enhanced communication between pre-departure and post-arrival actors produces realistic reintegration plans, as was identified in Ghana.

- **Multi-dimensional programming and monitoring**. The Assessment Report reviewed efforts towards engaging with the private sector through PPPs with the government, as seen in Bangladesh, and the utilisation of PPP platforms as in Iraq[26]. Further, the Assessment Report identified the multi-dimensional and interconnect needs of returnees, such as the centrality of psychological and social support in supporting economic reintegration. The need for multi-dimensional programming thus necessitates the need for multi-dimensional monitoring. This would need to provide a space for communities, families, and individuals to give their feedback.

If referral mechanisms meet the above four criteria, they can be considered as effective and contributing to linking reintegration actors and development actors.

24 KII3, KII4, KII5
25 Final report of the TWG R&D Project in Nigeria
26 PPP Project Proposal; Danish Innovative Activity in Iraq Project Proposal

Agreeing on an operationalisation of referral mechanisms: A four-staged approach

The design of the OF reviews what needs to be done at the various stages of planning. In this regard, practitioners identified opportunities across the activities of the TWG R&D activities according to four phases of programming:

- **Pre-design:** Understanding context specific considerations through programme mapping and scenario planning.
- **Design:** Addressing cooperation and coordination needs.
- **Implementation:** Establishing formalised referral systems.
- **Monitoring:** A monitoring framework and identification of key performance indicators suitable for both reintegration and development actors in the context of reintegration.

Pre-departure and post-arrival language silos reintegration and development actors to their geographic approaches and thus limits both ownership in countries of origin and transnational cooperation. To avoid this pitfall, the OF takes a four-stage approach to referral mechanisms, divided into pre-design, design, implementation, and monitoring phases.

While pre-departure and post-arrival language remain valuable for identifying at which stage of the return a referral is occurring, it also strengthens the barrier between country of destination and country of origin actors where country of destination actors are responsible for pre-departure and country of origin for post-arrival. It thus limits the transnational approaches which are much needed for establishing effective referral mechanisms. Pre-departure and post-arrival language are used to refer to as a geographic/time typology of referrals, rather than referring to any stage in the referral mechanism inception, design, implementation, or monitoring process.

2.2. Guiding principles

Underpinning this OF are 10 guiding principles. The operational standards, ecosystem of actors, and standard processes uphold these principles, ensuring that the rights and dignity of returnees are respected and strengthened throughout the return and reintegration process.

These principles apply to all referral mechanisms pursued under this OF. The principles pull from evidence gathered during the assessment, experiences, and opinions expressed in the TWG R&D meetings; the Quality Framework being developed by the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) and ERRIN; and finally general guiding principles on return, readmission, and sustainable reintegration, such as those from the IOM.

Figure 4. Guiding principles

Tailored referrals

Referrals should be specific and tailored to returnees' needs and wants. They should be sensitive to age, gender, and other diversity factors, including such factors of vulnerability as trafficking (as proposed in the PROSPECT project). However, such tailored referrals should be short-term and exist alongside longer-term development-oriented referrals.

Participation

Returnees are active participants in their own return and reintegration process, regardless of the nature of their return, and in the development of their communities. As such, not only their needs, but their wants should be considered in any referral mechanism. This requires a two-way system for accurate and timely information.

Whole of Society

Promoting a broad partnership to address sustainable reintegration, building on government-to-government collaborations (from the pre-departure to the post-arrival stages) as well as the inclusion of an ecosystem of actors – from the civil society to the private sector – that can best understand the profiles and needs of returnees and their communities.

Do no harm

Referral mechanisms should do no harm to returnees and their communities. This means upholding critical principles such as promoting voluntary return, as well as anonymity, confidentiality, consent, and data protection measures in the operations of referral mechanisms. It also requires due consideration of specific sub-groups' needs (children, women, VoT's, returnees with diverse sexual orientation and gender identity, among others).

Fairness

Integrating the reintegration and development fields necessitates also being cognisant of not exacerbating vulnerabilities or producing inequalities between migrant and non-migrant communities in the countries of origin. Ensuring that referrals build off existing development initiatives and objectives ensures such inequalities are not (re-) produced.

Complementarity

Each actor should remain in their field of expertise while looking for synergies across programmes and structures. This necessitates abiding by the principle of complementary from pre-design through monitoring stages. Before any return and reintegration programme is newly designed, efforts should be made to connect returnees with already-existing development structures on the ground.

Coherence

Actors should merge the themes of reintegration and development, coordinate eligibility criteria, and, in the long-term, streamline financial sources. Coherence in such aspects enhances complementarity and prevents programme overlap. However, targeted individual reintegration assistance will and should continue to coexist alongside such mutualised efforts. Ties between community-based development and individualised return approaches should be strengthened.

Rights-based approach

This OF aligns with the EU Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration, the UN Migration Network for Return and Reintegration, and international human rights law which applies to all people without discrimination, including *inter alia* the principle of non-refoulement and the promotion of voluntary returns and reintegration. Human rights are respected across all stages of the migration cycle, regardless of migration status.

Local ownership

Referral mechanisms should enhance local ownership of return and reintegration by capitalising off localised development structures and processes. In particular, institutional capacity-building activities can assist in this regard. Countries of destination cannot indefinitely support returnees in countries of origin.

Transnational cooperation

The bulk of the reintegration process takes place in the country of origin. However, given the vested interest in countries of destination in migration management and returns, as well as their role in providing pre-departure services and initiating pre-departure referral mechanisms, transnational cooperation with clearly defined roles and responsibilities is critical for a smooth-functioning referral mechanism.

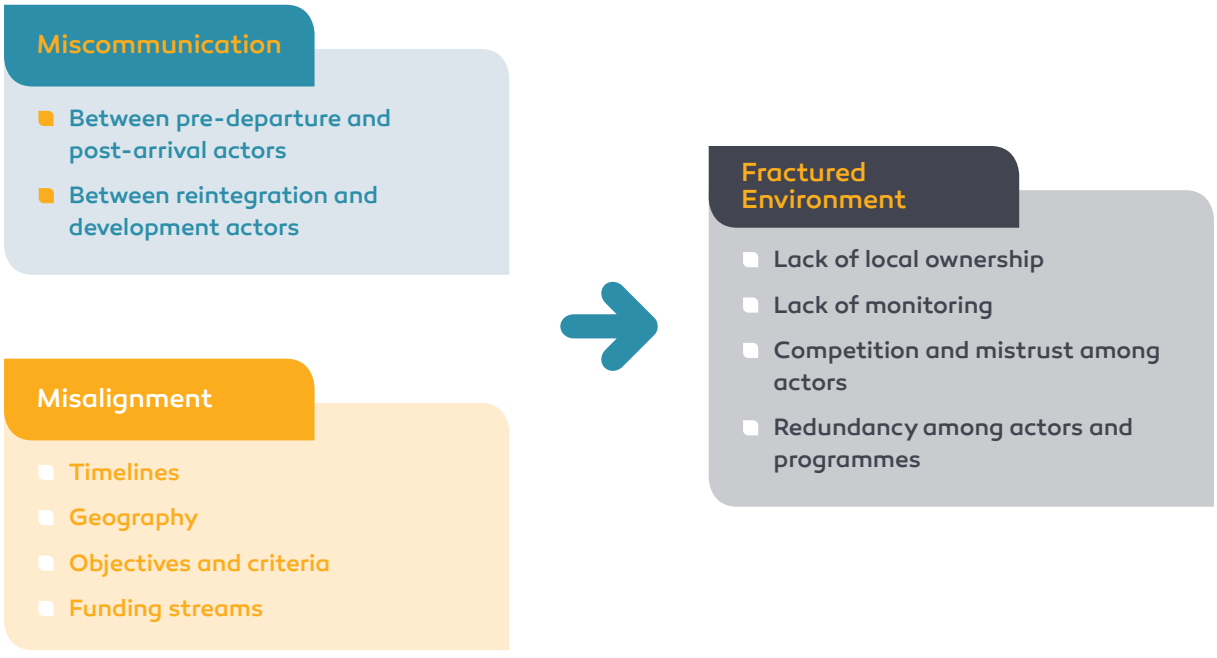
3. Key Dilemmas Addressed in the OF

The TWG R&D members' contributions (Annex 3), the Synthesis Report (Annex 1) and the assessment of TWG R&D activities, synthesized in the Assessment Report (Annex 2) which collectively serve as the background to this OF, identified a number of key dilemmas in the TWG R&D MSs' experiences and activities. This OF seeks to address such challenges. The OF thus fills a gap by providing guidance and addressing the dilemmas identified by reintegration and development actors already working towards establishing referral mechanisms. The key questions – raised in the context of the TWG R&D and validated by key informant interviews with MSs of ERRIN - include:

- **How can reintegration and development actors work better together vis-à-vis referral mechanisms?**
- **What is the framework where development and migration/return agencies could work together in a complementary manner, for stronger referral mechanisms and thus better reintegration outcomes?**

During the TWG R&D meetings and interviews, TWG R&D members and stakeholders have identified the main dilemmas linked to the ERRIN initiatives. Together, these dilemmas respond to the questions above, identifying opportunities across the four main stages of the ERRIN pilots namely pre-design, design, implementation, and monitoring. Annex 2 provides further detail on the assessment results from which these dilemmas are drawn.

Figure 5. Key dilemmas to resolve through the OF as expressed by TWG R&D members



3.1. Miscommunication

Miscommunication existed across two scales: geographically between pre-departure (country of destination) and post-return (country of origin) actors and across sectors between reintegration and development actors. The consequences of such miscommunication emerged through the assessment of ERRIN pilots and other activities. For example, key informants shared how miscommunication led to difficulties in designing and implementing referral mechanisms as on-the-ground realities, were at times ignored and reintegration actors may not have known of how to best tap into development initiatives in countries of origin[27].

Between pre-departure and post-return actors

Coordination between actors in the countries of destination and origin is critical for establishing an effective referral mechanism, particularly for pre-departure referrals as indicated in Ghana. Importantly, this coordination was at times lacking[28]. This communication can occur formally (e.g. through coordination platforms) or informally (e.g. through WhatsApp as done in Ghana).

GOOD PRACTICE

One key best practice identified included when officials from Denmark conducted transnational, multi-level communication with NGOs on the ground in Nigeria and discussed reintegration options for VoTs.

Transnational cooperation across all stages of the referral mechanism (i.e. pre-design, design, implementation, monitoring) ensures local buy-in in countries of origin; that the referral mechanism is grounded in the systems already existing in countries of origin; and that the entirety of migrants' return processes are considered within the mechanism. However, transnational cooperation relies on a complex ecosystem of actors. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities are thus required to ensure that the cooperation is sustainable and to avoid redundancy in referrals.

Between reintegration and development actors

Enhancing coordination and cooperation between the reintegration and development fields was difficult[29]. Given migration management work such as return and reintegration is often stigmatised by development actors, reluctance to contribute to reintegration programming and the overall return structures is a significant obstacle when integrating the reintegration and development sectors. As this reluctance is unlikely to change, outreach activities between sectors and at

GOOD PRACTICE

The ERRIN Stakeholder Platform in Ghana brought together key stakeholders from government agencies, NGOs and other actors in reintegration and development fields which enabled greater collaboration between reintegration and development actors.

27 KII3, KII6
28 KII13, KII14
29 KII4, KII7, KII8, Synthesis Report Phase I, Minutes of the 4th TWG R&D meeting, outcome of Sub-working group C: coordination in the field

an organisational level ideally continues and is strengthened to encourage greater collaboration among actors.

Between levels of actors

Critically, cross-sectoral and transnational cooperation must occur across multiple levels of actors, such as between government and non-state actors[30]. Given returnees mistrust of governments as voiced by TWG R&D members, the incorporation of independent return actors, such as reintegration partners, will encourage returnee buy-in in the reintegration process.

3.2. Misalignment

The reintegration and development fields have different timelines, geographic locations, objectives, criteria, and funding streams[31]. Given such misalignments, integrating reintegration and development actors and mutualising their efforts proved difficult. Identifying key misalignments can provide clarity on which structural changes facilitate reintegration and development collaboration.

Timelines

Reintegration and development sectors have incongruent timelines. Reintegration programming tends to be short-term while development programming is longer-term. As a result, development actors are at times unwilling to collaborate with reintegration actors who often have a shorter programming timeline - they find collaboration on such a small time horizon not beneficial. Individual assistance provided by reintegration actors ideally is to remain short-term with longer-term assistance to returnees provided by actors in the countries of origin, including development actors.

Individual assistance provided by reintegration actors ideally is to remain short-term with longer-term assistance to returnees provided by actors in the countries of origin, including development actors. However, expanding the time horizon of reintegration programming itself could thus facilitate greater collaboration between the reintegration and development fields. Further, development programming often runs within specific timeframes where returns are more ad hoc and continuous. Depending on when a person returns, integrating them into development structures may thus be difficult[32]. Group referrals based on specific timeframes or timed returns may thus be necessary to establish effective referral mechanisms.

Geography

Development actors may not always be active in communities of return, particularly when returnees are returning to urban environments. As a result there may be little development structure to which actors can refer returnees and thus benefit from a continuum of services. Nevertheless, returnees

30 KII12
31 KII2, KII8, KII9, Synthesis Report Phase I
32 Synthesis Report Phase I

are increasingly important agents and change makers in their communities of return. Recognising this important role, ideally development actors make efforts to expand their programming to better include communities of high migration and return. This may mean development programmes increase their focus on urban centres.

Objectives and eligibility criteria

Development and return actors often have incongruous eligibility requirements and objectives, which make it difficult to integrate returnees into existing development structures in countries of origin. For example, development actors often focus on community needs, while return actors focus on the individual. Such incongruities lead to perceived difficulties integrating returnees into larger development structures via a referral mechanism. Thus, while targeted individual assistance to returnees will continue - notwithstanding potential redundancies with development objectives and programming - development actors have an opportunity to consider returnees when developing their own community-based objectives and programming requirements. They can do so by increasingly collaborating with reintegration actors in the programme pre-design and design stage.

GOOD PRACTICE

One key practice identified was in the government-to-government initiative in Ghana where actors on the ground found development projects which did not discriminate against returnees and in Bangladesh where BRAC referred returnees to initiatives by the IOM.

Funding streams

Exacerbating and producing the above challenges are **incongruous funding streams**, which have contributed to misaligned timelines where reintegration programming has shorter timeframes and funding cycles, while development have longer time horizons and funding cycles[33]. Funding thus plays an influential role in preventing effective referrals. Competing funding streams contributed to challenges mutualising the two fields' approaches to return and reintegration overall. The EU Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration highlights the need to use financial resources in a more coordinated manner to bridge this sectoral divide[34].

Under the 2014 to 2020 multi-annual financial framework, the EU has complemented and supported MSs' efforts financing return and reintegration, with an estimated 75% of the costs borne by EU funding[35]. The current financial cycle from 2021 to 2027 provides short-term and long-term reintegration, and development funding through two complimentary financing instruments – AMIF and NDICI/Global Europe. A welcome practice by TWG R&D members focuses on the implication of EU delegations in countries of origin to ensure that the financing can be linked to development efforts in each context.

33 Ibid.
34 The European Commission. *The EU Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration*. 2021. COM/2021/120 Final.
35 EU strategy on voluntary return and reintegration, P.17

3.3. Fractured environment

The misalignments and miscommunications identified produced a fractured environment, which made designing and implementing referral mechanisms even more challenging. Lack of local ownership, lack of monitoring, competition and mistrust among actors, and redundancy among actors and programmes were key components of this fractured environment[36].

Local ownership

Actors in the countries of origin lack ownership, and in turn capacity, regarding return and reintegration programmes and structures. This is because reintegration actors in countries of destination have typically dominated migration management, and thus the return and reintegration field. Dual capacity building efforts and relying on existing development structures, over which countries of origin exert greater control and ownership, can encourage local ownership in the return field.

GOOD PRACTICE

The ERRIN coordination platform in the Government to Government initiative in Ghana and the Working Group on Return and Reintegration (WGRR) facilitated under the PROSPECT project in Nigeria enabled government agencies to take ownership over the return and reintegration processes.

However, the stigma attached to return and reintegration in countries of origin, particularly among development actors, remains strong. Similar to collaboration between reintegration and development actors, such stigma makes local ownership challenging to achieve. **Efforts thus need to continue to destigmatise return on an institutional level among development actors.**

Monitoring

While the reintegration and development fields are continuing to work towards a more mutualised approach, **mutual monitoring indicators among reintegration and development actors are lacking**. As a result there exists no common basis from which learning can occur. There is a need for reintegration and development actors to agree on how to monitor effective referrals through mutually relevant indicators[37].

Competition and mistrust among actors

Mistrust among actors prevented open information sharing and thus inhibited the development of effective referral mechanisms.[38] The mistrust flows predominantly from the stigma of return and reintegration amongst development actors; that organisations are at times competing for the same funds; and concern regarding development becoming a bargaining chip through which countries of destination demand cooperation on migration management with countries of origin[39]. Early ap-

36 KII2, KII4, KII9, KII10, KII11
37 Minutes of the 4th TWG R&D meeting, outcome of Sub-Working Group B: shared objectives and monitoring tool
38 KII11
39 OECD 2020. "Sustainable Reintegration of Returning Migrants: A Better Homecoming."

proaches to collaboration, streamlined funding sources, and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) can breed greater trust and reduce competition between and among reintegration and development actors in countries of destination and origin.

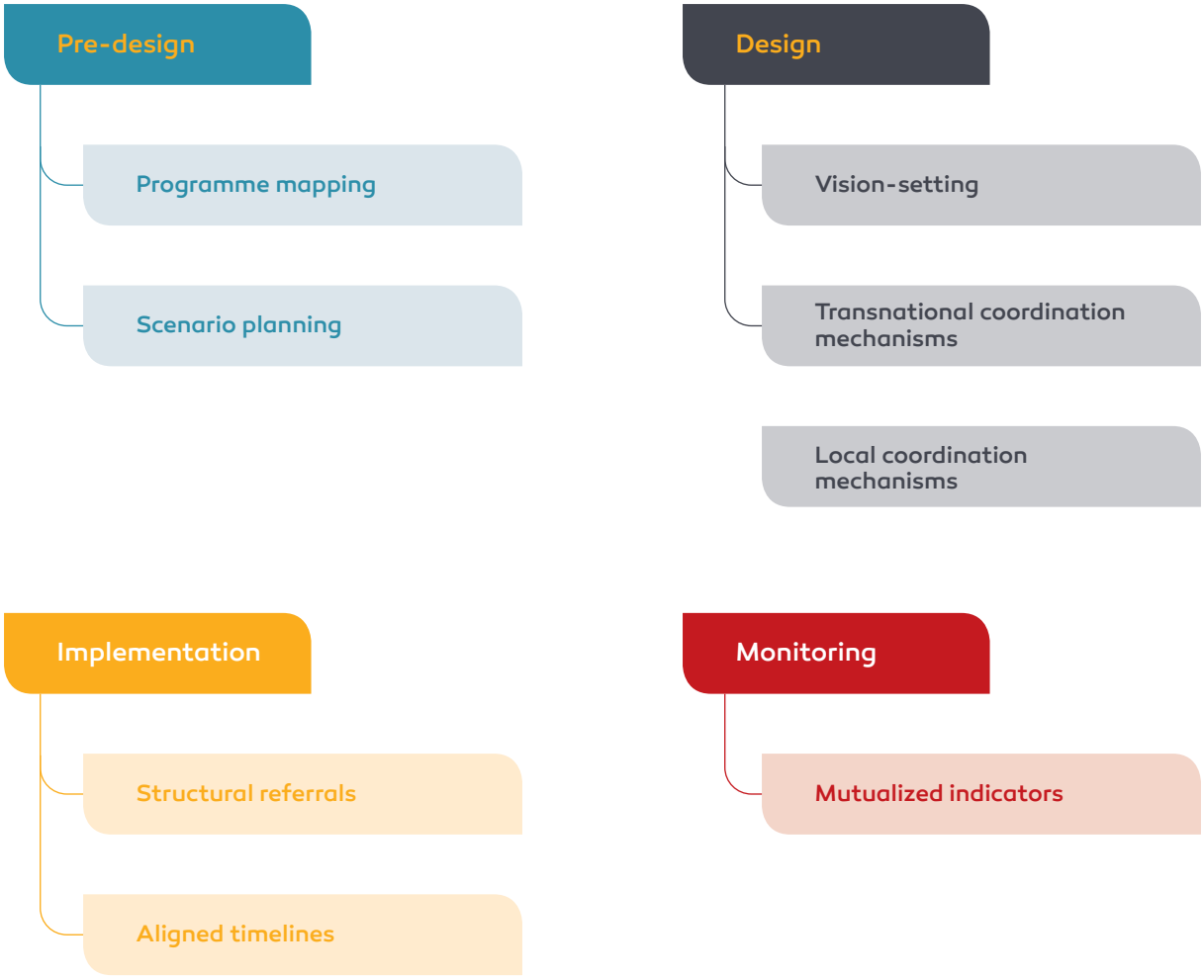
Complementarity and duplication

Competition and lack of trust, as well as miscommunication and misalignment have contributed to redundancy in the reintegration and development fields. The complicated environment of existing services, actors, and structures in countries of origin also make repetition an easy pitfall. However, effective referral mechanisms based on a rigorous and replicable mapping can overcome such redundancy. Further, a co-designed referral mechanism and involvement of multi-level actors in countries of origin from its inception can mitigate this dilemma.

4. Operational Standards for Effective Reintegration & Development Initiatives

Having presented the rationale, scope, objectives, and guiding principles of this OF, as well as key dilemmas it addresses, the figure below introduces the **proposed operational standards**. Developed based on the assessment of the TWG R&D activities and the experiences and opinions voiced by TWG R&D members, these standards are split into four distinct phases which are not bound to countries of origin or destination, but rather speak to key steps in the creation of a referral mechanism. As a key practical link for integrating reintegration and development actors and mutualising the sectors' approaches to returnees, it is recommended that these phases are always collaborative and transnational in nature.

Figure 6. Operational standards



4.1. Pre-design phase: Programme mapping and scenario planning

The pre-design stage aims at gathering inputs, identifying needs, existing interventions and gaps on the ground. This identification consists of mapping and scenario planning, for reintegration and development actors to have a full picture of actions taking place. This pre-design phase becomes an opportunity for early conversation, consultation and exchange between actors, to build trust and communications.

In the pre-design phase of referral mechanisms, programme mapping and scenario planning help actors to identify the existing structures and processes in countries of origin, ensuring the referral mechanism is embedded in existing resources, enhances cooperation, reduces redundancy, and encourages local ownership.

Programme mapping

Key to local buy-in and ownership, it is encouraged that coordination is based off rigorous programme mapping. This ensures that the referral mechanisms are based on-the-ground realities in the country of origin, and that the reintegration field is increasingly handed over to actors in the countries of origin, while the migration management imperative is respected.

Scenario planning

Programme mapping should produce scenario planning, where potential referrals are forecasted based on existing services and/or gaps in programmes. Through rigorous and duplicable mapping, scenario planning allows actors to better avoid challenges such as competition and redundancy between programmes, missed opportunities for service provision, and uncoordinated and/or ad hoc referrals. It thus allows actors to anticipate the needs of returnees systematically and over time.

4.2. Design phase: Cooperation

The operational standards within the design phase include vision-setting and establishing coordination mechanisms. As reiterated by TWG R&D members, a bottom up approach to include local authorities and community members is a key to reintegration and cooperation as early as the design phase as local authorities thus better have the possibility to be involved directly.

Vision-setting helps mutualise approaches between reintegration and development actors in the countries of origin and destination, reducing competition and redundancy, and encouraging complementarity and cooperation. Further, clear and formalised coordination mechanisms among relevant actors across countries of origin and destination allow for effective co-design in the design phase.

Vision-setting

Critical to an effective referral mechanism is a mutual understanding of reintegration in a specific context. This requires vision-setting by reintegration and development actors. This vision-setting is grounded in reintegration and development practitioners' shared perspective on sustainable reintegration, which sees sustainable reintegration as:

1) **contribute to inclusive and cohesive communities**,
2) **be multi-dimensional and long-term**, and
3) **be based off local ownership.**

It is thus encouraged that actors establish common goals and approaches to sustainable reintegration based off this understanding, either generally or across large, regional clusters of countries of destination and origin. Doing so would decrease internal competition and increase cooperation. As a result, referral mechanisms would be simplified and thus actors (like return counsellors) could more easily understand and implement such mechanisms.

Vision-setting should be multi-level, cross-sectoral, and include actors in the countries of origin and destination. To encourage local embeddedness, actors in the countries of origin should spearhead this vision-setting.

Transnational coordination mechanisms

Transnational coordination mechanisms assist in bridging the divide between countries of origin and destination. Although the bulk of return and reintegration occurs in the country of origin, countries of destination will continue to play an important role in the field. Effective transnational coordination mechanisms would thus rely on mutual exchange and capacity building between countries of origin and destination, as well as rely on proper time allocation in the design phase. It would also produce more robust pre-departure referrals as increased transnational coordination would allow actors to better anticipate the needs, wishes, and capacities of returnees.

It is critical to include independent actors, namely reintegration partners, in such mechanisms, as well, as one key tool for return counsellors is the ability to show that reintegration is not solely the responsibility of governments, who they mistrust. This thus supports the 'Whole of Society' principle.

Local coordination mechanism in country of origin

While dialogue occurs between development actors to identify development priorities in countries of origin, additional efforts are needed to ensure the dialogue also includes local reintegration actors, associations and community representatives[40]. Best practices include establishing national coordination mechanisms or platforms which can be further localised, to focus on reintegration and de-

40 The role of the diaspora in reintegration needs to be further researched. Given the broad scope of discussions relating to diaspora communities and their roles, for the purposes of this document, where relevant their inclusion can be considered mainstreamed into the different categories of actors (NGO, CSO).

velopment as started in Ghana, Nigeria, Bangladesh and Iraq. This additional coordination between reintegration and development actors will help implement referrals.

4.3. Implementation phase: Referral systems

There is a clear need to establish referrals which are not project-specific or ad-hoc referrals but are rather linked to the overall processes and development plans in countries of origin. Such referrals move towards including returnees in the national services or development plans, thus furthering their sustainable reintegration in the long-term. Critical for successful implementation of a referral mechanism is to abide by the principles of complementarity and coherence where the roles of reintegration and development actors are clearly delineated, redundancies eliminated, and synergies fostered.

Referrals to processes

Referrals are systematic, structured, regularised and connect returnees to the existing structures in countries of origin. Ad-hoc referrals, while at times necessary (e.g. emergency medical or mental health and psychosocial support [MHPSS] referrals), are not included within referral mechanisms between reintegration and development actors. Rather, referral mechanisms are meant to include returnees in the larger development objectives and schemes in the countries of origin and ensure a continuum of services. Given the longer-term nature of development programming, this allows countries of origin to also take on the responsibility of returnees' long-term reintegration. In this way, referral processes in the countries of origin enhance local ownership of the reintegration field, meet a need voiced by reintegration actors for longer-term assistance, and ensure that reintegration efforts are based in the realities of the communities in which returnees reside.

Aligned timelines

Reintegration and development actors have to be made aware of the profiles and numbers of returnees by MSs or other institutions, in a timely manner, to ensure linkages in the implementation phase can also be done in time. This communication has to be supported by structural capacity building initiatives.

Reintegration actors will continue to provide individualised, tailored support which respects the agency of returnees. However, this reintegration is short-term and inefficient to meet returnees' longer-term needs. As a result, longer-term, community-based development programming can fill an important gap in reintegration programming. The timelines of such services and programming overlap in the short-term (e.g. 0 to 12 months post-arrival). Ensuring that the principle of complementarity is upheld thus prevents such periods of overlap from producing repetitive and competitive programming.

Reintegration actors should ideally design their short-term reintegration programming understanding that development actors will continue reintegration actors' efforts vis-à-vis development actors' own localised development programming. As such, reintegration programming could address returnees' immediate and specific needs, while also preparing returnees with the skills needed to participate in the development of their communities.

4.4. Post-implementation phase: Monitoring

Integral to the process of learning throughout and monitoring of the referral mechanism ensures that actors are adapting and improving the referral mechanism. Monitoring should not be an afterthought, but a strategic and critical step in the process. The validity of referrals has to be monitored to understand whether the right partners have been involved in strengthening the system, and accountability on public spending needs to be strengthened with more clarity on funding streams for reintegration. Critically, monitoring will need to ensure a principled approach.

Mutualised indicators

Monitoring referral mechanisms (and as the key practical link fostering the integration and monitoring of reintegration and development actors' efforts to foster sustainable reintegration) relies on establishing mutual reintegration and development objectives. As stated above, the key principle for the collaboration of reintegration and development actors facilitating monitoring is understanding that returnees' sustainable reintegration

1) contributes to inclusive and cohesive communities,
2) is long-term, and
3) is based off local ownership.

The number of returnees involved in development programming at specific time intervals (6, 12, 18, 24 months) could be one such indicator.

A principled approach

Monitoring will be done against the 10 guiding principles set in this OF. Monitoring is, for instance, required to ensure *Do No Harm*, *namely that the referral mechanism has* not worsened the situation for communities and returnees, and uphold the human rights, such as not preventing further remigration.

Understanding when referrals did not or could not work

Learning is an essential part of the cycle – across all phases. Some of the gaps may not be filled, and some unions may not have materialised across the two worlds of reintegration and development action. Learning is needed to understand where those gaps remain.

4.5. Concluding remarks: Anticipating reintegration and development needs

As stated during a TWG R&D meeting, "referrals are not about replacing programmes or referring returnees to development programmes in lieu of reintegration programmes[41] ...[but] to provide a continuum of services across all dimensions". In all countries, referrals systems are the cornerstone of case management. In countries of origin, returnees require this support to be able to reintegrate in their societies of origin with levels of well-being and safety that can meet the principled approach outlined in this OF.

Overall, the OF is meant to ensure that actors move beyond generalisations like 'there are opportunities in Country A to align reintegration and development'. Rather a clear, long-term plan should preferably be established, such as 'this training is starting in April in that city, and it will last this many months allowing this kind of employment period for this many months, and access to this range of services'. This type of anticipation and preparation requires information around the eligibility criteria, the timeline, and the locations to manage expectations on all sides and focus on stakeholders' mandate and capacities to deliver. When issues around eligibility criteria arise, the understanding and agreement between reintegration and development actors should ideally explicitly address such obstacles. This is achieved by specifying funding that will ensure returnees are eligible for entry into development programmes.

41 6th ERRIN TWG R&D meeting

5. Ecosystem of Actors

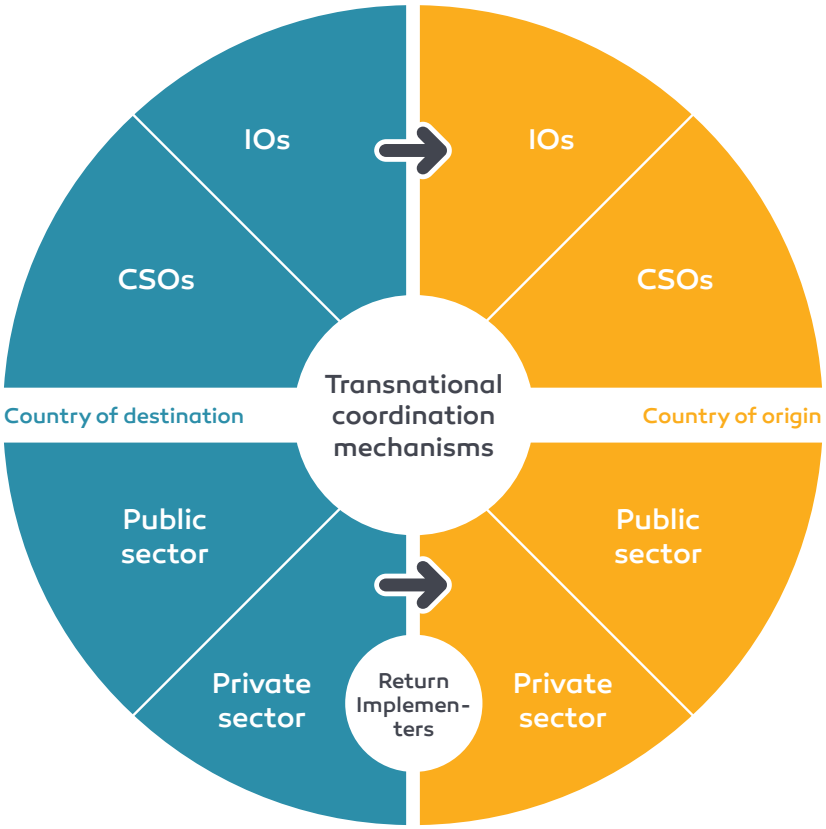
5.1. Geographic scale of reintegration and development actors

Integrating the reintegration and development fields via a referral mechanism requires many partners and levels of coordination. A geographic scale of reintegration and development actors across country of origin and destination is thus provided in Figure 7.

In the design phase, the roles and responsibilities of each partner need to be clearly co-defined. As key implementers of referral mechanisms adhering to the principles of complementarity and coherence will foster cooperation and trust. In turn, this will assist returnees' smooth transition from short-term return assistance provided by country of destination reintegration actors to longer-term, community-based country of origin reintegration and development actors.

A mapping of actors and programmes will be needed in the pre-design phase, as the stakeholder landscape will be context dependent.

Figure 7. Geographic scale of reintegration and development actors



5.2. Scale of cooperation and responsibility over time

An equally important scale in understanding the ecosystem of actors and their cooperation is time. As the referral mechanism is the key practical link integrating reintegration and development actors, over time in the post-return stage, the ecosystem of actor's shifts strongly towards development actors in the country of origin. Returnees are not the responsibility of countries of destination indefinitely and to foster local ownership, as well as returnees' long-term sustainable reintegration, it is recommended that ownership of development actors in countries of origin regarding returnees' outcomes be integrated with such actors' overall efforts to improve communities.

Figure 8. Cooperation and responsibility over time

Given sustainable reintegration is rooted in time, for returnees to consider they are in an environment of safety, inclusion, and cohesion upon return, they will require the support of both reintegration and development actors. In the fourth stage of the migration cycle, which is return, cooperation will span the entire return process, namely pre-departure and post-arrival stages. MS's need to give themselves, and returnees, the time necessary to prepare themselves to put in place the required procedures and planning mechanisms before returns take place. Important is also to safeguard the time needed to ensure there is a handover from reintegration to development actors on the ground.

Building on the existing learnings from the ERRIN project activities as well as the experiences and opinions of TWG R&D members, the key conclusions remain on the need to provide support in:

- **The pre-departure** stage consisting of the provision of accurate and timely information that returnees can understand and use to build their reintegration plans;
- **The return process** where returnees are also provided additional information immediately upon arrival when necessary; and
- **In the post-arrival and reintegration** stage which can ensure local embeddedness with a focus on referrals to CSOs, the private sector, and public services.

6. Standard Processes for Implementing the OF

Having identified key guiding principles, dilemmas from the examined ERRIN TWG R&D pilot and other activities (further detailed in the Assessment Report), and operational standards, as well as the relevant context vis-à-vis the ecosystem of actors in terms of geography and time, the OF provides processes for implementing such standards. These standards address the challenges highlighted in the assessment and abide by the key principles previously enumerated.

Establishing an effective referral mechanism is context-specific and will rely upon transnational coordination as well as local cooperation in the country of origin. As such, these processes are meant to be a flexible guide for establishing referral mechanisms. Given the role of referral mechanisms in mutualising reintegration and development actors' approaches to return and reintegration, these processes also represent a critical benchmark for integrating the reintegration and development fields. However, they are also based on the specific experiences of TWG R&D activities – and thus are primarily recommendations targeting these partners.

The processes are divided into the four stages previously described, namely: pre-design, design, implementation, and monitoring. The steps illuminated are those required to achieve the operational standards per stage. Additionally, as each step is described, further elements are also at times highlighted which will ensure the steps achieve the operational standards in the highest quality, most effective manner.

Figure 9. Standard processes

PRE-DESIGN	DESIGN	IMPLEMENTATION	MONITORING
Step 1. Programme mapping	**Step 3.** Validating priority areas and streamlining eligibility criteria	**Step 6.** Identifying referral systems that can be considered as "development referrals"	**Step 8.** Establishing a quality monitoring framework
Step 2. Scenario planning	**Step 4.** Developing government to government initiatives	**Step 7.** Promoting national and hub-based referral systems	**Step 9.** Agreeing on common and key performance indicators
	Step 5. Establishing a cooperation model, with local cooperation sub-mechanisms		**Step 10.** Ensuring independent evaluation and learning throughout

6.1. Pre-Design: Mapping and Scenario Planning

Any mapping and scenario planning will have to target how exactly people and communities will be supported economically, socially, and psychosocially. Mapping reintegration and development actors and programmes across countries of origin and destination is essential to avoid challenges such as competition and duplication between programmes, lack of information on existing interventions, contradictory eligibility requirements, complicated referral processes, missed opportunities for service provision, and uncoordinated and/or ad hoc referrals. Programme mapping aims toward scenario planning and forecasting. Pre-design thus aims to forecast the most effective pathways for collaboration across reintegration and development actors with specific sectors in mind (e.g. education or health interventions, agriculture and cooperatives, etc.).

During the assessment, competing programmes and complicated qualification requirements from the countries of destination affected referral mechanisms between the countries of origin and destination. Different target groups, eligibility criteria, scope, duration of the services, and other aspects represented a challenge for referral mechanisms. Given not all returnees are eligible for the services identified during mapping activities, accurate referrals were exceedingly difficult. That return counsellors did not appear to occupy a substantial outlet for internal communication during project activities exacerbated the complexity and difficulty of referrals.

Further, preventing effective coordination was the cause for mismatched priorities and approaches to reintegration among different reintegration and development actors. This coincided with a lack of trust and communication between the different actors involved both within the countries of origin and destination. As a result, there were at times siloed coordination entities which limited the ability to provide more effective referrals for returnees, as well as a willingness to collaborate.

Mapping of interventions and scenario planning will generate ideas and insights for more detailed work planning in the design phase. Importantly, these standard processes of programme mapping and scenario planning are also operational standards – meaning they are both key steps in the operationalisation of a referral mechanism, as well as key components of a referral mechanism.

STEP 1: Programme mapping

Rigorous and replicable mapping in the countries of origin is critical for actors to understand what are the existing structures and processes to which they can refer returnees. Programme mapping is thus a mechanism of identification and can maximise the utility of existing structures. It also becomes a mechanism through which partners can ensure that the right stakeholders are being consulted, and that all actors can come together from the inception of a referral mechanism, in a consultative and collective process. TWG R&D members confirmed that these mappings will need to be done with the EU delegations and commissioning bodies, with "shoulders broad enough[42]" to ensure robust mappings.

42 Feedback from a Member State contributing to the 6th TWG meeting, May 6, 2022.

Similar to the ecosystem of actors, it may be helpful to represent in a diagram the existing actors to visualise specific synergies. A potential template is provided below in Figure 10. This would be informed by consultations with all relevant actors, including returnees themselves.

Programme mapping would include the following information:

- Dimensions and sectors of intervention
- Objectives and expected results
- Public sector partners
- Private sector partners
- Partners for implementation
- Target groups and eligibility criteria
- Geographic areas of coverage
- Implementation duration
- Linkages with development plans (national or local)
- Technical and funding support to ensure integration of returnees

Questions mapping would answer are:

- Where are the programmes?
- How long are the programmes running?
- What are the eligibility criteria for the programmes?
- What are the target groups?
- What are existing cooperation partnerships and gaps, including in the private sector?
- What are the existing structures that are already in place?
- What is the sector of intervention?

As referral mechanisms encourage local ownership in countries of origin, the programme mapping will need:

1. Strong local ties, by actors who can update the mapping regularly. However, local actors must also be able to gain access to this information – which can at times be hard – as evidenced by the SRI activity in Iraq. The backing of larger players in the field, such as EU bodies, can allow local actors to conduct programme mapping effectively and empower local organisations as the drivers of reintegration.
2. Coordination with existing structures to ensure proper governance and maximise existing structures.
3. Sufficient time allocated to programme mappings as a result.

Further, programme mapping and the questions it asks are dependent on returnees' needs, capacities, and wants pre-departure and post-arrival. What are returnees' plans and capacities? What would returnees like to bring back in their communities of origin? In-depth analysis of the returnee population should thus inform the programme mapping. For example, the SRI activity in Iraq commissioned SEEFAR to conduct a study on stigmatisation of Iraqi returnees to understand their needs. A survey such as this could direct the programme mapping in Step 1.

STEP 2: Scenario planning

Once actors have completed the programme mapping exercise, robust scenario planning based on a cluster approach to returnees ensures that actors on the ground can implement such referrals. For example, this will include identifying sectors or dimensions that will be the priority entry points (e.g. social cohesion programme, skills training and livelihood programme, etc.) for a specific cluster of returnees based on the region of destination. This would include consultations with a variety of actors, including returnees themselves. If, for instance, the education sector is chosen as a priority to support reintegration, development interventions will include the inclusion of returnees and/or their children into the administrative registration, enrolment, and language support programmes within specific areas. Referrals could also emphasise the education sector. Importantly, identifying sectors or dimensions as key entry points will include asking returnees and their communities of return.

Other potential factors to consider would be specific scenarios based not just on the region of destination, but for urban and rural areas of return. This can help identify synergies between reintegration and development programmes mapped in Step 1, as well as scenarios for project prioritization to identify sectors or dimensions that will be the priority entry points for specific groups.

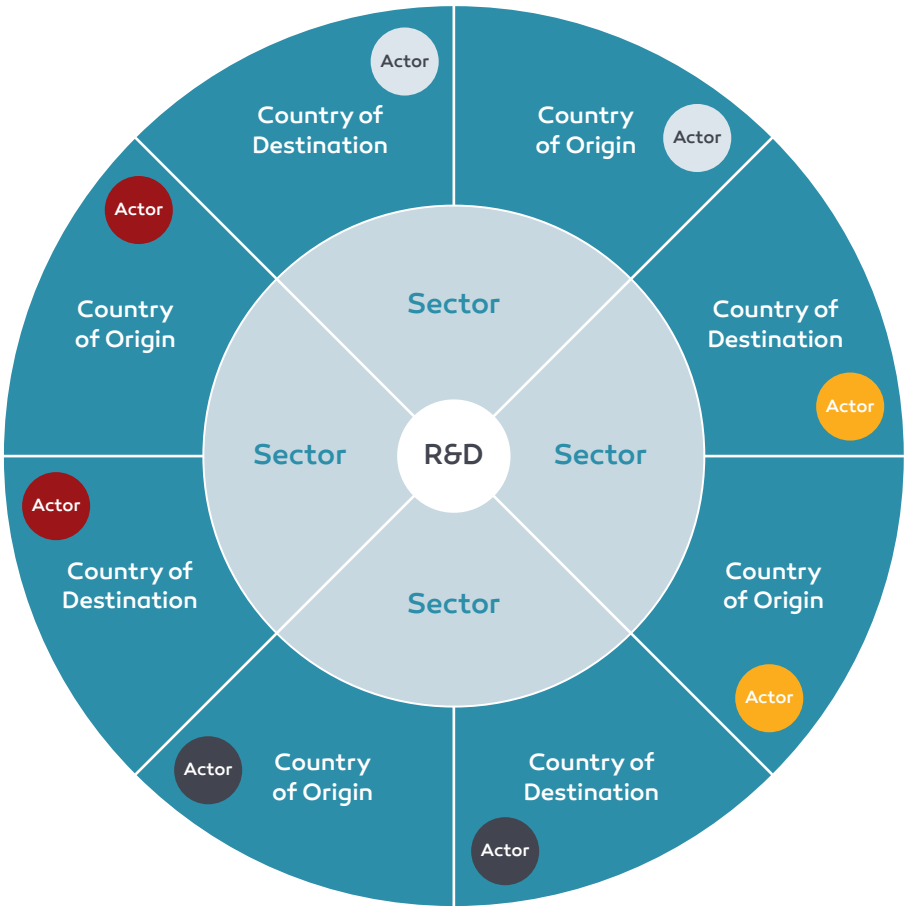
Scenario planning will clearly designate roles and responsibilities of the relevant actors and should be done collaboratively with development and reintegration actors, and actors in the countries of origin and destination. However, as scenario planning should capitalise off already existing structures, it relies heavily on the participation of CSOs and other on-the-ground local actors. Examples of such actors could include returnee organisations or local women's groups.

Finally, the scenario planning should set out the purpose of the engagement on reintegration, and the need to promote the benefits of a collective approach to ensure local buy-in by government as well as by the private sector.

Scenario planning asks questions, such as:

- What are potential synergies between existing programmes?
- Based off the region of destination, which sectors/programmes fit the needs of this group of returnees on a short-term, medium-term, and long-term basis?
- Are there any long-term needs of returnees which are unaddressed by development programming? What synergies exist to bridge this gap?
- What are the benefits and potential draw-backs of participation for local stakeholders – including for the government and the private sector?

Figure 10. Template scenario mapping



The design phase consists of three components, namely vision-setting, transnational coordination mechanism and a local coordination mechanism in the country of origin. To implement these three components, further steps in the process are outlined (Steps 3 through 5).

6.2. Design phase: A cooperation and coordination model built on trust, local ownership, and a two-way capacity building

Challenging operational contexts, such as complicated implementation realities, high turnover at organisations, and tight programme timeframes are common challenges identified in mitigating cooperation across theme and geography. However, integrating the reintegration and development fields and facilitating local ownership remains a priority. The design phase thus works to address these challenges and ultimately enhance local ownership. It does this by facilitating increased coordination among actors, thus enabling greater adaptability to realities on the ground and contributing to more efficient service and programme delivery. It also encourages interest among local stakeholders to participate in the available programming and contributes to the socioeconomic development of countries of origin.

STEP 3: Validating priority areas and streamlining eligibility criteria

Validating priority areas and eligibility criteria for reintegration and development actors in the countries of destination and origin is key for establishing and operationalising stakeholders' shared vision. This will also address the lack of trust, coordination, and quasi competition in the reintegration and development fields, particularly in the countries of origin. This was identified by practitioners as inhibiting coordination and thus effective referrals.

Vision-setting should include actors from both, country of destination and origin, as well as actors of the reintegration and development sectors. Critically, returnees and communities to which they return must also be included in this vision-setting. The latter can be achieved through surveys, such as the SEEFAR survey in the SRI activity and by including returnee organisations in coordination platforms.

- **Stakeholder engagement**

Validating priority areas and streamlining eligibility criteria will occur predominantly through stakeholder engagement, including country of destination migration management stakeholders. In stakeholder engagement, it is critical to identify the key partners to engage with based off the programme mapping from Step 1. The national and local partners will have been identified and already consulted within the pre-design phase. Engaging with key stakeholders will enable consensus regarding validating priority areas and streamlining eligibility criteria between the two fields.

Local actors and organisations leading efforts to streamline criteria and establish a common approach to return and reintegration in the countries of origin encourages local ownership – a clear need identified by practitioners. As a result, returnees are more able to take advantage of the available programming. Critically, it is recommended that this local ownership also occurs outside of governments, as returnees mistrust such authorities. Local ownership in the hands of independent actors such as reintegration partners is encouraged.

- **Internal awareness raising**

This validating of priority areas and streamlining eligibility criteria will include internal outreach among actors, thus encouraging effective implementation. For example, return counsellors were often key for initiating referrals, yet they were not always kept abreast of project activities. This inhibited potential for referral mechanisms to be implemented effectively, especially considering return counsellors' role as major frontline stakeholders. Further, return counsellors can contribute as potential information sources concerning the needs of returnees. It is thus encouraged that internal communication plans be developed prior to the implementation of any project activities to spread the set vision and include all relevant actors.

STEP 4: Developing government-to-government initiatives

Establishing a robust transnational coordination mechanism and local coordination mechanism in the country of origin, as well as supporting the shared vision will require building government-to-government initiatives such as the activity in Ghana[43]. This would also increase effectiveness and better integrate the individualised approach of return actors with the community-based approach of development actors.

It is recommended that government-to-government initiatives thus focus on the pre-departure and post-arrival efforts to link individual reintegration support to national plans and budgets. Outlining when a reintegration partner's work and responsibility ends, and when the development partner's work and responsibility begins would be very effective in this context. At this stage it is critical, for EU delegations, that the countries of origin chair or facilitate these meetings, to bring all actors together in the same country, and to ensure that the different financing modalities are tapped into to contribute to reintegration and development.

STEP 5: Establishing a cooperation model, with local cooperation sub-mechanisms

Referral mechanisms are meant to handover the responsibility of returnees' well-being to actors in the countries of origin over time and to merge returnees' outcomes with the larger development objectives of the communities to which they return. As a result, the responsibility of returnees' reintegration will eventually shift towards local development actors in the community of origin. This handing over should constitute an increasingly local embeddedness among actors involved in reintegration and represents a 'Whole of Society' approach.

To facilitate the transition to local actors in the long-term, a local cooperation mechanism is recommended to be developed from the onset which exists within the larger transnational coordination mechanism and whose responsibility for returnees increases over time. It will be this sub-group's responsibility to identify key synergies from the programme mapping and scenario planning in the pre-design phase. Separate from the government-to-government initiatives, this will not just include governments, but also independent reintegration partners to encourage buy-in from returnees, as well. Importantly, this step establishes the two final operational standards of the design phase, the transnational coordination mechanism, and the local coordination mechanism in the country of origin.

Practitioners reported that coordination between reintegration and development actors active in the country of origin and country of destination was a severe challenge and limitation when implementing their projects. The assessment of project activities confirmed the need to enhance coordination at three levels: first, in the country of destination; second, with the country-of-origin reintegration and development agencies; and third, with local actors and non-state actors.

43 Government to Government Ghana Summary, Phase I and Phase II

The immediate post-arrival experience and thus referrals suffered because of the poor connection between pre-departure and post-arrival at multiple levels and amongst many actors. Some returnees arrive without transportation from the airport or without immediate accommodation such as in Ghana. Proper communication with pre-departure actors prepares those in the country of origin to properly receive such returnees and provide them immediate support. For vulnerable returnees, such as VoTs, those in need of medical assistance or those in need of immediate psychosocial support, the immediate commencement of such referrals is even more critical.

A three-element cooperation model for the transnational coordination mechanism is thus required in the design phase to ensure that sustainable reintegration programmes are built from a development perspective, and that development programmes integrate the reintegration perspective. This cooperation model is based off three main miscommunications identified, namely across geography (country of origin versus country of destination), thematically (between development actors and return and reintegration actors in the countries of destination and origin), and across scales (governments versus non-state actors versus returnees themselves).

Coordination will require three elements:

1. **Cooperation** models across geographies as well as the reintegration and development fields.
2. **Co-design** between reintegration and development agencies in countries of origin.
3. **Consultations** with local government, non-state actors, returnees and their communities to build local ownership.

Cooperation across geographies

Cooperation across geographies but centred at the level of the country of destination is encouraged to be built through a systematic working group to ensure a strong flow of information of initiatives, in specific countries of origin, and to identify areas for synergies. The WGRR in the PROSPECT project is one such example to build on. Such cooperation can be critical when returnees' long-term needs are unmet by existing development projects in their area of return. Reintegration and development actors should coordinate to co-design additional programming to bridge development programming gaps concerning returnees' needs.

While reintegration actors will ideally meet the shorter-term needs of returnees, it is recommended that development actors in the communities of return be the ones to meet returnees' long-term needs and to do so in a community-based manner rather than embracing the individualised approach of reintegration actors. Cooperation across geographies thus continues to emphasise country of origin actors, and thus encourage local embeddedness.

Co-design intervention flows

Co-designed intervention flows between reintegration and development fields ensure the linkages on the ground are made across the reintegration and development fields. Intervention flows will focus on the pre-departure and post-arrival efforts that will link individual reintegration support to

national plans, budgets, and outlining when a reintegration partner's work and responsibility ends, and when the development partner's work and responsibility begins.

At this stage it is critical for EU delegations in the countries of origin to be chairing or facilitating these meetings in order to bring all actors together in the same country. EU delegations can address coordination gaps by bringing together local reintegration and development partners, funded through both national budgets and funding streams detailed further above.[44] As stated above, this would also involve transnational coordination, as reintegration actors and programmers are not usually represented in countries of origin, necessitating conscious inclusion of those reintegration actors placed in country of destination capitals.

To implement the shared vision and the roadmap established via the programme mapping and scenario planning, it is recommended actors identify key partners to engage with for designing such interventions. In this way, efforts can be made to streamline or simplify eligibility criteria across the development field to better include returnees, as well as establish key priority areas for returnees' long-term reintegration in collaboration with the development sector.

- **Consultations with multi-level actors**

Consultations with local authorities, non-state actors, and returnees will finalise the approach laid out above, to ensure that specific gaps – such as educational or medical support – are adequately provided and resourced embracing a 'Whole of Society' approach. This can also foster trust among potential returnees who mistrust governments. Importantly, if state actors are aware in a timely manner on the numbers and profiles of returnees, they are better placed to secure the necessary linkages in the implementation phase by either directing groups of returnees to the communities in which activities are ongoing and available or in the next cycle.

The mapping in the pre-design stage will inform who can be part of these local mechanisms – they should be inclusive of local authorities as well as associations of returnees who understand the issues better and who are already involved in the reintegration agenda. Returnee associations have the experience needed to give direction in the design phase. Taking this a step further, including the communities were returnees reside will be vital given that one of the challenges faced across return settings is the lack of understanding by host communities why programming targets returnees.

By including actors outside the government, returnees may be more willing to buy into the reintegration and development support.

- **Internal awareness raising**

The diversity of actors involved in referral mechanisms necessitates that the design of referral mechanisms includes internal awareness raising. Thus, similar to the pre-design phase, internal awareness raising is critical. Particularly relevant is the inclusion of the implementers of the designed referral

44 pg. 16 of this document

mechanisms, such as return counsellors, in any outreach activities. It is critical to allocate enough time to such internal awareness raising activities as no referral mechanism can occur without the full and active participation and contribution from those implementing the mechanism.

- **Iterative process of collaboration**

It is recommended that the design of referral mechanisms, while transnational, continue to emphasise local actors in the countries of origin and be based on continuous rigorous mapping and scenario planning. This consultative process of programme mapping, scenario planning, validating priority areas, streamlining eligibility criteria, and internal awareness raising constitute the pre-design and design phases and build the groundwork for the implementation phase.

6.3. Implementation Phase: Enhancing development-oriented referrals

It has been the experience of practitioners that referrals should preferably be development oriented and not only referrals to specific training centres, or project specific interventions, but referrals to processes that will include returnees in the national services or development plans. This will ensure returnees benefit from a continuum of services and encourage local embeddedness among returnees and the broader ownership of the reintegration field among country of origin actors.

While ad hoc referrals may at times be necessary (e.g. in case of medical emergencies or to address the specific reintegration needs of sub-groups), referral mechanisms speak to the larger handing over of responsibility for returnees' well-being and reintegration from country of destination to country of origin. Implementing such structural referrals faces a significant barrier in the ad hoc nature of reintegration versus the timed nature of development projects, as well as the geographic specificity of development actors in some regions. Thus Step 6 and 7 in the implementation phase ensure that the operational standards, namely referral to processes and timed referrals, are met.

- **Cluster approach**

Facilitating these steps is the establishing of a cluster approach to referrals. Given the diversity of return experiences and the conflict of needs for both community-based and individualised support, a cluster approach based on the region of destination will allow returnees to receive more targeted assistance while also keeping the referral mechanisms as streamlined and structural as possible. Further, as the timing of returns is incongruous with development projects' timelines, such a cluster approach could facilitate a staggered, grouped approach to referrals in the implementation stage.

Further, this can facilitate efforts for reintegration and development actors to stagger referrals, where possible, with the timeline of key development projects and structures in the communities of return. It also can facilitate a grouped approach to referrals where connections to development

actors do not occur as soon as the returnee arrives, but rather seasonally or at key moments for development programming in their community of return.

STEP 6: Identifying referral systems that can be considered as 'development referrals'

Referral mechanisms facilitate a structural handover of support and responsibility for returnees' reintegration, rather than simply constituting a project-specific referral. Referral mechanisms allow returnees to benefit from programming that the organisation implementing the return may not be able to provide. They can also assist the reintegration organisation in the provision of such services where they are not physically present or fill a gap where the reintegration organisation does not have the skills and experience to support certain returnees. As such, referrals can improve the uptake of support offers; help streamline the efforts of different actors to achieve sustainable reintegration; and ensure continuity of services after the end of the reintegration programme.

Key to such a structural handover is identifying a timeline by which it is recommended that development actors and actors in the countries of origin have integrated returnees into their structures and programmes. Thus, there is a need to rethink how far referrals can be linked to development programmes.

A typology of referrals can thus assist in understanding and implementing referrals. Initiating the referral mechanism is typically the reintegration organisation that is contracted by the donor to provide reintegration assistance to returnees. For example, the IOM is a major provider of reintegration assistance globally, but NGOs, CSOs, and national governments equally deliver these services. The two types of referrals are:

- Internal referrals: Occurs through the same actors implementing the return.
- External referrals: Refers returnees outside the reintegration organisation to a process in the country of origin.

Internal and external referrals can both begin at pre-departure and post-arrival stage.

Internal referrals are when the reintegration organisation refers returnees to another project implemented by this same organisation. Internal referrals via referring a returnee to another project or colleague within the same organisation are usually easier and efficient as the information about the returnee and coordination tends to be straightforward. With larger development actors, internal referrals can also facilitate closer linkages between their reintegration and development initiatives. This was evidenced when BRAC referred to projects and activities implemented by BRAC but funded through diverse donors, including development donors.

External referrals are when the return organisation refers returnees to an outside partner. Often returnees are referred to government entities which can, for example, register returnees to social security schemes. International development partners can also play a crucial role here.

Importantly, referrals can be highly formalised or more ad hoc with the amount of budget involved typically determining its formality.

Figure 11. Matrix of referral types

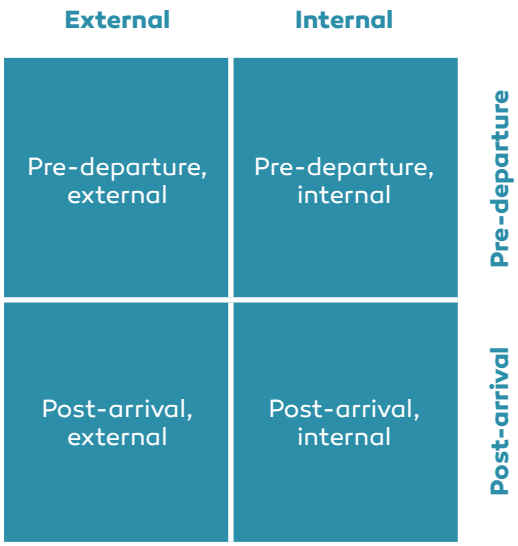


Figure 12. Degree of formality

Further, referrals can often be circular and do not necessarily have to flow from the main reintegration implementer. Returnees can benefit from multiple referrals and organisations who received the returnee upon referral and can also refer them onward. It is thus a cyclical ecosystem of continuous referrals.

STEP 7: Promoting national and hub-based referral systems

Good practices including the creation of a national referral system that would include returnees and is connected to the national employment bureaus and to different regions for a decentralization of services. This is based on the recognition that many of the services for returnees are concentrated in the capital and need to be decentralized through the governmental authorities of the country of origin. Including returnees will involve actively inquiring on their needs, capacities, and desires for reintegration.

Planning of hub approaches or hub-based referral systems is a trend in reintegration and development programming from Georgia, where UNDP works closely with the Government to provide decentralized services that can be inclusive of returnees, and an approach that was echoed as beneficial from ERRIN activities. Where such services are not available, development actors can focus on ensuring that services can be expanded to areas where returnees are – either through hubs or through the extension of services (medical, economic, etc.).

6.4. Monitoring Key Performance Indicators

For reintegration and development actors to work better together, practitioners participating in TWG R&D efforts agree that **key performance indicators would ideally be the common language and objectives used**. Among the suggestions made were for monitoring to strengthen a structural and ongoing dialogue, to contribute to more than individual needs, and to be able to show a link between development to migration and reintegration projects.

Monitoring of reintegration remains at a nascent stage. Evidence-based planning is critical to both, reintegration and development planning. MPI is currently working for ERRIN to develop a range of indicators that can be used to monitor reintegration programmes.

Step 8 through 10 allow the operational standard of the monitoring phase to be met – mutualised indicators.

STEP 8: Establishing a quality monitoring framework

The **quality monitoring framework** developed by MPI puts an emphasis on not only individual reintegration outcomes, but the quality of the service providers involved, and of the referrals. This is where reintegration and development actors can meet to:

- **Monitor the quality of services and improve the range of service providers involved** (linked to the mapping).
- **Capture all dimensions of reintegration.**
- **Measure the impact of return and reintegration at the individual and community levels**. While

reintegration actors focus on the individual component, the development actors will require the impact measurement to return and reintegration on communities.

Importantly, the design and monitoring of this framework should be done by both country of destination and origin actors.

STEP 9: Agreeing on common and key performance indicators to monitoring the referral mechanisms

Stakeholders have identified common grounds on which development and reintegration actors could agree on mutual performance indicators, by assessing the:

- Existence of a structural and ongoing dialogue on reintegration and development that is inclusive of the EU Delegations;
- Results in terms of specific structural projects that cater to the needs of individual returnees and their communities (e.g. the building of a hospital, a job placement platform or an employment service centre); and
- Instances where development funding has taken over where reintegration funding has ended (e.g. identifying services that end as they are development activities, and that can then be taken on board through development funds and programmes).
- Monitoring the referral mechanism

Approaches to reintegration evaluation typically favour a beneficiary-based approach. Indicators occurring at various time intervals (e.g. 6, 12, 18, 24 months) is recommended. Given that funding for reintegration is provided from the reintegration actors from country of destination usually only runs for a 12-month period after return, at which point other actors may provide further supporting reintegration activities, it is encouraged that mutual indicators be established amongst the sectors. Further, it is important that actors responsible for reintegration establish data sharing agreements and MoUs to facilitate longitudinal monitoring.

As a critical practical link, referral mechanisms play an important role in integration of the reintegration and development fields. Thus, it is recommended that actors co-design a framework for analysing the status of such attempts to mutualise the fields' approaches to short- medium and long-term reintegration. These indicators can examine the impact the referral mechanism has had on institutions and processes outside of the individual returnees.

Suggested key performance indicators are provided below:

- The number of returnees involved in development programming at specific time intervals.
- The number of development programmes which include returnees in their list of beneficiaries.
- The number of returnees who have been referred to development programming.
- The number of returnees who have remigrated post-arrival.
- The number of returnees involved in community-based programmes.

- The inclusion of returnees in community planning groups.
- The inclusion of returnees in cooperatives.
- Satisfaction of returnees with referrals.

STEP 10: Ensuring independent evaluation and learning throughout

The integration of learning partners from the start of the planning stage can ensure that all 10 steps of the OF are implemented and followed, while maintaining momentum to ensure progress and operationalisation. **Independent evaluation or learning will also ensure that challenges are noted and addressed *in the process of* collaborating across reintegration and development actors**. For example:

- If eligibility criteria remain a key obstacle, it is recommended that the learning partner identify that and promote solutions that reintegration and development actors can take on;
- If employment after training is a key obstacle, the learning partner can identify how PPPs can ensure a bridge into employment and income generating activities; or
- If social cohesion is lacking, the learning partner can identify where families could be better integrated into financial inclusion schemes or communities into service provision plans.

7. Conclusion

Referral mechanisms provide returnees a continuum of services across all dimensions while fostering ownership by country-of-origin actors. This implicitly recognises that there is often not one organisation able or mandated to meet all of the needs of returnees. Importantly, this is not specific to reintegration or to countries of origin - in all countries referral systems are the cornerstone of any case management. Referral mechanisms are thus critical in enabling greater opportunities for sustainable reintegration and thereby allowing returnees to better contribute to the socioeconomic development of their countries and communities of origin.

Returnees require a mix of both individualised, short-term as well as area-based, long-term support. Referral mechanisms ensure that reintegration and development actors support countries of origin to meet these needs together. Individual, immediate, and short-term and post-return support will remain. However, returnees also require longer-term support to ensure that their reintegration is sustainable. Thus, as individualised, return-specific assistance to returnees over time becomes increasingly unnecessary in returnees' individual reintegration process, referral mechanisms may ensure that development actors in the countries of origin pick up where reintegration actors have left off and continue to provide support to countries of origin for the well-being of returnees and their communities.

As returnees continue in their reintegration journey, reintegration actors in the countries of destination and origin will need to increasingly integrate returnees into the development efforts of country-of-origin actors. Effective referral mechanisms ensure that returnees are included in the development structures and objectives in countries of origin and not left behind – these can be done in a multiplicity of ways which this OF touches on. By increasingly handing over the responsibility of providing support for returnees' reintegration to such actors, local ownership of the return and reintegration field is fostered, as well. Mutualised efforts by the reintegration and development fields require continual and persistent efforts by a complex array of actors to ensure such integration yields the best possible outcomes for returnees and their communities.

The operations standards, ecosystem of actors, and standard processes enumerated above constitute the heart of the OF. This OF plays a critical role in ensuring that the collaboration between reintegration and development actors ultimately enhances opportunities for more sustainable reintegration. Building off challenges identified and lessons learned from the TWG R&D experience and assessed activities, the OF is a common framework on which future referral mechanisms can build and where reintegration actors can further contextualise their interventions for effective interaction with countries of origin with the support from development actors. Importantly, as a key practical link between the reintegration and development fields and mutualising their efforts towards sustainable reintegration, the OF also sets forth common standards off which reintegration and development actors can base their cooperation and collaboration, across time (from pre-departure to post-arrival) and across space (from countries of destination to countries of origin).

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EUROPEAN RETURN AND REINTEGRATION NETWORK (ERRIN)

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (TWG) REINTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Results Phase 1 of the Terms of Reference (ToR):
Research in Europe

PART I:
REPORT

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List of Abbreviations

Found throughout Report, Country Fiches and Annexes

ERRIN	European Return and Reintegration Network
PMU	Programme Management Unit
OMB	Operational Management Board
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
EU	European Union
EC/COM	European Commission
EUTF	EU Emergency Trust Fund (for Africa)
TWG	Technical Working Group
ToR	Terms of Reference
SP	Service Provider
MS	Member States
EPI(s)	European Partner Institution(s)
AT	Austria
BE	Belgium
DK	Denmark
FI	Finland
FR	France
DE	Germany
LU	Luxemburg
NL	Netherlands
NO	Norway
SE	Sweden
CH	Switzerland
UK	United Kingdom
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoJ	Ministry of Justice

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BMI	• Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior/Bundesministerium für Inneres • German Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community/ Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat
BFA	Austria Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum
ADA	Austrian Development Agency
RESTART II	Reintegration Assistance for Voluntary Returnees to Afghanistan and Iran (IOM AT)
RADA	Reintegration Assistance and Development for Afghanistan (AT)
FPS	Federal Public Service (BE)
FOD	Federale Overheidsdienst (BE)
IBZ	Belgian Federal Public Service (FPS) Interior Immigration Office/Federale (FOD) Overheidsdienst Binnenlandse Zaken - Dienst Vreemdelingenzaken
Fedasil	Belgian Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers/Federaal Agentschap voor de Opvang van Asielzoekers (BE)
Enabel	Belgian Development Agency
HIMO	High Manpower Intensity/Haute Intensité de Main d'œuvre
UIM	Danish Ministry of Immigration and Integration/Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet
UM	• Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Udenrigsministeriet • Finish Ministry for Foreign Affairs/Utrikesministeriets
MIGRI	Finish Immigration Service/Maahanmuuttovirasto Migrationsverket
CMC	Crisis Management Centre (FI)
OFII	French Office of Immigration and Integration/L'Office Français de l'Immigration et de l'Intégration
MEAE	French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs/Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères
AFD	French Development Agency/Agence Française de Développement
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development/ Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung
BAMF	German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees/Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge
BMEIA	German Federal Ministry Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs/Bundesministerium für Europa, Integration und Äußeres

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GIZ	German Corporation for International Cooperation GmbH/Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
KFW	German Development Bank
REAG GARP	Reintegration and Emigration Programme for Asylum-Seekers in Germany/Government Assisted Repatriation Programme
MFEA/MAEE	Luxemburg Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs/Ministère des Affaires étrangères et européennes
R&DS/DT&V	Dutch Ministry of Justice and Security – Repatriation and Departure Service/Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid - Dienst Terugkeer en Vertrek
BZ	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken
DSH	Department for Stabilisation and Humanitarian Aid/Directie Stabiliteit en Humanitaire Hulp (NL)
MO	Migration and Development Cluster/Migratie en Ontwikkeling Cluster (NL)
REAN	Return and Emigration Assistance from the Netherlands
ISF	International Security Fund/ Fonds voor Interne Veiligheid (NL)
UDI	Norwegian Directorate of Immigration/Utlendingsdirektoratet
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
UD	Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs/Utrikesdepartementet
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency/Styrelsen för Internationellt Utvecklingssamarbete
SMA	Swedish Migration Agency Ltd.
SEM	Swiss State Secretariat for Migration/Secrétariat d'Etat aux Migrations
FDJP/DFJP	Swiss Federal Department of Justice and Police/Le Département Fédéral de Justice et Police
FDFA/DFAE	Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs/Département Fédéral des Affaires Etrangères
SDC/DDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation/Direction du Développement et de la Coopération
ICM	(Interdepartmental Structure) International Cooperation on Migration (CH)
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DG DEVCO	Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development
DG HOME	Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs

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DG NEAR	Directorate-General for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations
R&D	Return and Development
AVR	Assisted Voluntary Return
NVR	Non-Voluntary Return
AVRR	Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
VARP	IOM Voluntary Assisted Return Programme
ODA	Official Development Assistance
AMIF	Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund
EDF	European Development Fund
SEQUA gGmbH	Development Agency of the German Private Sector
CPCCAF	Permanent Conference of African and French-Speaking Chambers
EUROCHAMBRES	Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry
ITC	International Trade Centre
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
SDG(s)	Sustainable Development Goal(s)
EURLO	European Return Liaison Officers Network
NGO(s)	Non-Governmental Organisation(s)
CSO(s)	Civil Society Organisation(s)
IGO(s)	Intergovernmental Organisation(s)
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
EMN IES	European Migration Network, Information Exchange System
RIAT	Reintegration Assessment Tool
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding

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1. Mandate, Objectives and Approach of the Research.

The **objective** of the Technical Working Group (TWG) on Reintegration and Development is to find and strengthen **synergies** between reintegration and (ongoing) development initiatives. Ultimately, the aim is for returnees from the EU (namely via European Return and Reintegration Network, ERRIN) Member States (MS) to be able to **access and benefit from the assistance services** offered under the established development initiatives in their countries of return. Accordingly, a consultant was appointed, abiding to the TWG's approved Terms of Reference (ToR), to explore the possibilities of such cooperation.

The **first phase of the research** involved an elaboration of questionnaires that included both quantitative as well as qualitative interrogations and ensured a comparative approach.[1] As a plan of action, the consultant was to hold **at least 15 questionnaire-based interviews** with key Informants. The results are presented in the following synthesis report, which serves as a basis for the upcoming Operational Framework. The continuing purpose of this exercise and analysis was to **screen the national programs of the ERRIN MS in the sectors of Reintegration as well as Development Aid**, and to identify possibilities where and how the respective programs can be **bridged**. **It has to be underlined** that this report presents the findings and research undertaken within the ERRIN TWG and focusses on the projects and opinions presented by the participants, at the moment of the interviews (February to April 2019). The present research **does not claim to constitute a representative study nor to present an exhaustive list of all projects and programmes** carried out in the sectors of Reintegration and Development in the ERRIN MS. The data gathered is treated with **confidentiality** and the Consultant will keep opinions shared by the interviewee as anonymous.

The **next step** is for the Consultant's proposed **program settings in the agreed two (2) pilot countries of Bangladesh and Nigeria to be put into practice and evaluated before the end of the current ERRIN programme (June 2020).** The discussion about the pilot projects as well as a vote defining the geographical scope took place in the framework of the April 2019 TWG meeting.[2] The outcomes of the meeting (and options recommended) was presented to the July 2019 Operational Management Board (OMB) obtaining approval and funding for the pilot activities.

2. Operational Framework of the Research and Outputs.

Thirty-five (35) persons participated in twenty-seven (27) interviews. All the interviews took place between the 13th of February 2019 and the 3rd of April 2019. A list of the interviewees is attached.[3] Ms. Sabine Boeltken, Project Manager within the ERRIN Programme Management Unit (PMU), selected as the internal Consultant, held the interviews. Where possible, the interviews were carried

[1] See in Part III - Annex 2: Template of the Questionnaire.
[2] See in Part III - Annex 3: Agenda and Minutes of the Meeting in Copenhagen, April 2019.
[3] See in Part III - Annex 4: List of interview participants.

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out face-to-face. Alternatively, Skype or telephone calls were organized. Individual as well as group interviews (bringing together several informants within the same institution) took place.

*Table 1: List of Interviewed Institutions (ERRIN European Partner Institutions, EPIs, highlighted in **blue**).*

Number	Country	Name of the institution
1	Austria	Federal Ministry of the Interior/*Bundesministerium für Inneres* (BMI)
2	Austria	• Federal Ministry Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs/*Bundesministerium für Europa, Integration und Äußeres* (BMEIA) • Austrian Development Agency (ADA)
3	Belgium	• Federal Public Service (FPS) Interior Immigration Office/*Federale Overheidsdienst (FOD) Binnenlandse Zaken - Dienst Vreemdelingenzaken* (IBZ) • Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers/*Federaal Agentschap voor de Opvang van Asielzoekers* (Fedasil)
4	Belgium	Enabel - Belgian Development Agency
5	Denmark	Ministry of Immigration and Integration/*Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet* (UIM)
6	Denmark	Ministry of Foreign Affairs/*Udenrigsministeriet* (UM)
7	Finland	Finish Immigration Service/*Maahanmuuttovirasto Migrationsverket* (MIGRI)
8	Finland	Ministry for Foreign Affairs/*Utrikesministeriets* (UM)
9	France	• Ministry of Interior/*Ministère de l'Interieur* • French Office of Immigration and Integration/*L'Office Français de l'Immigration et de l'Intégration* (OFII)
10	France	Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs/*Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères* (MEAE)
11	France	French Development Agency/*Agence Française de Développement* (AFD) (Governance Division)
12	Germany	Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community/ *Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat* (BMI)
13	Germany	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development/ *Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung* (BMZ)
14	Germany	Federal Office for Migration and Refugees/*Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge* (BAMF)
15	Luxembourg	Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MFEA) - Directorate of Immigration/*Ministère des Affaires étrangères et européennes* (MAEE) - *Direction de l'immigration*

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16	Netherlands	Ministry of Justice and Security – Repatriation and Departure Service (R&DS)/*Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid - Dienst Terugkeer en Vertrek* (DT&V)
17	Netherlands	Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Department for Stabilisation and Humanitarian Aid - Migration and Development Cluster/*Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken* (BZ) - *Directie Stabiliteit en Humanitaire Hulp* (DSH) - *Migratie en Ontwikkeling Cluster* (MO)
18	Norway	The Royal Ministry of Justice and Public Security/*Det kongelige justis- og beredskapsdepartement* Norwegian Directorate of Immigration/*Utlendingsdirektoratet* (UDI)
19	Sweden	Swedish Migration Agency - International Affairs Department /*Migrationsverket - Internationella Avdelningen* (Unit for international development cooperation - under steering of the Ministry of Justice/*Justitiedepartementet*)
20	Sweden	Ministry for Foreign Affairs/*Utrikesdepartementet* (UD) Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency/*Styrelsen för Internationellt Utvecklingssamarbete* (SIDA)
21	Switzerland	The Federal Department of Justice and Police (FDJP) - State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) - Directorate for International Cooperation/*Le Département Fédéral de Justice et Police* (DFJP)– *Secrétariat d'Etat aux Migrations* (SEM) - *Direction de la Coopération Internationale*
22	Switzerland	Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) - Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) - Global Programme Migration and Development Division/ *Département Fédéral des Affaires Etrangères* (DFAE) - *Direction du Développement et de la Coopération* (DDC) - *Division Programme Global Migration et Développement*
23	United Kingdom	Home Office - Immigration Enforcement
24	European Commission	Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO) - Migration and Development
25	European Commission	Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO) - EU Trust Fund (EUTF) for Africa
26	European Commission	Directorate-General Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME) - Irregular Migration
27	European Commission	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR)

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3. Presentation of Research Results Related to the First Layer: *Quantitative Data, Institutional Mapping and Project Landscape.*

3.1. General Remarks.

A **first observation** was that, the initial idea to interview one 'key informant' per ERRIN MS (or stakeholder) did not appear feasible. The consultant observed that the willingness and motivation to participate in the interviews was higher when the interviewee was not asked to give an overview about the overall institutional set-up and programme landscape. The invitation thus shifted for the interviewees to speak about his/her sphere of responsibility and then refer the consultant to other contacts/stakeholders in charge for the other respective sector(s). Therefore, more than 15 interviews (indicator ToR) were conducted in order to get the full picture. A **second observation** to note is that the number of interviews held per MS further mirrors the complexity of the institutional set-up and distribution of responsibilities in the respective country.

Figure 1: Participation in Interviews.

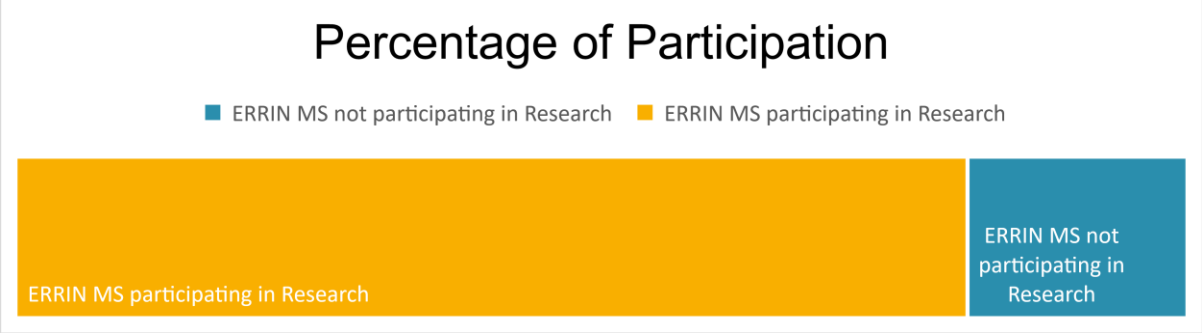
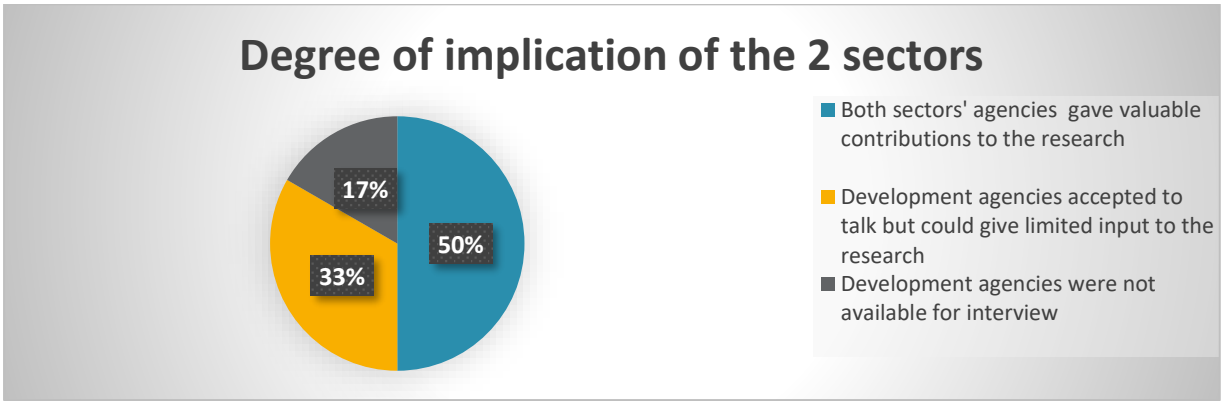


Figure 2: Degree of Participation of the Respective Two (2) Sectors of Interest.



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3.2. Screening of Institutional Set-up and Programme Landscape at European Partner Institution (EPI) Level.

In order to enhance the readability of the institutional mapping in Europe and to provide insight into the overall programme landscape in the sectors concerned, the consultant presented the results of the study in the format of **Country Fiches (per participating EPI)**[4]. When analysing the institutional set-up and programme landscape related to the ERRIN MS return and reintegration programmes vis-à-vis their development aid sector, **three (3) relationship layers** are identified and considered:

1. Institutional anchorage of the respectively responsible entities (return and development (R&D) programmes) and modus of collaboration (or non-collaboration);
2. Currently running return and reintegration programmes;
3. Currently running development aid programmes or projects that offer a potential to link up with ERRIN (form a TWG pilot).

The Country Fiches aim to visualize the first two layers. It sets-out the relationship between the bodies in charge of return and development (visualized in schemes) and summarizes the current programme situation (notes and comments on potential linkages are added in text boxes). All fiches have been **reviewed and approved by the respective countries**, namely by participating key informants[5].

Again, as mentioned above, related to the nature of the present work, the Country Fiches do not claim to be exhaustive. The objective of the presented fiches and schemes is to give an overall overview of the current situation in the countries. In the **second phase of the research**, during Activity 3 (Field Analysis) and Activity 4 (Draft of Operational Framework) of the ToR, the programmes and projects chosen as potential pilot activities will be evaluated more extensively.

Country Fiches – *set out in PART II.*

3.3. Observations Deriving from the Mapping Exercise.

3.3.1. Cluster/Points of Strategic Interest for Future (Inter-sectoral) Project Design.

Through the analysis of the data, clusters (common denominators) appeared within the EPI landscape that are strategically interesting when considering the design of projects that interlink the return and the development perspectives.

[4] Following the agreement of confidentiality, the consultant retains the responsibility over the content of the questionnaire but more detailed information can be given on request.
[5] Fiches not approved by the respective EPI at the time of sharing this report will be added as soon as approval will have taken place.

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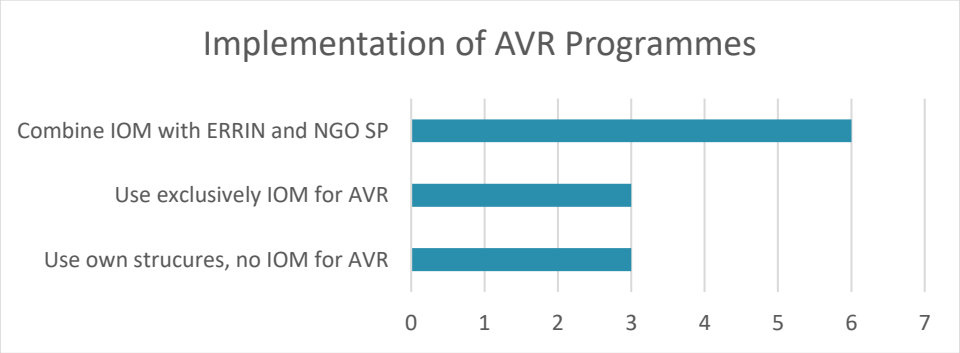
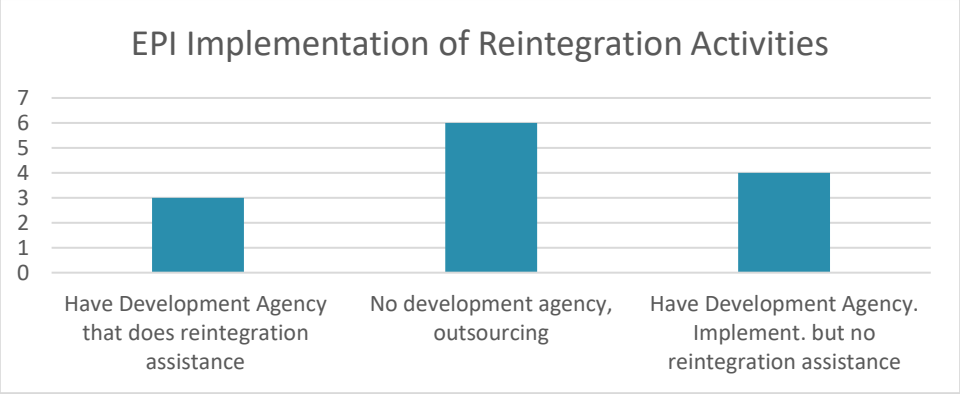
Figure 3: Institutions Implementing Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) Programmes.



The analysis has shown that the majority of the interviewed EPIs mix the usage of implementing partners when it comes to carrying out their national Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) programmes. In addition, the number of MS using their own structures to provide assistance is growing. This mirrors the wish of the MS – also expressed during the interviews – to have a direct impact and insight into their AVR activities. Specifically, those **EPIs not exclusively doing Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) via International Organisation for Migration (IOM) were interested** in the aim of the TWG, as they felt in their daily work that the **current reintegration assistance provided is not sufficiently efficient**.

Figure 4: EPI Implementation of Reintegration Activities via Development Channels.



A further interesting point to reflect on is the degree of direct implementation of development aid-funded reintegration activities on the side of the ERRIN MS.

The findings highlight that only a minority of the EPIs rely on their national development agencies to carry out reintegration activities. The majority of the EPIs, that have reintegration on their development agenda, outsource the services to Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), consultancy firms or other European development agencies. In addition, the institutional

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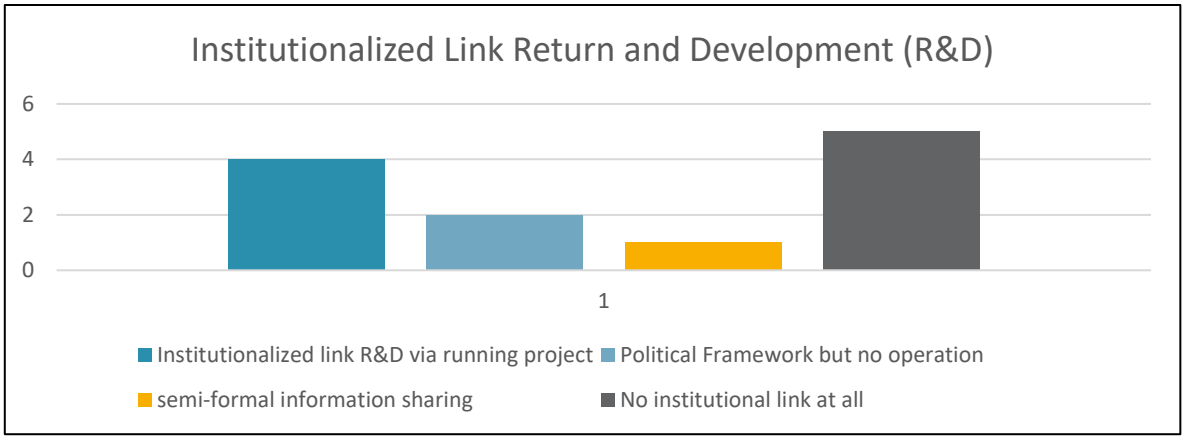
responsibility for return and/or reintegration is attributed to different institutions (Ministries, Departments). In most cases, a **certain remoteness exists between the institution in charge of the topic and the operational structure implementing the projects/programmes.** This explains why the identified key informants could at times only provide **fragmented information** about ongoing reintegration versus development programmes. Relevant is that, specifically, in those countries that implement intra-sectoral reintegration and development programmes by using their own structures were interested in promoting the **reintegration and development nexus at the European level**. All shared the concern that within the outreach activities, it would be more efficient for the target group if a prolonged reintegration value-chain could be offered at the stage of the pre-departure counselling. Furthermore, **return could be destigmatized when integrated into a community-based development approach**. A key question is whether there are **existing institutionalized links between the two sectors at ERRIN MS level**. This study has shown that this is **not the case** for most of the EPIs.
Four (4) categories are identified:

1. Existing institutionalized link between the two sectors via running programmes/projects;
2. Existing political framework (e.g. joint agenda on migration) but without practical usage;
3. Existence of semi-formal information sharing (e.g. invitation to respective project steering committees, semi-formal country meetings on operational level);
4. No link or dialogue existing at all.

It is relevant to note that these **institutional relationships are dynamic** and change whenever the political layer comes in. The MS who lack a link and collaboration between the immigration services and the development aid sector were specifically eager (on the immigration/return side) to **make use of the TWG, so to encourage internal dialogue on this issue**. Furthermore, those countries where cross-sectoral collaboration takes place have underlined that this evolution was due to the combination of political pressure (higher level pushing on operational level to collaborate) and additional funding.

Figure 5: Degrees of Inter-sectoral Collaboration (Return and Development Aid).



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3.3.2. Thematic Key Concerns.

Thematically, there are three specific areas of interest repeated by several key informants. Areas they feel to be of relevance for the future success of their work. The participants wish ERRIN/TWG to explore possible cross-sectoral (reintegration and development) project approaches entailing these interests:

- **(1) Community-based Approaches**

Both sectors (immigration/return as well as the development aid) acknowledge that the return of individuals and/or families have an impact on the lives and livelihoods of the communities to which they return to. Reintegration can barely be successful and sustainable if treated (only) on an individual level. The classical reintegration packages per returnee/family does not yet consider this fact. Return willingness is conditioned by the attitude that the returnee expects from his/her community of return. In addition, these communities tend to be suspicious/reluctant towards the return of their countrymen/countrywomen, especially if it is uncertain in which 'condition' the returnee will return (in terms of own income, employability, psychosocial health). Several interviewees have pointed out the need to integrate community-related development aid into the design of future return and reintegration programmes.

- **(2) Environment and Climate**

Pollution and climate change is of strong concern in all countries of origin. In the same time, the related economical areas (renewable energies, eco-friendly transport modes) entail potential for new type of professions that might be of interest for returnees. Often, returnees have experienced new technologies in the countries of destination and possess skills that could be strengthened prior to their return. In that regard, **(3) a collaboration with the Private Sector** (firms selling renewable energies, E-Bike Providers etc.) appears attractive and could constitute a further bridging element between return design and development aid activities. Indeed, as interviewees shared, there are several projects – like the SUPREM[6] project with Austria and the FONDEM[7] project with France - already in place. The **main obstacle** however was the limited number of appropriate candidates, a challenge that could be addressed if such programmes were designed at the European level (wider target group).

3.4. Results: Discussion of Potential Priority Countries and Pilot Activities.

The following section summarises the results of the questions addressing the **geographical zones of interest of the key informants**. This means the countries and regions in which the respective agency requests access to more sustainable reintegration services. A survey on the 'top priority countries and regions' was integrated into the questionnaire.

[6] See in Part III - Annex 1: Programme/Project/Funds Glossary.
[7] Ibid.

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3.4.1. Commonly Cited Regions and Countries of Interest.

- Afghanistan
- Bangladesh
- Horn of Africa and namely Ethiopia
- India
- Maghreb (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia)
- Western Africa and namely Nigeria, Senegal, Ghana, Ivory Coast
- Pakistan

The 'wish list' that resulted from the interviews, in terms of geographical priorities, has been **juxtaposed to the programmes/project that are funded by development aid.** More specifically, the interviewees were invited to cite examples of projects and programmes that offer a potential to be interlinked with ERRIN in order to extend the reintegration value chain. This means to maximise the support for the returnees by **combing ERRIN and development aid projects in a complementary manner.**

3.4.2. Potentially 'Linkable' Programmes and Projects Identified.

We need to differentiate between projects and programmes that are funded or implemented on a **bilateral level** (e.g. ERRIN MS level) and those funded on the **multilateral (EU) level** (e.g. through the EU Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) for Africa). Furthermore, the consultant sorted out those projects that: (1) **offer inter-linkage potential**, and (2) **cover countries mentioned as priority zones of interest**.

The matches resulting from that exercise are listed in the two tables below. It is relevant to mention that the positive matches are limited because the priority return countries are not per se the partner countries for development cooperation. In certain cases, there is no geographical overlap happening at all (e.g. see Luxemburg Country Fiche), what means that no nexus can be created between return and reintegration programmes vs. development aid projects.

Nota bene: a nexus between return and reintegration, and development aid can only take place when the two sectors collaborate with the same countries.

National Projects, Programmes and *Funding Instruments*:[8] disclaimer - the mentioned projects, programmes and funding instruments are provided by the interviewees themselves as examples.

[8] See in Part III - Annex 1: Programme/Project/Funds Glossary.

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Table 2: National Projects, Programmes and Funding Instruments.

Programme/ Project	**SUPREM** *SUPporting Sustainable Return of Migrants through Private-Public Multi-stakeholder Partnership.*	**AUDA** *Voluntary Return to Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia.*	**SAFBIN** *Smallholder Adaptive Farming and Biodiversity Network.*	**Flexible Return Fund** *Earmarked from the Official Development Assistance (ODA) budget to facilitate bilateral cooperation on the readmission of rejected asylum seekers.*	**FONDEM** *Fondation Énergies pour le Monde.*	**Perspektive Heimat** *Link return counselling activities in Germany with economic development activities in countries of origin.*
Partner	Austria (BMI)	Finland (MIGRI, UM(Fi) and the Crisis Management Centre (CMC))	Austria	Denmark	France (OFII)	Germany (BMI, BMZ)
Focal Country	Nigeria	Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia.	India	Afghanistan, Pakistan	Mali, Senegal, Cameroon	Afghanistan, Albania, the Gambia, Ghana, Iraq, Kosovo, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, Serbia, Tunisia, Planned: Egypt, Pakistan

Additionally, one can look at Ethiopia and Armenia - Official Development Assistance (ODA) countries – for further inspiration for the mapping exercise (Denmark, Netherlands, and Austria) and future design phases. Importantly, the involvement of ERRIN implementation (e.g. 'Gov2Gov' project) and Service Provider (SP) presence in those countries can be useful connections to tap into to create a nexus.

EU Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) for Africa Programmes: [9] disclaimer - the mentioned EUTF Programmes are provided by the interviewees themselves as examples.

[9] Ibid.

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Table 3: EU Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) Programmes.

	EUTF North Africa	EUTF Sahel & Lake Chad			
Programme/ Project	**EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration**	**ARCHIPELAGO** *Euro-African Partnerships for Vocational Education and Training.*	**ProGreS Migration Tunisie** *Promote the implementation of Tunisia's National Migration Strategy.*	**INTEGRA** *Support program for the socio-economic integration of youth.*	**Building a Future - Make it in The Gambia.**
Partner	DG DEVCO, IOM	Development agency of the German private sector (SEQUA gGmbH), Permanent Conference of African and French-Speaking Chambers (CPCCAF), Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry (EUROCHAMBRES)	France (OFII)	Germany (GIZ), Belgium (Enabel), International Trade Centre (ITC)	Germany (GIZ), Belgium (Enabel), International Trade Centre (ITC)
Focal Country		Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal	Tunisia	Guinea	The Gambia

Denominators Used:

As result of the research, certain denominators could be identified. We consider them as minimum standards to match, so to create a minimum basis in order to set-up an operational nexus for the integrated extended reintegration value-chain.

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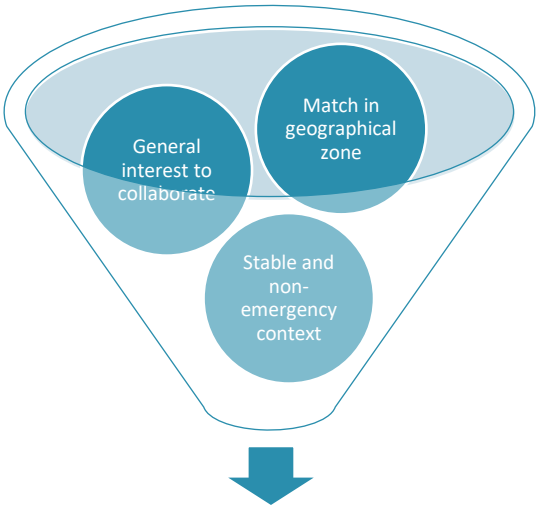
Figure 6: Denominators Identified for the Nexus between Return and Development Sector.



Based on the results of the first phase of the research, and following the internal discussion and voting process, **Bangladesh and Nigeria were selected as pilot countries**. In those two countries, the TWG will carry out fact-finding missions and identify pilot activities to test and learn from this intensified intra-sectoral collaboration.[10]

4. Presentation of Results Related to the Second Layer: *Qualitative Data, Questionnaire and Foundational Meeting Answers*.

The first part of the interviews focused on the quantitative data, such as:

- Which Member States is funding or carrying out which programmes/projects?
- In which countries?
- With which volume and until when?
- Which departments/agencies are in charge of what?

The second part addressed what we consider in the following as the qualitative data: **the reasoning behind existing (or non-existing) collaboration and/or strategic interests.** These findings are

[10] See in Part III - Annex 5: Project Proposal TWG presented to the Operational Management Board, July 2019.

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presented below, in line with the questions formulated in the questionnaire and foundational meeting of the TWG in Copenhagen in November 2018.

4.1. Presentation of Answers Clustered by Questions.

Analysis of existing (or possible future) collaboration between actors of the return and development sector

Most interviewees stated that none or limited collaboration is existing between the sectors. In those cases, where inter-sectoral collaboration does take place, this relates to reintegration, not to development aid. For example, France has their 'incentives approach' where extra assistance can be provided to the returnee if s/he has furthered their reintegration and contribution to the community. Again, this is considered as a part of the return assistance and not development aid.

Some examples:

- Information sharing at European Commission (EC/Com) level (participation in respective steering committees);
- But no common planning of DEVCO, DG Near and DG Home;
- Bilaterally (e.g. France, Austria, EUTF): specific components (related to reintegration) integrated in wider development aid projects, or more intensive reintegration elements designed specifically to address the need to go further towards sustainable reintegration.

The overall observation is a **high degree of fragmentation** in the responsibilities and projects implemented. Furthermore, the different persons, departments and entities involved **barely know from, and about, each other**. Concerning the motivation and whether prospective changes will be made, most of the interviewees referred to the following challenges:

- Different Countries (return vs. development aid)
- Different approaches in respective sectors (individual vs. structural)
- Different target groups:
  - Poorest vs. those with financial means to migrate
  - Local basis population vs. very specific group of persons with migration experience

To sum-up, the majority is of the opinion and recalls that the sectors are not and should not be mixed. Collaboration should indeed take place, following an inter-ministerial approach, but each sector/programme should keep his/her zone of intervention.

Nota Bene: Change a little, but not too much!

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Do returnees have/should have access to development and reintegration initiatives pre-departure?

The overall opinion is that ensuring such access to returnees appears to be difficult – institutionally and operationally. As pre-departure assistance, especially counselling, falls largely within the responsibility of the returning MS, while development aid is more based on separate agreements between MS and third country governments/actors (bilateral governmental agreements, multilateral agendas). If linkages were to be drawn, then development agencies would have to be included and integrated into the return-cycle very early on: even before the return decision takes place. Such process would be very labour intensive and require important resources at the level of the pre-departure.

Nota Bene: As a first step, it would be desirable to obtain a list of ongoing development projects in return countries, and be updated regularly.

What should be the role of development agencies in the reintegration of third country nationals?

Politically seen, migration is a factor taken into consideration by most of the development agencies, but **approached from a different perspective and agenda**. The 'traditional' migration and development strategies aim to **use migration as a trigger for development**, e.g. through channelling remittances or attracting diaspora to invest in their countries of origin. Furthermore, in most cases migration-related projects **target the protection of vulnerable groups or specific themes** (e.g. Female Genital Mutilation, FGM) and do not entail any link with return policy (and practice).

However, all interviewees agreed that a **more open dialogue and understanding of the development aid projects** would be of benefit for the return sector – **and vice versa**. For instance, development agencies have tools to identify and communicate needs of countries of return. A closer collaboration with development aid agencies could positively influence the political dialogue with governments in return countries.

Nevertheless, it was stressed that the communication about offering development aid should be carried out by development projects and not by pre-departure actors. This would **avoid the interpretation that there is support but also pressure for voluntary return to be attached to development aid.** In addition, the needs of partner countries should be identified as much as those of returnees. For instance, pinpointing potential labour market niches within these countries for which returnees can be trained prior to departure, and therefore contribute to the development of their home countries after return. If coordinated in that way (and if politically accepted in the host

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countries), pre-departure training of returnees can be aligned with development aid guided by a needs-based analysis.

In general, it has been underlined that it would require additional **political pressure and will** to start real joint programming and implementation between the two sectors. Some key informants expressed the wish to use the present pilot activity of ERRIN to motivate and lobby for extended collaboration.

Nota bene/Warning: Work with development agencies and NOT with migration agencies (EUTF/IOM etc.)!

> *What are the interests of development partners/agencies in getting involved in the individual approach to reintegrating returnees? What are the common elements (fil rouge) linking these experiences? What are the key elements that we can isolate and duplicate?*

There is an overall acceptance that the high political interest in return is something that the development sector cannot ignore or avoid. A responsible participation of the development aid sector in this discourse is key to shape the future of development cooperation. In terms of performance indicators, reintegration of returnees from Europe is commonly incorporated in project design. In that context, the development partners rely on the return sector for efficient outreach to the target group. Currently, most of the development projects that entail returnees as a category of beneficiaries are largely underutilised. The development agencies can no longer ignore the financial instruments that combine development aid with return, as in numerous countries development aid budgets are being cut/reduced.[11] For the time being, most of the development aid interlocutors do not see the significant benefit posed by the rejected asylum seekers/migrants in the development of their country of origin. On the contrary, the main concern is that rejected asylum seekers/migrants (and ergo-ERRIN returnees) could destabilise the socio-economic system and counter the successes of development aid strategies. This understanding could change by following the previously explained needs-oriented approach to which pre-departure vocational trainings are tailored to the specific needs of the country of return. Hereby, the returnee's contribution to development would be more tangible.

Nota Bene: The difference in points of view remain - no genuine interest to collaborate with the return sector, but just reply to political pressure!

[11] 33% in Sweden since 2015.

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What are the challenges for development actors to get involved in reintegration programmes?

An underlining perception is that funding is being 'taken away' from the development sector to strengthen the (internal/national) return policy. The funds allocated to those projects fighting *"the root causes of irregular migration"* (Pillar 1 of the Joint Valletta Action Plan)[12] would not be additional budget, but funds withdrawn from the development sector. In some MS, the immigration services suffer from a negative reputation that is often due to stricter asylum decisions/law. Return is increasingly politicized. Different from the return perspective, development actors mostly refer to different values and orientate themselves around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The main obstacle seems to be the **lack of dialogue and the existence of ideological stereotypes** *("bad policemen"* versus *"dreamers"*). In order to bring the two sectors closer together, there is **need to know each other better, ideally as an integrated part of the working routine.** The research has shown that stereotypes diminish where joint management takes place.

Nota Bene: To establish a stable return and reintegration vs. development nexus, a shift is needed in the mind-set within the European institutional landscape.

What are the interests of the return partners/agencies in getting involved in development projects?

The answers from the interviewed return agencies is comparably critical and sceptical than those presented from the development aid sector. They range from *"zero interest"* to *"very interesting for more sustainable reintegration."* The main motivators for an involvement in and from development aid are:

- Signal to undecided potential returnees to accept voluntary return;
- Success stories;
- Better position to negotiate readmission;
- Better image for the return sector (*"away from the cruel policemen"*).

In order to be successful, **an extended reintegration value-chain requires individual monitoring, an individual accompaniment that cannot be shouldered by the returning agencies, nor by the development actors.** The main challenges mentioned addressed the question on how to operationally inter-link different implementing agencies. More specifically, the question is on how to integrate an additional target group into a project's already running operational plan. From a project management perspective, it would constitute a **complex process** to review the contractual arrangements as well as

[12] See in Part III - Annex 1: Programme/Project/Funds Glossary.

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the key performance indicators. One proposal in that regard was to include returnees as a vulnerable target group, a 'joker' for returnees.

Nota Bene: To open up the dialogue between the sectors would already be a crucial first step!

What type of coordination/responsibility-sharing (if any) between the return/migration agencies and development cooperation is desirable? Is there any good practise, good examples of such cooperation?

The overall opinion was that responsibility-sharing would not be possible as long as we are considering combining different projects implemented by different agencies and budgets. Different programmes mean different reporting lines: there can be no sharing possible as long as different programmes and budgets are existing. A counter-question: *"How can the return sector make promises about something managed by third party?"* It seems obvious that joint monitoring is only possible, if there is **joint planning and implementation**. A more practical alternative would be to maintain two responsibilities in parallel:

- Responsibility for the returned migrant lies with the returning authority, and;
- Handover of responsibility should be within the eligible support period of the return programmes (under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) this is 1 year).

Nota Bene: Complementarity instead of merger. Seek ownership of development projects willing to collaborate, do not impose!

Analysis of the existing (or possible future) operational interrelation between the two (2) sectors. Complementarity of funding/specific indicators EUTF:

The main finding is that both sides do not see any major challenges (nor the risk of double funding) if a returnee obtains reintegration assistance from both sectors *("Be happy for the returnee!"*). However, there is a difference with the European Development Fund (EDF) (DG DEVCO funding) and the AMIF, which requires co-funding. Still, the EUTF was seen as the best example, for grounds for collaboration, as it integrated returnees as beneficiaries into development aid projects (30% of the beneficiaries should be returnees).

Overall, EUTF (namely its implementation via IOM) is perceived as not fully successful:

- Important delays;
- No track record about assisted returnees communicated back to MS (*black-box*);

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- Return actors are not aware of existing offers for their returnees.

Nota Bene: Eventually best solution is to link up the ERRIN Pilot to EUTF!

Practical solutions (examples and lessons learned) for referral process from a project type b (reintegration project, decided in EU MS) to a project type a (development project, implemented in the country of return):

The overall agreement of the interviewees is that the **referral process is key**, and should be linked to specific **case-by-case monitoring** during the pilot phase. Furthermore, a successful referral is **conditioned to the availability of an updated project database**. A third party - not return agency or development actor – shall take over the workload of updating the mapping of available and inter-linkable projects.

The recommendations can be presented as follows:

- **Referral prior to departure** shall take place via return counsellors:
  - Comment: involve development agencies already at this stage.
  - Return counsellors are already overloaded, so ERRIN Working Group on Counselling could play a key role in that context.
- **Referral after arrival** shall ideally take place via ERRIN's SPs and/or IOM (based on EUTF and already existing referral mechanisms):
  - Comment: (existing) referrals not yet operational and limited to/focussed on reintegration.
  - No further IOM or risk of SP black-box.
  - Integrate the European Return Liaison Officers Network (EURLO) if available.
- Extend the European Migration Network, Information Exchange System (EMN IES) – by documenting data from the field into a central database system (Reintegration Assessment Tool, RIAT).

Nota Bene: ERRIN could play the role of the missing bridge/linkage to facilitate information exchange between return counsellor, development project and migrant/returnee!

Are there sector-specific approaches when referring returnees to development programmes (e.g. employment-related, social security-related, assistance-related projects)?

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The shared view is that the referral should **be based on the needs of the returnee as well as those in the country of return**. Referral functions will be discussed in more detail in the country of return (e.g. ERRIN SP, IOM, Consultancy, Gov2Gov).

Second layer of the research: methodological review and proposal of suitable strategic approach. Based on your knowledge of the ongoing projects (in ERRIN countries and beyond), which best practices and lessons learned come to your mind thinking about do no harm.

Common opinion is that supporting returnees will be considered as **unfair** by some of those who were left behind and the local population. However, the question of discrimination has been called a *"very European discussion,"* and is actually less relevant in countries of return as they, themselves, ask for specific support for returnees.

! **Nota Bene: Make sure that local population can participate as well in capacity-building/training programmes!**

Empowerment: What is the role of local actors, both public and private (including Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Intergovernmental Organisation IGOs), especially of those which in addition to the provision of reintegration assistance are also involved in the implementation of development initiatives? Can they potentially link these two activities and if yes, under which conditions?

Related to the role of local authorities and civil society, the answers ranged from: *"Needs assessment and referral should be done by local government (Gov2Gov)"* to *"Still too early, information sharing, not more."*

Nota Bene: Maintain protocol, inform the governments but keep the lead on the referral (liberty of manoeuvre, gain trust of the returnees)!

Questions left unanswered:

- What kind of practical *modus operandi* is thinkable, at the intra-EU level?
- Check of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), accountability and visibility compliance if distinct financial instruments and donors are mixed.

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- Vulnerable persons' group.

4.1. Summary of Recommendations and Key Findings to Consider.

4.1.1. The Do's and Don'ts – Geographical Scope and Modalities of Pilot Activities.

Table 4: Key Do's and Don'ts.

Do's	Don'ts
• Open channels between Ministries (e.g. Ministry of Interior) and development agencies; • Seek ownership, buy in of development aid projects; • Use existing structures; • Lobby for training of returnees, start in MS where this is politically possible; • Open individual capacity-building measures and psychosocial assistance to returnees as well as to the local population; • Use ERRIN to set the way for more dialogue with the development sector; • Overcome the challenges and stereotypes by operational practice ('learning by doing'); • Add resources to referral (pre-departure); • Include EURLO in communication campaigns; • Work with NGOs and multilateral funding (EUTF), a solution: link up with EUTF.	• No emergency country as pilot; • No country with too low caseload; • Avoid political level (concentrate on dialogue with operators); • Do not link up with only one programme, consider Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or other forms of agreements with bouquet of services and partners; • Avoid changing existing contractual arrangements (including indicators); • No mix up of ownership but complement (define moment of handover); • Do not continue current reintegration practice that is rather psycho-mental coaching than real vocation training and job placement (more consolation than counselling); • No discrimination of local population.

4.1.2. Key Findings to Consider for the Design of the Pilot Activities.

The results of the first phase of the research have been presented to the TWG at the meeting in Copenhagen April 2019, as explained at the beginning of the report. At that stage, the following key

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facts were considered and guided in the design of the pilot activities, which were presented between May and July 2019:

- Willingness of EUTF to collaborate with ERRIN/confirmed by DEVCO;
- Willingness of BMZ to facilitate collaboration with German Corporation for International Cooperation GmbH (GIZ);
- Consensus about the aim to analyse and up-scale identified best practices (e.g. Danish Flexible Return Fund and the Perspektive Heimat);
- Use ERRIN as linkage to return counsellors as well as to SP in the field.

5. Conclusions and Next Steps.

Accordingly, the objective of this report (Part I) is to present the results of the study in Europe, inform the members of the technical working group as well as the Operational Management Board and conclude the first phase of the research. The present includes the findings of the institutional mapping exercise. Furthermore, it identified the geographical scope and elaborated on the answers given in the questionnaires. The Country Fiches have been reviewed by the MS and incorporated in Part II of the report compilation[13].

In parallel to the drafting of this report, phase 2 of the research has been underway. Based on the results orally presented to the technical working group in Copenhagen (April 2019), two pilot countries - Bangladesh and Nigeria – have been proposed and approved. Field visits to both pilot countries have taken place, with a visit to Bangladesh in June 2019 and Nigeria in September 2019. The pilot activities proposed for phase 3 (Implementation of pilot/exploratory activities and draft Operational Framework) are currently in the design phase and expected to be launched during the month of October 2019.

The key deliverable for the remaining time (until June 2020) will be the elaboration of the Operational Framework where good practices, lessons learned and recommendations will be shared, giving the start signal for project implementation.

[13] Fiches not approved by the respective EPI at the time of sharing this report will be added as soon as approval will have taken place.

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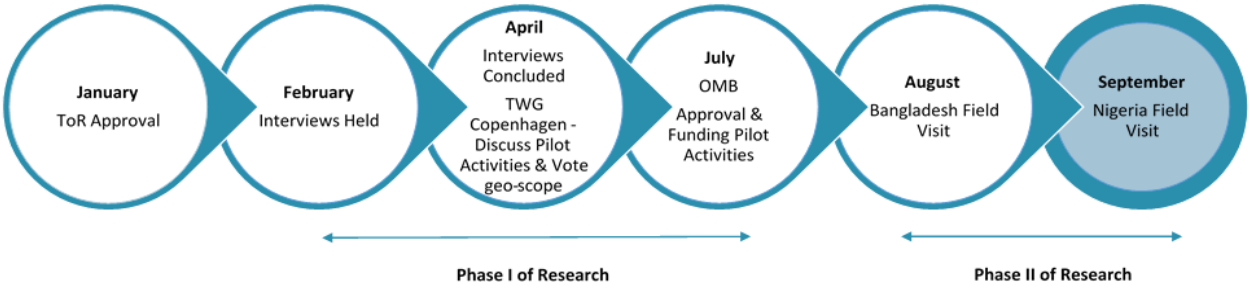
Figure 7: Timeline.



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EUROPEAN RETURN AND REINTEGRATION NETWORK (ERRIN)

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (TWG) REINTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Results Phase 1 of the Terms of Reference (ToR):
Research in Europe

PART I:
REPORT

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List of Abbreviations

Found throughout Report, Country Fiches and Annexes

ERRIN	European Return and Reintegration Network
PMU	Programme Management Unit
OMB	Operational Management Board
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
EU	European Union
EC/COM	European Commission
EUTF	EU Emergency Trust Fund (for Africa)
TWG	Technical Working Group
ToR	Terms of Reference
SP	Service Provider
MS	Member States
EPI(s)	European Partner Institution(s)
AT	Austria
BE	Belgium
DK	Denmark
FI	Finland
FR	France
DE	Germany
LU	Luxemburg
NL	Netherlands
NO	Norway
SE	Sweden
CH	Switzerland
UK	United Kingdom
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoJ	Ministry of Justice

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BMI	• Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior/Bundesministerium für Inneres • German Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community/ Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat
BFA	Austria Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum
ADA	Austrian Development Agency
RESTART II	Reintegration Assistance for Voluntary Returnees to Afghanistan and Iran (IOM AT)
RADA	Reintegration Assistance and Development for Afghanistan (AT)
FPS	Federal Public Service (BE)
FOD	Federale Overheidsdienst (BE)
IBZ	Belgian Federal Public Service (FPS) Interior Immigration Office/Federale (FOD) Overheidsdienst Binnenlandse Zaken - Dienst Vreemdelingenzaken
Fedasil	Belgian Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers/Federaal Agentschap voor de Opvang van Asielzoekers (BE)
Enabel	Belgian Development Agency
HIMO	High Manpower Intensity/Haute Intensité de Main d'œuvre
UIM	Danish Ministry of Immigration and Integration/Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet
UM	• Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Udenrigsministeriet • Finish Ministry for Foreign Affairs/Utrikesministeriets
MIGRI	Finish Immigration Service/Maahanmuuttovirasto Migrationsverket
CMC	Crisis Management Centre (FI)
OFII	French Office of Immigration and Integration/L'Office Français de l'Immigration et de l'Intégration
MEAE	French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs/Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères
AFD	French Development Agency/Agence Française de Développement
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development/ Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung
BAMF	German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees/Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge
BMEIA	German Federal Ministry Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs/Bundesministerium für Europa, Integration und Äußeres

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GIZ	German Corporation for International Cooperation GmbH/Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
KFW	German Development Bank
REAG GARP	Reintegration and Emigration Programme for Asylum-Seekers in Germany/Government Assisted Repatriation Programme
MFEA/MAEE	Luxemburg Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs/Ministère des Affaires étrangères et européennes
R&DS/DT&V	Dutch Ministry of Justice and Security – Repatriation and Departure Service/Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid - Dienst Terugkeer en Vertrek
BZ	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken
DSH	Department for Stabilisation and Humanitarian Aid/Directie Stabiliteit en Humanitaire Hulp (NL)
MO	Migration and Development Cluster/Migratie en Ontwikkeling Cluster (NL)
REAN	Return and Emigration Assistance from the Netherlands
ISF	International Security Fund/ Fonds voor Interne Veiligheid (NL)
UDI	Norwegian Directorate of Immigration/Utlendingsdirektoratet
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
UD	Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs/Utrikesdepartementet
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency/Styrelsen för Internationellt Utvecklingssamarbete
SMA	Swedish Migration Agency Ltd.
SEM	Swiss State Secretariat for Migration/Secrétariat d'Etat aux Migrations
FDJP/DFJP	Swiss Federal Department of Justice and Police/Le Département Fédéral de Justice et Police
FDFA/DFAE	Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs/Département Fédéral des Affaires Etrangères
SDC/DDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation/Direction du Développement et de la Coopération
ICM	(Interdepartmental Structure) International Cooperation on Migration (CH)
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DG DEVCO	Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development
DG HOME	Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs

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DG NEAR	Directorate-General for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations
R&D	Return and Development
AVR	Assisted Voluntary Return
NVR	Non-Voluntary Return
AVRR	Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
VARP	IOM Voluntary Assisted Return Programme
ODA	Official Development Assistance
AMIF	Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund
EDF	European Development Fund
SEQUA gGmbH	Development Agency of the German Private Sector
CPCCAF	Permanent Conference of African and French-Speaking Chambers
EUROCHAMBRES	Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry
ITC	International Trade Centre
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
SDG(s)	Sustainable Development Goal(s)
EURLO	European Return Liaison Officers Network
NGO(s)	Non-Governmental Organisation(s)
CSO(s)	Civil Society Organisation(s)
IGO(s)	Intergovernmental Organisation(s)
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
EMN IES	European Migration Network, Information Exchange System
RIAT	Reintegration Assessment Tool
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding

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1. Mandate, Objectives and Approach of the Research.

The **objective** of the Technical Working Group (TWG) on Reintegration and Development is to find and strengthen **synergies** between reintegration and (ongoing) development initiatives. Ultimately, the aim is for returnees from the EU (namely via European Return and Reintegration Network, ERRIN) Member States (MS) to be able to **access and benefit from the assistance services** offered under the established development initiatives in their countries of return. Accordingly, a consultant was appointed, abiding to the TWG's approved Terms of Reference (ToR), to explore the possibilities of such cooperation.

The **first phase of the research** involved an elaboration of questionnaires that included both quantitative as well as qualitative interrogations and ensured a comparative approach.[1] As a plan of action, the consultant was to hold **at least 15 questionnaire-based interviews** with key Informants. The results are presented in the following synthesis report, which serves as a basis for the upcoming Operational Framework. The continuing purpose of this exercise and analysis was to **screen the national programs of the ERRIN MS in the sectors of Reintegration as well as Development Aid**, and to identify possibilities where and how the respective programs can be **bridged**. **It has to be underlined** that this report presents the findings and research undertaken within the ERRIN TWG and focusses on the projects and opinions presented by the participants, at the moment of the interviews (February to April 2019). The present research **does not claim to constitute a representative study nor to present an exhaustive list of all projects and programmes** carried out in the sectors of Reintegration and Development in the ERRIN MS. The data gathered is treated with **confidentiality** and the Consultant will keep opinions shared by the interviewee as anonymous.

The **next step** is for the Consultant's proposed **program settings in the agreed two (2) pilot countries of Bangladesh and Nigeria to be put into practice and evaluated before the end of the current ERRIN programme (June 2020).** The discussion about the pilot projects as well as a vote defining the geographical scope took place in the framework of the April 2019 TWG meeting.[2] The outcomes of the meeting (and options recommended) was presented to the July 2019 Operational Management Board (OMB) obtaining approval and funding for the pilot activities.

2. Operational Framework of the Research and Outputs.

Thirty-five (35) persons participated in twenty-seven (27) interviews. All the interviews took place between the 13th of February 2019 and the 3rd of April 2019. A list of the interviewees is attached.[3] Ms. Sabine Boeltken, Project Manager within the ERRIN Programme Management Unit (PMU), selected as the internal Consultant, held the interviews. Where possible, the interviews were carried

[1] See in Part III - Annex 2: Template of the Questionnaire.
[2] See in Part III - Annex 3: Agenda and Minutes of the Meeting in Copenhagen, April 2019.
[3] See in Part III - Annex 4: List of interview participants.

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out face-to-face. Alternatively, Skype or telephone calls were organized. Individual as well as group interviews (bringing together several informants within the same institution) took place.

*Table 1: List of Interviewed Institutions (ERRIN European Partner Institutions, EPIs, highlighted in **blue**).*

Number	Country	Name of the institution
1	Austria	Federal Ministry of the Interior/*Bundesministerium für Inneres* (BMI)
2	Austria	• Federal Ministry Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs/*Bundesministerium für Europa, Integration und Äußeres* (BMEIA) • Austrian Development Agency (ADA)
3	Belgium	• Federal Public Service (FPS) Interior Immigration Office/*Federale Overheidsdienst (FOD) Binnenlandse Zaken - Dienst Vreemdelingenzaken* (IBZ) • Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers/*Federaal Agentschap voor de Opvang van Asielzoekers* (Fedasil)
4	Belgium	Enabel - Belgian Development Agency
5	Denmark	Ministry of Immigration and Integration/*Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet* (UIM)
6	Denmark	Ministry of Foreign Affairs/*Udenrigsministeriet* (UM)
7	Finland	Finish Immigration Service/*Maahanmuuttovirasto Migrationsverket* (MIGRI)
8	Finland	Ministry for Foreign Affairs/*Utrikesministeriets* (UM)
9	France	• Ministry of Interior/*Ministère de l'Interieur* • French Office of Immigration and Integration/*L'Office Français de l'Immigration et de l'Intégration* (OFII)
10	France	Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs/*Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères* (MEAE)
11	France	French Development Agency/*Agence Française de Développement* (AFD) (Governance Division)
12	Germany	Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community/ *Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat* (BMI)
13	Germany	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development/ *Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung* (BMZ)
14	Germany	Federal Office for Migration and Refugees/*Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge* (BAMF)
15	Luxembourg	Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MFEA) - Directorate of Immigration/*Ministère des Affaires étrangères et européennes* (MAEE) - *Direction de l'immigration*

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16	Netherlands	Ministry of Justice and Security – Repatriation and Departure Service (R&DS)/*Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid - Dienst Terugkeer en Vertrek* (DT&V)
17	Netherlands	Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Department for Stabilisation and Humanitarian Aid - Migration and Development Cluster/*Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken* (BZ) - *Directie Stabiliteit en Humanitaire Hulp* (DSH) - *Migratie en Ontwikkeling Cluster* (MO)
18	Norway	The Royal Ministry of Justice and Public Security/*Det kongelige justis- og beredskapsdepartement* Norwegian Directorate of Immigration/*Utlendingsdirektoratet* (UDI)
19	Sweden	Swedish Migration Agency - International Affairs Department /*Migrationsverket - Internationella Avdelningen* (Unit for international development cooperation - under steering of the Ministry of Justice/*Justitiedepartementet*)
20	Sweden	Ministry for Foreign Affairs/*Utrikesdepartementet* (UD) Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency/*Styrelsen för Internationellt Utvecklingssamarbete* (SIDA)
21	Switzerland	The Federal Department of Justice and Police (FDJP) - State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) - Directorate for International Cooperation/*Le Département Fédéral de Justice et Police* (DFJP)– *Secrétariat d'Etat aux Migrations* (SEM) - *Direction de la Coopération Internationale*
22	Switzerland	Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) - Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) - Global Programme Migration and Development Division/ *Département Fédéral des Affaires Etrangères* (DFAE) - *Direction du Développement et de la Coopération* (DDC) - *Division Programme Global Migration et Développement*
23	United Kingdom	Home Office - Immigration Enforcement
24	European Commission	Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO) - Migration and Development
25	European Commission	Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO) - EU Trust Fund (EUTF) for Africa
26	European Commission	Directorate-General Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME) - Irregular Migration
27	European Commission	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR)

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3. Presentation of Research Results Related to the First Layer: *Quantitative Data, Institutional Mapping and Project Landscape.*

3.1. General Remarks.

A **first observation** was that, the initial idea to interview one 'key informant' per ERRIN MS (or stakeholder) did not appear feasible. The consultant observed that the willingness and motivation to participate in the interviews was higher when the interviewee was not asked to give an overview about the overall institutional set-up and programme landscape. The invitation thus shifted for the interviewees to speak about his/her sphere of responsibility and then refer the consultant to other contacts/stakeholders in charge for the other respective sector(s). Therefore, more than 15 interviews (indicator ToR) were conducted in order to get the full picture. A **second observation** to note is that the number of interviews held per MS further mirrors the complexity of the institutional set-up and distribution of responsibilities in the respective country.

Figure 1: Participation in Interviews.

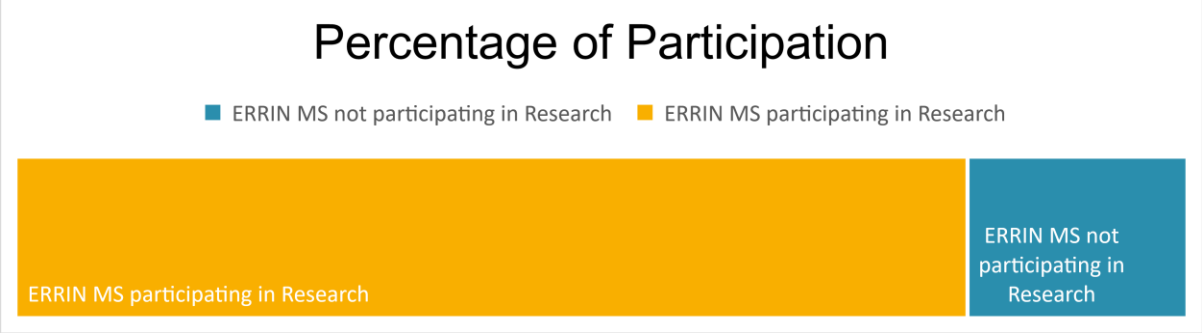
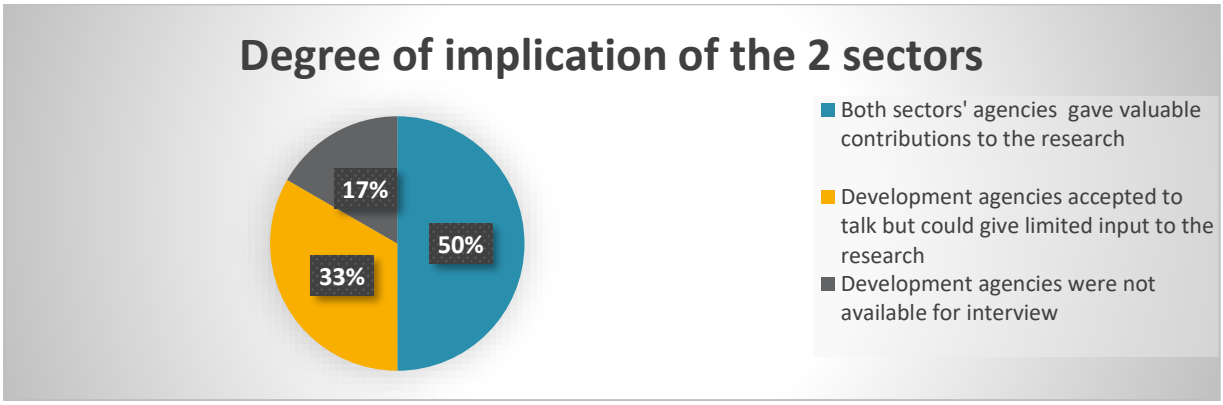


Figure 2: Degree of Participation of the Respective Two (2) Sectors of Interest.



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3.2. Screening of Institutional Set-up and Programme Landscape at European Partner Institution (EPI) Level.

In order to enhance the readability of the institutional mapping in Europe and to provide insight into the overall programme landscape in the sectors concerned, the consultant presented the results of the study in the format of **Country Fiches (per participating EPI)**[4]. When analysing the institutional set-up and programme landscape related to the ERRIN MS return and reintegration programmes vis-à-vis their development aid sector, **three (3) relationship layers** are identified and considered:

1. Institutional anchorage of the respectively responsible entities (return and development (R&D) programmes) and modus of collaboration (or non-collaboration);
2. Currently running return and reintegration programmes;
3. Currently running development aid programmes or projects that offer a potential to link up with ERRIN (form a TWG pilot).

The Country Fiches aim to visualize the first two layers. It sets-out the relationship between the bodies in charge of return and development (visualized in schemes) and summarizes the current programme situation (notes and comments on potential linkages are added in text boxes). All fiches have been **reviewed and approved by the respective countries**, namely by participating key informants[5].

Again, as mentioned above, related to the nature of the present work, the Country Fiches do not claim to be exhaustive. The objective of the presented fiches and schemes is to give an overall overview of the current situation in the countries. In the **second phase of the research**, during Activity 3 (Field Analysis) and Activity 4 (Draft of Operational Framework) of the ToR, the programmes and projects chosen as potential pilot activities will be evaluated more extensively.

Country Fiches – *set out in PART II.*

3.3. Observations Deriving from the Mapping Exercise.

3.3.1. Cluster/Points of Strategic Interest for Future (Inter-sectoral) Project Design.

Through the analysis of the data, clusters (common denominators) appeared within the EPI landscape that are strategically interesting when considering the design of projects that interlink the return and the development perspectives.

[4] Following the agreement of confidentiality, the consultant retains the responsibility over the content of the questionnaire but more detailed information can be given on request.
[5] Fiches not approved by the respective EPI at the time of sharing this report will be added as soon as approval will have taken place.

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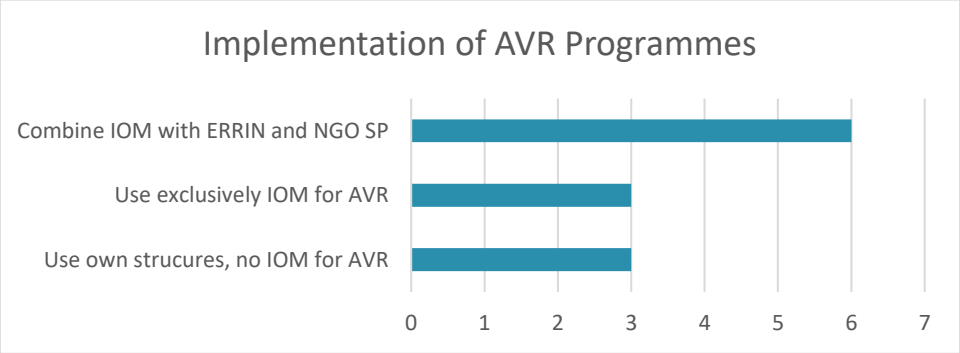
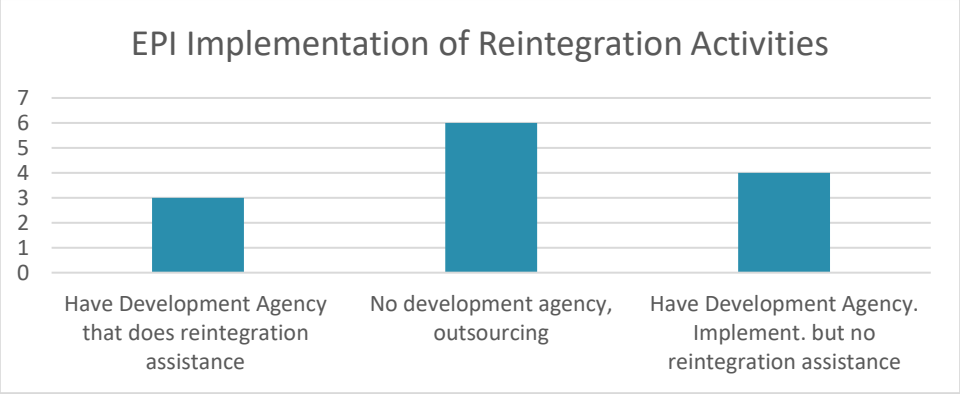
Figure 3: Institutions Implementing Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) Programmes.



The analysis has shown that the majority of the interviewed EPIs mix the usage of implementing partners when it comes to carrying out their national Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) programmes. In addition, the number of MS using their own structures to provide assistance is growing. This mirrors the wish of the MS – also expressed during the interviews – to have a direct impact and insight into their AVR activities. Specifically, those **EPIs not exclusively doing Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) via International Organisation for Migration (IOM) were interested** in the aim of the TWG, as they felt in their daily work that the **current reintegration assistance provided is not sufficiently efficient**.

Figure 4: EPI Implementation of Reintegration Activities via Development Channels.



A further interesting point to reflect on is the degree of direct implementation of development aid-funded reintegration activities on the side of the ERRIN MS.

The findings highlight that only a minority of the EPIs rely on their national development agencies to carry out reintegration activities. The majority of the EPIs, that have reintegration on their development agenda, outsource the services to Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), consultancy firms or other European development agencies. In addition, the institutional

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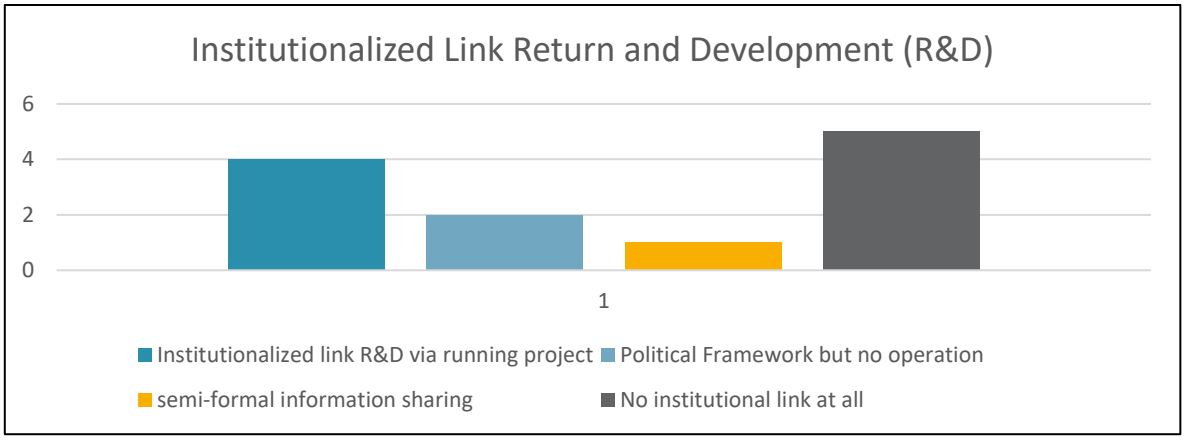
responsibility for return and/or reintegration is attributed to different institutions (Ministries, Departments). In most cases, a **certain remoteness exists between the institution in charge of the topic and the operational structure implementing the projects/programmes.** This explains why the identified key informants could at times only provide **fragmented information** about ongoing reintegration versus development programmes. Relevant is that, specifically, in those countries that implement intra-sectoral reintegration and development programmes by using their own structures were interested in promoting the **reintegration and development nexus at the European level**. All shared the concern that within the outreach activities, it would be more efficient for the target group if a prolonged reintegration value-chain could be offered at the stage of the pre-departure counselling. Furthermore, **return could be destigmatized when integrated into a community-based development approach**. A key question is whether there are **existing institutionalized links between the two sectors at ERRIN MS level**. This study has shown that this is **not the case** for most of the EPIs.
Four (4) categories are identified:

1. Existing institutionalized link between the two sectors via running programmes/projects;
2. Existing political framework (e.g. joint agenda on migration) but without practical usage;
3. Existence of semi-formal information sharing (e.g. invitation to respective project steering committees, semi-formal country meetings on operational level);
4. No link or dialogue existing at all.

It is relevant to note that these **institutional relationships are dynamic** and change whenever the political layer comes in. The MS who lack a link and collaboration between the immigration services and the development aid sector were specifically eager (on the immigration/return side) to **make use of the TWG, so to encourage internal dialogue on this issue**. Furthermore, those countries where cross-sectoral collaboration takes place have underlined that this evolution was due to the combination of political pressure (higher level pushing on operational level to collaborate) and additional funding.

Figure 5: Degrees of Inter-sectoral Collaboration (Return and Development Aid).



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3.3.2. Thematic Key Concerns.

Thematically, there are three specific areas of interest repeated by several key informants. Areas they feel to be of relevance for the future success of their work. The participants wish ERRIN/TWG to explore possible cross-sectoral (reintegration and development) project approaches entailing these interests:

- **(1) Community-based Approaches**

Both sectors (immigration/return as well as the development aid) acknowledge that the return of individuals and/or families have an impact on the lives and livelihoods of the communities to which they return to. Reintegration can barely be successful and sustainable if treated (only) on an individual level. The classical reintegration packages per returnee/family does not yet consider this fact. Return willingness is conditioned by the attitude that the returnee expects from his/her community of return. In addition, these communities tend to be suspicious/reluctant towards the return of their countrymen/countrywomen, especially if it is uncertain in which 'condition' the returnee will return (in terms of own income, employability, psychosocial health). Several interviewees have pointed out the need to integrate community-related development aid into the design of future return and reintegration programmes.

- **(2) Environment and Climate**

Pollution and climate change is of strong concern in all countries of origin. In the same time, the related economical areas (renewable energies, eco-friendly transport modes) entail potential for new type of professions that might be of interest for returnees. Often, returnees have experienced new technologies in the countries of destination and possess skills that could be strengthened prior to their return. In that regard, **(3) a collaboration with the Private Sector** (firms selling renewable energies, E-Bike Providers etc.) appears attractive and could constitute a further bridging element between return design and development aid activities. Indeed, as interviewees shared, there are several projects – like the SUPREM[6] project with Austria and the FONDEM[7] project with France - already in place. The **main obstacle** however was the limited number of appropriate candidates, a challenge that could be addressed if such programmes were designed at the European level (wider target group).

3.4. Results: Discussion of Potential Priority Countries and Pilot Activities.

The following section summarises the results of the questions addressing the **geographical zones of interest of the key informants**. This means the countries and regions in which the respective agency requests access to more sustainable reintegration services. A survey on the 'top priority countries and regions' was integrated into the questionnaire.

[6] See in Part III - Annex 1: Programme/Project/Funds Glossary.
[7] Ibid.

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3.4.1. Commonly Cited Regions and Countries of Interest.

- Afghanistan
- Bangladesh
- Horn of Africa and namely Ethiopia
- India
- Maghreb (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia)
- Western Africa and namely Nigeria, Senegal, Ghana, Ivory Coast
- Pakistan

The 'wish list' that resulted from the interviews, in terms of geographical priorities, has been **juxtaposed to the programmes/project that are funded by development aid.** More specifically, the interviewees were invited to cite examples of projects and programmes that offer a potential to be interlinked with ERRIN in order to extend the reintegration value chain. This means to maximise the support for the returnees by **combing ERRIN and development aid projects in a complementary manner.**

3.4.2. Potentially 'Linkable' Programmes and Projects Identified.

We need to differentiate between projects and programmes that are funded or implemented on a **bilateral level** (e.g. ERRIN MS level) and those funded on the **multilateral (EU) level** (e.g. through the EU Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) for Africa). Furthermore, the consultant sorted out those projects that: (1) **offer inter-linkage potential**, and (2) **cover countries mentioned as priority zones of interest**.

The matches resulting from that exercise are listed in the two tables below. It is relevant to mention that the positive matches are limited because the priority return countries are not per se the partner countries for development cooperation. In certain cases, there is no geographical overlap happening at all (e.g. see Luxemburg Country Fiche), what means that no nexus can be created between return and reintegration programmes vs. development aid projects.

Nota bene: a nexus between return and reintegration, and development aid can only take place when the two sectors collaborate with the same countries.

National Projects, Programmes and *Funding Instruments*:[8] disclaimer - the mentioned projects, programmes and funding instruments are provided by the interviewees themselves as examples.

[8] See in Part III - Annex 1: Programme/Project/Funds Glossary.

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Table 2: National Projects, Programmes and Funding Instruments.

Programme/ Project	**SUPREM** *SUPporting Sustainable Return of Migrants through Private-Public Multi-stakeholder Partnership.*	**AUDA** *Voluntary Return to Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia.*	**SAFBIN** *Smallholder Adaptive Farming and Biodiversity Network.*	**Flexible Return Fund** *Earmarked from the Official Development Assistance (ODA) budget to facilitate bilateral cooperation on the readmission of rejected asylum seekers.*	**FONDEM** *Fondation Énergies pour le Monde.*	**Perspektive Heimat** *Link return counselling activities in Germany with economic development activities in countries of origin.*
Partner	Austria (BMI)	Finland (MIGRI, UM(Fi) and the Crisis Management Centre (CMC))	Austria	Denmark	France (OFII)	Germany (BMI, BMZ)
Focal Country	Nigeria	Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia.	India	Afghanistan, Pakistan	Mali, Senegal, Cameroon	Afghanistan, Albania, the Gambia, Ghana, Iraq, Kosovo, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, Serbia, Tunisia, Planned: Egypt, Pakistan

Additionally, one can look at Ethiopia and Armenia - Official Development Assistance (ODA) countries – for further inspiration for the mapping exercise (Denmark, Netherlands, and Austria) and future design phases. Importantly, the involvement of ERRIN implementation (e.g. 'Gov2Gov' project) and Service Provider (SP) presence in those countries can be useful connections to tap into to create a nexus.

EU Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) for Africa Programmes: [9] disclaimer - the mentioned EUTF Programmes are provided by the interviewees themselves as examples.

[9] Ibid.

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Table 3: EU Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) Programmes.

	EUTF North Africa	EUTF Sahel & Lake Chad			
Programme/ Project	**EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration**	**ARCHIPELAGO** *Euro-African Partnerships for Vocational Education and Training.*	**ProGreS Migration Tunisie** *Promote the implementation of Tunisia's National Migration Strategy.*	**INTEGRA** *Support program for the socio-economic integration of youth.*	**Building a Future - Make it in The Gambia.**
Partner	DG DEVCO, IOM	Development agency of the German private sector (SEQUA gGmbH), Permanent Conference of African and French-Speaking Chambers (CPCCAF), Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry (EUROCHAMBRES)	France (OFII)	Germany (GIZ), Belgium (Enabel), International Trade Centre (ITC)	Germany (GIZ), Belgium (Enabel), International Trade Centre (ITC)
Focal Country		Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal	Tunisia	Guinea	The Gambia

Denominators Used:

As result of the research, certain denominators could be identified. We consider them as minimum standards to match, so to create a minimum basis in order to set-up an operational nexus for the integrated extended reintegration value-chain.

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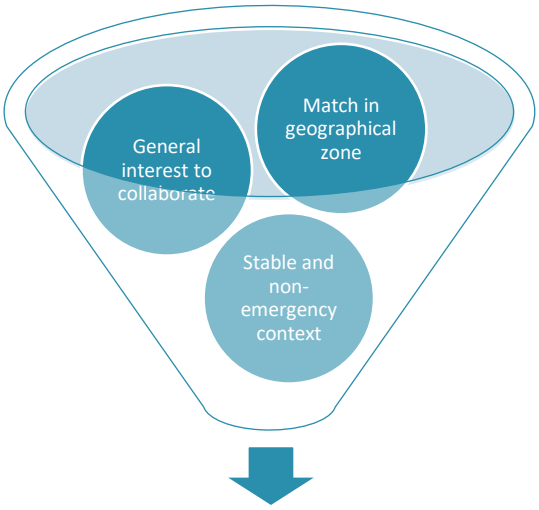
Figure 6: Denominators Identified for the Nexus between Return and Development Sector.



Based on the results of the first phase of the research, and following the internal discussion and voting process, **Bangladesh and Nigeria were selected as pilot countries**. In those two countries, the TWG will carry out fact-finding missions and identify pilot activities to test and learn from this intensified intra-sectoral collaboration.[10]

4. Presentation of Results Related to the Second Layer: *Qualitative Data, Questionnaire and Foundational Meeting Answers*.

The first part of the interviews focused on the quantitative data, such as:

- Which Member States is funding or carrying out which programmes/projects?
- In which countries?
- With which volume and until when?
- Which departments/agencies are in charge of what?

The second part addressed what we consider in the following as the qualitative data: **the reasoning behind existing (or non-existing) collaboration and/or strategic interests.** These findings are

[10] See in Part III - Annex 5: Project Proposal TWG presented to the Operational Management Board, July 2019.

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presented below, in line with the questions formulated in the questionnaire and foundational meeting of the TWG in Copenhagen in November 2018.

4.1. Presentation of Answers Clustered by Questions.

Analysis of existing (or possible future) collaboration between actors of the return and development sector

Most interviewees stated that none or limited collaboration is existing between the sectors. In those cases, where inter-sectoral collaboration does take place, this relates to reintegration, not to development aid. For example, France has their 'incentives approach' where extra assistance can be provided to the returnee if s/he has furthered their reintegration and contribution to the community. Again, this is considered as a part of the return assistance and not development aid.

Some examples:

- Information sharing at European Commission (EC/Com) level (participation in respective steering committees);
- But no common planning of DEVCO, DG Near and DG Home;
- Bilaterally (e.g. France, Austria, EUTF): specific components (related to reintegration) integrated in wider development aid projects, or more intensive reintegration elements designed specifically to address the need to go further towards sustainable reintegration.

The overall observation is a **high degree of fragmentation** in the responsibilities and projects implemented. Furthermore, the different persons, departments and entities involved **barely know from, and about, each other**. Concerning the motivation and whether prospective changes will be made, most of the interviewees referred to the following challenges:

- Different Countries (return vs. development aid)
- Different approaches in respective sectors (individual vs. structural)
- Different target groups:
  - Poorest vs. those with financial means to migrate
  - Local basis population vs. very specific group of persons with migration experience

To sum-up, the majority is of the opinion and recalls that the sectors are not and should not be mixed. Collaboration should indeed take place, following an inter-ministerial approach, but each sector/programme should keep his/her zone of intervention.

Nota Bene: Change a little, but not too much!

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Do returnees have/should have access to development and reintegration initiatives pre-departure?

The overall opinion is that ensuring such access to returnees appears to be difficult – institutionally and operationally. As pre-departure assistance, especially counselling, falls largely within the responsibility of the returning MS, while development aid is more based on separate agreements between MS and third country governments/actors (bilateral governmental agreements, multilateral agendas). If linkages were to be drawn, then development agencies would have to be included and integrated into the return-cycle very early on: even before the return decision takes place. Such process would be very labour intensive and require important resources at the level of the pre-departure.

Nota Bene: As a first step, it would be desirable to obtain a list of ongoing development projects in return countries, and be updated regularly.

What should be the role of development agencies in the reintegration of third country nationals?

Politically seen, migration is a factor taken into consideration by most of the development agencies, but **approached from a different perspective and agenda**. The 'traditional' migration and development strategies aim to **use migration as a trigger for development**, e.g. through channelling remittances or attracting diaspora to invest in their countries of origin. Furthermore, in most cases migration-related projects **target the protection of vulnerable groups or specific themes** (e.g. Female Genital Mutilation, FGM) and do not entail any link with return policy (and practice).

However, all interviewees agreed that a **more open dialogue and understanding of the development aid projects** would be of benefit for the return sector – **and vice versa**. For instance, development agencies have tools to identify and communicate needs of countries of return. A closer collaboration with development aid agencies could positively influence the political dialogue with governments in return countries.

Nevertheless, it was stressed that the communication about offering development aid should be carried out by development projects and not by pre-departure actors. This would **avoid the interpretation that there is support but also pressure for voluntary return to be attached to development aid.** In addition, the needs of partner countries should be identified as much as those of returnees. For instance, pinpointing potential labour market niches within these countries for which returnees can be trained prior to departure, and therefore contribute to the development of their home countries after return. If coordinated in that way (and if politically accepted in the host

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countries), pre-departure training of returnees can be aligned with development aid guided by a needs-based analysis.

In general, it has been underlined that it would require additional **political pressure and will** to start real joint programming and implementation between the two sectors. Some key informants expressed the wish to use the present pilot activity of ERRIN to motivate and lobby for extended collaboration.

Nota bene/Warning: Work with development agencies and NOT with migration agencies (EUTF/IOM etc.)!

> *What are the interests of development partners/agencies in getting involved in the individual approach to reintegrating returnees? What are the common elements (fil rouge) linking these experiences? What are the key elements that we can isolate and duplicate?*

There is an overall acceptance that the high political interest in return is something that the development sector cannot ignore or avoid. A responsible participation of the development aid sector in this discourse is key to shape the future of development cooperation. In terms of performance indicators, reintegration of returnees from Europe is commonly incorporated in project design. In that context, the development partners rely on the return sector for efficient outreach to the target group. Currently, most of the development projects that entail returnees as a category of beneficiaries are largely underutilised. The development agencies can no longer ignore the financial instruments that combine development aid with return, as in numerous countries development aid budgets are being cut/reduced.[11] For the time being, most of the development aid interlocutors do not see the significant benefit posed by the rejected asylum seekers/migrants in the development of their country of origin. On the contrary, the main concern is that rejected asylum seekers/migrants (and ergo-ERRIN returnees) could destabilise the socio-economic system and counter the successes of development aid strategies. This understanding could change by following the previously explained needs-oriented approach to which pre-departure vocational trainings are tailored to the specific needs of the country of return. Hereby, the returnee's contribution to development would be more tangible.

Nota Bene: The difference in points of view remain - no genuine interest to collaborate with the return sector, but just reply to political pressure!

[11] 33% in Sweden since 2015.

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What are the challenges for development actors to get involved in reintegration programmes?

An underlining perception is that funding is being 'taken away' from the development sector to strengthen the (internal/national) return policy. The funds allocated to those projects fighting *"the root causes of irregular migration"* (Pillar 1 of the Joint Valletta Action Plan)[12] would not be additional budget, but funds withdrawn from the development sector. In some MS, the immigration services suffer from a negative reputation that is often due to stricter asylum decisions/law. Return is increasingly politicized. Different from the return perspective, development actors mostly refer to different values and orientate themselves around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The main obstacle seems to be the **lack of dialogue and the existence of ideological stereotypes** *("bad policemen"* versus *"dreamers"*). In order to bring the two sectors closer together, there is **need to know each other better, ideally as an integrated part of the working routine.** The research has shown that stereotypes diminish where joint management takes place.

Nota Bene: To establish a stable return and reintegration vs. development nexus, a shift is needed in the mind-set within the European institutional landscape.

What are the interests of the return partners/agencies in getting involved in development projects?

The answers from the interviewed return agencies is comparably critical and sceptical than those presented from the development aid sector. They range from *"zero interest"* to *"very interesting for more sustainable reintegration."* The main motivators for an involvement in and from development aid are:

- Signal to undecided potential returnees to accept voluntary return;
- Success stories;
- Better position to negotiate readmission;
- Better image for the return sector (*"away from the cruel policemen"*).

In order to be successful, **an extended reintegration value-chain requires individual monitoring, an individual accompaniment that cannot be shouldered by the returning agencies, nor by the development actors.** The main challenges mentioned addressed the question on how to operationally inter-link different implementing agencies. More specifically, the question is on how to integrate an additional target group into a project's already running operational plan. From a project management perspective, it would constitute a **complex process** to review the contractual arrangements as well as

[12] See in Part III - Annex 1: Programme/Project/Funds Glossary.

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the key performance indicators. One proposal in that regard was to include returnees as a vulnerable target group, a 'joker' for returnees.

Nota Bene: To open up the dialogue between the sectors would already be a crucial first step!

What type of coordination/responsibility-sharing (if any) between the return/migration agencies and development cooperation is desirable? Is there any good practise, good examples of such cooperation?

The overall opinion was that responsibility-sharing would not be possible as long as we are considering combining different projects implemented by different agencies and budgets. Different programmes mean different reporting lines: there can be no sharing possible as long as different programmes and budgets are existing. A counter-question: *"How can the return sector make promises about something managed by third party?"* It seems obvious that joint monitoring is only possible, if there is **joint planning and implementation**. A more practical alternative would be to maintain two responsibilities in parallel:

- Responsibility for the returned migrant lies with the returning authority, and;
- Handover of responsibility should be within the eligible support period of the return programmes (under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) this is 1 year).

Nota Bene: Complementarity instead of merger. Seek ownership of development projects willing to collaborate, do not impose!

Analysis of the existing (or possible future) operational interrelation between the two (2) sectors. Complementarity of funding/specific indicators EUTF:

The main finding is that both sides do not see any major challenges (nor the risk of double funding) if a returnee obtains reintegration assistance from both sectors *("Be happy for the returnee!"*). However, there is a difference with the European Development Fund (EDF) (DG DEVCO funding) and the AMIF, which requires co-funding. Still, the EUTF was seen as the best example, for grounds for collaboration, as it integrated returnees as beneficiaries into development aid projects (30% of the beneficiaries should be returnees).

Overall, EUTF (namely its implementation via IOM) is perceived as not fully successful:

- Important delays;
- No track record about assisted returnees communicated back to MS (*black-box*);

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- Return actors are not aware of existing offers for their returnees.

Nota Bene: Eventually best solution is to link up the ERRIN Pilot to EUTF!

Practical solutions (examples and lessons learned) for referral process from a project type b (reintegration project, decided in EU MS) to a project type a (development project, implemented in the country of return):

The overall agreement of the interviewees is that the **referral process is key**, and should be linked to specific **case-by-case monitoring** during the pilot phase. Furthermore, a successful referral is **conditioned to the availability of an updated project database**. A third party - not return agency or development actor – shall take over the workload of updating the mapping of available and inter-linkable projects.

The recommendations can be presented as follows:

- **Referral prior to departure** shall take place via return counsellors:
  - Comment: involve development agencies already at this stage.
  - Return counsellors are already overloaded, so ERRIN Working Group on Counselling could play a key role in that context.
- **Referral after arrival** shall ideally take place via ERRIN's SPs and/or IOM (based on EUTF and already existing referral mechanisms):
  - Comment: (existing) referrals not yet operational and limited to/focussed on reintegration.
  - No further IOM or risk of SP black-box.
  - Integrate the European Return Liaison Officers Network (EURLO) if available.
- Extend the European Migration Network, Information Exchange System (EMN IES) – by documenting data from the field into a central database system (Reintegration Assessment Tool, RIAT).

Nota Bene: ERRIN could play the role of the missing bridge/linkage to facilitate information exchange between return counsellor, development project and migrant/returnee!

Are there sector-specific approaches when referring returnees to development programmes (e.g. employment-related, social security-related, assistance-related projects)?

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The shared view is that the referral should **be based on the needs of the returnee as well as those in the country of return**. Referral functions will be discussed in more detail in the country of return (e.g. ERRIN SP, IOM, Consultancy, Gov2Gov).

Second layer of the research: methodological review and proposal of suitable strategic approach. Based on your knowledge of the ongoing projects (in ERRIN countries and beyond), which best practices and lessons learned come to your mind thinking about do no harm.

Common opinion is that supporting returnees will be considered as **unfair** by some of those who were left behind and the local population. However, the question of discrimination has been called a *"very European discussion,"* and is actually less relevant in countries of return as they, themselves, ask for specific support for returnees.

! **Nota Bene: Make sure that local population can participate as well in capacity-building/training programmes!**

Empowerment: What is the role of local actors, both public and private (including Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Intergovernmental Organisation IGOs), especially of those which in addition to the provision of reintegration assistance are also involved in the implementation of development initiatives? Can they potentially link these two activities and if yes, under which conditions?

Related to the role of local authorities and civil society, the answers ranged from: *"Needs assessment and referral should be done by local government (Gov2Gov)"* to *"Still too early, information sharing, not more."*

Nota Bene: Maintain protocol, inform the governments but keep the lead on the referral (liberty of manoeuvre, gain trust of the returnees)!

Questions left unanswered:

- What kind of practical *modus operandi* is thinkable, at the intra-EU level?
- Check of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), accountability and visibility compliance if distinct financial instruments and donors are mixed.

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- Vulnerable persons' group.

4.1. Summary of Recommendations and Key Findings to Consider.

4.1.1. The Do's and Don'ts – Geographical Scope and Modalities of Pilot Activities.

Table 4: Key Do's and Don'ts.

Do's	Don'ts
• Open channels between Ministries (e.g. Ministry of Interior) and development agencies; • Seek ownership, buy in of development aid projects; • Use existing structures; • Lobby for training of returnees, start in MS where this is politically possible; • Open individual capacity-building measures and psychosocial assistance to returnees as well as to the local population; • Use ERRIN to set the way for more dialogue with the development sector; • Overcome the challenges and stereotypes by operational practice ('learning by doing'); • Add resources to referral (pre-departure); • Include EURLO in communication campaigns; • Work with NGOs and multilateral funding (EUTF), a solution: link up with EUTF.	• No emergency country as pilot; • No country with too low caseload; • Avoid political level (concentrate on dialogue with operators); • Do not link up with only one programme, consider Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or other forms of agreements with bouquet of services and partners; • Avoid changing existing contractual arrangements (including indicators); • No mix up of ownership but complement (define moment of handover); • Do not continue current reintegration practice that is rather psycho-mental coaching than real vocation training and job placement (more consolation than counselling); • No discrimination of local population.

4.1.2. Key Findings to Consider for the Design of the Pilot Activities.

The results of the first phase of the research have been presented to the TWG at the meeting in Copenhagen April 2019, as explained at the beginning of the report. At that stage, the following key

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facts were considered and guided in the design of the pilot activities, which were presented between May and July 2019:

- Willingness of EUTF to collaborate with ERRIN/confirmed by DEVCO;
- Willingness of BMZ to facilitate collaboration with German Corporation for International Cooperation GmbH (GIZ);
- Consensus about the aim to analyse and up-scale identified best practices (e.g. Danish Flexible Return Fund and the Perspektive Heimat);
- Use ERRIN as linkage to return counsellors as well as to SP in the field.

5. Conclusions and Next Steps.

Accordingly, the objective of this report (Part I) is to present the results of the study in Europe, inform the members of the technical working group as well as the Operational Management Board and conclude the first phase of the research. The present includes the findings of the institutional mapping exercise. Furthermore, it identified the geographical scope and elaborated on the answers given in the questionnaires. The Country Fiches have been reviewed by the MS and incorporated in Part II of the report compilation[13].

In parallel to the drafting of this report, phase 2 of the research has been underway. Based on the results orally presented to the technical working group in Copenhagen (April 2019), two pilot countries - Bangladesh and Nigeria – have been proposed and approved. Field visits to both pilot countries have taken place, with a visit to Bangladesh in June 2019 and Nigeria in September 2019. The pilot activities proposed for phase 3 (Implementation of pilot/exploratory activities and draft Operational Framework) are currently in the design phase and expected to be launched during the month of October 2019.

The key deliverable for the remaining time (until June 2020) will be the elaboration of the Operational Framework where good practices, lessons learned and recommendations will be shared, giving the start signal for project implementation.

[13] Fiches not approved by the respective EPI at the time of sharing this report will be added as soon as approval will have taken place.

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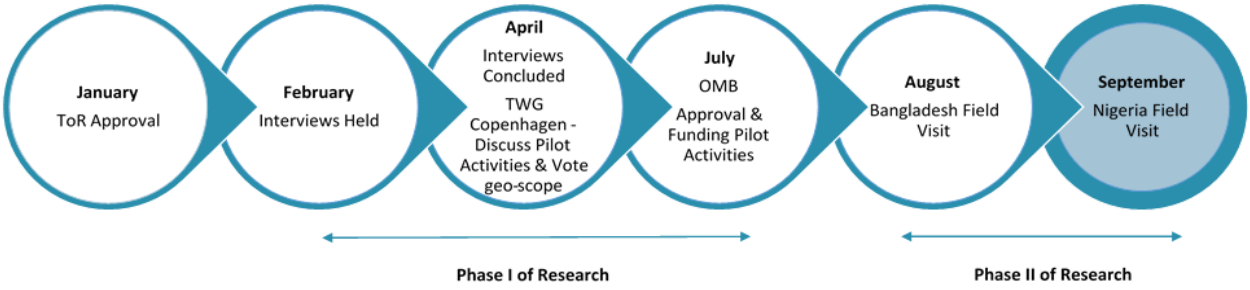
Figure 7: Timeline.



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EUROPEAN RETURN AND REINTEGRATION NETWORK (ERRIN)

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (TWG) REINTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Results Phase 1 of the Terms of Reference (ToR):
Inception and Research Europe

PART II:
COUNTRY FICHES

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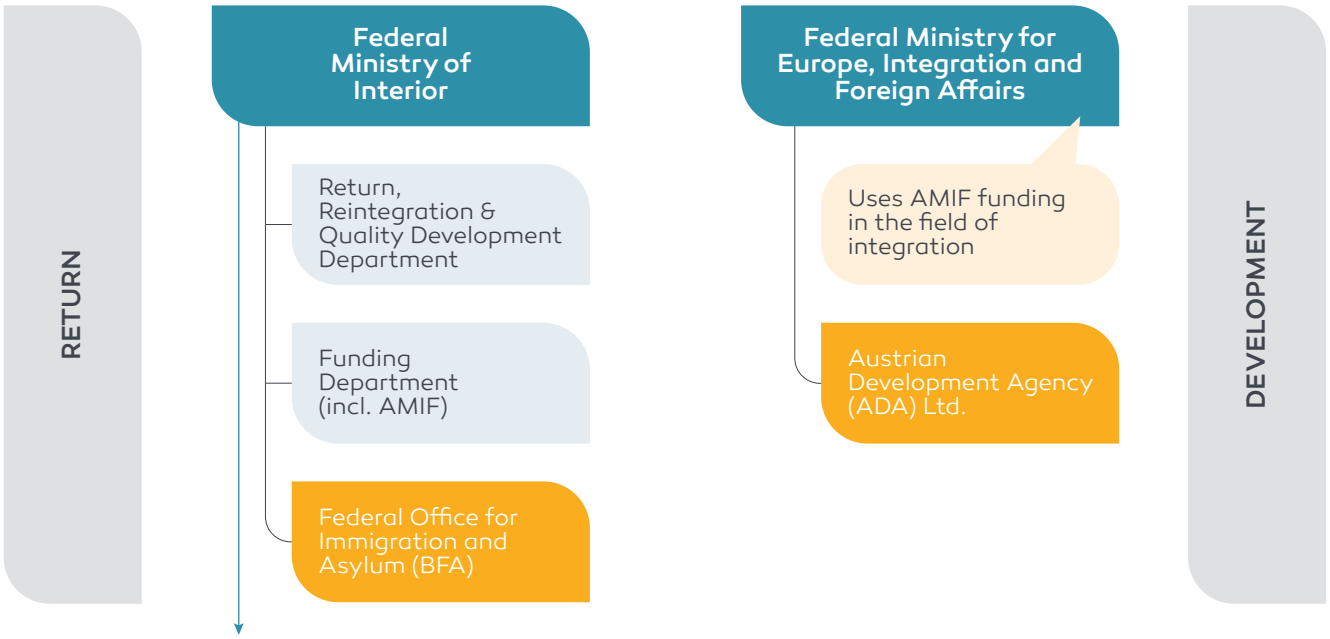
AUSTRIA

INSTITUTIONAL ANCHORAGE OF RETURN AND DEVELOPMENT SECTORS



ACTIVE RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES

- ERRIN
- IRMA Plus (Caritas)
- OFII
- Restart II (IOM)

OTHER RELATED PROGRAMMES

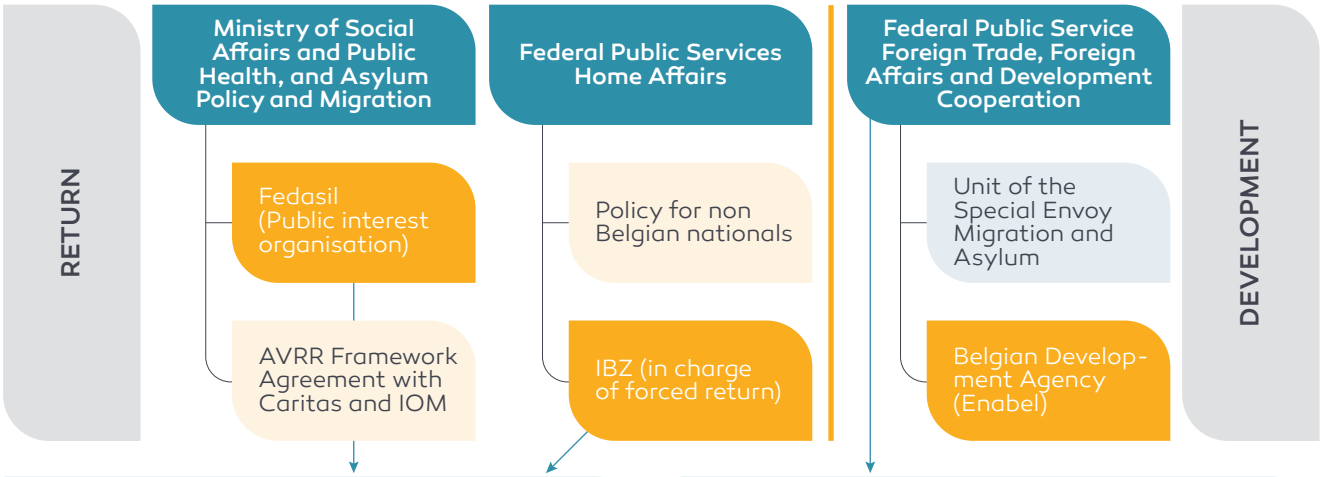
Mapping potential for synergies and avoiding duplication

- Reintegration Assistance and Development for Afghanistan (RADA) via IOM
  - Funded by DG DEVCO
  - Includes mapping of opportunities and referral of returnees
- IOM Referral Mechanism
  - Funded by EU Trust Fund for Africa
  - Pilot in Gambia, Guinea & Bangladesh
- SUPREME
  - Implemented by ICMPD Nigeria
  - Involves collaboration with the private sector, training in Austria, and job placement upon return (to note: only one beneficiary)
  - Project ending 31.8.2019

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

BELGIUM

INSTITUTIONAL ANCHORAGE OF RETURN AND DEVELOPMENT SECTORS



ACTIVE RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES

- Voluntary Return & Reintegration via Fedasil. ERRIN for Caritas lots (framework)
- Forced Return via IBZ: ERRIN

ACTIVE RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES

- Migration and Development Policy (including reintegration of third country nationals in their country of origin e.g. projects implemented by Enabel via EUTF funding)

OTHER RELATED PROGRAMMES

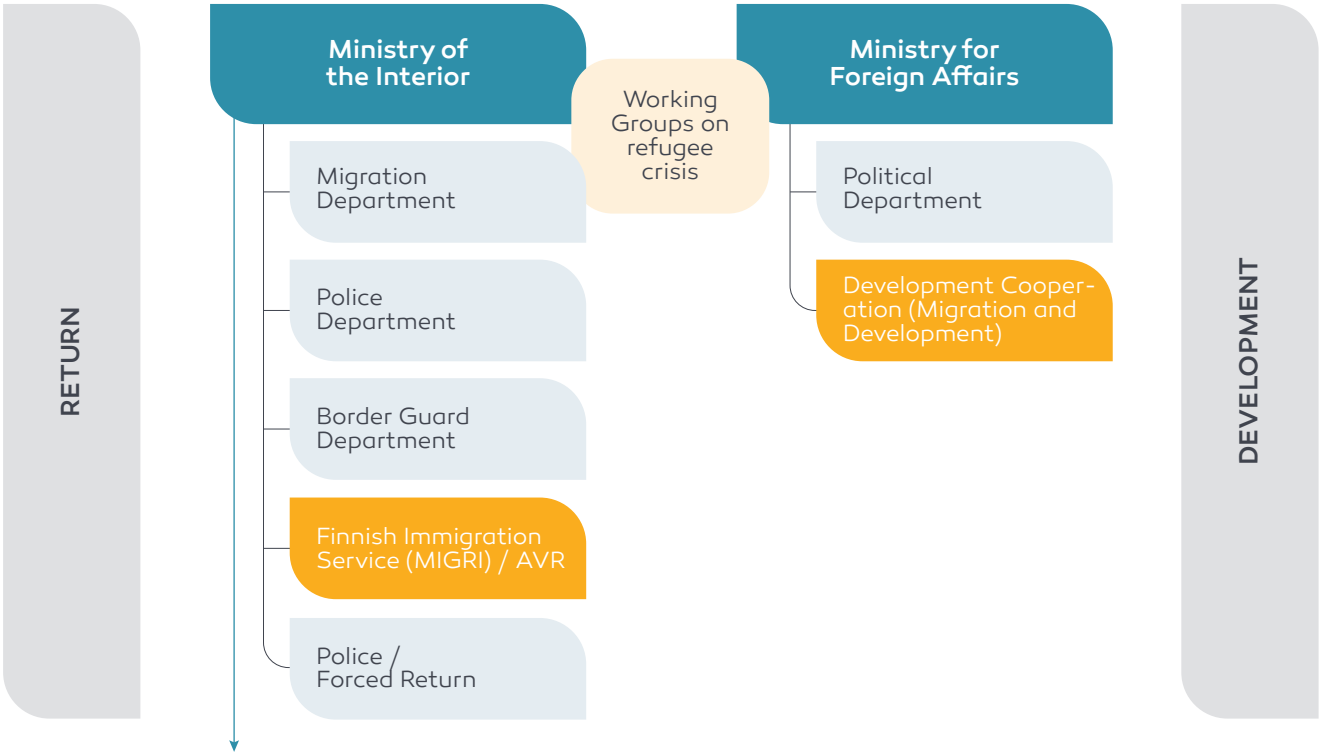
Mapping potential for synergies and avoiding duplication

- INTEGRA (Guinea Conakry) - funded by EUTF and split into 3 interventions, one of which is implemented by ENABEL. Main features:
  - Aims at promoting economic opportunities and sustainable jobs for unemployed youth in Guinea through high manpower intensity (HIMO) jobs, contributing to local development plans (mostly: rural infrastructure)
  - If criteria for inclusion of beneficiaries is met, the intervention may offer a job placement for returnees, capacity building for job counsellors and information sessions for return counsellors
  - To enable inclusion of returnees as beneficiaries as well as the training/information sessions for the counsellors, Enabel established a cooperation agreement with Fedasil. Cooperation modalities between the two agencies are still under discussion
  - Activities foreseen, including the mapping, contracting, training of professional training institutions in Guinea, are development oriented, complex and time-consuming
  - The selection of beneficiaries (including returnees) is also a complex process that involves the elaboration of common criteria among different stakeholders and transparent selection procedures

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

FINLAND

INSTITUTIONAL ANCHORAGE OF RETURN AND DEVELOPMENT SECTORS



ACTIVE RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES

- ERRIN
- IOM

OTHER RELATED PROGRAMMES

Mapping potential for synergies and avoiding duplication

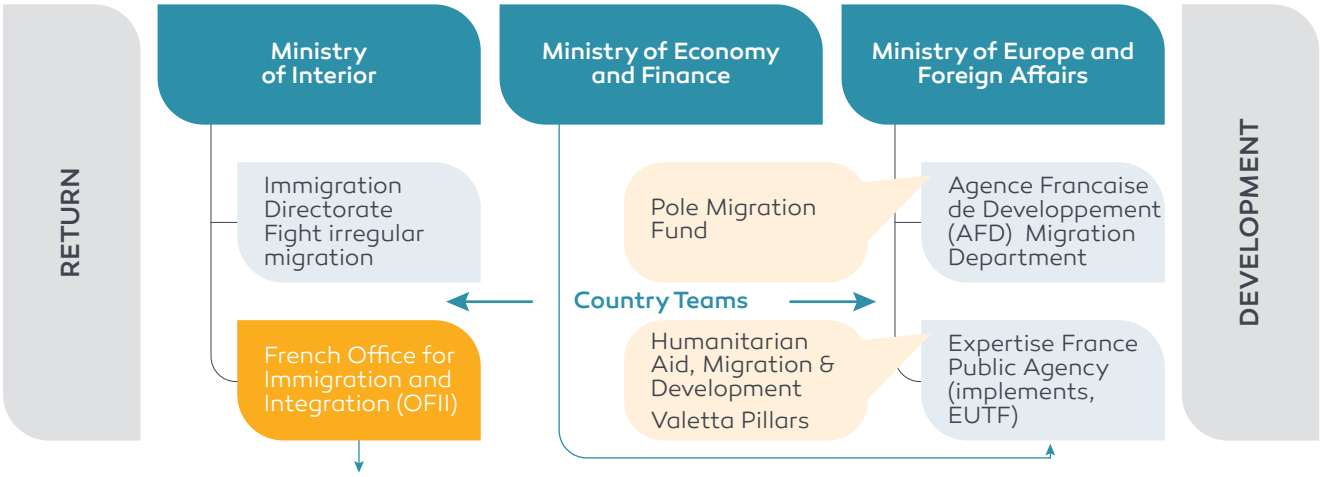
- AUDA project
  - Funded by EUTF
  - Exception. Otherwise, no established link between return and development aid sectors

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- Ministry of Interior does voluntary return mainly with IOM and NGOs
- High contribution (€ 5.000) per person. This could theoretically be spent by different actors
- *Check UNDP/IOM/Finland project in Afghanistan (Ministry of Labour, Norway might join)*

FRANCE

INSTITUTIONAL ANCHORAGE OF RETURN AND DEVELOPMENT SECTORS



ACTIVE RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES

- ERRIN (where no national option is available)
- OFII (national reintegration programme via local contractors), open to Member States via a pilot project

OTHER RELATED PROGRAMMES

Mapping potential for synergies and avoiding duplication

- ProGreS Migration in Tunisia. Component 3 (OFII): aims to to set up a Tunisian platform for returning migrations from different Member States

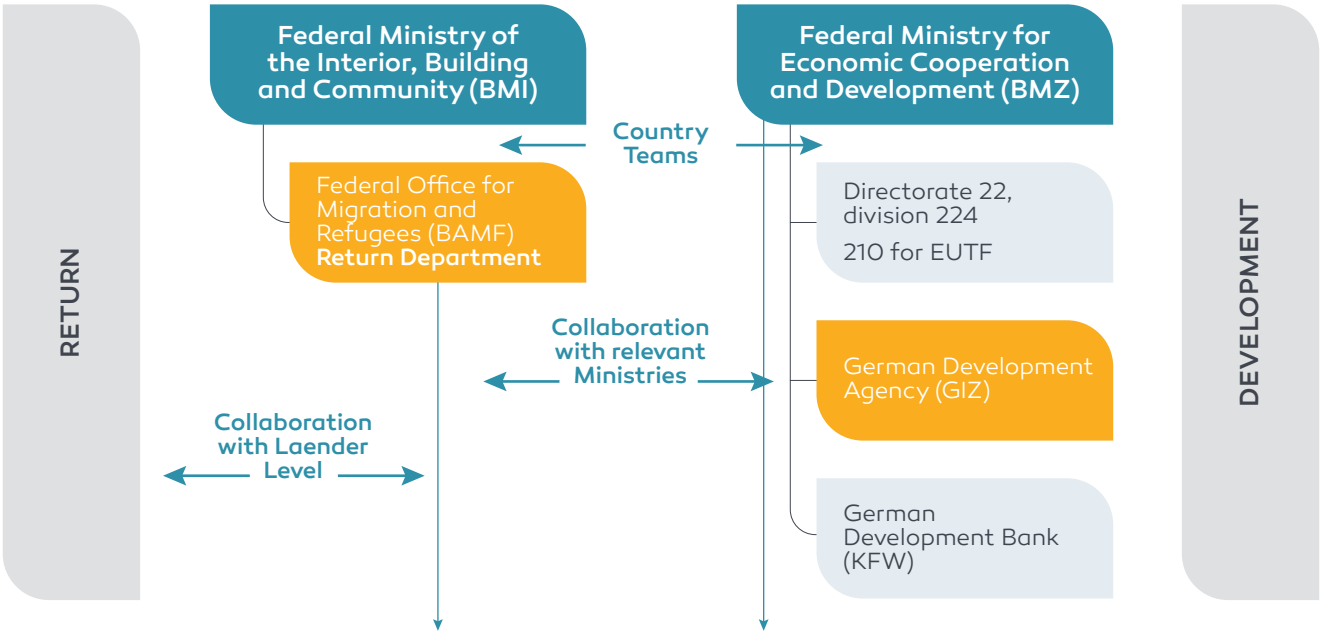
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Countries covered by OFII national reintegration programme, via local offices:

- OFII Armenia: covers Armenia, Georgia and Moldova
- OFII Senegal
- OFII Mali : covers Mali, Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Togo
- OFII Cameroon: covers Cameroon, Congo, DRC, Gabon
- OFII Tunisia
- OFII Morocco
- OFII Guyana: covers Guyana, Haiti
- OFII La Réunion: covers La Réunion, Mauritius.

GERMANY

INSTITUTIONAL ANCHORAGE OF RETURN AND DEVELOPMENT SECTORS



ACTIVE RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES

Return Programmes:

- REAG GARP (implemented by IOM, funded by Federal level and the Laender)

Reintegration Programmes/Projects:

- *StarthilfePlus* (implemented by IOM), ERRIN, Bilateral projects

ACTIVE RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES

Development and Reintegration Programmes:

- Programme Migration for Development
- Bilateral/Regional Programmes regarding reintegration in the context of migration and forced displacement

OTHER RELATED PROGRAMMES

Mapping potential for synergies and avoiding duplication

- BMZ: 'Perspektive Heimat'
  - 11 countries (Afghanistan, Albania, Gambia, Ghana, Iraq, Kosovo, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, Serbia and Tunisia. Planned: Egypt and Pakistan)
  - **Main idea:** training offers, counselling and referral services to training and job opportunities for the target group in Germany (services prior to departure) and in the country of return services upon return through the Counselling Centres for jobs, Migration and Reintegration.
  - Collaboration with host government
  - Funding for local NGOs; funding for NGOs providing transnational return support
  - Open for other Member States (e.g. MoU with OFII-France)
  - BMZ confirmed interest to collaborate closer with European Partners, incl. ERRIN Technical Working Group on Reintegration and Development (refer ERRIN returnees)

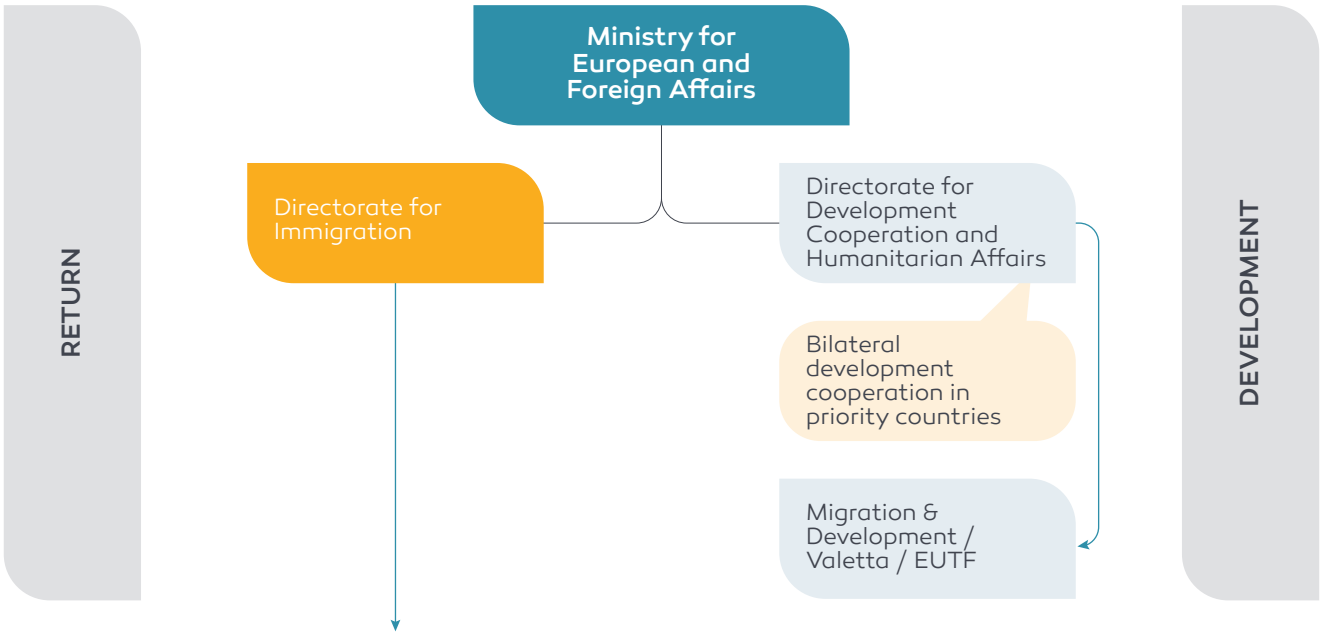
Continued overleaf

- BAMF:
  - Interest to launch pilot activities with other actors such as '*Sparkassenstiftung*' via GIZ
- GIZ projects that might offer potential for linkages with ERRIN (Pilot project TWG):
  - Make it in the Gambia (Gambia)
  - Learning for the future (Gambia)
  - Better Migration management

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

LUXEMBOURG

INSTITUTIONAL ANCHORAGE OF RETURN AND DEVELOPMENT SECTORS



ACTIVE RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES

- AVRR via IOM
- AVR to the Balkan countries - limited to financing of return travel (by bus)
- Recently started using ERRIN

OTHER RELATED PROGRAMMES

Mapping potential for synergies and avoiding duplication

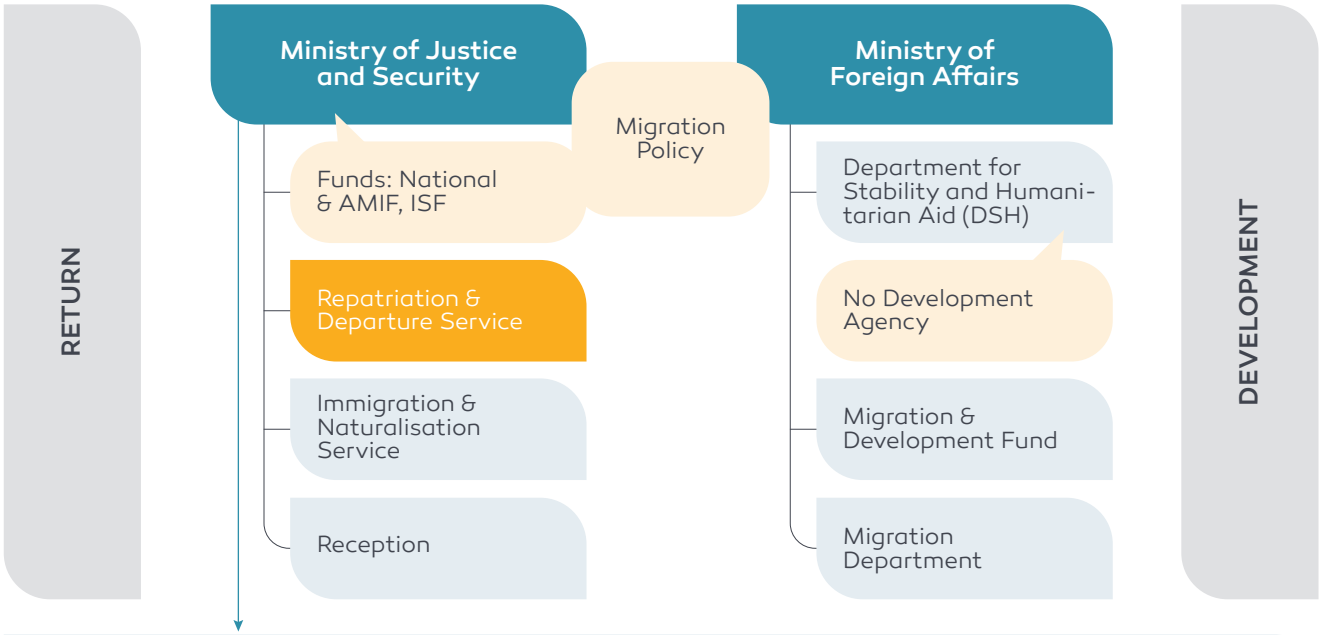
N/A

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- Priority countries - northern Africa
- Development Aid focused on a limited number of countries to achieve higher volume (e.g. Central America, Cape Verde)
- No structured linkage between Directorates, systematic information sharing or regular meetings
- However, there is now political will to foster increased linkages between development aid and return sectors. This has though yet to materialise at an operational level.

THE NETHERLANDS

INSTITUTIONAL ANCHORAGE OF RETURN AND DEVELOPMENT SECTORS



ACTIVE RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES

- ERRIN (non-voluntary return)
- REAN (Return and Emigration Assistance from the Netherlands/IOM)
- Several reintegration assistance projects via NGOs

OTHER RELATED PROGRAMMES

Mapping potential for synergies and avoiding duplication

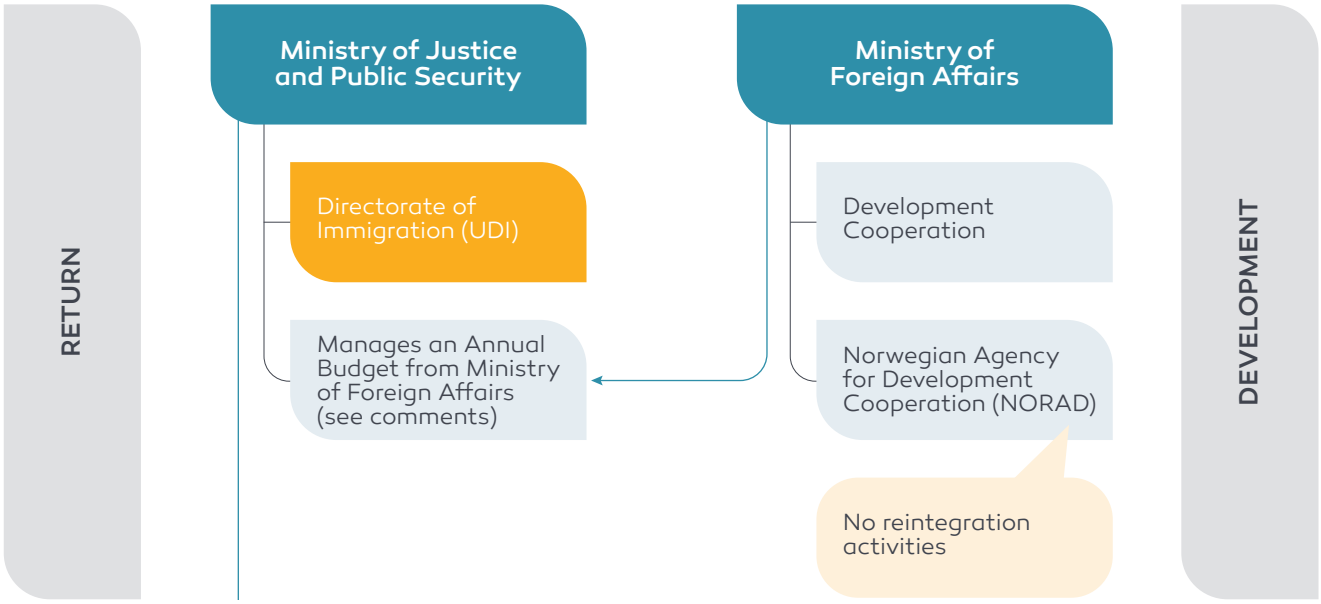
N/A

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- No institutional linkage or working groups
- Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Aid within Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) holds portfolio and budget for Migration and Development. Budget increased to € 34 million per year. Focus on angle of policy development and fighting root causes of irregular migration.
  - *Budget increased to € 34 million per year*
  - *Focus on angle of policy development and fighting root causes of irregular migration.*
  - *No Development Agency: outsourcing. Focus is, and remains, poverty reduction*
  - *Regions of interest: unstable countries close to Europe*
- Repatriation and Departure Service (R&DS) is responsible for return and sits under the auspices of Ministry of Justice and Security - finances ERRIN, IOM, NGOs for AVRR and NVR
  - *Invested € 10 million in Nexus project in Ghana, without notable success*

NORWAY

INSTITUTIONAL ANCHORAGE OF RETURN AND DEVELOPMENT SECTORS



ACTIVE RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES

- IOM Voluntary Assisted Return Programme (VARP)
  - *Reintegration with cash component and in-kind programme for vulnerable groups*
- ERRIN

OTHER RELATED PROGRAMMES

Mapping potential for synergies and avoiding duplication

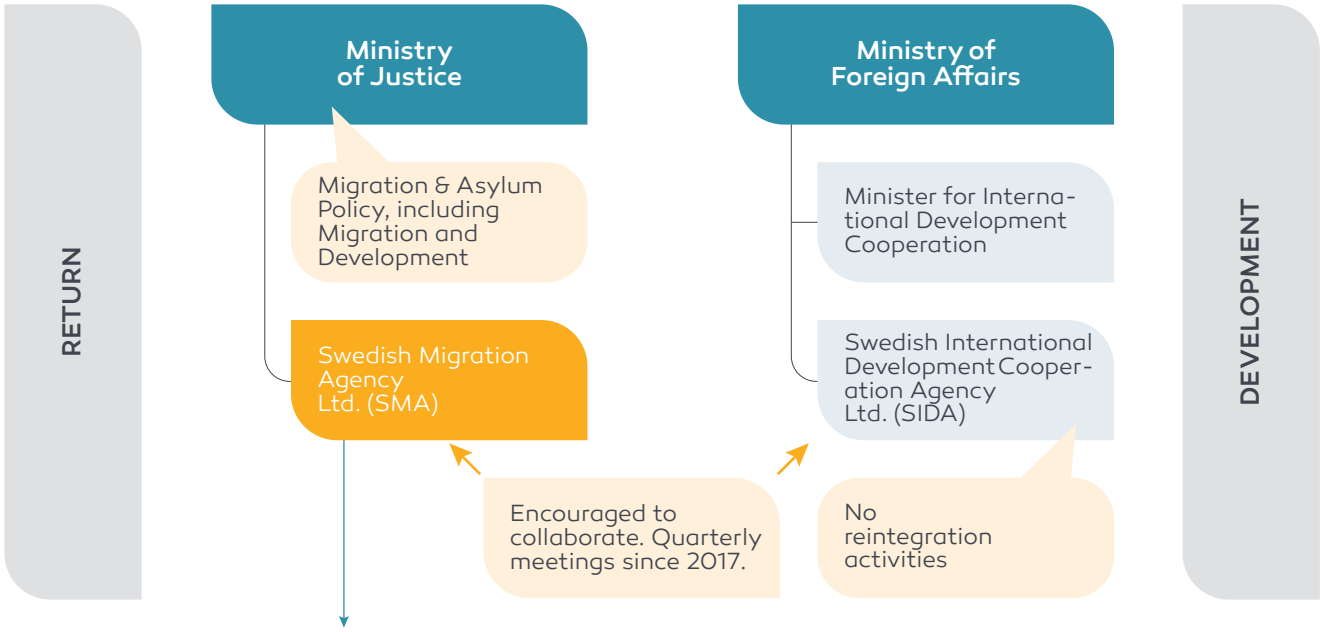
N/A

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- Programme in Somalia (implemented by Danish Refugee Council)
- Approximately 60 million NOK per year in flexible funding from Ministry of Justice for reintegration registered as Official Development Aid (ODA)
- Reintegration Assistance limited to financial support

SWEDEN

INSTITUTIONAL ANCHORAGE OF RETURN AND DEVELOPMENT SECTORS



ACTIVE RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES

- ERRIN
- Use own Swedish Migration Authority (SMA) structures for AVR counselling
- IOM only for cash grants

OTHER RELATED PROGRAMMES

Mapping potential for synergies and avoiding duplication

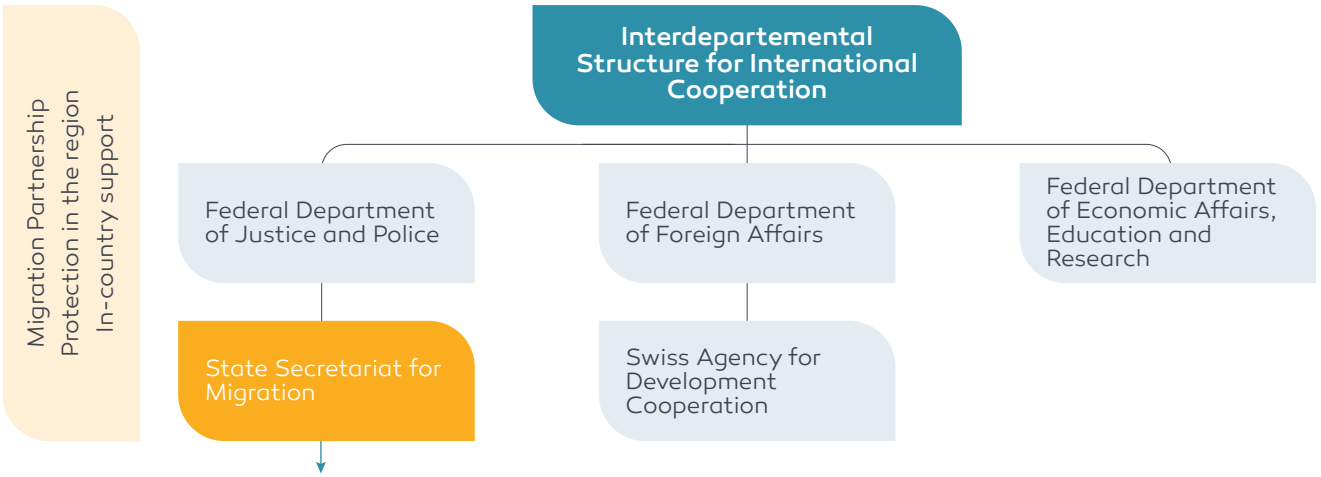
N/A

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- The Swedish Migration Agency (SMA) is an independent agency that sits under the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) is in charge of development aid, which entails the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) as well as the Ambassador for Migration.
- SIDA is not currently working with issues related to return and reintegration. SMA is already working on capacity building with governments in countries of transit and return (e.g. twinning project in the Balkans, Turkey).
- SMA and SIDA collaborate via quarterly meetings taking place since 2017.
- Over a longer period, the MFA has been working on and values a Migration & Development approach. Ministry of Justice is starting to show interest in collaboration with the development sector.

SWITZERLAND

INSTITUTIONAL ANCHORAGE OF RETURN AND DEVELOPMENT SECTORS



ACTIVE RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES

- IOM for AVRR
- ERRIN for assisted forced return

OTHER RELATED PROGRAMMES

Mapping potential for synergies and avoiding duplication

N/A

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- Switzerland's migration foreign policy is based on three key principles:
  1. **Global approach:** Migration is a global phenomenon generating both risks and opportunities.
  2. **Partnership approach:** The risk and opportunities presented by migration should be addressed in collaboration with the countries of origin, transit and destination.
  3. **Whole-of-government approach:** The challenge of migration calls for coherent action by the different departments within the federal administration.
- Switzerland takes a partnership approach to pursue Swiss interests in migration and has developed numerous instruments: dialogues on migration, international agreements on readmission, migration cooperation, visa waiver programmes and trainee programmes, migration partnerships, etc.

Continued overleaf

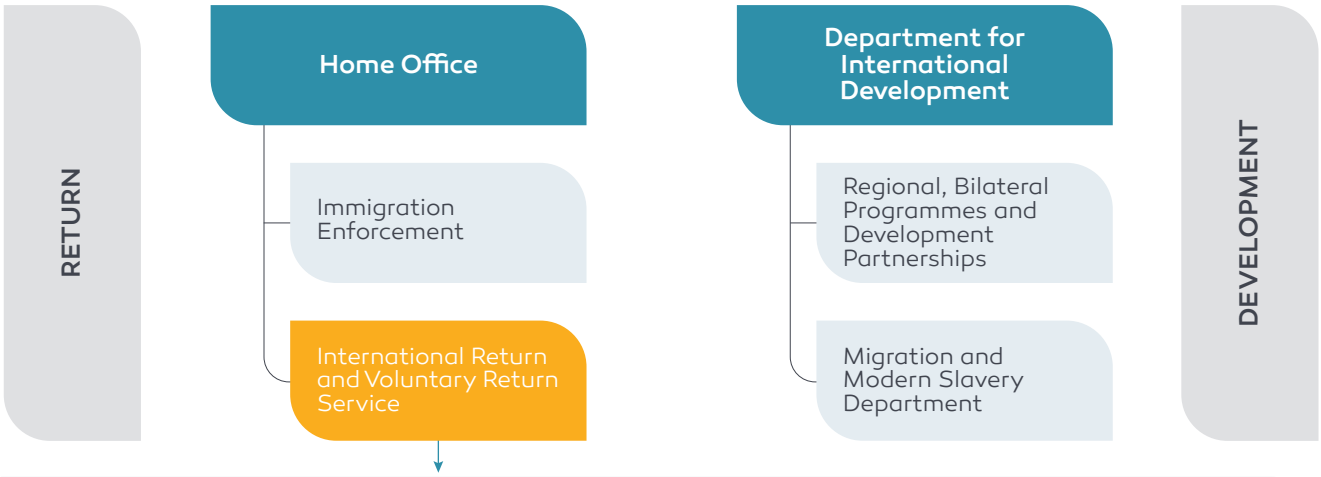
- Currently implementing 6 Migration Partnerships: Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Tunisia. These entail readmission agreements as well as support agenda (including development aid).

To implement entailed activities, joint programming via **ICM Structure (Interdepartmental Structure for International Cooperation on Migration)**. The ICM Structure has three levels:

1. **Plenum of the Interdepartmental Task Force on Migration** at the level of Directors/State Secretaries
2. **Committee for International Cooperation on Migration** at the level of Deputy Directors
3. **Task Forces** for specific regions, countries and topics
   - Institutionalised planning and complementary implementation
   - Each department is in charge of its portfolio
   - Country team meetings every two months: information sharing and joint monitoring
   - Follows the European approach of the mobility partnerships
   - But, structural approach does not specifically target individual returnees (in-country support)
   - Countries of interest (where Switzerland finances IOM via flat funding): Afghanistan, The Gambia, Iraq, Somalia, Sri Lanka

UNITED KINGDOM

INSTITUTIONAL ANCHORAGE OF RETURN AND DEVELOPMENT SECTORS



ACTIVE RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES

- AVRR via own structures
- ERRIN

OTHER RELATED PROGRAMMES

Mapping potential for synergies and avoiding duplication

N/A

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- Geographical interest in Horn of Africa (Somalia, Ethiopia)
- DIFD was not available for an interview; to be followed up in phase two of the research

ERRIN TWG Reintegration and Development

ASSESSMENT REPORT

May 2022

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Migration in Action
Migratie in Beweging

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Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AMIF	Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund
ATP	Anti -Trafficking Programme
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EMN IES	European Migration Network Information Exchange System
EPI	European Partner Institution
ERI	European Reintegration Instrument
ERIN	European Reintegration Network
ERRIN	European Return and Reintegration Network
ETTC	European Training and Technology Centre
EU	European Union
EURINT	European Integrated Return Management Initiative
EURLO	European Return Liaison Officer
EUTF	European Union Emergency Trust Fund
FIS	Finnish Immigration Service
FRONTEX	European Border and Coast Guard Agency
GIS	Ghana Immigration Service
GIZ	German Corporation for International Cooperation
GoG	Government of Ghana
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRMS	Integrated Return Management System
KII	Key Informant Interview
MB	Management Board
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
MICR	Migration Information Centre for Returnees
MoLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
MoMD	Ministry of Migration and Displaced
MoP	Ministry of Planning
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRS	Migrant Resource Centre
MS	Member States
NDICI	Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OF	Operational Framework on Reintegration and Development
OFII	French Office of Immigration and Integration
OKUP	Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Program
PMU	Programme Management Unit

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PPP	Public Private Partnership
PSC	Project Steering Committee
R&D	Reintegration and Development
RIAT	Reintegration Assistance Tool
RSC	Reintegration Service Centre
RSS	Reintegration Sustainability Survey
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation
SEIP	Skills for Employment and Investment Program
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SP	Service Provider
SRI	Sustainable Reintegration in Iraq
ToR	Terms of Reference
TTC	Technical Training Centre
TWG R&D	Technical Working Group on Reintegration and Development
VoT	Victim of Trafficking
UN	United Nations

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I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 ERRIN and the TWG R&D

The increased influx of asylum seekers in Europe in 2015-2016 has placed greater emphasis on the return of migrants and their reintegration process. The European Union (EU) has implemented a series of policy measures aimed at the creation of a return framework, which is seen as an essential part of its comprehensive migration policy. Such policy measures include the EU Commission's EU Action Plan for Return (2015), the Migration Partnership Framework (2016), the Regional Facility on Dignified Return and Sustainable Reintegration in Support of the Khartoum Process (2016), and the Renewed Action Plan on Returns (2017). The 2015 launch of the 'Integrated Return Management System' (IRMS) by the EU Commission has been a key component of the EU's approach to improving practical cooperation among the Member States (MSs) and third countries in the context of return. The IRMS comprises three different networks: the European Integrated Return Management Initiative (EURINT), the European Return Liaison Officers (EURLO), and the European Return and Reintegration Network (ERRIN). Key documents on the EU return system include the European Commission's New Pact on Migration and Asylum[1] released in September 2020 and the EU Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration of April 2021[2].

ERRIN began its operations in mid-2018, building on the earlier European Reintegration Network (ERIN) Specific Action Programme (implemented from June 2014 to end of May 2017), which strove to implement the sustainable return and reintegration of third country nationals in their country of origin, with cooperation with ERIN partner institutions from the 18 participating countries of migrant destination. The ERIN Specific Action was funded by the European Commission through the Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF), as well as by the partner institutions of eighteen European countries[3]. The ERIN Specific Action Programme took up where the European Reintegration Instrument (ERI), and the ERIN Projects (implemented from June 2014 to the end of May 2016) left off[4]. ERI was the first joint European return and reintegration project, led by the Netherlands and implemented by six EU MS institutions in seven third countries: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Russia. The project assisted the return of over 500 migrants with reintegration assistance and led to a common methodology for joint project development, procurement, and implementation[5].

Throughout its operation, ERRIN has worked to facilitate the entire return process from pre-departure arrangements to post-arrival. Through its Technical Working Group Reintegration and Development (TWG R&D), ERRIN has enabled its members to work jointly on key reintegration related topics, alongside key development partners. The TWG R&D has been established by the decision of the ERRIN Management Board and is chaired by the Danish Ministry of Immigration and Integration, with the aim of finding and strengthening synergies between reintegration and (ongoing) development initiatives. Ultimately, it strives to allow returnees from EU MSs to access and benefit from programmes and services offered by various development initiatives in return countries.

Linking reintegration services with existing development programmes creates more opportunities to support returning migrants, whilst facilitating their sustainable reintegration. Moreover, synchronisation between ERRIN and development actors can allow return to potentially contribute to increased socio-

[1] European Commission "New pact on migration and asylum: A fresh start on migration in Europe," 2020.
[2] European Commission "The EU strategy on voluntary return and reintegration," 2021.
[3] European Commission "ERIN – European Reintegration Network Supporting policy,"(n.d.)
[4] Ibid.
[5] European Migration Network "European Reintegration Instrument (ERI) Final Conference in Brussels," 2014.

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economic development in countries of origin. In this direction, the TWG R&D's activities are based on mapping out future joint efforts between reintegration and development actors implicated in providing assistance to returnees. Finding and strengthening synergies between reintegration and development initiatives, understanding how they can be connected, and what the limits of such collaboration might be, are the key objectives of the TWG R&D's activities.

The creation of a technical working space, where migration and development practitioners/experts can convene to explore options for closer and coherent cooperation in a non-political setting is a key component for the TWG R&D. It enables its success in ensuring that reintegration and development actions are achieved simultaneously. Creating an Operational Framework on Reintegration and Development (OF) containing key findings and lessons learned from TWG R&D members and pilot activities is the main deliverable of TWG R&D, which will be designed to offer practitioners actionable and directly applicable guidance. Beyond lessons learned from the pilot's activities, the OF shall constitute a baseline for common denominators that need to be fulfilled for a winning match (geographic match, target group, individual *and* area-based support etc.)

Ultimately, the OF shall include recommendations on how to strengthen the practical links between the reintegration and development sectors. This will serve ERRIN, governmental practitioners, and other interested parties in the design of future projects.[6] Therefore, the OF shall entail:

- **Key players and institutional anchorage** of the respectively responsible entities (reintegration and development [R&D] programmes) and modus of collaboration (or non-collaboration);
- **Currently running return and reintegration, as well as development aid national and EU programmes** in Nigeria, Bangladesh, Iraq, Ghana, and Tunisia;
- **Past and future national and EU financial instruments available in the area of return and reintegration** (AMIF; European Union Emergency Trust Fund [EUTF]); Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument [NDICI], etc.); and
- **Recommendations on if and how the reintegration and development sectors could be linked** by brainstorming challenges from different angles.

1.2. Towards an Operational Framework on Reintegration and Development

TWG R&D has evolved in phases giving more shape to its purpose and objectives over time; raising more interest among MS and development stakeholders to navigate into possibilities to incorporate reintegration to longer-term development planning. TWG R&D presented itself also as an opportunity for its members to express their ideas on the subject matter, identify complementarities and, finally, align their objectives and strive towards a coherent programming approach to reintegration.

For the first phase, a research was conducted to screen EU funded and national programs of the ERRIN MS in the sectors of reintegration as well as development aid, and to identify possibilities where and how the respective programs can be bridged. Furthermore, the study searched for ways and provided recommendations on if and how both sectors, reintegration and development, could be linked brainstorming challenges from different angles.[7]

In a second phase, in order to produce and assess tangible and realistic outcomes on the ground, three pilot-initiatives have been launched and implemented in Bangladesh and Nigeria. Main purpose of these

[6] ERRIN/TWG R&D. "Results Phase 1 of the Terms of Reference (ToR): Research in Europe. Part I and II: Report,"

[7] ERRIN/TWG R&D. "Results Phase 1 of the Terms of Reference (ToR): Research in Europe. Part I: Report,"

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pilot activities is to test how such operational referral mechanisms will work, on a case-by-case basis. To this end, the implementation of the pilot initiatives aimed at mapping, linking and referring to currently implemented reintegration and development initiative in these partner countries. This exercise allows the TWG to test the level of cooperation between actors involved and identify best practices and bottlenecks concerning operational referral mechanism.

In order to learn which additional elements should be considered for future intra-sectoral project designs, the results of these pilot activities and other bridging projects as enshrined in the outline for the operational framework was to be evaluated, and respective lessons learned be integrated into an Operational Framework that constitutes the main deliverable of the working group. Thus, in a third phase, ERRIN PMU has been appointed by TWG on Reintegration and Development to recruit and assign an External Expert to contribute to its set objectives.

Within this context, ERRIN and the International Centre for Migration and Policy Development (ICMPD) have commissioned Samuel Hall - a social enterprise specialised in migration research – to support the TWG R&D members in finalising the OF. The overarching objective that permeates this consultancy is to provide evidence- and in-depth fieldwork-based support to the ERRIN TWG R&D in developing an OF for ERRIN, and thus draft a referral document for the TWG R&D.

To achieve these aims, the Samuel Hall team has worked in consultation with TWG R&D Members, while also carrying out interviews and field assessment of existing activities and practices across the target countries involved in ERRIN return and reintegration programmes. This consultancy builds on previously conducted quantitative and qualitative research within Phase 1 of ERRIN, as well as existing evaluations of ERRIN pilot activities[8].

Among the core components of the OF are thus the assessment and reflection on the results and the lessons learned from ERRIN pilot activities and other relevant initiatives implemented in Bangladesh, Nigeria, Iraq, Ghana, and Tunisia. This Assessment Report thus serves as an annex in the OF.

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH APPROACH

The research approach for drafting the Assessment Report, and thus what informed and created the OF, consisted of four complementary components:

- **Desk review and TWG R&D debriefs**

In this phase, the Samuel Hall team conducted a thorough review and analysis of relevant documentation and actively participated in the 5th TWG R&D meeting held on 13 th January 2022 to capture and incorporate the perspectives of the TWG R&D members. Documentation included that supplied by ERRIN with targeted material on the operations and activities of the TWG R&D (primary resources) and other affiliated organisations. A full list of sources cited is included in the bibliography.

- **Field research in focus countries**

This phase included the review and analysis of five countries of origin – Bangladesh, Nigeria, Iraq, Ghana and Tunisia - and those destination countries who were willing to participate in data collection (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France and Finland) to capture modalities of collaboration and planning on R&D across countries of destination and origin. A full list of interviews is provided in Annex III.

- **Analysis and report writing**

[8] ERRIN/TWG R&D. "Results Phase 1 of the Terms of Reference (ToR): Research in Europe. Part I: Report," (n.d.)

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This phase focused on the analysis of the primary and secondary data and the drafting of the outputs.

- **Validation through the final TWG R&D Meeting, and dissemination.**

The validation phase consists of the active participation in the 5th, 6th and 7th TWG R&D meetings, with dedicated sessions to capture and incorporate TWG R&D perspectives.

DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

There are four steps to the data collection process:

- **Desk review of primary targeted** material on the operations and activities of the TWG R&D **and secondary literature review** building on past studies and analysis of existing data on R&D.
- **Key Informant Interviews** across a range of reintegration and development actors in each participating country. Of special interest for these interviews were: development agencies, authorities in ERRIN MSs in charge of reintegration, implementing agencies and service providers, NGOs, community service organisations (CSOs), and community-based groups, and other key government authorities and ministries.
- **Assessment of ERRIN TWG R&D pilot and other activities** and the incorporation of the voices and priorities of national stakeholders, through field visits and consultations.
- **Mapping of programmes and practices and a review of good practices** that can inform the OF.

1.3 Geographical scope and target group

This assessment revolves around five case studies on countries of origin, namely Iraq, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Ghana, and Tunisia. These countries were stipulated in the Terms of Reference (ToR) for this assignment as approved by the ERRIN/TWG R&D representatives and endorsed by the ERRIN Management Board. Several criteria, illustrated below in Figure 1, weighed in on this selection, related to the focus and priorities of the ERRIN TWG R&D members, as well as the prior expertise, presence, engagement, and contacts of SH within each national context. Four criteria guided the selection of countries:

- **Zones of Interest**: Pilot activities or countries pre-identified in the ERRIN OF outline.
- **Typology of Returns**: Returns (forced or voluntary), readmissions.
- **Typology of Countries**: Countries of origin, and countries of destination.
- **Knowledge Mapping**: Existing data, engagement and buy-in for discussions on R&D.

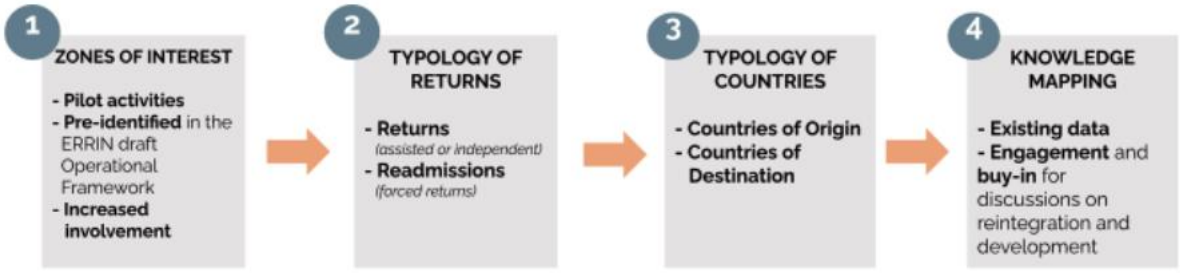

Figure 1 – Criteria for case countries' selection

Taking into account these criteria, and after discussions with ERRIN and TWG representatives, the countries presented in Table 1 were identified for this assessment.

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SELECTED COUNTRIES	
Countries of Origin	Bangladesh
	Nigeria
	Iraq
	Ghana
	Tunisia
Countries of Destination[9]	Belgium
	Denmark
	Finland
	Germany

Table 1 – Countries included in the revised approach

1.4 Limitations and constraints

This section provides an overview below on the limitations the consultancy team encountered when conducting the assessment. These limitations included:

- **Revision of the cluster approach**;
- **Time constraints**;
- **Challenges accessing and contacting KI**Is;
- **Missing beneficiary interviews**;
- **Limited reporting and available project documentation**; and
- **Limited information or insights received on different funding streams**.

Revision of the cluster approach

Constraints regarding stakeholder capacity led to revisions to the cluster approach. This subsequently affected the rigour of the assessment.

The initial methodology proposed and discussed during pre-consultations with the Chair of the TWG R&D consisted of pairing each country of origin with a country of destination and invited stakeholders to contribute to a limited number of in-depth discussions on the topics of the consultancy. Invited stakeholders were also to participate in a virtual group discussion with other stakeholders within the cluster.

The consultancy team presented this approach to the TWG R&D members during the 5th TWG R&D meeting held on 13th January 2022. However, most of the TWG R&D members considered the effort required too heavy within an already ambitious timetable and did not subsequently express interest in participating in the cluster approach as primary stakeholders. Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, and

[9] Besides the countries of destination listed in the table, Germany and France contributed to the study by providing verbal and/or written contributions. More information about each country's degree of involvement can be found in Annex III.

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Finland are the only countries of destination who agreed to play a role in the assessment, with varying degrees of involvement.

Time constraints

The strict timeline significantly affected the amount of data collected. The time constraints resulted from the end of ERRIN mandate in June 2022 and delays in procurement at the onset of the work. Given the June deadline, ERRIN/ICMPD were not able to grant an extension for the submission of the Assessment Report or OF. As a result, it was not possible to adjust further the methodology or allocate more time to engage in discussions with the TWG R&D members who had requested more time to schedule interviews. Given these time constraints, the OF developed on the basis of the information gathered will not reflect the perspectives of some key players involved in R&D activities, particularly development actors.

Challenges accessing and contacting KIIs

As stated in the ToR developed and approved by the TWG R&D members and endorsed by the ERRIN Management Board, the target group of the interviews to be conducted by the team of consultants included development agencies, MS authorities in charge of reintegration, implementing agencies, etc. The ToR's further stated that the list of key informants would be provided by ERRIN on behalf of the TWG R&D. Although ERRIN focal points shared a preliminary contact list of key stakeholders with the consultants, the stakeholders in the countries of origin identified by ERRIN were ERRIN Service Providers (SPs) on the ground or partners closely involved in ERRIN-managed projects. In line with the ToR, only few actors more broadly involved in R&D activities were pointed out as potential key informants. For these reasons, the consultancy team was not able to reach out to key actors such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Labour Organization (ILO), various local NGOs, development actors, and governments in countries of origin from the data collection. Their perspectives would have added value and depth to the analysis. However, the data collected and the variety of actors interviewed did allow for an in-depth assessment of the pilot activities.

The data presented in this assessment thus includes mainly information provided by actors involved in return and reintegration (see Figure 2). The team of consultants recommends engaging with a broader ecosystem of actors in future assessments to better understand the context in which the activities are implemented and integrate the experiences of other relevant actors. As beyond ERRIN SPs, the OF will thus only partly reflect the perspectives of relevant actors from the broader reintegration and development sectors in the countries of origin. A full list of interviews is provided in Annex III.

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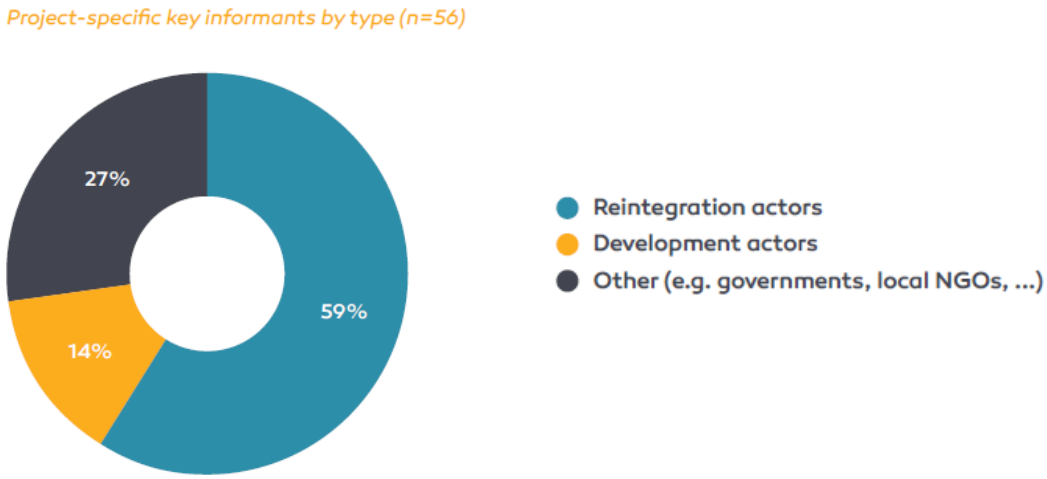

Figure 2 – Project-specific key informant interviews by type

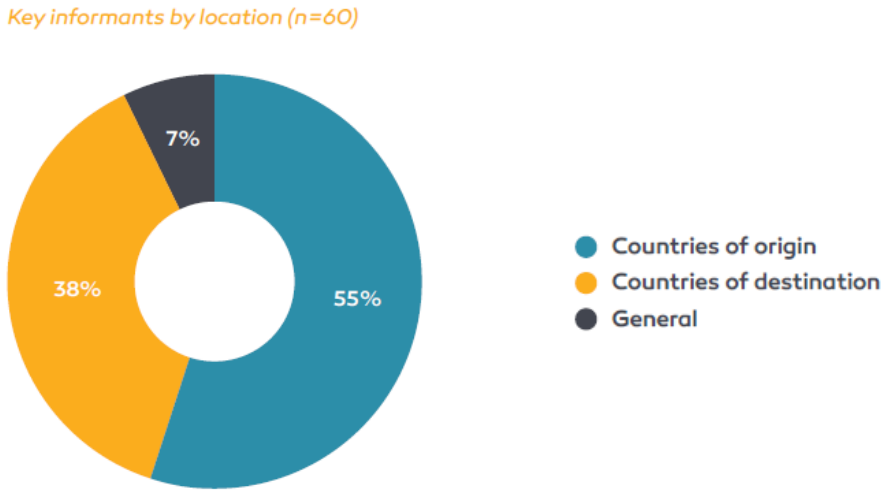

Figure 3 – Project-specific key informant interview by location

Missing beneficiary interviews

The consultancy team faced quite some challenges in interviewing beneficiaries, except in a few instances. As a result, the perspective of beneficiaries is limited in this assessment.

The consultancy team aimed to prioritise the perspectives, experiences, and knowledge of migrants in the assessment to gain a broad understanding of beneficiaries' perspectives and thoughts on the support received from ERRIN. This has been possible only partly. In line with the ToR's for this assignment, as developed and approved by the TWG R&D members, and endorsed by the ERRIN Management Board, the ERRIN Programme Management Unit (PMU) requested the inclusion only of beneficiaries from the TWG R&D pilots in Bangladesh and Nigeria (see Annex II for a comprehensive list). Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) and Idia Renaissance, ERRIN service providers on the ground in Bangladesh and Nigeria, provided the consultancy team with a list of beneficiaries to be interviewed. However, the national researchers of the consultancy team struggled to conduct interviews with

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beneficiaries. Thus of the 66 interviews conducted only six were from beneficiaries, two from Nigeria and four from Bangladesh.

Limited reporting and selected project documentation

The availability of project documentation challenged the consultancy team from assessing projects holistically.

A key component of the assessment of ERRIN pilot activities was the review of the project documentation provided by ERRIN. However, due to the outbreak of COVID-19 and the lack of a continuous monitoring plan, the documentation available was not extensive. Clear information on the projects' progress and implementation was thus missing. Further, COVID-19 pandemic limited ERRIN PMU capacity to conduct missions to third countries and report on them, with the lockdown measures imposed in the countries of origin representing a further challenge for ERRIN project managers in the field. For these reasons, most of the documents shared were concept notes and project proposals drafted in the pre-design stage of the projects, outlining the key objectives, outputs, and activities to be implemented within a given timeframe. However, these documents did not always reflect the actual projects' timelines, implementation of activities, and the actors involved. Cross-checking the information available in the project documentation against the actual implementation proved to be challenging and resulted in gaps in the assessment. Information gaps were filled by triangulating the available data provided by KIIs, conversations with ERRIN focal points, and presentations given during the 5th TWG R&D meeting. Despite these efforts, some gaps have remained.

The assessment clarifies where information was unclear or lacking. The challenges related to the lack of reporting have been discussed with ERRIN focal points, who acknowledged the need to strengthen monitoring tools for future projects. Therefore, this limitation opened up a space for reflection and has been integrated as a lesson learned on the key importance of monitoring both in this report and the OF.

Limitation information received on funding streams

A component of the Assessment Report envisaged including an analysis on different funding streams and how this matter may affect the cooperation of reintegration and development partners. However, limited engagement or knowledge on this topic by informants limited findings in this regard.

Some respondents spoke to their limited familiarity with the topic and felt unequipped to discuss the topic in the KIIs. As a result, the topic was not one that was selected by many respondents as interviewees were allowed to choose which topics they felt more comfortable commenting on. The majority of the respondents preferred answering project-specific questions instead of focusing on broader and more general questions. However, the initial desk review conducted for the synthesis report preceding this output and general KIIs conducted delivered key information in this regard.

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II. KEY SUCCESSES

Throughout the TWG R&D Pilot and other activities, there were key successes in efforts to integrate the reintegration and development sectors via referral mechanisms. These are important bases upon which further collaboration can refer to.

Some of the main successes are highlighted below:

- **Multi-sectoral involvement in the countries of origin including government, civil society, and private sector actors** as done in Bangladesh was a key success and good practice. Including a wider array of actors in reintegration projects can create important synergies in the countries of origin, increase local ownership in the countries of origin, better address the needs and wants of returnees, and more robustly link the reintegration and development sectors (given the development field often already has already extensive private sector linkages).

- **Linking pre-departure and post-arrival actors, as well as reintegration and development actors in the countries of origin and destination through transnational coordination mechanisms** as done in Ghana, Iraq, and Nigeria was a key success. This enhanced communication and coordination and thus allowed returnees' needs to be better met. It also increased local ownership on the ground. When coupled with capacity building workshops, such as in Nigeria, local ownership was technically enhanced by growing the operational capacity of actors in the countries of origin. Such coordination platforms similarly encouraged multi-sectoral involvement by incorporating non-state and state actors and thus further enabled the sustainable reintegration of returnees.

- **Expanding and streamlining the referrals available through memoranda of understanding** (MoUs) was a key success, such as with the MoU with the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ) in Ghana. In doing so, referrals became less ad hoc and better met returnee's needs. Further, through SOPs, the roles, responsibilities, expectations, and abilities of the various actors became clarified, allowing for less competition and smoother implementation of the referral mechanism. While coordination mechanisms fostered collaboration so that actors could better address pressing challenges and identify additional needs of returnees, MoUs and SOPs enabled such collaboration by providing guidelines and methods for operationalising identified synergies.

- **Conducting extensive mapping exercises to identify development projects potentially open to returnees**, like in the case of the TWG R&D pilots in Bangladesh and Nigeria, proved to be a crucial step in establishing solid collaboration and setting up referral mechanisms with key actors in the ground. In both cases, the mapping conducted at the inception of the project led to the identification of development-funded projects and initiatives that ERRIN returnees have successfully been referred to.

- **Establishing stakeholder platforms and coordination mechanisms involving all stakeholders.** In Ghana, the ERRIN stakeholder platform was established where government and other actors, including international development actors, met quarterly to discuss, exchange and share challenges. Evidence from these stakeholder meetings shows increasing participation and interest by a range of stakeholders. The meetings have improved communication, clarified roles, and

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fostered collaboration so that actors could better address pressing challenges and identify additional needs of returnees. The platform worked towards an inter-institutional referral mechanism, and supported greater ownership by the government.

III. RESULTS AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM ERRIN's PILOTS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

3.1 Summary of activities

This section provides information on ERRIN TWG R&D pilot and other activities implemented by different actors that aim to create a linkage between reintegration and development.

Each assessment of the various ERRIN TWG R&D pilot and other activities is divided into four sections: (i) scope initiative and timeframe; (ii) key actors, role and donors; (iii) referral flow; and (iv) assessment. The assessment section presents the results and summarises the challenges, good practices, and lessons learned identified during data collection. Drawing on this knowledge, this section further provides recommendations to strengthen the collaboration between reintegration and development actors to facilitate returnees' reintegration. The footnotes provide an indicative although not exhaustive list of sources (key informants, beneficiaries, and project documentation). The projects presented in this section include:

PROJECTS	COUNTRIES	DONORS	IMPLEMENTERS
TWG R&D pilot project	Bangladesh	ERRIN	BRAC
PPP pilot project	Bangladesh	ERRIN	ICMPD Vienna and ICMPD Dhaka
TWG R&D pilot project	Nigeria	ERRIN	Caritas International Belgium and Idia Renaissance
PROSPECT pilot	Nigeria	ERRIN	ICMPD Anti-Trafficking Programme (ATP)
Government to Government initiative	Ghana	ERRIN and Federal Agency for Migration and Refugees (BAMF)	ERRIN PMU, Ghana Immigration Service (GIS), FRONTEX, Ministry for Children, Family, Refugees and Integration of State of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), BAMF

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ERRIN Sustainable Reintegration Activities (SRI)	Iraq	ERRIN/Finnish Immigration Service (FIS)	Government of Finland, Startup Refugee, European Training and Technology Centre (ETTC)
Capacity building for long-term reintegration of returnees to Iraq complementary to reintegration support through ERRIN (CAIR) - Danish innovative activity	Iraq	Danish development assistance facility (Flexible Return Funds)	ICMPD
OFII mapping	Senegal, Mali, Cameroon & Morocco	ERRIN/ French Office of Immigration and Integration (OFII)	GIZ Mali and other development partners
GIZ-ERRIN Collaboration in Tunisia	Tunisia	ERRIN/ German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)	GIZ Tunisia, Caritas International

Table 2 – Overview of assessed activities

In the scope of assessing these activities and drafting the OF we thus conducted 66 interviews in total. We conduced 56 project-specific KIIs (see Figure 4) and four general KIIs. We additionally conducted six semi-structured individual interviews with beneficiaries (four in Bangladesh and two in Nigeria). Further information can be found in Annex III, as well as Annex II for beneficiaries.

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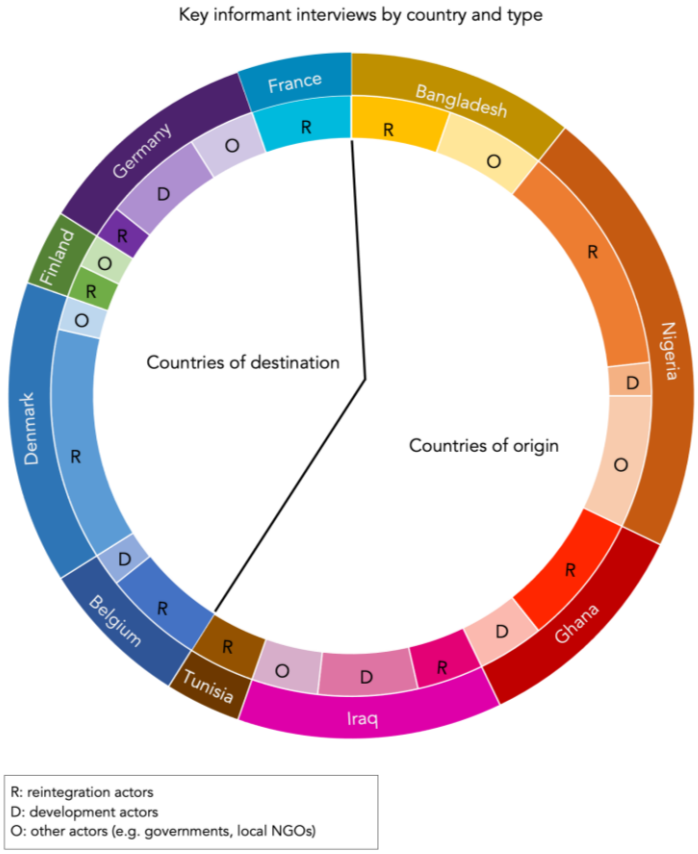

Figure 4 – Key informant interview by country and type

3.2 Design and results of ERRIN pilot activities

A. Developing a referral mechanism for ERRIN service providers

The main objective of ERRIN pilot activities in Bangladesh and Nigeria was to test a referral mechanism to enable ERRIN returnees to systematically access and benefit from assistance and services provided by development-aid funded projects in both countries. The pilot projects emerged as a response to the need to bridge the gap between the reintegration assistance provided by ERRIN and ongoing development projects in countries of origin. Even though some ERRIN service providers had already attempted to interlink ERRIN returnees with services offered by the developed sector in an ad hoc manner, at the time of inception no systematic mechanism was in place to ensure that these linkages would be effective and organised. The key activities planned under the ERRIN pilot initiatives included the:

- **Setup of an operational coordination mechanism** linking ERRIN returnees with relevant development initiatives;
- **Mapping of development projects** potentially open to returnees;
- **Design and testing of an operational referral flow** making use of services provided via the development sector; and
- **Monitoring and enhancement of the established coordination mechanisms**.

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The second TWG R&D meeting, held in Copenhagen on April 25th, 2019 highlighted the importance of testing referral systems[10]. During this meeting, an external consultant presented the findings of research conducted on behalf of ERRIN on the existing collaboration between reintegration and development actors in origin and destination countries. This research included a mapping of geographical areas of interest for the implementation of ERRIN pilots. The research represented the first step towards the design and development of ERRIN pilot activities. One of the topics covered in the study were the different modalities of implementing a referral project[11].

In the course of the interviews conducted by the consultant, the respondents discussed three different options for a systematised referral mechanism:

- **Involve development agencies at the pre-departure stage**. This would facilitate information sharing with returnees and ensure that returnees' expectations are aligned with the assistance that service providers can offer in the countries of origin. On the other hand, this would add a significant workload to return counsellors who have already reached their capacity.
- **Focus on what already exists on the ground** with ERRIN Service Providers and IOM carrying more responsibility after return. However, existing referral mechanisms are not yet operational and their scope is limited to reintegration. This option raised some concerns as a third entity would operate on behalf of ERRIN.
- **Extend the European Migration Network Information Exchange System (EMN IES)** through gathering data from the field and inserting it into the system. However, this was not a stand-alone solution.

All the respondents who participated in the research agreed that ERRIN should play the role of bridging actors in the referral process.

An additional important point raised was the Do No Harm principle and the challenge represented by the different target groups of reintegration and development projects. The opportunity of promoting empowerment by channelling the referral process through ERRIN government-to-government projects was also mentioned during the interviews.

Drawing from the options presented by the consultant, the TWG R&D members discussed two referral modalities: pre-departure and post-arrival. Participants understood these options as not excluding each other, but rather able to be implemented in parallel.

- **Pre-departure referral**: Designing a pre-departure referral mechanism would allow returnees to access more detailed and accurate information, which would in turn make them feel more comfortable and motivated to return. However, the success of a pre-departure referral system is linked to the time allocated to each returnee's pre-departure counselling. Moreover, effective coordination with the service providers on the ground is essential. Otherwise, decisions made at the pre-departure stage without consultation with stakeholders on the ground could produce a situation where the service providers in the country of origin are not able to provide the kind of support promised to the returnee and meet their expectations. Further, for a pre-departure referral system to work, counsellors in countries of destination should be thoroughly trained on regulations in the countries of origin. A recommendation given was for ERRIN to develop guidelines on how to counsel during the pre-departure phase, as well as train counsellors to present all available options in the country of origin. Within this option, the TWG R&D members imagined two possible scenarios:

[10] ERRIN/TWG R&D. "Copenaghen 25/04/2019: Minutes," 2019.
[11] ERRIN/TWG R&D. "Results Phase 1 of the Terms of Reference (ToR): Research in Europe. Part I: Report," n.d.

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- **Scenario 1**: ERRIN Service Providers could establish a link with development projects on the ground and be responsible for training their personnel. However, this would mean delegating all responsibility to a third party, which raised some concerns in the participants.
- **Scenario 2**: Someone appointed via ERRIN could be responsible for the mapping and gathering information from development agencies in countries of origin, under the supervision of the ERRIN PMU/TWG R&D and in close collaboration with the ERRIN SP.

- **Post-arrival referra**l: Opting for a post-return referral system would ensure that returnees receive updated information on the kind of support that is available to them at the moment of return - not prior. The main point raised was the necessity of gauging what kind of services are more relevant to returnees and which ones should therefore be included in the mapping. The choice must be needs-driven and should not depend on what activities are easier to manage.

This understanding of referral mechanisms informed the design of such mechanisms in the TWG R&D pilot activities. Based on the inputs provided by the TWG R&D members, the PMU drafted the pilot projects' concept notes. The countries chosen for the implementation of ERRIN pilot activities were Bangladesh and Nigeria.

B. Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, ERRIN collaborates with IRARA and BRAC for the delivery of ERRIN reintegration assistance on the ground[12]. Given the interest expressed by the TWG R&D members during initial consultation held within ERRIN MSs, the TWG R&D conducted a mission in Bangladesh from June 16th to June 20th, 2019) to test the possibility of implementing the TWG R&D pilot project there [13]. The specific purpose of the mission was to analyse the functioning of the Danish project with BRAC 'Sustainable Reintegration of Returnee Migrant Workers of Bangladesh', identified during the first phase of the consultancy, and map other existing projects providing assistance to returnees. After the mapping, the mission aimed to understand how the services offered within identified projects could be complementary to the reintegration package offered by ERRIN and check the eligibility of ERRIN returnees to access them. The mission thus served as a way to gauge a potential collaboration with ERRIN and assist in elaborating a joint workflow.

As a result, ERRIN launched two pilot activities that aim to strengthen the linkages between reintegration and development actors on the ground and ultimately foster the sustainable reintegration of returnees. The pilot projects are:

- **The Bangladesh TWG R&D pilot activity** and
- **The Private-Public Partnership (PPP) pilot activity**.

B.1 Bangladesh TWG R&D pilot activity

Scope initiative and timeframe

The Bangladesh TWG R&D pilot activity is complementary to existing ERRIN reintegration services and aims to enable ERRIN returnees to systematically access and benefit from services provided by development-aid funded projects in Bangladesh.

[12] ERRIN/TWG R&D. "Draft Minutes of the 5th Technical Working Group meeting on Reintegration & Development," 2022.
[13] ERRIN/TWG R&D. "Mission Report to Dhaka, Nigeria 16-20 June 2019," 2019.

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The target beneficiaries of this pilot are returnees from European countries under the 'Sustainable Reintegration of Bangladesh Returnees Project', including the migrants who returned to Bangladesh before the start of the project. The project's total duration was planned to be 12 months, from February 2021 until the end of January 2022. The outbreak of COVID-19 severely delayed the start of the pilot[14].

OBJECTIVES (GOALS)	
Overall objective	Achieve more sustainable reintegration of returnees from ERRIN MSs in Bangladesh.
Specific objective	Enable ERRIN returnees to systematically access and benefit from services provided by various development projects/initiatives in the respective country of origin.
OUTCOMES (RESULTS)	
Outcome I	Consolidate mapping of existing (and free) development-aid funded services in the respective country of origin for facilitating the reintegration process of returnees.
Outcome II	120 ERRIN returnees access development-aid funded initiatives in view of their reintegration process.
KEY ACTIVITIES (OUTPUTS)	
Activity I	Continuous mapping of ongoing development-aid funded services relevant for the reintegration process of ERRIN returnees.
Activity II	Organisation of operational coordination meetings.
Activity III	Set-up and maintain an operational coordination mechanism with identified actors to interlink ERRIN returnees with services provided by actors in the development sector.
Activity IV	Design and test an operational referral flow to make use of the services provided via the development sector.
Activity V	Continuous monitoring and enhancement of the established coordination mechanism.

Table 3 – TWG R&D Bangladesh pilot outline

Key actors, roles and donors

- **ERRIN/ICMPD**: The project was managed by ERRIN.
- **BRAC**: Established in 1972, BRAC is the biggest international development organisation in Bangladesh, which employs over 97,000 staff members and has a presence in the whole country through its offices. BRAC was the implementer of the project on the ground, and was given the mandate to organise the referral flow in Bangladesh. All referrals were made directly by BRAC. After conducting an initial mapping, BRAC identified five donor-funded projects and government

[14] ERRIN/TWG R&D. "Draft Minutes of the 5th Technical Working Group meeting on Reintegration & Development," 2022.; ERRIN/TWG R&D. "Pilot Activity BRAC, Bangladesh", 2022.

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Technical Training Centres (TTC) that ERRIN returnees could be referred to, listed below in Table 4[15].

PROJECT	DONOR	IMPLEMENTER
Sustainable Reintegration and Improved Migration Governance - Prottasha Project	EU	IOM and BRAC
Sustainable Reintegration of Returnee Migrant Workers of Bangladesh - Anuprerona Project	Royal Embassy of Denmark in Bangladesh (Flexible return funds)	BRAC
COVID-19 Recovery: Entrepreneurship Training and Gainful Employment for Returnee Migrants affected by COVID-19 in Bangladesh	Standard Chartered Foundation	BRAC
Nobojatra - Skills for Reintegration Project (A part of ILO-Skills 21 Project)	ILO	Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Program (OKUP)
Skills for Employment and Investment Program (SEIP)	Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC)	Government of Bangladesh
Government Technical Training Centres (TTC)	N/A	Government of Bangladesh

Table 4 – Overview of the services that returnees have been referred to in the context of the Bangladesh pilot

The services offered in the context of these projects were mainly psychosocial counselling, business counselling, and training (e.g. entrepreneurship development, financial literacy and remittance management, livestock, and hard skills development). Some services were also open to returnees' family members. Among the projects listed above, the referrals to the Prottasha and Anuprerona projects have been the most successful, as returnees showed a lack of interest in the services offered by the other three.

Referral flow

The referral mechanism established within the project enabled ERRIN returnees to benefit from the activities offered by the Prottasha and Anuprerona projects.

The Prottasha activities relevant for ERRIN returnees entailed: psychosocial counselling, business counselling, entrepreneurship, development training, training on financial literacy and remittance management, and livestock rearing.

[15] KII16

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The Anuprerona activities relevant for ERRIN returnees included: basic entrepreneurship training, appropriate product and service development training, marketing and sales management training, financial management of enterprises, and psychosocial counselling[16].

At the beginning of 2021, it was agreed that Prottasha staff would provide psychosocial counselling and other soft skill training to ERRIN returnees, including guidance and advice in the effective management of their enterprises. Further, it was decided that the Anuprerona staff would focus on the eligibility verification for ERRIN returnees, while also providing psychosocial counselling and soft skill training, if the returnees met the selection criteria (geographic location, age, economic condition etc). A referral flow of ERRIN cases was therefore established towards both projects.

Referral Flow - Prottasha

After the European Partner Institution (EPI) provides the address of BRAC to the returnee, an initial meeting between the returnee and ERRIN project manager takes place at BRAC head office. The ERRIN project manager assesses the returnee's needs and then refers the returnee to the relevant Reintegration Service Centre (RSC) according to the working area distribution list and the returnee's district of residence. There, another meeting is conducted by the district manager.

The RSC officials then prepare a profile of the returnee, which includes information on their social, economic, and personal situation, as well as their migration history. After the profiling is complete, RSC officials develop a reintegration plan tailored to the returnee's specific needs.

Once the returnee visits the RSC, the psychosocial counsellor plans and conducts the first counselling session. Depending on the assessment conducted during this first session, more sessions can be scheduled and counselling can be provided to the returnee's family members.

After the counselling session(s), the district manager prepares the reintegration plan for the returnee, which includes a detailed business plan and suggestions of trainings that the returnee can attend to acquire the skills needed to manage that business.

Training is arranged in batches of 20 to 25 returnees and in some cases can be extended to the family members of returnees. All the training-related costs are covered under the Prottasha Project. The trainings available for ERRIN returnees are 'Financial Literacy and Remittance Management', 'Entrepreneurship Development', 'Live-Stock Rearing', and 'Fish Culture'[17].

Referral Flow – Anuprenona

After the returnee visits BRAC head office, BRAC project manager shares the list of the returnees of a particular geographic location with the officials of the District Reintegration Service Centre (DRSC). The list contains the address of the returnees, age, phone number, types of (ERRIN) in-kind support received, etc.

Once they receive the list, the DRSC officials get in touch with the returnee and prepare a detailed profile of the returnee, which includes the returnee's social, economic, and personal information, and migration history. The DRSC officials can request other projects to share the returnee's profile if this has already been prepared by Prottasha or BRAC.

[16] ERRIN/TWG R&D. "ERRIN: Operational Coordination Mechanism, ERRIN Referral to 'Sustainable Reintegration of Returnee Migrant Workers of Bangladesh - Anuprerona, 2nd Phase's Project", n.d. ERRIN/TWG R&D. "ERRIN: Operational Coordination Mechanism, ERRIN Referral to 'Sustainable Reintegration and Improved Migration Governance - Prottasha' Project", n.d.
[17] ERRIN/TWG R&D. "ERRIN: Operational Coordination Mechanism, ERRIN Referral to 'Sustainable Reintegration and Improved Migration Governance - Prottasha' Project", n.d.

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The DRSC officials then checks the eligibility of the returnee for a particular soft skill training based on their profile, interest, and selection criterion for the training.

If the returnee is selected for a particular training, all the associated costs of the training are booked under project code Anuprerona. Any ERRIN returnees can benefit from the counselling service from the Anuprerona Project[18].

Assessment of project activities

The section below provides information on the status of the activities proposed for the Bangladesh TWG R&D pilot activity. It then describes key challenges, good practices and lessons learned.

REVIEW OF RESULTS		
ACTIVITY	**ASSESSMENT**	**DETAILS**
Activity I: Mapping	Not completed	An initial mapping of development-funded activities was conducted by BRAC and key projects to be included in the coordination mechanism have been identified. However, the mapping has not been completed due to the COVID-19 pandemic[19].
Activity II: Operational coordination meetings	Not completed	Organising operational coordination meetings has not been possible because of COVID-19[20].
Activity III: Operational coordination mechanism	Completed	An operational coordination mechanism has been successfully established and led to the design of an operational referral flow.
Activity IV: Operational referral flow	Completed	A referral flow has been successfully established and, within the timeframe of the project, 123 ERRIN returnees have been referred to the 'Bangladesh: Sustainable Reintegration and Improved Migration Governance-Prottasha'[21]. Among the services that returnees have been referred to, psychological counselling sessions were found helpful by the beneficiaries as they helped them reduce

[18] ERRIN/TWG R&D. "ERRIN: Operational Coordination Mechanism, ERRIN Referral to 'Sustainable Reintegration of Returnee Migrant Workers of Bangladesh - Anuprerona, 2nd Phase's Project", n.d.
[19] ERRIN/TWG R&D. "Draft Minutes of the 5th Technical Working Group meeting on Reintegration & Development," 2022; Pilot Activity BRAC presentation
[20] Ibid.
[21] Among the services offered within the Prottasha project, 62 ERIN returnees received psychosocial counselling and 61 ERRIN returnees benefited from training, in particular 'Financial Literacy' (45), 'Entrepreneurship Development' (8), 'Agriculture- Crop Cultivation' (4), 'Cow Breeding and Beef Fattening' (4).

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		their level of stress, improve their mood and cope with anxiety given by traumatic events or negative experiences of their migration journey. In the Prottasha project transportation, food and accommodation costs were covered for the trainees, and the courses were delivered over a short period of time, which made the referrals to the Prottasha training more successful than those to other projects, such as the Government Technical Training Centres.
Activity V: Monitoring	Information not available	The status of this activity is unclear due to previously discussed limitations.

Table 5 – TWG R&D Bangladesh pilot results

To achieve more results and make reintegration sustainable we really need coordination and connection from the very beginning to the very end. In many ways there is no coordination.

Challenges

The main challenge to both the implementation of the pilot and the achievement of sustainable reintegration in the broader sense is lack of coordination among actors. The aim of the TWG R&D in Bangladesh is precisely to establish linkages between relevant stakeholders, therefore fostering coordination and addressing one of the main gaps identified by local actors. Besides that, and more related to the operational side of the project implementation, one of the main challenges faced was the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020. The pandemic significantly delayed the implementation of the activities and two lockdowns hampered the smooth running of the project. For this reason, it was not possible to organise operational coordination meetings and the mapping of development-funded projects could not be completed[22].

Moreover, increasing prices and the worsening of the economic situation in Bangladesh made it difficult to motivate returnees to attend trainings, as they became more concerned about other priorities and were in need of more immediate forms of assistance[23].

Besides that, different target groups, eligibility criteria, scope, and duration of the services and training available represented a challenge for the referral mechanism. Several returnees in Bangladesh didn't match the eligibility criteria of the development projects identified during the mapping conducted by BRAC and thus could not benefit from the services they provided.

Several returnees were reluctant to attending training because of the long duration of the courses, the distance between their home and the nearest training venue, the existence of admission or application fees for some training offered at the TTC, and the urgent need of engaging in income-generating activities to provide for their families.

Interestingly, a key informant highlighted the difference between reintegration according to gender, noting how most women returning to Bangladesh are more interested than men in starting a business, as

[22] ERRIN/TWG R&D. "Draft Minutes of the 5th Technical Working Group meeting on Reintegration & Development," 2022; Pilot Activity BRAC presentation
[23] KII16

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the latter are generally more interested in re-migrating. However, reintegration for women presents some additional challenges, as the Bangladeshi society can be very conservative in its understanding of gender roles and expectations. For instance, women returnees are less likely to be granted loans and receive financial support, and face more social stigma[24].

Good Practices

One of the good practices highlighted during the 5th TWG R&D was the creation of links with IOM-managed projects. 'The Sustainable Reintegration and Improved Migration Governance - Prottasha Project' is in fact jointly implemented by BRAC and IOM and returnees have been referred to IOM projects in Bangladesh.

Lessons Learned

The main lesson learned from the TWG R&D pilot concerns the positive impact that coordination can have on reintegration even when limited resources are available[25].

Another lesson learned identified by the respondents is that including returnees' families in activities such as Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship training can be highly effective, especially in the case of elderly returnees[26]. Moreover, this project helped stakeholders realise that while most of the migrants who return to Bangladesh are from the middle and upper-middle economic class, development projects tend to prioritise the poorest and more disadvantaged members of society. This can result in the non-eligibility of some returnees to many development-aid funded projects.

What we have learned is that if you can coordinate with each other, even with little money we can do a lot. What we need is the passion for the migrants, because this is more than a job. I think that with a small amount of money we can lots of things together and I will say that if the referrals have had a positive impact, this has been possible thanks to the passion that we have.

Lastly, interviewees noted that establishing trust and good interpersonal relationships with the returnees is a key factor for establishing a successful referral mechanism on the ground[27].

Recommendations:

- **Provide the returnees with accurate information** about the services available upon return at the pre-departure stage. This would make returnees feel more confident about the decision to return.
- **Provide psychosocial counselling before finalising returnees' reintegration plan** and providing in-kind assistance, to ensure that returnees attend the counselling sessions and fully benefit from them[28].
- **Allocate a portion of the budget to hiring skilled counsellors** who can provide counselling as one of ERRIN's activities, without depending on other development actors for the provision of this service[29].
- **Render Financial Literacy Training mandatory for ERRIN returnees** and ensure that returnees attend the training before finalising their economic reintegration plan. This would limit the risk of

[24] KII11
[25] Ibid.
[26] BRAC, "An Operational Coordination Mechanism for ERRIN Returnees in Bangladesh", n,d.
[27] KII16.
[28] BRAC, "An Operational Coordination Mechanism for ERRIN Returnees in Bangladesh", n,d.
[29] Ibid.

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returnees investing in a project before having acquired the relevant skills needed to manage it and thus potentially losing the financial support received[30].

- **Include family members in the referral system**, as family members could also benefit from some of the services offered within the reintegration package. For example, providing financial literacy training to the returnee's family members would allow the family to better support the returnee throughout the process of setting up a business.
- **Conduct regular monitoring** after the provision of in-kind assistance[31] to assess the impact of the assistance provided on the returnee's reintegration, and check if more support is needed.
- **Include and build the capacity of local authorities** and local communities to participate in the referral mechanism[32].

Beneficiaries interviewed in the context of the assessment of ERRIN pilot activity in Bangladesh were very satisfied with the support provided by BRAC on the ground.

More than one respondent emphasised the importance of the financial literacy training, which "opened their eyes" and supported their reintegration in Bangladesh[33]. The respondents also stressed the impact that the psychosocial counselling received had on their lives.

Overall, all the beneficiaries interviewed agreed that the support received matched their needs and skills and they would recommend visiting the BRAC office to any migrant returning from Europe. Three of the four respondents reported remaining in regular contact with BRAC after receiving the reintegration assistance.

BRAC trained me on how to do savings and organize my life in an effective way. I am very much grateful to them. During my difficulties, they came to my life as a blessing. Although the support wasn't very big, it was the only support that I received from anyone. The most important thing I have learned from BRAC is you can't do everything in your life based on your emotion.

Beneficiary Recommendations

- **Offer loans with low interest rates**. This would encourage returnees to set up their own businesses and ensure that they can sustain them beyond the financial support received within the reintegration package.
- **Increase the amount of financial support provided**. Even though beneficiaries considered the support provided as matching their needs, they believed that a bigger amount would have an ever-greater impact on their reintegration.
- **Reduce the document processing time**. One beneficiary noted that BRAC head office took a considerable amount of time to process his documents, which slowed down the process of receiving assistance[34].

I received psychosocial counselling from ERRIN. Without their support, I might not have been able to revive my relationship with my family.

[30] KII16
[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid.
[33] SSII1
[34] SSII2

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B.2 Bangladesh pilot - Public Private Partnership (PPP)

Scope initiative and timeframe

The PPP project in Bangladesh aimed to set-up an operational coordination mechanism to interlink reintegration services with the labour market needs of the private sector. It did so by connecting returnees with private sector employers to facilitate their reintegration in Bangladesh[35]. This mechanism strove to create a PPP platform, used to advise returnees on reintegration and on existing employment and livelihood enhancement opportunities. The platform was designed to raise awareness among the private sector on the skills available among returnees and on the different ways in which returnees can contribute to enhance their skills to further develop their businesses. The ultimate goal of the project is to create a channel for the private sector to actively engage in reintegration initiatives in Bangladesh, recognising the potential of this collaboration and the positive impact that it could have on their businesses. The project came from a request from the government of Bangladesh to ICMPD to support them on reintegration, particularly in light of COVID-19 and the unprecedented migration flows it generated[36].

Even though the project officially started in August 2021, COVID-19 delayed the actual implementation and the kick-off meeting took place in Dhaka in November 2021[37]. The meeting saw the participation of 65 individuals from 24 different organisations and 10 private sector groups. Government representatives also took part in the kick-off meeting and emphasised the need for a solid partnership between private and public sector to facilitate returnees' reintegration, highlighting that destination and origin countries should be involved. This could contribute to opening up paths for legal migration, as well. Other participants stressed the importance of having accurate data on the returnees and their profiles, as well the importance of involving micro-finance institutions, real estate groups, and garments and pharmaceutical companies in the PPP. Participants agreed that the expertise of the private sector can be tapped by the government[38].

OBJECTIVES (GOALS)	
Overall objective	Set up operational coordination mechanisms to interlink services for returnees and their dependents with the market needs of the private employment sector in view of their reintegration in Bangladesh.
Specific objective	Develop and implement an operational coordination platform for PPP on reintegration.
OUTCOMES (RESULTS)	

[35] ERRIN/TWG R&D. "ERRIN Project Proposal: Pilot Bangladesh - Public Private Partnerships," n.d..
[36] KII22
[37] Ibid.
[38] ERRIN/TWG R&D. "ERRIN Project Proposal: Pilot Bangladesh - Public Private Partnerships," n.d. ; TWG R&D Pilot Bangladesh - Public Private Partnership presentation

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Outcome I	Develop a concept of the PPP cooperation focusing on the role of the private sector in reintegration of returnees in Bangladesh, which includes the following: • Stakeholder mapping for PPP in the area of reintegration or a continuous listing of relevant stakeholders to participate in PPP in the area of reintegration. The geographical scope is Dhaka and Cumilla and neighbouring districts. • A functional model for the organisation of PPP and coordination mechanisms.
Outcome II	Set up and test a functional operational coordination platform for the engagement of the private sector in reintegration processes. The exact form of this platform was to be determined. This includes: • Clear operational strategies for continuous listing/identifying the market needs, identifying gaps (i.e. skills/ knowledge), and providing recommendations on how to identify these gaps (i.e. vocational training, etc.). • Continuous updated and tested procedures and flows to orient and monitor suitable candidates from the ERRIN services or Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) to the identified job opportunities on the private market. • Continuous updated information material/briefing notes for ERRIN MS to enhance their pre-departures counselling activities in Europe to potential returnees for Bangladesh.
Outcome III	Evaluate results of the operational PPP coordination platform. The evaluation will be aligned wherever possible with the logic developed within the Quality Monitoring Framework and will include recommendations on possible next steps on further strengthening PPP in the area of reintegration.
KEY ACTIVITIES (OUTPUTS)	
Activity I	Develop a PPP concept for reintegration of returnees in Bangladesh.
Activity II	Organise training sessions and strategic meetings.
Activity III	Map and analyse the needs of the private sector.
Activity IV	Establish a referral flow - potentially in a follow-up project.
Activity V	Organise an awareness campaign - potentially in a follow-up project.

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Activity VI	Set up an operational PPP coordination platform for reintegration of return migrants in Bangladesh.
Activity VII	Evaluate the results of the PPP operational coordination mechanisms.

Table 6 – Bangladesh PPP pilot outline

Key actors, roles and donors

- **ERRIN/ICMPD**: The project is funded by ERRIN and implemented by ICMPD Vienna and ICMPD Dhaka.
- **Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment**: The project is approved and chaired by the Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment which is responsible for the migration process, including reintegration.

Referral flow

No referral flow has been established in the context of the PPP yet, but it is being planned as part of a follow-up project which is in development. Envisaged is a flow chart that provides information of where migrants can find employment, but at the same time helps service providers find employees and refer other actors. In this sense, the referral flow should be designed from the perspective of the private sector and respond to the needs of the actors identified during an initial mapping[39].

Assessment of project

The section provides information on the status of the activities proposed for the PPP project in Bangladesh. It describes key challenges, good practices and lessons learned.

REVIEW OF RESULTS		
ACTIVITY	**ASSESSMENT**	**DETAILS**
Activity I: Developing a concept of the PPP	Completed	PPP concept successfully developed through meeting with the relevant stakeholders.
Activity II: Organise training sessions and strategic meetings	Completed	The first training sessions were conducted on November 8th and November 9th, 2021. The first strategic meeting was held on December 7th, 2021. In total, 43 stakeholders with different profiles (labour, youth, government, and foreign affairs) joined the strategic meeting, including 11 governmental actors, 10 actors from the private sector, and

[39] KII22

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		22 members of CSOs and IOs[40]. During this meeting, the participants became aware of the potential of this project and of the different areas that the PPP can contribute to, namely: reintegration; private sector and stakeholder engagement; access to service; and access to finance. In the second training session, three major activities were confirmed: (i) data banking; (ii) service mapping; and (iii) publication of the informational material which could help the private sector. After the meeting, several activities had been implemented, including the completion of the stakeholder mapping and the development of the ToR for the set-up of the PPP. The next steps are the confirmation of commitment from participants by signing a document and the set-up for the activities identified.
Activity III: Mapping and analysing the needs of the private sector	Ongoing	Ongoing mapping of private sector actors to analyse their needs in Bangladesh and to gauge engagement modalities with returnees. This will assist matching the returnees to the needs of the private sector and not vice versa.
Activity IV: Establishing a referral flow	Planned	The establishment of a referral flow to link private sector with returning migrants is an activity planned in the upcoming months within a follow-up project.
Activity V: Organising an awareness campaign	Planned	Organising an awareness campaign has been identified as a key activity needed, that will be implemented in the upcoming months.
Activity III: Setting up operational PPP coordination platforms	In progress	ToR for the formal set-up of the PPP developed. The next steps are the confirmation of commitment from participants and the set-up for the activities identified.
Activity IV: Evaluation on the results of the PPP	N/A	The project is ongoing and an evaluation will be conducted at a later stage of the project.

Table 7 – Bangladesh PPP pilot results

[40] Ibid.

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The PPP pilot project implemented by ERRIN/ICMPD is the first PPP initiative implemented in Bangladesh. For this reason, the Government is interested and actively participates in the project activities[41]. Today, the PPP brings together 35 agencies and organisations from government, private sector, trade unions, CSOs, academia, and IOs. All actors involved have shown a great interest in the project and are willing to actively engage in the creation of the PPP platform.

Moreover, the PPP project contributes to at least 4 of the 10 migration-related development priorities in the 8th Five-Year Perspective Plan (2020-2025) of the Government of Bangladesh, namely: (i) reintegration, (ii) private sector and stakeholders' engagement, (iii) access to service, and (iv) access to finance. This is in turn helping propel the development of a comprehensive reintegration policy for Bangladesh[42].

The difficult part about that is that in our government organization the ministries and the officers joining the ministries keep changing every two or three years, or even sometimes less than that. So, the continuation of the process of continuation of efforts is sometimes missing, because of the changes of posting of the officers. This is our number one problem.

Challenges

The main challenge to the success of the PPP identified by the respondents is the constant overturn of officials in Bangladesh and the consequent change of ownership, as well as the lack of interagency coordination and collaboration among ministries[43]. Coordination in terms of managing the expectations of the PPP members was also a challenge.

Moreover, the government of Bangladesh has a specific understanding of the concept of returnees' welfare, understood from an economic perspective. This prevents the government from integrating innovative ideas into their policies and programming[44].

Matching returnees' profiles with the demands of the private sector proved challenging. A respondent involved in the implementation of the PPP highlighted how most migrants, in particular those returning to rural areas and districts, are unskilled and only have basic education, which makes it more difficult to match their profiles with the demands of the private sector[45].

[41] KII23
[42] KII22
[43] KII22; KII23
[44] KII22
[45] KII23

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Good Practices

Involvement of stakeholders from the government, civil society, and the private sector was key, as there were actors who normally do not actively participate in discussions around reintegration in Bangladesh[46]. The PPP project brings together governmental entities involved in migration management, such as the Ministry of Labour and Employment, national skills development authorities, and the Ministry of Local Governance. Including these actors in the project contributed to raising awareness on the need of creating synergies between the different stakeholders involved - more or less directly - in reintegration. This also led to a better appreciation of the linkages between reintegration and development[47].

The platform brings in government entities that are not typical in migration... The realization that for example the Ministry of Expatriates and the Ministry of Labor shouldn't work on different sides, because when the migrant returns, it becomes a problem of the Ministry of Employment, and so on. This realization also brings in the factor of them better appreciating the linkages between reintegration and development.

The number one lesson learned is that there is a lot of interest from the private sector. We thought that this was going to be a challenge from the very beginning, and we prepared ourselves on how we were going to bring forward the private sector. But our fear has been proven wrong, which is good!

Lessons Learned

The main lesson learned from this project, still in its initial phase, is the great interest from the private sector side to engage in the PPP. The fear of struggling to find interested actors from the private sector proved to be unfounded[48].

The project also proved that there is a need for ownership within this initiative, which ultimately is expected to come from the Government. One of the respondents interviewed stressed the importance of encouraging the private sector to take initiative without necessarily relying on the government for that, by building the capacity of the Bangladesh Employers Federation (BEF) as a leader on the private sector side[49].

Lastly, another lesson learned is the potential of establishing online platforms that do not rely on physical presence. The use of technology and non-traditional tools can therefore ensure the sustainability of the project[50].

Recommendations

- **Establishing a good relationship** with the Government of Bangladesh to align the PPP work with the government's efforts towards ensuring sustainable reintegration[51].

[46] KII22
[47] KII22
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.
[51] KII23

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- **Designing and implementing innovative activities like the PPP** to facilitate returnees' reintegration[52].
- **Maintaining a good relationship with all the partners** involved by ensuring that all decisions are taken collectively and agreed upon by all participants[53].
- **Conducting continuous monitoring of the project** to regularly assess the progress made and promptly address potential issues arose.

A. Nigeria

In Nigeria, ERRIN works with Caritas International Belgium and Idia Renaissance to deliver counselling, referral, and reintegration services to migrants returning from ERRIN MSs. In collaboration with these actors, the TWG R&D has implemented a pilot project to establish an operational coordination mechanism between reintegration and development actors on the ground[54].

Before the design of the pilot, the TWG R&D carried out two fact finding missions: the PMU mission of 2019 as part of the TWG R&D research phase and the PMU monitoring mission in 2020. Both missions were conducted by ERRIN PMU in the country to identify synergies between the ERRIN reintegration scheme and development-aid funded projects that would help extend the support offered to returning migrants. The missions' objectives were to observe how the pre-identified projects and programmes were working in the field; and to discuss ways to enhance complementarity by setting up a systematic referral workflow.

One of the mission's findings was that even though reintegration assistance was being provided by actors such as GIZ, the IOM, and ERRIN, persistent gaps hindered the sustainable reintegration of ERRIN returnees. Additional identified challenges include lack of:

- **Participation in the vocational trainings provided** to returnees,
- **Specific joint approaches**,
- **A comprehensive understanding of existing reintegration schemes** by returnees,
- **Job opportunities and access to financial resources** to start a business,
- **Communication between pre-departure and post-arrival counsellors**,
- **Consistent monitoring of returnees** after the provision of the reintegration support, and
- **A feeling of frustration among returnees**.

Based on this information, and to address these gaps, the TWG R&D agreed that Nigeria would have been a favourable location for the implementation of the pilot project. Detailed information on the initiative and its outcomes are given in the section below.

[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.
[54] ERRIN/TWG R&D. "Draft Minutes of the 5th Technical Working Group meeting on Reintegration & Development," 2022;

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A.1 Nigeria pilot initiative

Scope initiative and timeframe

The aim of ERRIN pilot project in Nigeria is to interlink ERRIN activities with existing development aid-funded projects, to extend the support provided to returnees and thus better facilitate their reintegration. To achieve that, the contracted service providers were tasked with establishing an operational coordination mechanism and a referral flow that would systematically refer eligible ERRIN returnees to relevant services provided by the development sector, complementing the existing ERRIN reintegration package. The pilot activity started in February 2021 and ended in October 2021[55].

OBJECTIVES (GOALS)	
Overall	More sustainable reintegration of returnees from ERRIN MSs in return countries.
Specific objective	Enable ERRIN returnees to access and benefit from assistance services offered by various development initiatives in the countries of return.
OUTCOMES (RESULTS)	
Outcome I	Consolidated mapping of existing (and free) development-aid funded services in Nigeria for facilitating the reintegration process of returnees.
Outcome II	At least 20 ERRIN returnees make use of the development-aid funded initiatives in view of their reintegration process.
KEY ACTIVITIES (OUTPUTS)	
Activity I	Ensure a continuous mapping and update of potential development projects available for ERRIN returnees and make it available to return counsellors.
Activity II	Organise operational coordination meetings.
Activity III	Set up an operational coordination mechanism to systematically interlink ERRIN with GIZ job centres and/or to other relevant projects/initiatives that can complement the reintegration support package.

[55] Ibid.

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Activity IV	Elaboration and use of tailor-made communication material and counselling tools.
Activity V	Evaluation of the lessons learned from the pilot[56].

Table 8 – TWG R&D Nigeria pilot outline

Key actors, roles and donors

- **Caritas International Belgium and Idia Renaissance**[57]: Caritas International Belgium and Idia Renaissance are ERRIN service providers in Nigeria, which have been contracted to carry out a mapping of development projects run by state and non-state actors in the country (as well as NGOs providing services like training, psychosocial support, or educational support). Further, an operational coordination mechanism among relevant stakeholders was established.
- **GIZ**: One of the main partners identified during the initial mapping, which participated in the operational coordination mechanism established by ERRIN through the German initiative - 'Perspektive Heimat' (Returning to New Initiatives) implemented by GIZ.
- **IOM**: The 'EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration' is another key partner involved in the operational coordination mechanism.

Other development partners identified through the operational referral workflow include:

- GIZ Benin office
- Genius Hub
- Angella Dara Conture in Ogun and Lagos state
- Chisaphy beauty place in Lagos state
- Covanda Technology system Limited in Lagos state
- EDMO decorations in Lagos state
- Emkem Global in Lagos state
- Lofty allied in Lagos state
- Shoespeed Limited in Lagos state
- Software Tech in Lagos state[58]

Referral flow

The coordination mechanism developed within the project's scope led to establishment of a referral flow among the identified partners. The referral mechanism enabled ERRIN returnees to access vocational training. The project fully covered the skills training costs (tuition fees, accommodation, transportation, etc.).

When a returnee is identified, both at the pre-departure or post-arrival phase, ERRIN SPs organise a counselling session to identify their specific needs. The first counselling is a key moment in understanding

[56] ERRIN/TWG R&D. "ERRIN Project Proposal: Pilot TWG R&D Nigeria," 2019.
[57] Idia Renaissance is a NGO based in Benin City, Edo State, that assists returnees, voluntary and non-voluntary, with the first steps of their reintegration in the country.
[58] ERRIN/TWG R&D. "Draft Minutes of the 5th Technical Working Group meeting on Reintegration & Development," 2022.

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the vulnerability and needs of the returnee and making sure they are referred to the most relevant services. After conducting the initial assessment, ERRIN SP sends a referral form to Caritas Belgium. The referral normally takes place within five days from the identification. To facilitate and improve the reintegration of returnees, the local provider is chosen based on the geographic location and the specific needs of the returnee. Caritas Belgium assesses each specific case and notifies ERRIN SP of approval from EPI/PMU and ERRIN SP notifies the development providers of approval or commencement. If the referral is made to GIZ or IOM, the returnee is referred to other GIZ or IOM-funded projects.

Assessment of project

The section below provides information on the status of the activities proposed for the ERRIN pilot project in Nigeria. It then describes key challenges, good practices and lessons learned.

REVIEW OF RESULTS		
ACTIVITY	**ASSESSMENT**	**DETAILS**
Activity I: Mapping	Completed	The mapping of relevant development-funded projects has successfully been completed. A mapping exercise, which consisted of two physical and two online meetings, was conducted. 15 organisations were identified as key partners (Lagos State 10; Edo State 4; and Abuja 1)[59]. However, no partners have been identified in south-eastern Nigeria and respondents recommended conducting additional mapping exercises there to compensate for this lack.
Activity II: Coordination meetings	Completed	Three coordination meetings were held within the project's timeframe. The pilot kick-off meeting took place in Benin City on April 19th 2021. The aim of the meeting was to bring relevant stakeholders together to discuss the operational coordination mechanism and identify eventual gaps and challenges that hindered its work. It also aimed to propose solutions to better support returnees, which complemented the basic reintegration assistance provided by ERRIN (e.g. finding accommodation, purchasing household items, etc.). Another purpose of the meeting was for actors to discuss and agree on a referral workflow and communication channel.

[59] ERRIN/TWG R&D. "Draft Minutes of the 5th Technical Working Group meeting on Reintegration & Development," 2022.

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		Stakeholders agreed on aligning their training offers and sharing the training topic beforehand with other relevant actors. As a way forward, participants committed to start using the operational platform for effective service delivery. A parallel aim has been the identification of other development-aid funded initiatives as part of the mapping exercises, and their inclusion in the operational coordination mechanism. Monthly meetings were arranged between participants to discuss the state of play and the implementation of referral flows, and to identify challenges and best practices[60]. The second coordination meeting aimed at expanding the scope of the referral mechanism to include other organisations providing technical and vocational education and training services that were identified during the mapping exercise carried out in April 2021. These organisations joined the meeting and provided information about the activities and services they offered to avoid overlapping of training programmes[61]. The third meeting was held in Lagos state and aimed at identifying more actors in Lagos and its suburbs to be involved in the coordination mechanism[62].
Activity III: Set up an operational coordination mechanism	Completed	An operational coordination mechanism has been established, and seven beneficiaries have been referred to other development partners to improve and increase their capacities in different skills relating to their businesses. Two beneficiaries were referred to GIZ/Caritas Nigeria training programme in animal farming, where they acquired skills for rearing animals such as cow, pig, goats, chicken, and snails[63]. One returnee has been referred to an IOM project, and four returnees were

[60] Idia Renaissance, "Final Report R&D Project", n.d.; Idia Renaissance, " Report 1st R&D Coordination Meeting", n.d.
[61] Idia Renaissance, "Final Report R&D Project", n.d.; Idia Renaissance "Report 2nd R&D Coordination Meeting", n.d.
[62] Idia Renaissance, "Final Report R&D Project", n.d.; Idia Renaissance "Report 3rd R&D Coordination Meeting", n.d.
[63] The course outlines included: (i) introduction to animal farming; (ii) management and types of sheds and pen; (iii)feeding safety and hygiene; (iv) reproduction and breeding management; (v) health and nutrition management; (vi) parasite control and vaccination for infectious diseases; (vii) management of newborn; (viii) market and revenue management.

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		referred to the Society for Empowerment of Young Person in Benin city on business development training[64][65].
Activity IV: Elaboration and use of tailor made communication material and counselling tools	Information not available	The status of this activity is unclear due to previously discussed limitations.
Activity V: Evaluation of the lessons learned from the pilot experience	Ongoing	A final evaluation has been conducted by ERRIN service provider Idia Renaissance.

Table 9 – TWG R&D Nigeria pilot results

Challenges

The limited time frame for the project implementation proved to be a challenge to the successful completion of the process, and only a limited number of referrals have been made. Moreover, no development projects were identified in south-eastern Nigeria. This represented a considerable challenge for returnees who had to attend training outside of their states. This resulted in several returnees choosing not to participate in the programme[66].

[64] The training consisted of four modules: (i) Inspire Module: beneficiaries are presented with different employment opportunities and equipped with the tools to make an informed decision on whether employment or entrepreneurship is more suitable for them (ii) Create Module: beneficiaries are provided with basic entrepreneurship knowledge to develop concrete business ideas and a Business Model Canvas (BMC); (iii) Start Module: beneficiaries receive startup support (e.g. registering a business, opening a business bank account, etc); and (iv) Scale Module: beneficiaries receive advanced business management training, product re-development and repositioning in market as well as employment creation and human resources management.

[65] Idia Renaissance, "Final Report R&D Project", n.d.

[66] ERRIN/TWG R&D. "Draft Minutes of the 5th Technical Working Group meeting on Reintegration & Development," 2022; TWG R&D pilot activity Nigeria presentation.

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The main challenge is the lack of structure of the Government of Nigeria in taking care of returning migrants (..). These services [accommodation, health care assistance] should normally be provided by the government, and the NGOs also need to cover their bills.

Coordination among state and non-state actors has been a significant challenge with multiple actors involved in reintegration assistance and employment promotion in Nigeria. There are programmes implemented by the Federal Ministry, others by parastatals like the National Directory for Employment, or state level agencies like Edo Jobs, and the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund. Respondents highlighted a mismatch of priorities and approaches to reintegration[67]. Moreover, some programmes are accessible to both returning migrants and the local population, others only to returning migrants.

A respondent further noted how the Nigerian government lacks a formal system to assist returning migrants (e.g. providing temporary housing on arrival, covering health care needs, etc.), and strictly focused on income-generating activities[68].

The different eligibility criteria of the different projects represented an obstacle to the referral mechanism, as not all returnees could have access to these training.

Finally, the lack of interest of some returnees in attending training has been highlighted by several respondents as a key challenge.

Good Practices

Given the reluctance of some returnees to engage in vocational training, the pilot project in Nigeria ensured that all training-related costs were covered by a financial envelope included in the assistance provided. Returnees therefore felt more motivated to attend training and developed key skills related to managing a business.

Lessons Learned

The main lesson learned from the Nigeria TWG R&D pilot is that returnees' needs are different from those of the local population. This calls for a specific kind of support that is tailored to the returnees' needs. Moreover, respondents noted how having a functional referral mechanism and providing adequate support to returning migrants will prompt more returns, as returnees will know that they have access to multiple support systems in their country of origin.

The support made a big difference in my life. I am independent and can take care of my three kids. Though I still need more help.

Recommendations

- **Extend the project period** to allow for more beneficiaries to benefit from it. The short timeframe of the project only allowed seven returnees to benefit from the services available[69].

[67] KII28
[68] KII30
[69] Ibid.

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- **Extend the target group** of relevant projects to all returning migrants except for those who voluntarily decline, as development-aid funded projects identified have different eligibility criteria and not all returnees can have access to them.
- **Conduct monitoring and evaluation activities** for the project beneficiaries, to assess the impact of the support provided and make sure that the returnee does not need any additional assistance.
- **More mapping exercises** to be conducted in south-eastern Nigeria to identify development-aid funded actors and ensure that returnees living in that area of the country can receive the same assistance as the ones in Lagos and Edo state.
- **Better coordinate with the relevant stakeholders** to ensure that training opportunities are always available to returnees and that are not affected by lack of funding and communication among actors.

Both the beneficiaries interviewed within the scope of this assessment considered the support received from ERRIN adequate and matching their skills. The assistance provided by ERRIN had a significant and positive impact on their reintegration. However, one of them would have wished to receive additional assistance to support her children's education.

Interestingly, both respondents reported having faced some challenges related to the social dimension of reintegration. One respondent struggled to reintegrate within her community because of the social stigma of having left her children during the migration period. The second one did not feel accepted by his family. Even though ERRIN 'Homecoming Project' aims to address the issue of stigmatisation faced by migrants upon return to their countries of origin[70], the benefciaries interviewed stated that the ERRIN assistance received did not help them address these difficulties.

Beneficiary Recommendations

- **Increase the funding allocated** to cover technical and vocational education and training related costs; and
- **Provide more business-related support** to better assist returnees in setting up a business upon return to their countries of origin, for example by offering one-to one business advice and coaching.

3.3 Lessons learned from other innovative project activities

A. PROSPECT - Strengthening the Provision of Support for Reintegration of Vulnerable Returnees, including Presumed and Identified Victims of Trafficking to Nigeria

Scope initiative and timeframe

The PROSPECT project 'Strengthening the Provision of Support for Reintegration of Vulnerable Returnees, including Presumed and Identified Victims of Trafficking (VoT)' implemented in Nigeria attempted to address the needs of presumed and identified VoTs in Nigeria and other vulnerable returnees from ERRIN MSs**.**

[70] The project kicked off in February 2022

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VoTs spend a substantial portion of the reintegration package on rent and housing costs. As a result, VoTs are left with insufficient funds for additional needs, such as medical and psychosocial support. These kinds of situations can heighten vulnerabilities and elevate re-trafficking risks. At the time of the PROSPECT project inception, reintegration and development actors were thus inadequately meeting the complex and multidimensional needs of VoTs and other vulnerable groups in the return and reintegration process. This project was developed in response.

The PROSPECT project had two phases. Phase I ran from September 2020 to August 2021. Phase II took place in the latter half of 2021 and ends in June 2022. The target group was presumed or identified victims of trafficking and persons vulnerable to human trafficking and other forms of exploitation returning from MSs to Nigeria. However, no VoTs referrals were made under the PROSPECT project. As a result, lessons learned regarding implementation of referrals are theoretical.

Phase I

OBJECTIVES (GOALS)	
Overall objective	Improve standards of care for presumed and identified VoTs and other vulnerable groups from ERRIN MSs returning to Nigeria.
Specific objective I	Enhance cooperation between frontline organisations and pre-departure counselling actors working with presumed and identified VoTs.
Specific objective II	Establish an adequate mechanism for reintegration of presumed and identified VoTs and other vulnerable groups from ERRIN MSs returning to Nigeria by bundling existing services from different projects/providers and providing additional specific and tailor-made services via the project's referral mechanism.
OUTCOMES (RESULTS)	
Outcome I	Strengthen practical and operational links between pre-departure counselling and post-arrival assistance.
Outcome II	Strengthen the capacity of Idia Renaissance to cope with the return and reintegration of VoTs.
Outcome III	Garner key lessons in safe return and reintegration of VoTs.
Outcome IV	Establish and bolster a community-based partnership and related coordination mechanism for reintegration of VoTs in Nigeria.
KEY ACTIVITIES (OUTPUTS)	

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Activity I	Map operational frameworks, actors, programmes, and practices related to return and reintegration of trafficked persons from selected ERRIN MSs to Nigeria to produce an operational workflow consolidating relevant services for presumed and identified VoTs and other vulnerable returnees.
Activity II	Strengthen the existing pre-departure/post-arrival cooperation framework via a thematic workshop where relevant actors address the challenges, and offer solutions where necessary, pertaining to outreach strategies, counselling, and sustainable reintegration of trafficked persons.
Activity III	Provide in-kind reintegration assistance of up to 1,800 EUR (on top of the national reintegration allowance by ERRIN MSs) to 20 cases of presumed or identified VoTs and other vulnerable returnees who were referred by ERRIN EPIs. The in-kind assistance bundles various services offered by different relevant actors.
Activity IV	Build/extend a multidisciplinary 'reintegration network' of local partners in the country of destination and return that work in the field of anti-trafficking, in order to meet the complex needs of those presumed and identified VoTs and other vulnerable persons returning to Nigeria.

Table 10 – PROSPECT phase I outline

Phase II

OBJECTIVES (GOALS)	
Overall objective	Effective return counselling and referral and high quality of support for identified and presumed VoTs and other vulnerable returnees from ERRIN MSs to Nigeria and improve the sustainability of reintegration support and ownership of such support among partner countries.
Specific objective I	Strengthen cooperation between pre-departure and post-arrival actors by improving knowledge and skills among counsellors and case managers on specific needs of vulnerable returnees and increasing visibility and referrals to specific services for vulnerable returnees, including victims of trafficking, available in Nigeria.
Specific objective II	Enhance the quality of counselling and enable the delivery of tailor-made reintegration services to vulnerable returnees, including victims of trafficking, returning to Nigeria.

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OUTCOMES (RESULTS)	
Outcome I	Enhance standard of care for vulnerable returnees, including victims of trafficking, returning to Nigeria.
Outcome II	Enhance cooperation between pre-departure counsellors in Europe and post-arrival and reintegration actors in Nigeria.
Outcome III	Strengthen capacities of pre-departure and post-arrival actors on assessing needs/risks and providing counselling, thus improving the rehabilitation of vulnerable returnees.
KEY ACTIVITIES (OUTPUTS)	
Activity I	Update the operational mapping to include additional ERRIN MSs countries in Europe.
Activity II	Tailored- and joint capacity building workshops with EU return counsellors and Nigerian post-arrival assistance practitioners on victim centred approaches with a focus on needs, risk assessment, and psycho-trauma counselling.
Activity III	Develop a Blueprint on 'Counselling Victims of Trafficking' including guidelines on how frontline practitioners in Europe can provide return counselling to VoT returnees.
Activity IV	Coordination meetings of the Nigerian 'Reintegration Network' (built/expanded in Phase I) where actors discuss lessons learned from the implementation of the ERRIN reintegration packages and build the capacities of post-arrival Nigerian actors.
Activity V	Implement 20 additional reintegration packages for vulnerable returnees including victims of trafficking.

Table 11 – PROSPECT phase II outline

Key actors, roles and donors

- **ERRIN PMU**: ERRIN PMU played a filter role and was the lead partner. They determined returnees' ERRIN eligibility, supervised the entire process, intervened as appropriate/when needed, provided overall feedback to EPIs, and had responsibility vis-à-vis ERRIN Management Board (MB).

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- **ICMPD Anti-Trafficking Programme** (ATP): ICMPD ATP acted as the implementing partner and was responsible for overall coordination of the reintegration plan/process, acted as a neutral coordinator of the Working Group on Return and Reintegration (WGRR), activated services accordingly, supervised the process on the ground, and ensured transparency and accountability.
- **Caritas International Belgium and Idia Renaissance:** Caritas and Idia Renaissance were the local service providers, managing all aspects of service delivery in Nigeria. In the scope of this project, Caritas would work with Idia Renaissance to assist the presumed and identified VoTs with their reintegration in Nigeria. Caritas supported Idia Renaissance with administrative work and communicating with ICMPD and at the EU level. Idia Renaissance in turn was envisioned to provide services to the returnees or work with a local delivery partner (within the 'Reintegration Network') to assist returnees.
- **Working Group on Return and Reintegration (WGRR)**: It is a multidisciplinary network of local partners that work in the field of anti-trafficking. And/or provide support services to vulnerable returnees (reception, sheltering, psychosocial support, counselling, medical support, family tracing, family reunion, inclusion, and training of vocational skills). Depending on returnees' needs, they were tasked with providing tailored support. This WG is led by the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and IDPs and co-chaired by ICMPD.

Referral flow

The referral mechanism for the PROSPECT pilot project would have enabled ERRIN VoTs or other vulnerable returnees to access the additional in-kind assistance in the form of vocational training or other services included in the 'Reintegration Network'. These services include specialised accommodation (reception centres for vulnerable persons, including child-care facilities), adequate medical adequate treatment (including medical materials), psycho-social support (including family counselling/mediation), special protection measures in case of security risks, educational activities and programmes, and legal support and counselling.

Theoretically, the referral mechanism would operate as follows: the ERRIN EPIs working with PROSPECT would reach out to the ERRIN PMU who then would reach out to CARITAS/Idia Renaissance in Nigeria regarding a presumed or identified VoT/vulnerable returnee following a first assessment at the pre-departure stage. Afterwards, there would be additional follow-up sessions where the referring agency further identified and clarified the vulnerability and needs of the presumed or identified VoT/vulnerable returnee. Caritas would then work with Idia Renaissance to assist the returnee and refer them to the appropriate service provider in Nigeria. After, Idia Renaissance would work with a local delivery partner (not only within the 'Reintegration Network') to refer the returnees to additional, more tailored support if required.

Again, it is important to note that no referrals were made in the scope of this project and thus the referral mechanism was not implemented.

Assessment of project

The section below provides information on the status of the activities proposed for Phase I and II of the PROSPECT project. It then describes key challenges, good practices and lessons learned.

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Phase I

REVIEW OF RESULTS		
ACTIVITY	**ASSESSMENT**	**DETAILS**
Activity I: Operational mapping	Completed	Operational workflow was designed, along with a needs assessment template to guide the return counsellors throughout the screening of the returnee's vulnerable situation.
Activity II: Thematic workshop to strengthen cooperation	Completed	Workshop took place November 30th to December 1st, 2020.
Activity III: Additional in-kind reintegration assistance	Not completed	No additional in-kind reintegration assistance was provided in Phase I of the project because EPIs did not refer any presumed or identified VoTs to Caritas/Idia Renaissance.
Activity IV: Build/Expand reintegration network	Completed	Based on the operational workflow, a 'Reintegration Network' of local service providers in Nigeria was established for presumed and identified VoTs and other vulnerable returnees. PROSPECT provided additional capacity building activities targeting this WGRR in order to revive this platform, by sharing and refreshing knowledge about return and reintegration in Nigeria and European MSs, understanding what is the procedural framework in Nigeria, and strengthening the communication between relevant R&D agencies in Nigeria.

Table 12 – PROSPECT pilot phase I results

Phase II

REVIEW OF RESULTS		
ACTIVITY	**ASSESSMENT**	**DETAILS**
Activity I: Update of operational mapping	Completed	Developed an operational mapping on all service providers in Nigeria. Although it remains unclear if this was updated due to previously discussed limitations.
Activity II: Joint capacity building workshops	Completed	Two sessions held on psycho-trauma counselling.

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Activity III: Blueprint development	Partial	Draft was created (presented in 2021 meeting). Blueprint is about to be finalised by the end of April 2022.
Activity IV: Coordination meetings of Reintegration Network	Completed	Sessions took place within Phase II of the project. These sessions again focused on sharing and refreshing knowledge about return and reintegration in Nigeria and European MSs, understanding what is the procedural framework in Nigeria, and strengthening the communication between relevant R&D agencies in Nigeria.
Activity V: Additional in-kind reintegration assistance	Cancelled	Because of lack of interest by ERRIN MSs, reintegration packages during Phase II were cancelled.

Table 13 – PROSPECT phase II results

Challenges

Key informants identified challenges related to implementation of the referral mechanism (both in pre-departure and post-arrival stages in the return and reintegration process), cooperation among actors, and M&E. However, as no VoT/vulnerable returnee cases were actually referred under PROSPECT, the following presents presumed challenges related to PROSPECT had referrals been implemented as well as challenges related to other activities involved in the project.

We have organised a few meetings of and facilitated capacity building on psycho-trauma healing with key actors in Nigeria. We've also carried operational mapping of service providers in Nigeria to strengthen this engagement within Nigeria. They get to know each other. But this needs to be further formalised. We need to develop a very comprehensive mapping…because no one is clear on who is doing what on reintegration in Nigeria.

In terms of implementation, the timing of the assistance provided and the planning of this assistance, was perceived as potentially inadequate for implementing the referral mechanism[71]. Had the referrals occurred, key informants agreed that the reintegration plan beginning prior to departure would have been a challenge. While such plans better allow returnees to establish skills which may be relevant for their reintegration in Nigeria, as well as to identify areas of need and interest prior to departure, Caritas and Idia Renaissance more generally often initiate the reintegration plan only after the returnee has arrived for ERRIN joint integration[72]. As a result, the returnees' needs are addressed in a less comprehensive and more ad hoc manner - for VoTs such ad hoc reintegration plans would be insufficient. Revamping this system to begin before would thus be a challenge. Further, the short timeframe of the assistance (6 months) envisioned for VoTs would have been incapable of addressing the medium- and

[71] KII2
[72] KII13

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longer-term needs of VoTs, particularly related to psychosocial support[73]. Coordination was lacking among key actors[74]. Key informants argued that the government needed to become more involved in the cooperation and packages provided to VoT returnees in order to streamline services and provide greater clarity on the availability and parameters of such services[75]. However, much of the services planned were very ad hoc, damaging the sustainability of the initiatives. These programmes were also scattered across the country. Returnees to certain parts of Nigeria thus experienced a distinct landscape in terms of reintegration services, with organisations not always able to meet returnees' needs in all places[76]. Had there been VoT referrals, this would have been a challenge. The ad hoc nature of VoT returnee programming, and the lack of linkages between the different actors active in the field (e.g. state actors, international organisations, CSOs, NGOs), thus left resources unused.

Hampering coordination, as well as implementation, was a lack of interest, understanding, and screening in ERRIN MSs participating in PROSPECT. Return counsellors were unaware of the intricacies of VoT identification and their needs[77]. As a result, no VoTs/vulnerable returnees were identified for assistance during the course of the project.

There existed a lack of trust and communication between the different actors involved which would have hampered referrals[78]. One key informant identified that there was quasi competition between the SOPs implemented by European stakeholders and those by Nigerian state actors, potentially causing NGOs and CSOs to struggle to accommodate both. The overall lack of coordination in the project was challenging, as well, particularly as European actors did not take into consideration the know-how of service providers in Nigeria and the limitations of the actors on the ground. However, as not VoTs/vulnerable returnees were referred, this represents a potential challenge rather than one experienced under PROSPECT.

The lack of a comprehensive M&E framework in the project would have been a challenge, as well[79]. Key informants expressed a need to have follow-up meetings with returnees and a framework which took into account the transnational nature of the return process in the case VoT/vulnerable returnees had been referred.

[73] KII2
[74] KII2, KII15
[75] KII2, KII17
[76] KII13
[77] KII2, KII13
[78] KII2, KII15
[79] KII17, KII18

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Good Practices

Good practices identified included EU actors cooperating with actors in Nigeria and local actors establishing connections with VoT returnees prior to arrival in Nigeria. One key informant identified Danish actors as practising a high degree of communication and cooperation with actors on the ground in Nigeria, which led to more protective reintegration strategies for VoT returnees[80]. They even brought together returned VoTs to share their experiences with other returnees. Another key informant described how their organisation spoke with VoT returnees prior to arrival to ask them their interests, provide reassurance, inquire regarding accommodation, etc. This allowed them to provide a "soft landing" for the returnees[81].

The officials from Denmark that were supposed to prepare these persons for return, established communication and coordination channels with NGOs in Nigeria and discussed reintegration options. They also brought together some people who have reintegrated in Nigeria so they could share this experience with returnees, so they could see that the picture is not so black, that this package might help them with proper support.

The organisation of meetings, as well as online-workshops for the WGRR brought together pre-return counsellors with post-arrival actors from Nigeria and worked on capacity building. This allowed the actors to refresh their understanding of the different return landscapes on the ground in Europe MSs and in Nigeria and to identify pressing needs of VoT/vulnerable returnees. These activities also enhanced the counselling skills of post-arrival actors in Nigeria, particularly involving psychodrama and healing. It thus advanced the standard of care for beneficiaries of the ERRIN project.

The WGRR overall was a good practice, involving state and non-state actors to discuss reintegration of returnees. Including VoT/vulnerable returnees, and referral pathways to service providers. This practice attempted to address the coordination challenges in Nigeria and between actors in Nigeria and countries of destination. The WGRR clarified the mandate of relevant agencies in Nigeria, improved communication between pre-return and post-arrival actors in Nigeria, and grew the network in Nigeria active in the field.

[80] KII13
[81] KII18

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Lessons Learned

Given the challenges identified, key informants described numerous lessons learned regarding implementation, coordination and M&E. Implementation should be both long-**term** and realistic for VoTs[82]. Reintegration plans must consider the realities for VoT returnees in Nigeria, particularly the specific services available in their location of return. Further, VoTs require long-term psychosocial support, which extends beyond 12 months.

> **Individual [reintegration] plans would need to be done in a realistic way according to what is possible, as well as to match what is on the ground in terms of realities and also to match returnees' desires to conditions in their home country. This communication and coordination between these actors is very crucial. It should be done together between EU and origin countries and the returnee to look at risks.**

Cooperation between all partners is critical and such cooperation should begin prior to departure[83]. The standardisation of tools can support this cooperation, particularly as it concerns smooth identification and referral processes for VoT returnees who particularly require well-coordinated and well-planned reintegration strategies and referrals.

Longer-term follow-up on VoT return cases is essential as well[84], particularly as the long-term reintegration of returnees proved challenging, particularly for VoTs whose needs are long-term.

Recommendations

Through consultation with key informants of the PROSPECT pilot project, the following was recommended:

- **Greater coordination with Nigerian state actors** to develop joint action plans on how the actors and services can complement one another. This may ultimately culminate in a single system rather than the current parallel system. The WGRR can continue to facilitate this improved coordination by more fully handing over responsibility to key Nigerian agencies on the ground.
- **A yearly review of reintegration actors and services available**, given the field's fluidity, to assist greater cooperation and ensure accurate, effective referrals.
- **Enhance communication and coordination channels between pre-departure and post-arrival actors** to bring greater visibility to the realities on the ground in Nigeria and the transnational nature of returnees' experiences, thus producing realistic reintegration plans. This can continue through continued capacity building via the WGRR.
- **Expand services to develop and implement vocational training and other economic reintegration programmes** pre-departure and link them with similar post-arrival efforts so that VoT returnees have the knowledge and skills to feel more secure when commencing their reintegration plan.

[82] KII2; ERRIN/TWG R&D, "PROSPECT: Strengthening the Provision of Support for Reintegration of Vulnerable Persons, including Victims of Trafficking, returning to Nigeria Workshop Report 30 November – 1 December 2020," n.d.; ERRIN/TWG R&D, "Operational mapping on 'Strengthening the Provision of Support for Safe Return and Reintegration of Victims of Trafficking to Nigeria' – ERRIN," 2020.
[83] KII2, KII13; ERRIN/TWG R&D, "PROSPECT: Strengthening the Provision of Support for Reintegration of Vulnerable Persons, including Victims of Trafficking, returning to Nigeria Workshop Report 30 November – 1 December 2020," n.d.; ERRIN/TWG R&D, "Operational mapping on 'Strengthening the Provision of Support for Safe Return and Reintegration of Victims of Trafficking to Nigeria' – ERRIN," 2020.
[84] KII17, KII18; ERRIN/TWG R&D, "Operational mapping on 'Strengthening the Provision of Support for Safe Return and Reintegration of Victims of Trafficking to Nigeria' – ERRIN," 2020.

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- **Consider the specificities of VoTs' transnational experiences when designing reintegration plans**. For example, many VoT returnees were reluctant to reside in collective housing because of their harmful experiences in Europe.
- **Family-based reintegration and counselling efforts** and an emphasis on psychosocial support must occur prior to labour market reintegration programmes to prioritise key risks first (such as re-trafficking).
- **Bolster trainings for VoT identification among return counsellors** in order to facilitate referrals to organisations on the ground, including how to identify male VoTs.
- **Establish a more robust M&E mechanism** which encompasses all actors involved in the return and reintegration process and which considers the long-term nature of reintegration to provide a more comprehensive understanding of VoT returnees' experiences and thus producing more thoughtful programming.

B. Government-to-Government initiative in Ghana

Scope initiative and timeframe

The Government-to-Government project implemented in Ghana aims to ensure a more coordinating and steering role of third-country institutions in the reception, referral, and reintegration of their citizens that have **been** returned from Europe or other countries. The project focused on bolstering the local ownership over returnees and the reintegration capacity of the Government of Ghana. In Phase II, which is ongoing, ERRIN aims to further strengthen the capacities of Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) as well as of other relevant government agencies involved in return and reintegration with the ultimate goal to contribute to the establishment of a coordination mechanism for the referral and reintegration of returnees in Ghana.

The Government-to-Government Migration Information Centre for Refugees (MICR) component of the project was developed in response to an increasing desire for the Government of Ghana to coordinate the services offered to returning migrants and to increase their ownership in the migration management cycle. The MICR project focused on GIS strengthening the national administration capacities on arrival of returnees at the Kotoka International Airport. The Land of North-Rhine-Westphalia (where the highest number of Ghanaians without a residence permit live within Germany) proposed the idea of a collaboration between Ghanaian authorities and ERRIN, which led to the design of the 'ERRIN Government-to-Government' project.

To improve local ownership, ERRIN established, within the scope of the project, a stakeholder platform that brings together relevant institutions and governmental agencies working in the field of return and reintegration, along with international development actors present in Ghana. Regular stakeholders meetings improved communication among stakeholders, clarified roles, and fostered collaboration so that actors could better address pressing challenges and identify additional needs of returnees. Having the government actors come together in such a platform was designed to facilitate greater ownership by Ghana of the return and reintegration field.

Additionally, the project established a cooperation with GIZ through an MoU to provide additionally needed support to returnees and to strengthen referrals.

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The IOM-led Migration Coordination Platform[85] (IOM MCP), through its subgroup on Return and Reintegration (which ERRIN is part of), gathered key stakeholders from international organizations, NGOs, and other actors implementing not just reintegration projects but also development projects and any other returnee-relevant assistance.

Phase I of the project ran from March 2020 to August 2020. Phase II is ongoing, beginning in January 2021 and to continue until June 2022.

Phase I

OBJECTIVES (GOALS)	
Overall objective	Improve collaboration between the Government of Ghana and the EU MSs on return and reintegration related processes.
Specific objective I	Inform the Ghanaian administration about the return procedures from an EU MS perspective.
Specific objective II	Enhance the capacity of the Ghanaian administration to capture all existing reintegration support schemes in Ghana and to ensure post-arrival information and referral of returnees.
Specific objective III	Improve collaboration between the Ghanaian administration, EU MS, and FRONTEX.
OUTCOMES (RESULTS)	
Outcome I	GIS has a full overview and understanding of all steps of the return procedure.
Outcome II	GIS is aware of the existing reintegration landscape in Ghana and enabled to refer returnees to development aid projects.
Outcome III	MICR is installed and acts as single information and access point for questions related to return.
Outcome IV	Improved and stable cooperation of Ghanaian and EU MSs' authorities.
Outcome V	Improved and stable cooperation of Ghanaian authorities and FRONTEX.
Outcome VI	Persons returning to Ghana can make maximum use of existing services available through government services/projects and activities funded through other sources.
KEY ACTIVITIES (OUTPUTS)	

[85] Action funded by EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF)

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Activity I	Conduct needs assessment analysis consisting of the mapping of Ghanaian institutional actors and coordination mechanisms involved in return and reintegration and needs of MICR staff.
Activity II	Installation and opening of the MICR Office space, including: (i) analysis of existing communication channels within the Ghanaian administration, (ii) (facilitating the communication of different ministries and organisations involved in return and reintegration, (iii) designing workflows to install the MICR as central information and contact point for all questions/information related to return, (iv) operational setup of the MICR at the airport and procurement/purchase of equipment, (v) set up of the referral mechanism for the returnees upon arrival, (vi) set up of an information desk at the airport, and (vi) organisation of an opening event.
Activity III	Elaboration of a training programme by translating needs/gaps identified in Activity 1 into capacity building measures, preparing and implementing a mapping mission, and developing a training programme/curricula.
Activity IV	Prepare and organise a training/capacity building measures for GIS/MICR officers. Trainings in Ghana and the sub-region are to include: conflict management/prevention, counselling, do no harm, IT training/MS Office, and database management. Trainings/study visits in Europe are to include: rules and procedures of residence, asylum and return management in Europe, and management of return and reception of returnees.
Activity V	Outline future SOPs for the functioning of the GIS-MICR & manual on return, readmission, reintegration.

Table 14 – Government to Government phase I outline

Phase II

OBJECTIVES (GOALS)	
Overall objective	Improve the collaboration between the Government of Ghana and EU MSs on return and reintegration related processes.
Specific objective I	Strengthen the institutional coordination mechanisms and structures in Ghana in the context of return and reintegration.
Specific objective II	Enhance the operational structures and capacities of GIS for supporting the referral of Ghanaian citizens to relevant post-arrival services in the country.

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OUTCOMES (RESULTS)	
Outcome I	A more coordinating and steering role for Government of Ghana in the area of reintegration and more ownership in providing post-arrival information to their returning citizens.
Outcome II	Tailored referral services to returnees in cooperation with a structured network of local stakeholders.
Outcome III	Improved counselling practices and better dissemination and management of knowledge on post-arrival and reintegration services.
Outcome IV	Persons returning to Ghana can make maximum use of existing services available through government services / projects and activities funded through other sources.
KEY ACTIVITIES (OUTPUTS)	
Activity I	Hold coordination activities with key reintegration actors in order to support the implementation of a coordination mechanism with relevant state/non-state stakeholders, support the liaison and operational exchanges with other relevant governmental structures, and develop information and communication material for returnees.
Activity II	Strengthen the capacity of the GIS MICR through: (i) organising capacity building/training measures in order to enhance the capacity of GIS to act as an information and referral hub for returning migrants, and (ii) development of SoPs defining the core functions of GIS officers providing information at MICR, as well as workflows for the key operational tasks.

Table 15 – Government to Government phase II outline

Key actors, roles and donors

- **ERRIN PMU**: Overall project coordinator, in charge of technical and financial reporting.
- **GIS**: Main governmental partner in Ghana for activity, provided staffing for MICR.
- **Ministry for Children, Family, Refugees and Integration of State of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW)**: Main governmental partner in Germany for activity, led training component in Europe, while ensuring coordination with FRONTEX and other relevant stakeholders.
- **FRONTEX**: Contributed to the implementation of the project activities via EURLO, brought in knowledge and contacts related to all elements relevant for return operations.
- **ICMPD**: provided a part-time staff member to the project as local coordinator.
- **BAMF**: Co-financed the action.
- **GIZ**: In the course of the project, a cooperation with GIZ was established via an MoU.

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- **ERRIN stakeholder platform**: Consisted of relevant institutions and governmental agencies working in the field of return and reintegration in Ghana, along with international development actors present in Ghana.
- **IOM MCP and its subgroup on Return and Reintegration**: Consisted of key stakeholders from international organizations, NGOs and other actors implementing not just reintegration projects but also development projects and any other returnee-relevant assistance.

Referral flow

In the scope of the MICR project, MICR acted as a focal point at the Kotoka International Airport for returnees arriving to Ghana and thus was involved in referrals. After returnees arrive and pass through immigration, MICR refer the returnees to the police for fingerprinting to check if they have criminal records. Afterwards, MICR staff then refer the returnees to the applicable services. This would involve providing flyers to the returnees or giving them contact information of relevant organisations. At times, MICR had contact with returnees prior to arrival. For example, they sometimes arranged a virtual information session and would introduce the returnee to the available services upon return. Additionally, they would coordinate in advance if a returnee required assistance from the airport, such as airport pick-up or accommodation.

Assessment of results

The section below provides information on the status of the activities proposed for Phase I and II of the Government-to-Government initiative in Ghana. It then describes key challenges, good practices and lessons learned.

Phase I

REVIEW OF RESULTS		
ACTIVITY	**ASSESSMENT**	**DETAILS**
Activity I: Needs assessment	Completed	In close cooperation with Frontex/EURLO, training needs of GIS staff were determined and mapping of relevant return and reintegration actors was conducted.
Activity II: Operational setup of MICR Office	Completed	The GIS MICR was established at the Kotoka International Airport in Accra, with ERRIN providing technical equipment and furniture to operationalise the office space at the airport. Initial steps were also taken to give a more coordinating role to GIS on referral services provided to Ghanaian returnees upon arrival. A project team was set up at ICMPD Accra to support ERRIN in the overall monitoring and coordination of the project's activities, including the operational liaison with the main project's beneficiary, GIS.

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Activity III: Develop training programme	Completed	Planned two trainings on IT/database management issues and counselling techniques identified via the needs assessment.
Activity IV: Capacity building measures	Completed	Conducted two trainings on IT/database management issues and counselling techniques. No trainings/study visits conducted.
Activity V: Outline of future SOPs	Completed	SOPs for MICR developed.

Table 16 – Government to Government phase I results

Phase II

REVIEW OF RESULTS		
ACTIVITY	**ASSESSMENT**	**DETAILS**
Activity I: Coordination activities	Ongoing	Coordination meetings ongoing. The ERRIN stakeholder platform was established where all government actors involved in return and reintegration meet quarterly to discuss, exchange and share challenges. Three stakeholder meetings have been held thus far and every time the number of participants has increased. The meetings have improved communication, clarified roles, and fostered collaboration so that actors could better address pressing challenges and identify additional needs of returnees. For MICR, a WhatsApp platform has also been established to provide more current information on return flights.
Activity II: Capacity building	Ongoing	Capacity building measures are ongoing.

Table 17 – Government to Government phase I results

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Challenges

> **The challenge has to do with information flow. Sometimes when these people are coming those of us on the ground are supposed to be aware of their coming before they finally arrive so that we can organise. But sometimes you would be there, [and there would be] no information about their coming. Then, by the time you realise, they have arrived.**

The key challenge during Phase I and II (ongoing) of the MICR project was information sharing among various return and reintegration actors[86]. For example, MICR at times was unaware that returnees would be arriving, despite their role to act as a focal point for all returnees. As a result, they could not prepare sufficiently for returnees' arrivals, including following necessary steps such as providing COVID-19 tests[87]. Additionally, poor coordination between the actors at times was an ongoing challenge. The project addressed this part. However, such challenges nonetheless inhibited MICR operations. For example, because of the multiple systems and programmes providing reintegration support, MICR staff were at times unsure which returnees qualified for which services.

Good Practices

Good practices identified related to improved coordination and information sharing, and expanding the services provided to include referral to non-returnee specific development projects and provision of other supplemental services. Such supplemental services included those provided by other actors such as SIM cards or access to phones provided by GIZ upon arrival.

> **The ambulance used to be a nightmare or used to be very difficult to get, like support when you have sick [returnees]…It was very difficult. But now it's easier because we were able to get the ambulance service involved and they also understood why they needed to be there, because they didn't quite understand it before. So we've seen more ownership. They are more willing to participate. They're more willing to make resources, internal resources available…to support reintegration.**

Improving local ownership and coordination via the ERRIN stakeholder platform, and capacity building activities was a key good practice identified in this activity[88]. The stakeholder meetings established by ERRIN specifically improved communication, clarified roles, and fostered collaboration so that actors could better address pressing challenges and identify additional needs of returnees[89]. It also streamlined and improved the services provided to returnees upon their arrival at the airport and worked towards an inter-institutional referral mechanism. By having such a shared platforms through which government agencies and other actors could meet and exchange information, ideas, and challenges, the Ghana government improved its capacity in terms of return and reintegration and their ownership over

[86] KII14, KII19, KII20
[87] KII19
[88] Ibid.
[89] KII19, KII24, KII25

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the field. Further, the MoU also allowed for increased capacity building for Ghana government agencies in return and reintegration.

Information sharing which was quick, efficient and coordinated among the various actors facilitated the operations of MICR, thanks also to regular organization of stakeholder meetings[90]. For example, at times MSs contacted MICR when vulnerable persons were returning, informing them of special needs, such as psychosocial or medical care. As a result, MICR could then have the necessary resources available on arrival, such as an ambulance or psychologist. Quick information sharing which allowed actors to receive up-to-date information, through WhatsApp, facilitated the smooth functioning of MICR.

Expanding and streamlining the referrals available allowed returnees to benefit from a larger variety of services, as well as grow the MICR network. The MoU with GIZ was a key component of this[91]. Further, providing returnees with SIM cards or access to phones upon arrival allowed returnees to contact their families and facilitated a smoother return process, maximising the impact of the assistance provided[92]. This further allowed for referrals to be less ad hoc and better meet returnees needs. Such an MoU followed by the development of a referral pathway is a key good practice[93].

> Now when [the returnees] come, we have a dedicated office where we receive them, put them, where we offer them water, and refer them...the people are received in a more dignified manner. So, it is a great lesson we have learned, how we can actually receive returnees in a more dignified, collaborative and well-organised manner.

Lessons Learned

Given the challenges identified, key informants described that ensuring a well-organised reception for returnees immediately upon arrival was a key lesson[94]. This requires providing more services at the airport to contribute to a more dignified, collaborative, and well-organised reception[95]. The services include psychological support, mobile phone access, airport pick-up, immediate and short-term accommodation, etc. For example, many returnees arrive at the airport ill-prepared and require immediate support, as well as immediate psychological support, as well.

Recommendations

Through consultation with key informants of the MICR project, we recommend the following:

- **Expand services provided at the airport to include psychological support and more immediate practical support**, such as access to mobile phones or immediate accommodation referrals. This would provide returnees with a more dignified arrival, as well as meet their most pressing needs before beginning their reintegration.

[90] KII19, KII21
[91] KII19
[92] KII21
[93] KII19, ERRIN/TWG R&D, "Draft Minutes of the 5th Technical Working Group meeting on Reintegration & Development," 2022.
[94] KII14, KII21,
[95] KII14

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- **Broaden the referral options available at arrival.** These programmes do not need to be return-specific. Rather, referrals should include referrals to larger development projects so that returnees can benefit from a variety of services. This can be facilitated by additional MoUs.
- **Continue with MICR staff trainings on counselling and reception** and include general trainings to airport staff involved in returnee reception. Continual training of MICR staff is required given the turnover rate at the organisation. Further, airport staff at times stigmatised returnees. Training should be provided to ensure a dignified reception upon arrival.
- **Continue to identify and formalise areas of responsibility for government actors** involved in reintegration and enhance cooperation between reintegration actors via the ERRIN stakeholder meetings. Regular coordination meetings, which are already ongoing, should continue to ensure smooth cooperation between all actors. Thus, continued work of the ERRIN stakeholder coordination platform and the IOM-MCP, particularly its subgroup on Return and Reintegration is recommended.
- **Work towards establishing a national referral mechanism** based off the work of the ERRIN stakeholder platform and overall effort (e.g. IOM MCP) to formalise referrals.
- **Develop further MoUs with relevant development actors** to continue to meet returnees needs and share MoUs as a best practice with other TWG R&D stakeholders.

C. ERRIN Sustainable Reintegration Activities in Iraq (SRI)

Scope initiative and timeframe

The ERRIN programme in Iraq attempts to provide a coherent and sustainable response to reintegration challenges. Through dedicated service providers, ERRIN already provides reintegration support in the form of housing support, medical assistance, vocational and educational training, assistance to business start-ups, job counselling and job placement, and other reintegration related support. However, returnees in Iraq face a challenging landscape regarding reintegrating into the labour market. As a result, the SRI project provides additional assistance, on top of ERRIN assistance, to the returnees arriving to Iraq to increase their chances for sustainable livelihoods.

Returnees who are eligible for SRI services receive structured pre-departure (in Europe) and post-arrival (Iraq) assistance in form of tailor-made business trainings. The project, which ran between 2020-2021, was supposed to establish a job-matching platform, enabling returnees to offer their expertise and find local vacancies that match their skills. However, due to the high number of existing job-platforms, it was eventually decided not to implement this project activity during the relevant project timeline.

OBJECTIVES (GOALS)	
Overall objective	Improve sustainability of the return and reintegration of returnees from Europe to Iraq.
Specific objective I	Facilitate a more promising prospect for Iraqi nationals to return to their home country, consequently leading to an overall higher number of returns.

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Specific objective II	Increase local ownership of the return process in Iraq.
OUTCOMES (RESULTS)	
Outcome I	Encourage the sustainable reintegration of returnees from Europe to Iraq into the Iraqi labour market.
Outcome II	Develop the capacity of local actors in the return and reintegration field, bolstering local ownership and enhancing Iraqi capacities in dealing with returns.
Outcome III	Provide more extensive insights in return dynamics, which in the long term could lead to more effective counselling.
KEY ACTIVITIES (OUTPUTS)	
Activity I	Preparatory Assessment of current reintegration services in Iraq, particularly existing post-return structures, needs assessment and gap filling to be identified.
Activity II	Set up tailor-made trainings for 100 Iraqi returnees to be provided in Finland (pre-departure) and Iraq (post-arrival). This involves developing a training curriculum, ensuring the pre-departure and post-arrival trainings interlink development and distribution of information material, gathering feedback on the training from all the participants, and monitoring all participants after the training.
Activity III	Finnish and Iraqi trainers engage in a mutual exchange of experiences with regard to developing, preparing, and giving trainings for the returnees.
Activity IV	Establish a job platform, which consists of potential employers that are willing to offer vacancies to returning migrants and which is linked to the post-return training.
Activity V	Contribute to increased support for and ownership of returns on a local level by raising awareness about the return process within the local community. The project archives this by holding technical level dialogues on the project and its intentions to the relevant Iraqi government actors, organising a seminar in Iraq on the return and asylum policies of the EU, organising an awareness campaign about the asylum and return processes of EU, and involving local actors in the project.

Table 18 – SRI

Key actors, roles and donors

- **ERRIN PMU:** ERRIN PMU funded the project and provided administration support and overall guidance to the project.

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- **Government of Finland:** The Government of Finland was the main implementing partner and monitored activities.
- **StartUp Refugees**: The local organisation in Finland who was tasked with providing pre-departure online trainings to returnees to Iraq from Finland.
- **ETTC**: A local ERRIN service provider in Iraq, ETTC provided the in-person post-arrival trainings in Baghdad Iraq to returnees from Finland and other EU MS.
- **SEEFAR**: A service provider conducting a survey on stigmatization of Iraqi returnees.

Referral flow

The referral process began with pre-departure counselling online in Europe where return counsellors would then guide and provide returnees with necessary information based on their needs and questions as well as services available to them by us upon return, such as the SRI project. However, no cases of returnees were referred prior to departure. All referrals occurred after the returnee had arrived in Iraq. The referral to the pre-departure online training came from the ERRIN service provider in Iraq, ETTC. Start-up Refugees provided the online training, which was mandatory for the post-arrival training. ETTC gave face-to-face business trainings in Baghdad to returnees after completion of the pre-departure training..

Assessment of results

The section below provides information on the status of the activities proposed for the SRI. It then describes key challenges, good practices and lessons learned.

REVIEW OF RESULTS		
ACTIVITY	**ASSESSMENT**	**DETAILS**
Activity I: Preparatory Assessment	Completed	Mapping completed.
Activity II: Trainings provided to returnees	Completed	In total, 59 cases were referred. 41 returnees completed the online pre-departure training with StartUp Refugees (but only after arrival, not pre-departure due to time constraints) and 35 returnees completed the five-day face-to-face training course with ETTC.
Activity III: Mutual exchange among trainers	Completed	Exchange between two service providers took place.
Activity IV: Establish job platform	Not completed	Not enough time allotted and the job platform would have been redundant - there were many such platforms already existing.

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Activity V: Increase support and local ownership of returns	Partially completed	The initial idea of a mapping and an awareness raising campaign could not be implemented. However, SEEFAR instead conducted a study on stigmatisation of Iraqi returnees to identify psychosocial challenges and stigmatisation that could possibly be addressed by a future grass root campaign for a more enabling environment for them.

Table 19 – SRI results

Challenges

The timeframe, coordination, and administrative problems among actors in Iraq and Finland were key challenges which slowed down the implementation of the project and reduced the time available for implementation[96]. For example, the tight time frame damaged coordination between the different implementing actors. Further, awareness raising among return counsellors proved difficult under the time restrictions, and thus no referrals were made pre-departure.

The main activities were an online pre-departure training, which was made here in Finland by one of our service providers…and the point was to do it already pre-departure so in Europe basically but because it took a lot of time for us to get the activities running for several challenges. We never actually got to try it pre-departure and all our referral came of people who had already returned.

Good Practices

Although actors did not implement the referral mechanism as originally envisaged, Start-up Refugees completed the online training and ETTC did successfully train 35 returnees via its five-day, in-person training. In this way, the referral mechanism worked successfully.

SRI is not very attractive because it only provides transportation fees for the returnees to attend training courses, no business grant, and no tool kits. To have the SRI successful and contributing to sustainable reintegration, it must also include other elements such as providing the business grant to returnees.

Lessons Learned

Key lessons included the importance of cooperation, longer project cycles, and the inclusion of additional financial support as part of the SRI project. Improved cooperation, including awareness raising among return counsellors and communication between countries of departure and service providers on the ground, would have ensured a smoother implementation of the project[97]. Further, the short project cycle prevented the implementation of certain activities[98], as well as collaboration with other development actors in the field – as such actors would not have deemed such a short contract as fruitful[99]. Finally, the

[96] KII9, KII12; ERRIN/TWG R&D, "Draft Minutes of the 5th Technical Working Group meeting on Reintegration & Development," 2022.
[97] KII9, KII11
[98] ERRIN/TWG R&D, "Draft Minutes of the 5th Technical Working Group meeting on Reintegration & Development," 2022.
[99] KII9, KII12

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SRI project was not attractive to a wide variety of returnees as it only provided transportation fees for the returnees to attend training courses - there was no additional business grant provided[100].

Recommendations

Based off the challenges, good practice and lessons learned, we recommend the following:

- **Cooperation between implementing actors and organisations should begin in the inception phase**. By communicating the modes of operation and awareness raising about the programme immediately, delays to programme implementation are prevented - even when restricted by a short time frame.
- **Early involvement of return counsellors in MSs** to ensure that pre-departure activities can be implemented in the pre-departure phase.
- **Inclusion of more diverse actors, including the Iraqi diaspora.** This would capitalise off the know-how and community connections already connected between European MSs with Iraq, as well as facilitate additional communication channels which could enhance cooperation.
- **Training programmes should also include a financial element** to entice participants, as well as to make it easier for participants to take advantage of the training received (e.g. additional funds to start their own business).

D. Danish innovative activity: Building skills, knowledge and models for long-term reintegration of returnees to Iraq, as a complementary intervention to reintegration support provided through ERRIN

Scope initiative and timeframe

The project 'Capacity building for long-term reintegration of returnees to Iraq complementary to reintegration support through ERRIN (CAIR) ' was developed in response to increased returns of Iraqis from Europe to Iraq.

In 2019, approximately 10,000 Iraqi migrants returned home voluntarily. Services provided to support these returnees include: travel expenses and cash assistance or in-kind reintegration support.

In Iraq, the Ministry of Migration and Displaced (MoMD), the Ministry of Planning, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Center, and the Central Statistics Office play an important role in supporting these efforts. While specific reintegration programmes promoting returnees' livelihoods were ongoing at the time of inception, there remained a gap in terms of financial availability, technical capacities, and general know-how on how to fully embed reintegration programmes into a post-war country such as Iraq.

This project thus aimed to address this gap and to address returnees' reintegration challenges regarding lack of sustainable livelihoods, lack of documentation, cost of travel, loss of housing, lack of security, etc. The ambition is to build on initiatives such as the ERRIN SRI, which provides additional business trainings pre-departure and post-arrival in addition to standard ERRIN reintegration support such as housing support, medical assistance, vocational, and educational training.

[100] KII11

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The project began in February 2021 and will run through January 2023. Although initially envisioned to take place in Afghanistan and Iraq, the recent political transition necessitated cancelling all planned activities in Afghanistan and diverting all funds to Iraq.

OBJECTIVES (GOALS)	
Overall objective	Create conditions for sustainable reintegration of Iraqi returnees, as well as their families, in their communities of return.
Specific objective I	Strengthen capacities of MoMD, as well as of CBOs for provision of extended reintegration support to a cohort of returnees to Iraq by creating linkages between the ongoing ERRIN efforts and development objectives of the communities.
Specific objective II	Enhance sustainability of reintegration efforts by creating PPPs to improve access to employment opportunities for returnees and better linkages between reintegration support and market needs.
OUTCOMES (RESULTS)	
Outcome I	Develop a small-scale model for sustainable reintegration linking ERRIN interventions with development objectives of communities.
Outcome II	Capacity building plan developed and implemented for local level institutions and CBOs to respond to challenges related to sustainability of reintegration of returnees to Iraq.
Outcome III	Develop a concept of the PPP in service of reintegration of returnees in Iraq.
Outcome IV	Set up Multi-Stakeholder Platforms for reintegration of return migrants in Iraq.
KEY ACTIVITIES (OUTPUTS)	
Activity I	Reintegration assistance and counselling plans developed for the cohort of returnees. This would take the form of reintegration maps for individuals/families assisted.
Activity II	Lessons learned document encompassing setbacks in individual reintegration plans as well as ways of addressing these developed and made available to all relevant stakeholders in Iraq in order to ensure success of accumulated reintegration efforts in the long-run.
Activity III	Development of a software for individual reintegration casework.

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Activity IV	Engage relevant Ministries and CBOs through training, continued education and empowerment of the locally available institutional infrastructure mandated to deal with return and reintegration.
Activity V	Development and implementation of a platform for PPP on sustainable reintegration. This would be a multi-stakeholder platform acting as a one-stop shop for cooperation on sustainable reintegration. The platform will serve as an entry point for assessing existing skills/qualifications needs, feedback-loop for preparedness before arrival, as well as the link for training and employment of returning migrants. The format of the platform, a secretariat, ToRs, and two-year work plan will be defined in a participatory manner within the course of the project.
Activity VI	Stakeholder mapping for PPP in the area of reintegration

Table 20 – Danish innovative activity

Key actors, roles and donors

- **Danish Development Assistant Facility - Flexible Return Funds**: Donor of the project
- **Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Immigration and Integration**: Manager of the project, provides strategic oversight.
- **ICMPD:** Executing agency, they are responsible for the day-to-day management, strategic level management, and overall strategic guidance.
- **Project Steering Committee (PSC)**: Approve the work plan for the project, the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, the Communications Strategy and approve other deliverables under the project. The committee will include representatives of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Danish Ministry of Immigration & Integration and ICMPD staff.
- **MoMD:** A local partner, the MoMD receives capacity building and assists with implementation.
- **Branches of the Ministry of Migration and Displacement (local level):** A local partner, the local ministries receive capacity building and assist with implementation.

Assessment of results

The section below provides information on the status of the activities proposed for project 'Capacity building for long-term reintegration of returnees to Iraq complementary to reintegration support through ERRIN (CAIR)'. It then describes key challenges, good practices and lessons learned.

REVIEW OF RESULTS		
ACTIVITY	**ASSESSMENT**	**DETAILS**

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Activity I: Reintegration assistance and counselling plans developed	Ongoing	Two workshops held to develop a roadmap for the return and reintegration plans.
Activity II: Lessons learned document	Not started	
Activity III: Casework software	Information not available	The status of this activity is unclear due to previously discussed limitations.
Activity IV: Capacity building	Ongoing	Coordination meeting held although details are not available due to previously discussed limitations.
Activity V: PPP Platform	Information not available	The status of this activity is unclear due to previously discussed limitations.
Activity VI: PPP stakeholder mapping	Information not available	The status of this activity is unclear due to previously discussed limitations.

Table 21 – Danish innovative activity results

When you look at the reality in Iraq…the [MoMD] is focusing basically 100% on reintegration activities for IDPs. So when it comes to those that…[are] sitting in Europe, and reintegration of them then actually no one really has a focus on them from the Iraqi side.

Challenges

Current and potential challenges included questions regarding the feasibility of implementation, the focus on IDP returnees in Iraq rather than returnees from Europe, lack of local ownership, and lack of coordination. Regarding the feasibility of implementation, high turnover, political obstacles, and a rigid governmental framework limited the capacity of certain actors to address all issues related to Iraqi returnees from Europe[101]. Further, while the capacity of the MoMD had improved in recent years, repetitive capacity building from external actors failed to produce a sense of local ownership[102]. Finally, the array of issues involved in return and reintegration necessitate close coordination among different actors and sectors. However, there lacked a national coordination mechanism to achieve this in the Iraqi context. As a result, efforts

[101] KII11, KII7
[102] KII11, KII7

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were at times redundant or were not holistic enough to achieve sustainable, positive impacts on the lives of returnees to Iraq[103].

Good Practices

The key good practice identified during the initial year of the project included close coordination among the different relevant actors in Iraq working in the return and reintegration field[104]. The large coordination meeting among actors was a key achievement during the initial phase of this project. Key informants argued that this would prevent efforts from becoming redundant while still incorporating the diversity of actors required for an impactful programme.

I would say that the main outcome was that so many different people were actually sitting at the table at the same time and also for the first time we had the different implementing partners sitting there…Several of the Member States also said that they would like to see regular coordination meetings happen. And just Friday last week I received an email that now the EU is actually calling for this to happen. So again, I think that we have achieved something by doing it in this way.

There are a lot of different kinds of smaller groups of coordination. But that is again, if you look at it from a very narrow-minded way…So you need to look at it again from a broader perspective and then suddenly you would need to add another organisation or three other organisations and so on.

Lessons Learned

Key informants argued that a national coordination mechanism was required to ensure more effective collaboration[105]. This would allow for more coordinated capacity building, important given the continual given turn over at MoMD requires continual capacity building efforts. Further, it would enhance the ability to identify capacity and capacity building needs across actors and sectors. There existed siloed coordination entities in Iraq, which limited the ability to provide more impactful programming for returnees.

Recommendations

The project is still in the inception phase. However, from challenges, good practices, and lessons learned previously identified, we propose the following preliminary recommendations:

- **Capacity building needs to be continual and focused** on making the MoMD self-sufficient so they can pass on the provided training and knowledge internally. This is particularly important given the high turnover and thus the continual need for capacity building. Further, this would increase local ownership over the return and reintegration processes in Iraq.
- **Establish a national coordination mechanism for international, national, and local return and reintegration actors in Iraq** to coordinate both programming and capacity building efforts more

[103] KII11
[104] KII11
[105] KII11

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effectively in the field of return and reintegration. This would also serve to de-silo some of the actors currently working in the return and reintegration in Iraq.

E. OFII mapping on system of stakeholder and return & reintegration assistance in Senegal, Mali, Cameroon, and Morocco

Scope initiative and timeframe

Within the ERRIN-OFII initiative, the French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII) provides reintegration support to ERRIN returnees in Cameroon, Mali, Morocco, and Senegal and since 2021 in Benin, Burkina Faso, DRC, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Guinea, Republic of Congo and Togo. With an amount of €3,000, the services offered to returnees are: social assistance (level 1), technical and vocational education and training (level 2), and business start-up assistance (level 3). The management of reintegration aid is carried out via the RIAT tool, developed by ERRIN and DG HOME.

The initiative began in March 2020 for an initial period of one year, to be extended until June 2022.

OBJECTIVES (GOALS)	
Overall objective	Foster operational cooperation between return and reintegration actors on the ground to strengthen reintegration projects.
Specific objective I	Gain a better understanding of the returned development programmes in the target countries (Cameroon, Mali, Morocco, and Senegal).
OUTCOMES (RESULTS)	
Outcome I	Encourage sustainable integration among returnees in the four target countries.
Outcome II	Draw lessons on a new way of understanding reintegration, in particular by facilitating the links between reintegration programs and development programs.
KEY ACTIVITIES (OUTPUTS)	
Activity I	Provide reintegration assistance.
Activity II	Draft a mapping system to map the various players and schemes involved in reintegration in the countries of interest.

Table 22 – OFII initatiative

Key actors, roles and donors

- **OFII:** OFII enables returnees from European ERRIN partner countries to benefit from the reintegration scheme implemented in Cameroon, Mali, Morocco and Senegal and since 2021 in Benin, Burkina Faso, DRC, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Guinea, Republic of Congo and Togo.

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- **National governments** of the countries of return.
- **GIZ**: OFII cooperates with GIZ in Mali, Morocco and Senegal for returnees to receive additional funding and training. In Senegal, OFII works with GIZ through a direct partnership and through the National Youth Employment Agency (ANPEJ). In Mali, both work in the Kayes region to provide additional technical training and in Morocco a direct partnership has been signed with GIZ and CEFA for additional funding in kind.
- **ERRIN MSs and other European actors**: DG DEVCO, DG HOME, and DG NEAR, national authorities in target countries, international organisations, civil society organisations, and development agencies.
- **Development agencies**

Referral flow

During the first meeting with the returnee, an initial assessment of their needs is conducted. The returnee is then referred to the relevant local operator, who submits a reintegration plan that has to be approved by the funding committee in the MS. When cofounding or additional training is provided by another structure, a common reintegration plan is drafted to avoid the risk of double funding (in Senegal and Morocco).Once the plan is approved, the reintegration assistance is provided. OFII monitors the process and submits a report to the relevant MS.

Assessment of results

The section below provides information on the status of the activities proposed for the ERRIN-OFII initative. It then describes key challenges, good practices and lessons learned.

REVIEW OF RESULTS		
ACTIVITY	**ASSESSMENT**	**DETAILS**
Activity I: Provide reintegration assistance	Completed	OFII has successfully provided reintegration assistance to ERRIN returnees.
Activity II: Draft a mapping system	Completed	More than 100 interviews were conducted within 9 months in the context of the mapping, involving institutional officials in France and in the field. The final report was published in December 2020, in French and English.

Table 23 – OFII results

Challenges

The mapping showed challenges MSs face on sharing information on voluntary return to irregular migrants and, reaching out to determinate target groups, and making themselves understood by them.

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> **I think that once again, the system is young. Things need to be broken in, but they have all the material…The more Member States have confidence in the system and come to rely on it, the quicker [the coordination mechanism] will be able to function and its mechanisms will be honed.**

Lessons Learned

There are notable differences in the sum of RR assistance that MSs provide and how they allocate the amount (e.g. cash assistance on departure versus cash assistance post-return)[106]. Moreover, the study found that communication strategies play a key role in ensuring informed and confident decision-making among returnees and ensuring MSs take advantage of the available activities.

Recommendations

- **Establish the role of the coordinator in the field,** without whom it is difficult to mobilise counterparts, keep track of funding requirements and ensure that the reintegration assistance is provided coherently.
- **Carry out an economic study per activity sector** and adjust reintegration assistance accordingly to ensure that returnees have sufficient funds to start their own businesses.
- **Include the payment of stipends to returnees** who attend training to cover training-related costs such as transportation and accommodation
- **Encourage better communication** within ERRIN MS' administrations to better coordinate efforts.
- **Establish information campaigns for return candidates** which rely on diaspora and national actors to create adequate tools and to ensure the target audience is reached.

F. Collaboration between GIZ and ERRIN service provider Caritas in Tunisia

Scope initiative and timeframe

At the end of 2021, a MoU was signed between GIZ and ERRIN service provider Caritas International in Tunisia. The objectives of the MoU are to:

- **Establish a mutual operational referral mechanism** of returning migrants from ERRIN MSs and third countries;
- **Facilitate the communication, exchange of information, and technical cooperation** in the field of return and reintegration in Tunisia;
- **Ensure the complementarity of existing programs** in the field of return and reintegration in Tunisia; and
- **Embed cooperation into the national reintegration mechanism** (national programme 'Tounesna') to strengthen it in a sustainable manner.

The beneficiaries of this cooperation are Tunisian citizens voluntarily returning from Germany or other ERRIN MSs. Returnees who are not eligible for ERRIN reintegration services or who have already completed

[106] KII8

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accompaniment may be referred to the German-Tunisian Centre for Jobs, Migration and Reintegration (CTA) in agreement with Caritas to receive complementary assistance[107].

Key actors, roles and donors

- **Caritas International in Tunisia:** Offers reintegration support to voluntary returned migrants through ERRIN.
- **GIZ:** Implements the Migration for Development programme in Tunisia, among 11 other countries, which falls under the umbrella of the BMZ Programme 'Returning to New Opportunities. Other projects implemented by GIZ under this programme include the 'Employment Promotion in Rural Areas in Tunisia'; the 'Promotion of Sustainable Tourism in Tunisia'; and the 'Vocational Education and Labour Market'.
- **The German-Tunisian Centre for Jobs, Migration and Reintegration (CTA)**: Has two offices in Tunisia, one in Tunis (since 2017) located in the ANETI office and one in Sfax (since 2019).
- **The National Agency for Employment and Labour (ANETI):** The Tunisian employment agency, which works closely with the CTA and implements government policies on employment promotion and carries out the following tests: (i) stimulating the labour market on the national, regional, local and sector-specific level through job centres; (ii) providing enterprises and job seekers with information on employment and professional qualifications; (iii) implementing employment promotion and youth employment programmes as authorised by the MFPE promoting the creation of small business and self-employment; and (iv) supporting those who seek to pursue (further) training with information and professional guidance.

Referral flow

The referral mechanism between GIZ and Caritas is aimed at linking ERRIN returnees to services provided by GIZ and foresees the joint organisation of information events to strengthen the 'Tounesna' mechanism towards a common European return and reintegration approach in Tunisia. Other provisions include the appointment of a focal person at GIZ and Caritas to foster coordination and communication.

Challenges

The scope of the referral system was considered "too restrictive" and the timeframe too short to set up an effective referral mechanism[108]. In fact, the only returnees eligible were the ones who were still in Europe and decided to return, and this situation was actually very rare. For this reason, no referrals have been made in Tunisia.

[107] ERRIN/TWG R&D. "Draft Minutes of the 5th Technical Working Group meeting on Reintegration & Development," 2022; Coordination between GIZ and ERRIN in Tunisia presentation.
[108] KII32

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IV. MAIN TAKE-AWAYS FOR THE OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK ON REINTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

A core component of the OF is the project-specific assessment and reflection on the ERRIN pilot activities and other innovative projects implemented in Iraq, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Ghana, and Tunisia The activities assessed in this Report are presented again in the table below.

PROJECTS	COUNTRIES
TWG R&D pilot project	Bangladesh
PPP pilot project	Bangladesh
TWG R&D pilot project	Nigeria
PROSPECT pilot	Nigeria
Government to Government initiative	Ghana
ERRIN Sustainable Reintegration Activities (SRI)	Iraq
Danish innovative activity	Iraq
OFII mapping	Senegal, Mali, Cameroon and Morocco
GIZ-ERRIN Collaboration in Tunisia	Tunisia

Table 24 – Overview of projects

The assessment reveals commonalities across the challenges, good practices, lessons learned, and recommendations identified by key informants and highlighted throughout this assessment. While each project encountered difficulties and achieved successes, which were specific to both the project and its context, the commonalities illuminated through this assessment can serve as an important baseline for broader take-aways. These larger take-aways can bolster the applicability of the OF across multiple and diverse contexts.

The key questions – raised through key informant interviews with Member States of ERRIN include:

- **How can reintegration and development actors work better together?**
- **What is the framework where development and migration/return agencies could work together in a complementary manner, for stronger programme outcomes?**

Through this assessment, we have identified the main take-aways linked to the ERRIN pilot and other initiatives. Together, these take-aways respond to the questions above, identifying opportunities across the four main activities of the ERRIN pilots namely, coordination, mapping, referrals, and monitoring.

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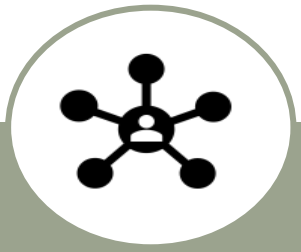
The main take-aways are structured in four overlapping phases of programming:

Section 1: PRE-DESIGN: Context specific considerations, Mapping and scenario planning

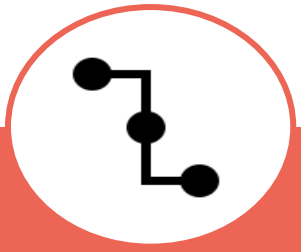
Section 2: DESIGN: Addressing cooperation and coordination needs

Section 3: PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION: Establishing formalised referral systems

Section 4: MONITORING, EVALUATION, ACCOUNTABILITY & LEARNING: A monitoring framework and identifying key performance indicators suitable to both reintegration and development action



Mapping lessons learned include the need to identify what development services can be most suited to reintegration, which contexts can be suitable for R&D linkages, and which actors need to be involved. The mapping of '**who does what**' from return to reintegration will then be the basis for coordination and referrals.



Coordination lessons learned point to the need to determine what levels of complementariness are sought, in each context, beginning with co-designed reintegration programmes, and ensuring local ownership, from the national to the local government level, as well as through trust building with non-state actors.

Referrals lessons learned include the need to strengthen pre-departure and post-arrival planning and eligibility guidelines, and including the economic, psychosocial, and social dimensions. Flowcharts will help ensure the right timing and inclusion of public to private sector actors.

Monitoring lessons learned include the need to build a M&E Framework of key performance indicators that for reintegration and development actors. Monitoring should provide a space for communities, families and individual returnees' needs and profiles to come through and provide room for learning and adaptation.

Figure 5 – Main take-aways

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The TWG R&D projects reviewed in this assessment aimed to map out and pilot joint efforts between reintegration and development actors providing (or potentially able to provide) assistance to returnees. A review of project documentation, key informant interviews, and when available, beneficiary interviews, informed the assessment of these activities.

The ultimate goal of the TWG R&D is to produce the OF which contains findings, good practices and lessons learned from TWG R&D members and activities, while also outlining recommendations regarding strengthening practical and operational links between the R&D sectors, bolstering coherence and synergy between R&D actors.

The assessment despite its shortcomings given by above listed limitations nonetheless provided impactful findings for improving future project activities and informing the creation of the OF.

Main Take-Away 1: Mapping and Scenario Planning (Pre-Design Phase)

Mapping R&D actors and programmes across countries of origin and destination is essential to avoid challenges such as competition and duplication between programs, lack of information on existing interventions, contradictory eligibility requirements, complicated referral processes, missed opportunities for service provision, and uncoordinated and/or ad hoc referrals. Any mapping should lead to **scenario planning and forecasting**. The focus should be around how to forecast the most effective pathways for collaboration across reintegration and development actors with specific sectors in mind (e.g. education or health interventions, agriculture and cooperatives etc.).

Mapping:

- Development services suited to reintegration – considering both returnee profiles and area based approaches
- 'When and where' (which sectors) R&D linkages are feasible or not feasible
- 'Who does what' on the reintegration-development spectrum

According to the OECD, human development enlarges people's choices through a process, while sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising future generations' ability to meet theirs.[109] On the other hand, according to IOM, sustainable reintegration is when "returnees have reached a level of economic self-sufficiency, social stability within their communities, psychosocial well-being that allow them to cope with (re)migration drivers. Having achieved sustainable reintegration, returnees are able to make further migration decisions a matter of choice, rather than necessity".[110] The overlap between these definitions are on three critical elements: time, choices, people (individuals) and communities (or generations).

Any mapping and scenario planning will have to target on how exactly people and communities will be supported, economically, socially, and psychosocially, to be more capable and more able to make choices,

[109] "OECD Glossary of Statistical Terms."
[110] "Setting Standards for an Integrated Approach to Reintegration: Summary Report,"

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across time. Yet, during the assessment, competing programmes and complicated qualification requirements from the countries of destination affected referral mechanisms the countries of origin and destination. Different target groups, eligibility criteria, scope, and duration of the services and other aspects represented a challenge for referral mechanisms. Given not all returnees are eligible for the services identified during mapping activities, accurate referrals were exceedingly difficult. That return counsellors did not appear to occupy a substantial outlet for internal communication during the course of project activities exacerbated the complexity and difficulty of referrals.

Preventing effective coordination was the cause for mismatched priorities and approaches to reintegration among different R&D actors. This coincided with a lack of trust and communication between the different actors involved both within the countries of origin and across the countries of origin and destination. As a result, there were at times siloed coordination entities, which limited the ability to provide more efficient referrals for returnees, as well as a willingness to collaborate. A source of potential expansion for the R&D field was PPP. Actors in the private sector were often interested participants in the projects assessed.

In order to do this, mapping of interventions and scenario planning will generate ideas or insights for more detailed work planning in the design phase. What is needed is to provide:

- STEP 1: **Programme mapping** should include the following information:
    - Dimensions and Sectors of intervention
    - Objectives and expected results
    - Public sector partners
    - Private sector partners
    - Partners for implementation
    - Target groups
    - Geographic areas of coverage
    - Implementation duration
    - Linkages with development plans (national or local)

- STEP 2: **Scenario planning** to create a roadmap for the process of linking reintegration with development interventions:
    - Scenarios for urban and rural areas
        - Identify synergies between reintegration and development programmes mapped in Step 1
    - Scenarios for project prioritization
        - Identify sectors or dimensions that will be the priority entry points (e.g. social cohesion programme, skills training and livelihood programme etc). If, for instance, the education sector is chosen as a priority to support reintegration, development interventions should be planned to include the inclusion of returnees and/or their children into the administrative registration, enrolment, and language support programmes within specific areas.

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- STEP 3: **Validating priority areas and eligibility criteria**

  - **Stakeholder engagement**

    - **Identifying the key partners to engage with**.
      From Step 1, the national to local partners will have been identified and already consulted within the pre-design phase.
    - **Key informants identified a need for local ownership.** Local actors and organisations leading R&D efforts can contribute to streamlined national referral mechanisms, establishment of national R&D networks, and a common approach to return and reintegration in the countries of origin. As a result, returnees are more able to take advantage of the available programming.
    - **Internal outreach among actors involved in the projects was ineffective, inhibiting effective implementation.** Awareness raising among the relevant implementers involved in the projects should be a key element of all proposed activities. For example, return counsellors are often key for initiating referrals, yet they were not always kept abreast of project activities entailing potential for referrals considering their role as major frontline stakeholders. Further, they can contribute as potential information sources concerning the needs of beneficiary groups. It is encouraged that internal communication plans be developed prior to the implementation of any project activities to spread the set vision.

  - **Streamlining eligibility criteria**

    - **The lack of trust, coordination and quasi competition in the R&D field**, particularly in the countries of origin, inhibited coordination and thus effective referrals. Efforts should be made to streamline or simplify eligibility criteria. Further, actors should establish common goals and approaches to return and reintegration either generally or across large clusters. Doing so would decrease internal competition and increase cooperation. As a result, referral mechanisms would be simplified and thus actors (like return counsellors) could more easily understand and implement such mechanisms.

> **Then also you know, when we all have them in the same room, you want them all to start opening up to start telling other organizations about their programmes…but bottom line, this is a business…So you have a lot of internal secrets that you don't want to basically get too many to know about. So, I think also that we have to be aware of that.**

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Main Take-Away 2: A cooperation and coordination model built on trust, local ownership, and a two-way capacity building (Design Phase)

Challenging operational contexts, such as complicated implementation realities, high turnover at organizations, and tight programme timeframes, necessitate that local actors and programmes are able to adapt to such difficulties. Capacity building, which is robust and delivered with the attention to foster independence from outside structure, is critical for effective implementation of R&D programming.

Enhanced local ownership facilitates increased coordination among country of origin actors, enables greater adaptability to realities on the ground and contributes to more impactful and efficient service and programme delivery. It also encourages interest among local stakeholders to participate in the available programming and contributes to the socioeconomic development of countries of origin.

Coordination will require three elements:

- **Cooperation** models at the level of the country of destination, between immigration and development agencies
- **Co-design** between immigration and development agencies at destination and origin (gov-to-gov model)
- **Consultations** with local government and non-state actors to build local ownership

Key informants reported that coordination between R&D actors active in the country of origin and country of destination was a severe challenge and limitation when implementing their projects. The assessment of project activities confirmed the need to enhance coordination at two levels: first, in the destination country; second, with the country of origin reintegration and development agencies; and third with local actors and non-state actors. This three-step cooperation model is required in the design phase to ensure that sustainable reintegration programmes are built from a development perspective, and that development programmes integrate the reintegration perspective.

Our services start…at the host country. [The returnees] are sometimes scared of what will happen in the origin country or they don't trust that the support they are supposed to get [that they] will receive it. [MICR] arranges an information section where they will either call on zoom, WhatsApp or whatever means that we have available. We use that with the returnee [to tell them] what we are doing in the country and we tell them the available services. If the returnee has any question to ask, we answer.

However, ineffective communication and coordination between pre-departure (country of destination) and post-arrival (country of origin) actors and services resulted in less impactful reintegration plans and ineffective programming. For example, MICR in Ghana was at times unaware that returnees would be arriving, negatively affecting the ability of MICR to receive returnees in

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a dignified and well-organised manner. Further, poor cooperation between the pre-departure and post-arrival stages of the return process led to poor awareness raising among return counsellors in the country of origin. Because of this lack of coordination, returnees were not taking advantage of potentially impactful programming, which would have given them greater opportunities for sustainable reintegration.

The immediate post-return experience and thus referrals suffered because of the poor connection between pre-departure and post-arrival. Some returnees arrive without transportation from the airport or without immediate accommodation. Proper communication with pre-departure actors prepares those in the country of origin to properly receive such returnees and provide them immediate support. For vulnerable returnees, such as VoTs, those in need of medical assistance or those in need of immediate psychosocial support, these immediate referrals are even more critical.

A consultative process should be at the heart of the design phase, following up on the momentum built during the pre-design phase meetings and consultations.

- STEP 1: Cooperation at the level of the country of destination should be built through a systematic working group to ensure a strong flow of information of initiatives, in specific countries of origin, and identifying areas for synergies
- STEP 2: Co-design intervention flows to ensure the linkages on the ground are made. These government to government meetings will focus on the pre- and post-departure efforts that will link individual reintegration support to national plans, budgets, and outlining when a reintegration partner's work and responsibility ends, and when the development partner's work and responsibility begins. At this stage, it is critical, for EU delegations, that the countries of origin chair or facilitate these meetings, to bring all actors together in the same country, and to ensure that the different financing modalities are tapped into to contribute to reintegration and development. EU Delegation can bring together local and international, reintegration and development actors and partners.
- STEP 3: Consultations with local authorities and non-governmental civil society actors will finalise the approach laid out above, to ensure that specific gaps – such as educational support or medical support – are adequately provided and resourced for a 'whole of society' approach.

Main Take-Away 3: Enhancing development-oriented referrals (Implementation Phase)

Key informants shared their feedback that referrals should be development oriented and not only referrals to specific training centres, or project specific interventions, but referrals to processes that will include returnees in the national services or development plans.

Identifying referral systems that can be considered as 'development referrals'. One weakness identified in the current referral system is that referrals need to provide long term support, to sustainably address reintegration, and for the moment remind time bound. There is a need to rethink how far referrals can be linked to development programmes by building: Internal referrals (through the same government / country of destination) and external referrals (available in the country of origin).

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Internal referrals are when reintegration actors may choose to refer specific cases to the development agencies of the same destination country, to ensure their integration is planned before return and the referral process is validated ahead of time. These processes of internal referrals need to be already included in the design phase and in the cooperation models built previously. Eligibility criteria were the main obstacle to returnee inclusion in development interventions.

Setting eligibility criteria that can meet the needs of both reintegration and development actors, further discussed below.

- **Voluntary versus forced:** The focus on voluntary return has meant that forced returnees are the more vulnerable, as often left out of referral processes. The inequalities in terms of programming and support should be addressed by removing voluntariness as an eligibility criterion.
- **Daily subsistence:** The different expectations of returnees in terms of stipend to meet their daily needs differ from the host population. There can be a top up or transition offered by reintegration actors to ensure that returnees can have enough incentives to join development interventions.
- **Administrative requirements:** in both Ghana and Nigeria, points were raised about the layers of bureaucracy involved for ERRIN beneficiaries to obtain start-up money, for instance. These administrative hurdles will need to be addressed.

External referrals will happen in the country of return, might be administratively more time consuming as they are made to a range of organisations and government departments (from national to local levels). These external referrals shall be put in place, mapped through case managers and inclusive of families and local actors. The lessons learned from the assessment show the need to always include

- Psychosocial referrals (for the first year)
- Families in the interventions (for instance around livelihoods and financial inclusion)
- Local authorities (so that they can make the link to longer term service provision)

In Ghana the EUD is working on building a national referral system that would include returnees but would be open to everyone – and as a natural fit for further collaboration between R&D actors in Ghana. The connection would be to the national employment bureau, which then connects to offices in different regions of Ghana through a decentralization of services. This is based on the recognition that many of the services for returnees are concentrated in the capital and need to be decentralized through the government. This was confirmed in discussions with ICMPD in Accra, connecting the MICR established at the airport to these employment bureaus, alongside youth employment bureaus/offices to target specific demographic groups among the returnees.

Main Take-Away 4: Monitoring Key Performance Indicators (Monitoring Phase)

For reintegration and development actors to work better together, it was agreed through our consultations that **key performance indicators should be the common language** or objectives used. Among the suggestions made were for monitoring to strengthen a structural and ongoing dialogue, to contribute to more than individual needs, and to be able to show a link of development to migration and reintegration projects.

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Monitor through:

- **A quality monitoring framework** to address the multiple dimensions and multiple layers of reintegration
- Agreed **key performance indicators**, suitable to both reintegration and development action
- A **communication and learning approach**: building on the results of the monitoring for decision making

Monitoring of reintegration remains at a nascent stage. Evidence based planning is critical to both reintegration and development planning and an area where various reintegration actors have already been involved. One the RIAT Tool currently managed by ERRIN. MPI is working for ERRIN at the moment to develop a range of indicators that can be used to monitor reintegration programmes.

Monitoring will be linked to the previous steps. A stronger and formal referral system attached to the MICR in Ghana, at the airport, would provide stronger support to tracking reintegration outcomes. The quality monitoring framework developed by ERRIN/MPI puts an emphasis on not only individual reintegration outcomes, but the quality of the service providers involved, and of the referrals. This is where reintegration and development actors can meet:

- **To monitor the quality of services and improve the range of service providers to involve** (linked to the mapping).
- **Capture all dimensions of reintegration**.
- **Measure the impact of return at the individual and community levels**. While reintegration actors focus on the individual component, the development actors will require the measurement of the impact of return on communities.

Stakeholders interviewed for this study identified through common grounds on which reintegration and development actors could agree on mutual performance indicators, by assessing the:

- **Existence of a structural and ongoing dialogue on reintegration and development** that is inclusive of the EUDs.
- **Results in terms of specific structural projects** that cater to the needs of individual returnees and their communities (e.g. the building of a hospital, or of a job placement platform, or of an employment service centre).
- **Instances where development funding has taken over where reintegration funding has ended** (e.g. identifying services that end as they are development activities, and that can then be taken on board through development funds and programmes).

V. CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

This Assessment Report is based on learnings and knowledge acquired through the ERRIN pilot and other initiatives, the investments of reintegration and development actors in the five countries of origin, and the TWG R&D member's contributions throughout the lifetime of the ERRIN TWG. The data for this assessment is drawn from both primary and secondary sources, as well as primary data collection with key informants and beneficiaries. The OF translates the main take-aways drawn from this report and draws fully on this

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Assessment Report and the inputs from TWG R&D members. The data collected and received has provided the team of consultants with the data needed to draft:

- **Guiding principles**;
- **Operational standards**;
- **A representation of the ecosystem of actors** to connect reintegration and development activities; and
- **Standardised processes** for operationalizing and delineating good practices.

The OF is based on this Assessment Report in six ways, namely the OF:

- Enumerates key **guiding principles** to follow a rights-based framework;
- Provides guidance on how to achieve **transnational and sector alignment** across geographic areas (pre-departure, post-return, country of destination, country of origin) and thematic fields (across reintegration and development actors);
- Recommends **staged planning** to facilitate the handover of responsibility for returnees from country of destination to the responsible authorities of the country of origin, with the potential support of development actors within a period of 12 months;
- Emphasises the need to rely on **partnerships and coordination with an ecosystem of actors** to achieve this alignment and staged planning; and
- Provides critical steps for developing adequate **referral mechanisms** and adequate **resources and funding streams** to operationalize the OF.

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ANNEX I BENEFICIARY PERSPECTIVES

Methods

COUNTRY	BENEFICIARIES INTERVIEWED	IN PERSON SSIs	REMOTE SSIs
Nigeria	2	2	0
Bangladesh	4	0	4

Table 25 - Beneficiaries interviewed

Involving the perspectives, experiences and knowledge of migrants in the assessment was critical. The consultancy team thus strove to interview returnees in the countries of origin to gain insight into how they perceived the activities of the Technical Working Group on Reintegration and Development (TWG R&D) within the larger R&D context. However, lack of stakeholder cooperation prevented the consultancy team from interviewing beneficiaries, except in a few instances. BRAC and Idia Renaissance, ERRIN service providers in Bangladesh and Nigeria, were thus the only beneficiary perspectives included in the Assessment Report, incorporated into the OF on Reintegration and Development (OF), and in this one-pager.

Main findings

- **The beneficiaries benefitted from the support even if at times it was not enough.** Beneficiaries were often satisfied with the support they received through ERRIN and believed that it supported them in reintegrating in their communities upon return and would continue to support them. However, the support was often not enough to meet their needs.
- **The training received was at times the first business-related training beneficiaries had received.** While beneficiaries did not identify this as a challenge, stakeholders should keep this in mind when developing programmes, as multiple rounds of training are likely needed to develop certain skills (e.g. financial literacy).
- **Beneficiaries identified that having children was at times a challenge in terms of reintegration.** Programming which targets individuals only and does not take into consideration the wider household, or the responsibilities the returnee has to various household members, such as children, may thus be unable to address returnees' needs sustainably.

Recommendations based on the findings

- **Greater monetary assistance should be provided under more favourable conditions.** While beneficiaries required more monetary support from ERRIN, the support needed to be under favourable conditions such as lower interest rates. This would ensure that the financial support received within the reintegration package encourages sustainable reintegration in the long-run and bridges the gap between return and their integration into the development landscape.
- **In-depth business training should be continued and enhanced and coupled with monetary support.** While monetary support and training are important, these two components should go hand-in-hand in one programme - something key informants identified, as well. Coupling business training with monetary support makes the training received actionable on-the-ground, while also making the

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money received more sustainable as it is more likely to encourage returnees to invest monetary support received into productive and sustainable livelihoods. Critically, **the trainings should account for returnees' households and household responsibilities**, as well.

- **Decreasing the processing times for assistance is critical.** As referral mechanisms aim to refer returnees to available reintegration assistance supported by development actors, reintegration actors have a limited window to provide effective and timely assistance to returnees. As a result, reintegration actors must make sure processing times for their programming are short so returnees can get this short-term, more individualised assistance to address returnees' pressing and immediate needs.

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ANNEX II ERRIN TWG R&D PERSPECTIVES

TWG R&D members were a key source of guidance and information throughout the project. As stakeholders in reintegration and development (R&D), their opinions, experiences, and expertise informed the Assessment Report and OF throughout their drafting. In this one-pager we present a summary of perspectives of the TWG R&D members as documented in the five TWG R&D meetings. The main takeaways are incorporated throughout the Assessment Report and OF, with more details and depth attached to these perspectives

TWG R&D perspectives

Actors need to mutualise reintegration and development objectives, target groups, scopes, and timeframes. The individual, short-term approach taken to reintegration contrasts with the more community-based, structural approaches of development cooperation. However, establishing key practical links between R&D actors, such as referral mechanisms, can facilitate this streamlining, as well as synergies. Scrutinising funding streams and how they contribute to siloing the R&D fields is critical. For example, immediate return assistance should remain, but should be designed with the understanding that returnees will eventually need to integrate into existing development structure on the ground.

Institutional linkages can complement practical links (e.g. referral mechanisms). However, the level of awareness and buy-in for return-oriented work in the development sector currently inhibits collaboration between the two sectors. As a wider array of actors becomes increasingly involved in return, this gap presents a challenge in fostering linkages for sustainable reintegration.

Transnational cooperation between countries of origin and destination is critical for ensuring pre-departure referrals are systematic and not ad hoc. This requires deep institutional awareness raising and information sharing across the R&D sectors and countries. For example, return counsellors need to be made aware of the realities on the ground in countries of origin, while reintegration actors need to speak to development actors to develop awareness of the development structures and systems on the ground.

Local ownership fosters improved institutional and practical links between R&D actors and thus better provides opportunities for sustainable reintegration. This flows from local ownership better facilitating the integration of return and reintegration plans into countries' development and migration strategies. It also enables countries of origin to identify and capitalise off of returnees being actors of change in their return societies and communities.

Incorporating TWG R&D perspectives

The OF aimed to address the needs and challenges expressed by TWG R&D members by:

- **Establishing key guiding principles**, such as coherence, whole of society approaches, and local ownership, which ensures that an integrated approach to reintegration and development upholds the standards and principles elaborated and touched upon by TWG R&D members;

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- **Developing steps for overcoming the misalignment between the R&D fields**, through operational standards and standard processes like vision-setting, programme mapping and scenario planning;
- **Ensuring communication and collaboration is enhanced by visualising an ecosystem of actors** and providing steps for designing both transnational and local coordination mechanisms; and
- Encouraging the handover of responsibility for returnees' sustainable reintegration to the responsible authorities of the country of origin, with the potential support of development actors over time.

Beyond the project documentation, primary sources, beneficiary interviews, and the key informant interviews, as a key audience, the perspectives of the TWG R&D members guided the development of the OF.

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ANNEX III INTERVIEW LIST

		Modality of the interview		Type of actor interview			Total
	Country	In person KIIs	Remote KIIs	Reintegration actors	Development actors	Other (e.g. governments, local NGOs)	
KIIs							
Countries of origin	Bangladesh	0	6	3	0	3	6
	Nigeria	4	8	7	1	4	12
	Ghana	5	1	4	0	2	6
	Iraq	5	2	2	3	2	7
	Tunisia	2	0	2	0	0	2
Countries of destination	Belgium	1	3	3	1	0	4
	Denmark	0	8	7	0	1	8
	Finland	0	2	1	0	1	2
	Germany	3	3	1	3	2	6
	France	1	2	3	0	0	3
Other	Non country-specific	0	4	2	2	0	4
KIIs GRAND TOTAL							60
SSIs							

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Countries of origin	Bangladesh	0	4	N/A	N/A	N/A	4
	Nigeria	2	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	2
SSIs GRAND TOTAL							6
GRAND TOTAL							66

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European Return and Reintegration Network
Technical Working Group on Reintegration and Development
6 November 2018

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Copenhagen- Denmark

Participants list

		COUNTRY/ORGANISATION
1		Belgium
2		Belgium
3		Finland
4		France
5		Germany
6		Germany
7		Germany
8		Sweden
9		The Netherlands
10		The Netherlands
11		United Kingdom
12		European Commission
13		ERRIN
14		ERRIN
15		Denmark
16		Denmark
17		Denmark
18		Denmark
19		Denmark
20		Denmark
21		Denmark

1. Welcome and Introduction

Welcoming remarks from the Danish Chair:

- Very happy to see colleagues from immigration as well as from development agencies. This confirms the importance of collaboration, acknowledging the complex nature of the issue. There is momentum now, which we have worked for quite a while.
- Need to focus not only on short-term return policies (short-term incentives are obviously not sufficient) but also on the link between reintegration and development policy – how to make the reintegration of migrants sustainable?
- See return and reintegration as part of a broader migration policy agenda (successful return implies successful long-term reintegration)
- Migration cuts between many policy areas. Coordination is not sufficient, programmes need to be **linked**
- In DK a strong cooperation with MFA has already been put in place

Initial remarks from DEVCO:

- Very useful initiative
- More successful attempts are taking place currently to improve coordination between Ministries of the Interior and Ministries of Foreign Affairs/Development than in the past
- Finding practical operational ways to link broader development initiatives with reintegration of returnees is one of the Commission priorities

Purpose of the day:

- Need to bring the policy intentions to a practical level
- Members of the TWG will define the scope of the activities of the TWG and take ownership of it.
- Validate the Concept Note, i.e. objectives, expected results and modus operandi. Further, reach an agreement on elements of the analytical framework, whether we are asking the right questions and finally, agree on a work/action plan.
- Agree on the milestones to be communicated to the ERRIN Strategic Management Board for latter's endorsement

2. Objectives of the TWG

- Practical, hands on – how do we get the actors that we want involved in the actions needed in the context of reintegration
- TWG should jointly elaborate practical best-practices (operational framework) in terms of linking relevant development cooperation initiatives and reintegration
- Creating a community of practice so that will have a tangible tool in terms of how we best go about this

Initial Comments on the Concept Note:

- General agreement in terms of the objective of the group.
- Need for a balance between general principles and concrete examples of good practices
- Need to be as **practical** as possible – concrete example of what does/does not work

- Many programmes that are not focused on migration could be beneficial for returnees but we need referral mechanisms, not only to EC programmes but also to EC-MS/MS-EC and other donors. Interest in finding operational ways to establish these linkages, and doing it together.
- Individual-based approach of reintegration vs. more community based, structural approaches of development cooperation
    - How can returnees access community based programmes in the countries of return?
    - How can returnees benefit from sector development, capacity building, thematic, structural reform and other forms of programmes?
- Need to find the complementarities between EC programmes and bilateral MS programmes

3. Suggested Modus Operandi

- Analyse what we already have, methodologies in different types of existing interventions and initiatives (in what ways they differ, in what ways they are comparable) – some analytical work is to be done at the starting level
- Draft the operational framework

- Opportunity to ask ERRIN to develop concrete initiative (pilot, exploratory activities) and look into funding through the facility
- Review the operational framework after testing in the field through pilot/exploratory activities

Comments/discussions:

- The ERRIN timeframe currently until July 2020 - latest in June 2020 we will need to meet and decide what happens to this group.
- We thus seem to be on quite a tight timescale – particularly to implement a pilot project
- It however depends on how you understand the concept of "pilot" – it could be one activity, one existing practice or linking the existing initiatives in a way that correspondents to the operational framework developed within the TWG.

- A pilot can be implemented within ERRIN but maybe other bilateral opportunities will arise as well. MS should feel free to put the Operational Framework to the test, bringing the results to bear during the review of the Operational Framework.
- Maybe the TWG will turn very fast into a lab based on the experiences around the table.
- We need to keep in mind that a pilot in 1 country may not necessarily work in another country/ replication and scaling in different contexts is something to look at.

4. Foreseen Results

- Operational framework developed
- Exploratory activities
- Operational framework refined based on exploratory activities
- Sharing operational framework with stakeholders

Discussion on the involvement of other partners/actors:

- DEVCO: need for the involvement/consultations of implementing partners like IOM at one point in the development of the operational framework
- We are at the stage of the Initial meeting: the purpose at this stage is to get ERRIN MS development and immigration experts together around the table.
- Actors involved in this field are a much broader set of actors (partner countries and their institutions, implementing partners, such as IOM, other IGOs, NGOs and many others)
- At some point, we need to discuss how we deal with that large spectrum of actors and how we involve them (perhaps specific meetings involving them)
- New UN network for migration to be launched – we could benefit from sharing thoughts and ideas with them – however, it needs to be kept in mind that the focus of the TWG is not the policy development and it aims rather at identifying practical/operational solutions.
- At the same time, backing from the policy makers will be key in the entire process

5. Suggested work plan

When	Milestones	Comments
November 2018-April 2019	Analysis, mapping existing initiatives, drafting contents	PMU to draft TORs for an expert to support this work. Expert supports TWG in data collection and analysis. Budget allocation needs to be reviewed by PMU.
February 2019	Consultations with TWG members and relevant implementing partners	Mid-term meeting – consider whether virtual.
April 2019	Review meeting	Draft Op. Framework reviewed. Priority area(s) agreed
May – July 2019	Mapping of geographic focus area. Identification of pilot/exploratory activities.	Consultation with broader set of actors in geographic focus area(s). Expert support for data collection and analysis.
September 2019	Pilot/exploratory activities verified and launched	Involvement of broader set of actors.
September 2019-April 2020	Implementation of pilot/exploratory activities.	Expert support to MS in data collection and analysis. PMU support in the implementation of pilot/exploratory activities.
End April 2020	Review meeting	Documentation and draft Operational Framework reviewed. Relevant actors involved.
May-June 2020	Revision of draft Operational Framework	Expert support TWG in revision.
End June 2020	Concluding meeting.	Review and evaluate the future of the TWG.

- Noted that procurement for an expertise with a view to the analysis phase to be started ASAP – ToRs for an expert will be developed by the ERRIN PMU.
- ToRs to be shared for comments with the members of the TWG.

Comments/Discussions:

- Mapping should go beyond MS existing bilateral practices, may also include existing initiatives implemented by NGOs etc.
- What are the problems encountered with reintegration of returnees linked to development programmes should also be part of the mapping
- It might be worth looking into the reports of previous ER(R)IN Monitoring Missions
- Geographical areas: we should not always focus on sub-Saharan Africa. For scalability, we need variety of contexts.
- Job creation/ vocational trainings should be considered as one key thematic areas to analyse.
- In terms of geographical areas, MS have some countries they are involved in and others they are not – a mapping of MS geographical involvement should be made as well, providing a matrix overview allowing us to identify 'low handing fruit' where lessons can be drawn immediately and share more obvious gaps can be addressed by pilot/exploratory activities.

6. Discussions in the two parallel workshops

Key questions for the analytical framework identified/validated as a result of discussions of the Workshop No. 1:

1. What are the access/selection criteria for development-funded projects?
- Personal scope
- Geographic scope
- Temporary scope
2. What are the eligibility criteria for the access to individual reintegration assistance funded by the member states' return institutions?
3. How are 1 and 2 interrelated?
4. Complementarities (i.e. continuity) vs. non-eligibility of those who already received individual AVRR packages?
5. How to reconcile "privileged" access to individual reintegration assistance by returnees from specific countries with objectives of and inclusion in (non-discriminatory) community-, area- or sector-based programming?
6. To what extent the return and reintegration considerations are factored in the development programming? Good practices? Challenges?
7. Any input from the refugee and host community context and previous experience?
8. How to approach the links in programming for different migrant groups (e.g. young males, families with children, elderly women, UAM, etc.)?

Key questions for the analytical framework identified/validated as a result of discussions of the Workshop No. 2:

Feasibility of referring returnees to development oriented initiatives – making links in the country of return and host country:

1. Is it feasible to refer individual returnees to development-funded projects and programmes? What would be the best referral mechanism (Who, How…)?
   What are the implications for referral depending on type of development programme (sector, approach etc)?
   At what point in development programming should considering returnees as potential beneficiaries take place?
2. What are the opportunities and challenges, if any, relating to different categories of (**implementing) partners**?
   - INGOs, International organizations (incl. UN)
   - NGOs, CSOs
   - Private (commercial) sector
   - Government
   - Approaches: projectized vs. planning for sustainability
3. What is the role of development actors in programming reintegration? What are the interests of development partners/agencies in getting involved in the individual approach to reintegrating returnees?
4. Before returning a third country national, what kind of **feedback can the return agencies/counsellors obtain from the field**? Do returnees have/should have access to development and reintegration initiatives pre-departure?
5. What is **the role of local actors**, both public and private (including CSO and IGOs), especially of those which in addition to the provision of reintegration assistance are also involved in the implementation of development initiatives? Can they potentially link these two activities and if yes, under which conditions?
6. What type of feedback can current and/or future projects provide?
7. What kind of practical modus operandi could be established, including at the intra-EU level?
8. What type of coordination/responsibility-sharing (if any) between the return/migration agencies and development cooperation is desirable?
9. On the basis of a do-no-harm principle, what risk analysis, if any, is done by organizations/agencies when considering including returnees in programming (in the case of development oriented actors)/when considering utilizing existing development oriented initiatives in the context of individual oriented reintegration planning?

7. Presentations of MS practices

Presentation of DE experience:

- 20 GIZ "Reintegration scouts" – providing information to migrants about what is available in the countries of return
- DE providing potential returnees with short qualifications (vocational training) schemes in Germany – (3 weeks to 6 months): some qualification schemes on basic maintenance for solar installation for example – a few little pilot projects (most of the trainings are taking place in-country at a later stage)

- In-country programme (12 partner countries selected, where DE has development cooperation programmes): a) 'Job and Migration Centers'/information points run in cooperation with the labour agencies/ministries of the partner countries, little trainings on business plan development, CV review, job fairs, etc.; as well as provision of information on the dangers of irregular migration and requirements for legal migration to Germany (level of language skills, etc.). b) Increase of some of the funding (top-ups) of some existing bilateral programmes so that their scope is open to returnees within these programmes (very much focused on economic aspects but there are as well socio-psychological elements to integration, financing to mainly local NGOs for these elements).
- DE has a 'success stories' which they will share with the TWG (currently only in German).

Presentation of BE experience (Enabel):

- 14 partner countries for development cooperation
- Migration at large became a priority for development cooperation policies since 2016.
- In this framework, alongside with other initiatives aiming at fostering labour migration, since 2016 the Belgian development agency started integrating returning migrants into the target groups of projects targeting professional training and employment, at the demand of the EC
- Among the different challenges, Enabel is now addressing issues such as: What are the impact/the risk to embed/involve this population in development cooperation (risks for the refugees themselves, risks for the communities/constituencies/risks for other actors)? How do we deal with referrals – do we only look at Fedasil referring returnees to Enabel? Do we let other institutions refer individuals? To whom do we refer these persons once the training/access to employment activities are completed?
- Practical example - Guinea project (INTEGRA): starting point is the lack of skilled labour in the country. People who will be referred to the project implemented by Enabel will receive job-trainings and a daily salary at the same time. Once the course is finished, they will receive a top-up to start up an activity.
- Project built on an in-country demand.

8. Results and next steps:

- ✓ The concept note was endorsed by the participants of the meeting.
- ✓ Work Plan was agreed upon. The final version of the Work Plan (as displayed in the section 5 above) shared with TWG members.
- ✓ Results of the foundational meeting to be presented at the next week's ERRIN Strategic Management Board meeting with a view to obtaining endorsement from the Strategic Management Board
- ✓ ToRs for an expert to be developed by the PMU, draft will be shared with TWG members for comment.
- ✓ Expert to be recruited and to start the Analysis and Mapping phase asap
- ✓ As promised during the foundational meeting, TWG members providing the data in analysis phase to the expert
- ✓ Attempt to speed up the process
- ✓ Second meeting of the TWG to take place (either physically or via videoconference) in February 2019

- ✓ If a MS is willing to invite TWG members to their capital, communication to the Danish Chair/ERRIN PMU. Danish Chair committed to continue chairmanship.
- ✓ Outreach to other development colleagues from the ERRIN members, with whom the results of the foundational meeting should be shared.

Minutes of the ERRIN Technical Working Group Reintegration and Development
25 April 2019

Ministry of Immigration and Integration, Slotsholmsgade 12, Copenhagen

Annexes:

- Attendance list
- Agenda
- ERRIN PMU Presentation

Welcome and opening of the meeting

- The meeting was chaired by DK, represented by Christina Jespersen (CJ), who thanked the participants for their presence and active contribution to the research.
- The morning session was dedicated to the presentation of the results and data deriving from the research conducted by Sabine Boeltken (SB). The presentation was divided in 2 parts:
    - Preliminary results for the first layer of the research (institutional mapping and project landscape)
    - Analysis of qualitative data reflecting opinions about the development-reintegration nexus
- The afternoon session offered the opportunity for participants to brainstorm on initial pilot ideas in a workshop format.
- The objective for the day was to decide on a list of pilot activity countries and identify already existing projects that could be interested in collaboration. Ultimately, the lessons learned from the pilots will be translated into an Operational Framework document including recommendations on how to strengthen the practical links between the reintegration and development sectors. This will serve ERRIN and development focal points and other interested parties in the design of future projects.
- SB reminded that a Facility exists within ERRIN that funds the implementation of innovative projects; means that funding for pilot activities is available (e.g. additional work force, travels, consultancy fees).

Part 1: Mandate, objectives and operational frame of the research

- During the European dialogue on Reintegration and Development in Berlin, the need for a more coherent approach to tackling migration issues was expressed. Both sectors are servicing the same constituencies, but often each in their own silo. Reintegration has typically focused on the individual and on short-term assistance (6-12 months), whereas development entities see returnees are part of the broader, long-term development of the country. Bridging these two approaches could promote sustainable return and reintegration, and the TWG is exploring how they can be linked and what the limits of such collaboration are. The aim of the TWG is to enable returnees to access and benefit from assistance services offered by development initiatives in the countries of origin. The TWG works on extending the existing value chain by linking up ERRIN with development initiatives.

- The list of questions initially developed during the Foundational meeting in November 2018 was incorporated into the ToR for an Expert for Development and Reintegration. It was decided jointly in January 2019 (TWG, ERRIN PMU) that SB would perform this role.
- With the conclusion of the first phase of field research, the TWG is currently on schedule.
- The next step is to identify countries and programs where the collaboration between development aid and reintegration can be put into practice by designing specific pilot activities
- The pilot activities will have to be presented to and approved by the Operational Management Board.
- As the Operational Management Board scheduled for May 2019 has been cancelled, the TWG needs to agree with the ERRIN PMU which procedure to follow to seek their approval via a specific meeting or via written procedure.

Part 2: Results Level 1 - Institutional mapping and project landscape – Quantitative data

- In her capacity as a consultant, SB has since February 2019 conducted 35 joint and individual interviews, covering 27 institutions. 12 out of the 15 ERRIN MS participated. The aim was to understand how the two sectors are anchored in their country's institutional setting, whether collaboration already exists and how it takes place. Further, an initial mapping of geographic areas of interest for reintegration and development actors, respectively, was conducted as part of the interviews.
- For half of the cases, agencies from both sectors were able to contribute with valuable data to the research. The most flexible potential partners would be those who have development agencies (e.g. GIZ, Enabel) that implement programmes and provide reintegration assistance. Others were willing to assist but could only provide limited information because they outsource implementation to implementing partners and agencies, thus revealing different levels of complexity. For a few cases, development agencies were not available or interested in participating in the interviews.
- As a result of her screening of the MS' institutional and sector-related programmatic set-up, SB presented a set of Country Fiches. This format allows to visualize the institutional anchorage between the two sectors. When drafting them, SB noticed MS' strong interest in discovering the scenario in neighbouring countries, and suggested that as a network, ERRIN could develop this tool and share the knowledge among MS for strategic intel. MS were encouraged to review the Country Fiches and provide their corrections and feedback.
- In the majority of MS, some level of information-sharing exists between the two sectors, but a real institutional link is politically difficult to establish because of the bad reputation pervading the return sector. Still, most also expressed a willingness to "jump on the running train" and use the positive experience in other countries to lobby for collaboration at home.
- Some MS envisaged collaboration with a focus on specific themes, directing returnees e.g. to anti-pollution or livelihood promotion activities rather than an entire sector. A private sector network is also open for collaboration (e.g. via ADA), but to be considered with care as several such initiatives have failed in the past.
- Several countries were cited for a potential pilot activity, amongst which India and Ethiopia being return and ODA country for a number of MS.
- Finally, several EUTF funded programmes should be taken into consideration, e.g. Make it in the Gambia or Archipelago (implemented by German consultancy Sequa & Part. in partnership with the European Chamber of Commerce).

- DEVCO and EUTF voiced a strong willingness to collaborate with ERRIN and liaise with IOM, should they wish to take part.

Part 3: Results Level 2 - Opinions about the Nexus

- The major part of interviewees reported very limited partnership between the two sectors, or "co-habitation" at best; if intersectoral collaboration takes place, it relates to reintegration and not development aid. The same applies to the EC, where joint steering committees (DEVCO, NEAR, HOME) exist, but rather for information sharing than joint programme planning. The only exception is DK, where reintegration packages are considered as ODA.
- Development colleagues reminded that their aim is to the support the country of origin to reintegrate the returnees, wherever they come from. Reintegration is an important area for the development sector, but from the perspective of assisting the country of origin. Therefore, a point of convergence between the two sectors' different motivations must be identified; this can emerge if the returnee is treated not only as an individual needing financial assistance and psychological support, but as part of a community that she/he returns to.
- Overall, it was highly felt that there is no wish to combine the two sectors and their different mandates. Collaboration is desired, but with a clear distinction between the actors, their needs and obligations.
- The responsibility of pre-departure counselling lies with the MS. In order to avoid creating wrong expectations for returnees whose frustrations development agencies will eventually have to deal with, the development sector could provide the counsellors with information about the offers available to them in the country of return that also cater to the needs of that country. Such bridging would necessitate a mediating entity to verify with the development agency whether they are willing to receive the returnee, and thus monitor each case individually.
- The question of the role of development agencies in the reintegration of third country nationals was approached, as development projects focus on capacity building and the structural side rather than individual approaches. Development agencies have the tools to identify the needs of the countries of return; if communicated to the return partners, these needs could potentially be matched in the trainings offered to returnees. With a better understanding of the context of the country of origin, it might be possible to lobby for a perception of the returnee as an added value for the country in terms of development. It is however highly important that pre-departure training manages expectations and does not become a destabilizing factor.
- Development actors cannot shoulder monitoring on a case-by-case basis for free, and immigration agencies/interior and justice ministries are not willing to monitor returnees after assistance. However, the initiative could be framed as monitoring the effectiveness of the programme (avoiding remigration and contributing significantly to the community) rather than the individuals themselves.
- The benefit of collaboration for development partners is that reintegration offers tangible and measurable results. For return colleagues, fighting the root causes of migration and working towards sustainable return offers an opportunity to deliver value to both the individual returning, but also to the communities and countries of return.

- If piloting is to take place within the next year, it is necessary to access an overview of potential participating projects in different countries, so that discussions about how referrals, monitoring and further linkages can begin, with an emphasis on complementarity rather than merging and attention to the fact that it is not up to development agencies to change their operational tools to include ERRIN returnees.
- Regarding handover of responsibility, the AMIF regulations restrict services up to 1 year after return only. A window of opportunity exists with the EUTF, which states that 30% of the beneficiaries should be returnees.

- Three practical solutions for the referral process were presented:
    1. Involving development agencies at the very early stage of pre-departure (communication strategy, information material…) to avoid that inflated promises are made to returnees before departure. However, return counsellors are already overloaded, and explaining the array of development projects in the country of return might add to their workload. On the other hand, this could ease the conversation with the returnees, if they are presented with decent material.
    2. Focusing on what already exists in the field, more responsibility could lie with ERRIN Service Providers and IOM after return. However, existing referrals are not yet operational and limited to reintegration. In addition, this scenario implies the risk of a black box where another entity operates on our behalf, and such outsourcing elements lead to reluctance.
    3. In addition, not as a stand alone solution, extending the EMN IES through gathering data from the field and inserting it into the system.
- There was agreement among the interviewees that ERRIN should play the role of bridging in relation with the referral process.
- The “Do no harm” concept and the challenge of different target groups was raised. Development projects mainly target the local population who do not have the means to leave their country, and whose skills feed into labour-intensive programmes. How to reconcile this reality with offering extra support to the wealthier individuals who bring back a completely different set of skills? It is crucial to ensure that local participation is possible in the programmes. In terms of programme content, it was suggested to observe development programmes proposed in the country of origin to returnees coming from neighbouring countries.
- The possibility of promoting empowerment by channelling the referral process through ERRIN Gov-to-Gov projects was also suggested. This would mean that responsibility to align the system with the countries’ needs would lie with the governments themselves, and to avoid them feeling sidelined by the creation of an additional structure working on their behalf. However, substantial concerns about corruption issues were raised in this regard.
- A list of “Dos and Don’ts” to consider when developing ideas for pilot countries and projects was presented.

Workshops

The afternoon session was dedicated to exchange opinions about the referral options presented during the presentation. The objective of the exercise was to gather key points that should be considered when designing pilot activities related to the respective models for referrals. It has been underlined that both referral modalities (referral prior or after departure/arrival) could be implemented in parallel. In that sense, the models are not understood as ‘either – or’ options, but as ‘pilot type A’ and ‘pilot type B’. The participants worked in two groups and came back to the forum to present their key outcomes.

Group 1 - pre-departure referral

- If the referral mechanism takes place before departure, returnees will feel more motivated because they will be well-informed. It is also an incentive for the counsellors, as they can refer to concrete measures in the COO.
- The time factor is important, as the opportunities for informed referral depend on how much time is allocated for each returnee's pre-departure counselling. The returnee would need more sessions.
- There is also a risk of less flexibility; if a decision is made before departure and the person is not in the COO, the project might not be adapted accordingly.
- The necessary pre-conditions include a more specific training for the counsellors on regulations in COOs, with the possibility of study trips in which MS focal points would be invited to learn how counselling should be done before departure. In addition, counsellors should have access to conditions that enable them to create trust with the returnees. ERRIN should develop guidelines on how to counsel, as well as trainings for them to learn how to present all available options in the country of return.
- Two scenarios are possible:
    - Scenario 1: Have the ERRIN Service Providers (SP) build the link to the development projects and do the continuous coaching. The pilot project would assist the SP and provide the necessary funds to develop their capacity. This however removes the TWG's "marge de manoeuvre" as all responsibility is delegated to a third party. In addition, even with capacity development programmes in place, the SPs are struggling and underperforming.
    - Scenario 2: Appoint someone via ERRIN who will be in charge of mapping and gathering the information from the development agencies in the countries of return, under the supervision of the ERRIN PMU/TWG and in close collaboration with the SP

Group 2 – post arrival referral in chosen return countries

- A clear definition of what sustainable reintegration entails is needed in order to gauge what type of support (e.g. job placement) and which activities to map; mapping all development activities in one country would be too lengthy and not beneficial. It is important to think about what type of activities potential returnees need to return rather than which are easier to manage. For development partners to be able to persuade their management to enter into collaboration, the support
- Has to be needs-based, having a clear idea of what are the needs of potential returnees, what would convince them to return, what type of activity is needed rather than what types of activities are easier to manage at our level.
- India and Ethiopia were discussed as potential pilot countries. Development colleagues pointed out that the relevant activities that could be offered to returnees (job placement, livelihood programmes) are currently mostly directed at Eritrean refugees and humanitarian beneficiaries. Gambia was also brought forward.
- Concern was raised regarding the scope of the pilot; in particular, defining its aim and the purpose was considered necessary before launching into a pilot

- At the same time, it was argued that a learning-by-doing, exploratory approach is essential to a pilot activity, and that its goal is also to find the limitations of the aim to bridge Reintegration and Development programmes;
- The decision about the pilot countries will allow the Consultant (and the TWG) with the development colleagues in the selected countries about the trainings and services they offer, and then produce a pragmatic document suggesting how the collaboration could take place.
- Developing a portfolio of 2-3 countries was encouraged to move forward.
- CJ suggested that (additionally to the designed pilot projects) the Danish Landbank project in Afghanistan that offers an extra allocation to returnees upon arrival, could be integrated into the approach chosen by the TWG.

Results/Next steps

- The next step will be for participants to review their Country Fiches and get back to the PMU with input.
- The reflection about which countries and regions of origin to pilot will continue, all participants are invited to get back to SB with their recommendation and opinion asap.
- It has been proposed and adopted that the MS will elaborate average profiles of their returnees per selected pilot countries.
- Based on these inputs, the PMU will draft the pilot project concept note
- A meeting between the PMU, DK and DEVCO will be held on 3 May 2019 to discuss the design and leadership of the pilot project. Conclusions will be shared with the TWG.

Minutes of the 3rd Technical Working Group meeting on Reintegration & Development

Date 8 December 2020

Location WebEx

Annexes:

- Agenda
- Presentations

Objectives of the TWG meeting

- The objective of the third Technical Working Group (TWG) meeting was to explore the ways of resuming and deepen the initial work done by the TWG on R&D so far and facilitating room for a dialogue for our partners from both, the Return & Reintegration sectors as well as from the Development Aid sector.

- TWG member also were informed on the COVID 19 impact on the TWG's work, and received an update on TWG R&D pilot activities and a further elaborated outline of the Operational Framework (OF), which also entailed a roadmap on the way forward for the remaining period of ERRIN's mandate.

Welcome and Opening

- Ruben Laurijssens, ERRIN PMU Senior Programme Manager, welcomed everyone.
- Due to COVID-19 and staff replacements, there has been an unfortunate delay in starting the pilot activities in Bangladesh and Nigeria, but both pilot activities are due to be implemented soon.
- Development cooperation and home affairs are not yet within the scope of Frontex (FX) portfolio. Thus, the TWG will remain important in the next two years preparing for a feasible future. This meeting is a step towards creating a better alignment of the policy areas of R&D.
- Christina Jespersen, Chair of the TWG, stressed that a lot has happened since the last TWG meeting in terms of adjusting to activities within the field of R&D in accordance with COVID constraints. The meeting comes at a time when there has been general acknowledgement of the need to further strengthen interlinkages between R&D by e.g. OECD, the Migration Pact etc.
- The Operational Framework is a living, working document, and discussions will start but not finish after the meeting.

Outcome of Syntheses Report, Key Findings and Recommendations

- ERRIN provides post-arrival reintegration assistance in 34 countries through contracted service providers, fosters operational governmental partnerships, running several Government to

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Government (Gov2Gov) projects under Pillar II (for example in Ghana and Armenia), and develops tailor-made reintegration services.

- These initiatives are entry points and present a great opportunity to build bridges within the scope of the TWG, to find ways on how R&D approaches can be linked in a coherent, comprehensive and holistic way aiming at sustainable reintegration of returnees from Europe.
- The TWG on Reintegration and Development was founded on 6 November 2018 in Copenhagen. Here, it was decided that the overall objective of the TWG R&D shall be the elaboration of a Practical and Operational Framework to better link individual reintegration assistance programming with current and future development-oriented activities funded and/or developed either by individual Member States, by the European Union or other donors.
- (Possible) linkages, synergies, complementarities as well as discordances between the fields of R&D were researched in conducting 15 interviews with 35 participants from 27 institutions in both the R&D sector.
- Screening was done in three layers for both fields, the first being institutional encouragement of responsible entities. Interviewees reported to be either non-existent or limited given minimal cooperation between the two sectors and where intersectoral collaboration does exist, it relates more to reintegration than development.
- Fragmentation was also observed in terms of differing geographical criteria. It will be important to first make a cluster to identify in which third countries R&D sectors are active at the same time.
- Differences in approach were identified given how the Return and Reintegration (RR) sector generally provides more short-term assistance (6-12 month programmes), focusing on individual returnees, whilst development entities place emphasis on a broader scope by focusing on long-term development of a third country rather than of an individual.
- Target groups are not always consistent between the R&D sectors, as political and strategic agendas differ.
- The second layer observed is the interest of current RR programmes, where a challenge was identified in terms of linking running programmes and projects together.
- When wanting to bridge R&D initiatives, it is important to look into funding schemes and e.g. compare Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) to the EU Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) in terms of how they function.
- The interviews show that activities of the two sectors should not be merged but rather complement each other, which can be made possible by finding those clusters and denominators for which there should be close cooperation.
- The purpose of launching more pilot projects is to get a variety of ideas of what works and what does not with regards to building bridges between R&D fields.
- The Chair underlined that issues discussed in the TWG not only relate to referrals from one type of programme to another, but also to how we considers each other's objectives when programming our respective operations. When there is little consideration for each other's work, it will be more challenging to bridge and link programmes, which will result in complications when trying to smoothly refer one to the other.
- Concerning the funding mechanisms, issues around financial technicalities (how each streaming fund is structured) were perceived as well as issues related to the fact that financial streams have

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to feed results into two different systems, which will require political authorities to reflect those ambitions seen on a technical level.

- OF contains examples of where it is difficult for funding streams to work together, where it is difficult for beneficiary groups to move from one type of programming to another, and where it is difficult to foster coherent monitoring between R&D arenas.
- OF would need to reflect issues arising on all levels (programming, implementation, financial) and issues around perceived limitations, taking examples from pilot activities.

Pilot R&D Nigeria

- ERRIN PMU introduced the pilot by pointing to the key R&D projects pre-identified during the research phase: GIZ (*Perspektive Heimat*, funded by BMZ), EU/IOM (*Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration*, funded by EUTF), and Caritas International/Idia Renaissance (ERRIN Service Provider, funded by AMIF).
- Two fact-finding missions (2019 and 2020) were organised with the objective to observe how R&D programmes could be interlinked to enhance complementarity.
- Involved partners and key actors supported the idea to enhance complementarity of their respective programmes by participating in a more structured and well-defined referral mechanism.
- The pilot will soon be launched. Its objective is to set up and implement an operational coordination mechanism interlinking ERRIN reintegration services with development projects in order to extend the support offered to returnees. The establishment of an operational referral flow will systematically refer eligible returnees to those services offered by development-aid funded initiatives that complement reintegration support already provided by ERRIN.
- An aimed result is to have continuous mapping of existing services within the development sector which is then channelled back to European return counsellors (to help promote voluntary return).
- Another aim is to have at least 20 ERRIN returnees receive additional financial support to cover transport and accommodation costs as an incentive to attend vocational training courses that ensure easier access to the local labour market.

Pilot R&D Bangladesh

- ERRIN PMU introduced the pilot reporting on activities such as the continuous mapping of ongoing development projects which work in parallel to eventually bring structure to and better establish a bridge between R&D services. To do this, an operational coordination mechanism with relevant actors from development sector will be introduced, starting with a kick-off meeting and additional operational coordination platform meetings.
- These meetings will form the baseline for the design of operational referral flows and systematic referral of eligible returnees to development projects (the aim is to refer around 120 returnees).
- Support should also be provided to improving pre-departure counselling in ERRIN MS to better inform returnees.
- The pilot will be launched at the beginning of 2021.

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Outcome of Mapping in Senegal, Mali, Cameroon and Morocco (OFII)

- Within the ERRIN-OFII pilot, OFII offers reintegration assistance to returnees in Cameroon, Mali, Morocco and Senegal, providing access to social assistance (level 1), technical and vocational education and training (TVET) (level 2), and business start-up assistance (level 3) (see attached presentation for more details).
- The reintegration process consists of five steps: 1) meet with the returnee to determine their needs (L1, L2 and/or L3); 2) refer returnee to the relevant local operator; 3) submission of a reintegration plan for the approval of the funding committee; 4) plan is submitted to the MS for their approval; 5) OFII monitors the process and submits its final report to the MS.
- The primary aim of mapping was to get a better understanding of the RR programmes in target countries, while the second aim was to foster operational cooperation between R&D actors on the ground to strengthen reintegration projects.
- To collect data, questionnaires were designed and disseminated to reintegration actors, grouped into six categories (ERRIN MSs, European actors like DG DEVCO, DG HOME, and DG NEAR, national authorities in target countries, international organisations, civil society organisations, and development agencies).
- There are notable differences in the sum of RR assistance MS provide and how they allocate the amount (e.g. cash assistance on departure versus cash assistance post-return).
- Communication strategies (including leaflets, newsletters, information sessions, websites, and telephone assistance) are important to ensure informed and confident decision-making among returnees, to promote the existence of RR assistance, and to increase the number of assisted returns.
- All MSs share common challenges related to broadcasting information on voluntary return to irregular migrants, to reaching out target groups, and to how they in return make themselves understood (BE e.g. is the only country which offers services in an indigenous language of three sub-Saharan African countries mapped).

Cameroon

- In Cameroon, different stakeholders were interviewed including national authorities, development agencies, civil society organisations as well as European institutions and European diplomatic representatives of which there were notably few as most are based in Nigeria.
- Cameroon is the only country among the four states mapped that has special programmes dedicated to return and reintegration, all of which were scrutinised by OFII.
- Four projects were identified that seemingly had the most potential for synergies: the WIDU platform, the Migration and Diaspora Program, the Global Skills Partnerships for Migration, and the Dias Invest 237.
- The WIDU platform is (implemented by GIZ) an online platform created to secure and facilitate diaspora investment in Cameroonian and Ghanaian projects and businesses.
- The Migration and Diaspora Program entails provision of salary top-ups for 24 months targeting qualified regular migrants in Germany who wish to return. It is implemented by GIZ across 22 countries.

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- The Migration and Diaspora Program is also notable in that they mobilise diaspora experts (on 3-week – 6-month missions) to provide technical support to local structures and businesses.
- The Global Skills Partnerships for Migration is an initiative led by the International Labour Organization (ILO) who supports national and development agencies in facilitating the formal recognition of the skills and competences of vulnerable migrants (including returnees). This is an important initiative as returning migrants often lack formal (academic) credentials and therefore have trouble finding employment.

Mali

- A lot of stakeholders are active in Mali compared to Cameroon, including numerous national authorities involved in RR activities as well as development agencies that largely concentrate on youth employment.
- Two key projects were identified which provide an avenue for cooperation between R&D: EJOM and FACEJ.
- EJOM is financed by the EUTF, has four implementing partners, has a 50 % quota for returning migrants, and provides entrepreneurship training to young individuals (under 40) that have completed vocational training in the horticulture, agriculture, craftsmanship, and waste management sectors.
- FACEJ is funded by the Danish Cooperation, implemented by Swiss Contact, and provides funds in the forms of loans to young individuals as well as entrepreneurship coaching over the course of 1 year.

Morocco

- The case of Morocco differs from the other countries mapped as it is in North Africa and has a more stable and stronger economic landscape, meaning that the R&D nexus had to be approached in a different way also.
- All interviewed stakeholders reported the main issue to be a lack in making use of Moroccan public services, as there is a heavy reliance on development initiatives.
- OFII reached out to the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Competencies (ANAPEC) and are currently finalising an ANAPEC-OFII partnership for early referrals of OFII beneficiaries to ANAPEC where they will have online access to technical training as well as entrepreneurial training. With this partnership, returnees will be fully involved in the national (Moroccan) ecosystem as opposed to solely relying on external international actors.
- Another interesting partnership in the making is one with CEFA, an Italian NGO and service provider for both GIZ and OFII, whereby OFII can refer returnees to GIZ if additional support is needed and GIZ beneficiaries, in turn, gain access to OFII's French diplomatic network.

Senegal

- Senegal is a country of departure, transit, and destination, and numerous different actors deploy RR mechanisms in the country.
- 28 interviews were conducted with European institutions, national authorities, development agencies, and civil society organisations.

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- In Senegal, the EUTF deploys EUR 198 million through 18 programmes (10 national, 8 regional), one of the most important being the joint initiative managed with IOM.
- Out of 15 EPIs, 9 have representations in Senegal (AT, BE, FR, DE, LU, NL, ES, CH, and UK).
- Policymakers show strong will to have returnees play a major role in the country's development, setting up structures to implement migration policies (e.g. the Rapid Entrepreneurship Delegation fund, targeting women and young people).

Lessons Learned

- Without a coordinator in the field, it is apparently impossible to mobilise counterparts, keep track of funding requirements, prevent double funding, and, most importantly, guarantee reintegration project coherence
  - *Recommendation:* To ensure efficient implementation of referrals, it is most important to put forward the role of the coordinator.
- Upon reviewing RR systems, there were notable discrepancies related to the amount dedicated to reintegration assistance, which is often not sufficient to launch certain activities (according to the economic sector in question).
  - *Recommendation:* to conduct an economic study per activity sector in target countries and adjust reintegration assistance accordingly to ensure that returnees have sufficient funds to start businesses.
- The returnees usually refrain from participating in TVET not because they cannot afford it but because their priority upon return is to first generate income.
  - *Recommendation:* OFII suggests that reintegration assistance schemes include the payment of stipends to returnees to cover living cost during training and enhance accessibility.
- Interviews with European diplomatic representations abroad revealed that ERRIN, its network, and projects are rather unknown.
  - *Recommendation:* The advice is to foster better communication within ERRIN MS' administrations on ERRIN and its activities.
- A pitfall for most information campaigns targeting return candidates is that they often fail to reach the targeted audience and do not achieve the desired outcome.
  - *Recommendation:* Information campaigns for return candidates should rely on diaspora and national actors to create adequate tools and to ensure the target audience is reached.

Discussions

- DK asked what negative feedback was received from returnee beneficiaries. OFII argued that returnees often struggle with (re)adapting to a now unfamiliar environment and find the time gap between their moment of arrival and the receipt of funding to be too wide, as they still need to put food on the table in the meantime.
- FR notes that COVID-19 has additionally caused delays in the implementation of activities.

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Outline Operational Framework (OOF)

- The OOF is a living document owned by the TWG. It aims to give examples of good practices and provide recommendations (largely based on the implementation of pilot activities) to programme designers of both the R & D sector on how to best interlink their practices.
- A roadmap on the steps forward has been designed by the ERRIN PMU Pillar 2. It foresees to furthering pilot activities in Nigeria and Bangladesh, as well as ERRIN to further explore and assess possible pilot activities in third countries aiming at gaining more lessons learned for the final version of the operational framework.
- Current pilot activities target referral systems (operational coordination mechanism) but other perspectives could and should be explored e.g. looking into the different angles taken by OFII.
- Given a common agreement on the way forward and ERRIN PMU staff capacity limitations, additional possible pilot activities could be explored and presented to the TWG before being submitted to the ERRIN Management Board (MB) by 20 March 2021 so as to potentially implement them before the end of ERRIN's mandate (June 2022).
- ERRIN PMU is planning to draft the Terms of Reference for an expert to evaluate the pilot activities and report on findings as well as to elaborate a first draft of the Operational Framework (OF) in close coordination with ERRIN PMU and TWG members. The ToR for the expert will be presented in one of the coming TWG meetings in which the output and expectations around the OF should also be agreed upon.
- The assigned expert will be evaluating pilot activities and other initiatives as of September 2021.
- The next TWG will tentatively take place in March 2022 to mainly discuss additional pilot activities and updates on the OOF.
- The last TWG meeting will be in June 2022 in which the final OF is presented and disseminated, and will at its best serve the different partners and stakeholders beyond ERRIN's mandate.

Discussions

- DE (BMZ) underlined that they recently embarked similar activities to those that ERRIN envisages and is happy to share their input and collaborate on an operational level (together with third countries in for example Tunisia).
- DE (BMZ) noted that it is important to look into what reintegration means to countries of origin.
- The Chair asked for the latest draft of the ToR to be sent out again given that the TWG has welcomed many new members.
- The Chair reiterated that the TWG's task is to gather operational knowledge and experiences from colleagues in the R&D sector as well as those gained from pilot activities to add to the OF, a document which will offer operational considerations for anyone wanting to link R&D in programmes and projects benefitting returnees.
- AT emphasised that it is important for them to know what will happen to Austrian returnees who might benefit from the assistance offered by the initial pilot projects so that they know how to best incorporate the pilot activities in their e.g. pre-departure counselling. Concerning the OF, more practical input is needed to guarantee the actual implementation of ideas on how to interlink R&D. In Austria, the interlinkage between R&D is lacking and, while they are working on it on a national

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level, ERRIN would be a good platform to have as a dynamic actor and moving indicator in the process.

- AT asked what is the added value for additional pilot projects and whether it is realistic to implement them before 2022 and continue to have an output beyond that timeframe.
- ERRIN PMU explained that the TWG is a good platform and ERRIN is able to facilitate dialogue between the R&D sector, using the OOF as an indicator and other sources to make it into a practical operational framework.
- NL stressed that it is important to not only focus on developmental aid to returnees when talking about R&D, but to also look at how we can support the community at large and with that the work that is being done on governmental structures.
- NL added that, in their view, when the returnee returns to a particular country, they are a national of that country and should be able to fall back on and refer to the existing national structures.
- NL noted that there seems to be an apparent distinction between what is being funded with the reintegration package and what is funded by development agencies; NL believes that it would be good to improve this process by asking who is doing what and where to streamline funding and project designs more effectively.
- FR agreed with NL on the point of taking community needs into account and replied to the point made about funding processes by explaining that categorising projects as either an R&D project is not easy given the diversity in criteria and duration of projects and how they are still implemented on a case by case basis (all of which emphasises the vital role of the coordinator).
- BE added that they are always astonished at the sheer amount of development projects running in third countries, funded by European countries, and believes in the added value of strengthening centralisation of these processes, engage in continuous mapping, and looking into what links can be made between existing projects.
- BE pointed out that - in pre-departure counselling stage - the returnees are often too preoccupied with processing their departure, which often hinders them to properly focus on post-return actions; in Guinea e.g. service providers give more detailed description on reintegration services taking into account that returnees are more likely to be open to these details upon arrival.
  The Chair noted that TWG members not only want to look into ways of linking existing development activities but also include programming on a community level and share knowledge on potential returnee streams among development actors, all of which can be used as input for the draft OOF.

➢ **Conclusion of the discussion**: No objections to the roadmap presented by ERRIN PMU have been made; continuous involvement of TWG members has been encouraged, and valuable information and experiences will be added to the outline and shared in future TWG meetings.

New Migration Pact, European Commission (COM)

- COM focused its presentation on the upcoming strategy on voluntary Return and Reintegration (RR), which was announced in the “New Migration Pact” and which, according to the calendar annexed to the Pact, is intended to be adopted at the end of Quarter 1, 2021 (ideally by the end of March).

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- COM will further develop texts and ideas as well as to ensure that finalised material (resourced from the COM, EPIs, and other European bodies) is collected and incorporated into a coherent strategy.
- The key objectives of the new Migration Pact are as follows:

    - The envisioned content of the strategy will emphasise that voluntary return is the preferred way of return.
    - The Pact proposes an avenue of solidarity aiming at further exploring how Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) can be used via a new form of solidarity and return sponsorship, including e.g. opening access of national AVRR programmes in a third country for other MS, covering costs of ongoing activities, and capacity building between MS.
    - Enhance the efficiency of provided assistance by avoiding duplications and increasing synergies with the actions of other donors in third countries.
    - Increase sustainability of return and reduce irregular migration.
    - Strengthen capacity and ownership of third countries over the process of return, readmission, and reintegration of their own nationals.
    - For this purpose, the strategy will put forward a set of tools e.g. RIAT, which the COM wants to institutionalise as the referral mechanism at EU level for onwards referrals (and potentially external referrals in the future) and which it wants to use for better monitoring of service provision.

- COM announced its intention to work on the quality framework, in close cooperation with ERRIN, and establish minimum content or harmonisation of RR support to third-country nationals.
- Harmonisation also comes into play when considering AVVR in the context of solidarity in terms of further alignment on the content and extent of support provided by different donors to different nationals.
- The framework on return counselling could become one of the more concrete deliverables of the strategy.
- Once adopted, EURODAC will hinder reintegration shopping in case a returnee has already benefitted from reintegration assistance from another MS.
- There is a need to establish guidelines, such as the OF, establishing linkages between different projects, whether funded by MS or EU, to close potential gaps and benefit from synergies.
- It terms of funding, there are two avenues; (1) the future Asylum Migration Fund (AMF, successor to AMIF) overseen by DG Home which would be used for internal referral and initial packages of post-return support, and (2) the other being overseen by DG DEVCO and DG NEAR.
- DG DEVCO is currently reflecting on lessons learned and recommendations regarding previous RR programmes and referral mechanisms, and is notably finalising a report on lessons learned concerning the EUTF for Africa.
- At this stage there are a couple of examples of good practice but there equally is still work to be done in filling the need to e.g. explore how to better design projects to include returnees, better coordinate between national stakeholders and ensure sustainability.

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- The referral of returnees to other programmes should not replace reintegration projects but certainly play an important part in the reintegration process.
- AVVR programmes are expected to be to a large extent implemented on a regional level (now it is mostly done on a national level) as the COM will look into the different gaps in the migration agenda and see where action is needed on a regional level, focusing on AVVR regional programming as a key element.
- For DEVCO Africa, AVVR is one of the main priorities and will absorb a large portion of the funds allocated to migration in Africa.
- DG Home presented recommendations around sustainable reintegration programmes as follows:

    - In terms of linking EU and donor-funded development projects, it is essential to connect reintegration projects to local and existing development initiatives as early as possible in the stage of project design to ensure that the project responds to the needs on the ground and activities are feasible and efficient.
    - Notably, in many target countries, measures have been set up to decrease the vulnerability of local populations, supporting their livelihoods; the returnees need to have access to such programmes and it should be reflected already in the project design.
    - Some barriers to accessing such programmes due to the project's geographic coverage, scope and eligibility criteria, illustrate the need for reintegration projects to include advocacy activities and to be developed in close cooperation with relevant actors on the ground to limit such access barriers.
    - Coordination mechanisms are key elements when developing reintegration schemes; there is an importance in knowing which donors fund existing programmes by e.g. governments, civil society, international organisations as well as the statuses of these programmes to identify relevant synergies and whether they target returnees or broader target groups.
    - It will also be important to analyse whether programmes that target long-term assistance to returnees are likely to continue beyond their funding phases (set by e.g. development agencies).
    - Even with dedicated RR support from national authorities, it might still be useful to study a third country's legal framework and identity laws and regulations which may act as gaps and hamper the successful reintegration of returnees (e.g. limited rights for women to obtain land or own a business), taking this into account in the programme design phase.
    - The drivers that result in migrants' initial decision to migrate and the factors influencing their ability to reintegrate in their country of origin are two sides of the same coin; if these factors are not addressed emigration will continue as a coping mechanism against inadequate standards of living, lack of opportunities and security.
    - Sustainable reintegration programmes should work in support of host communities and go beyond the socioeconomic development of returned individuals to benefit the community at large.
    - Reintegration programming should therefore be fully integrated, nationally and locally, into existing development plans and migration strategies through the revision of policy frameworks and development of reintegration-friendly policies. This makes the country of

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origin the lead actor in the process and ensures contextualised priorities and sustainable outcomes.

- Similarly, it is important for the governments of countries of origin and international organisations to include reintegration programmes in development frameworks and strategies. Strategies for migration mainstreaming should be developed in partnership with key stakeholders to improve commitment, clarity, and cost-efficiency.
- Other preconditions include the active involvement of stakeholders on all levels to facilitate discussions whereby realistic, shared objectives and timeframes can be identified and agreed upon.
- An example of how to boost returnee employment through supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is an IOM-implemented project in Iraq, which provides SMEs with grants for their continuing expansion and recovery, facilitating the creation of jobs among marginalised communities, including returnees, who lack e.g. access to formal finance. The project focuses on areas with high return rates or areas with significant displaced populations and approaches reintegration from a more structural lens in creating jobs that can be matched to specific beneficiary profiles (such as returnees). To replicate such a project, strong donor interest is required not only in the reintegration of the returnee but also in economic recovery and social coherence beyond the returnee community.

Discussions

- DE (BMI) asked at which stage in the process of drafting the Strategy there will be the opportunity to bring in the experience and feedback of different MS, and inquired what the objective is in terms of the Strategy's depth and volume.
- The COM clarified that many consulting and feedback forums took place including numerous in-depth talks and workshops. Thus, the COM is therefore not planning for another round of consultation before the adoption of the Strategy.
- DE (BMI) reiterated their interest to be consulted. COM replied that the Strategy will include both the big picture and well as some nitty-gritty specifications (around e.g. RIAT) but overall the aim is to display the European direction and announce what the COM would want to achieve together with MS.
- DE (BMZ) is disappointed that COM is not planning another consultation process amongst MS, considering the extensive experience supporting development in partner countries, which could be incorporated in the new Strategy.

Assessing New Potential Pilot Activities

R&D Activities in Ghana

- ERRIN is already quite active in Ghana by providing post-arrival and reintegration systems via its service providers and, since March this year, by implementing a capacity-building project (ERRIN Gov-to-Gov initiative) with the Ghana Immigration Service (GIS).
- Within the Gov-to-Gov framework, ERRIN contributed to the establishment of an information desk at the Kotoka International Airport (Accra) for the provision of referral services upon arrival.

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- In order to strengthen GIS' capacity to deal with returnees, ERRIN also organised training activities on counselling, conflict-management techniques as well as on IT issues such as the management of sensitive data.
- Given the new key role that GIS will play, there is the need to have better stakeholder coordination, which lead the EUD to Ghana to officially invite ERRIN to take part in coordination meetings with GIZ and IOM for the implementation of a referral mechanism.
- There is also an ongoing bilateral discussion with GIZ/Ghanaian-German centre on how to improve reintegration service delivery by implementing consistent referral mechanism.

State of Play: SRI & SRA

- The ERRIN Facility project – Sustainable Reintegration in Iraq (SRI) – will be operational in early 2021 and focuses on business development, offering returnees pre-departure business training (which they can continue after arriving in Iraq).
- A job vacancy platform was also established, creating a meeting place for returnees, which is in accordance with a campaign launched towards creating acceptance of returnees in local communities.
- The Sustainable Reintegration in Afghanistan project (SRA) has provided courses on business development training to better prepare returnees to start a business and to improve the quality of business plans.
- After offering psychosocial support in Afghanistan, the recommendation is to offer it outside of the training and to establish a return support network where returnees can share their experiences and benefit from the positive effects that come out of being connected (this is also the reason why training is done in groups).
- Feedback received from the SRA project can be fed back to counsellors in Europe to improve pre-departure counselling in ERRIN member countries, creating a feedback loop.

Preparatory Reintegration Training

- While potential activities are still on the table, in general they should pertain to entrepreneurship training and job placement.
- The expectation is that the majority of returnees will choose entrepreneurship over job placements according to labour markets in the countries of origin but also because of anticipated job-skill mismatches.
- Counsellors face challenges when informing returnees on post-return possibilities; easy learning skills could be the way to go but there is the question of timing, incentive and preparation.
- Challenges are also seen around participation and labelling; if you label courses in a way that point to the return direction, it might be difficult to attract those who have yet to make up their mind and can affect group dynamics in the sense that it can create the feeling of 'what have you been doing here' as it is not geared in an economic or protective direction.
- Preparation is very important, and incorporating it would allow the return process to be more of a continuum as opposed to having diverging processes for pre-departure, on the one hand, and post-return, on the other.

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Discussion: Exploring Other Pilot R&D Activities in Third Countries

- DE (BMZ) is active in 13 countries, 12 of which have advice centres for jobs, migration and reintegration and many of which overlap with countries such as those in the Maghreb area.
- DE (BMZ) sees an opportunity for cooperation regarding R&D pilot activities in e.g. Tunisia or Morocco given the important partnership in these third countries. There is always room to improve and complement reintegration services to returnees with development activities.
- The Chair mentioned that while additional pilot activities would need to be launched in a slight hurry if they are to be funded under ERRIN's mandate, they should not be launched for the sake of having additional pilot and still be well thought through.
- The Chair encouraged TWG members to explore and identify innovative activities which can give different perspective and a diversity of options and potentials to be scrutinized within the OF.
- FR noted that the work done within the OFII pilot activities could also give incentives for further small-scale pilot activities that consider R&D interlinkages. Potentially these approaches could be applied to other countries as well.
- NL pointed out the importance to stick to those countries in which ERRIN is active given how this could limit the selection of potential third-country partners.
- ERRIN PMU noted time constraints due to the short period of the ERRIN's mandate. Developing pilot activities building on existing partnerships working on the ground is the easiest way (field missions to a third country are not possible due to COVID-19 travel restrictions).
- BE required clarification whether TWG members should either quickly send in project proposals or wait and see what Frontex might come up with in the near future.
- The Chair explained that R&D activities lay outside of FX' scope and emphasised the importance of the work done within the scope of the TWG, and encouraged to further support the work of the TWG. Furthermore, there are already numerous initiatives under development, funded pilot activities focusing on establishing referral mechanisms, the Ghanaian Gov-to-Gov initiative as well as the preparatory reintegration-training pilot, which has yet to be funded.
- AT would like to know what direct role they would need to play in the project design process.
- ERRIN PMU explained that in the best case scenario the internal procedures to set up other pilots should not take more than 3 months, making it possible for TWG members to endorse proposed pilot activities in March 2021, before submitting them to the ERRIN MB for its approval and ensure enough time for implementation before the end of ERRIN's mandate.
- AT inquired whether ERRIN plans to ask host countries to put additional eligibility criteria in place for development assistance or whether returnees eligible for reintegration assistance would simply receive additional development assistance.
- ERRIN PMU affirmed that referral is one piece of the puzzle and that they aim at facilitating innovative approaches and find sustainable solutions to challenges faced on the ground (or at the very least look into lessons learned).
- The Chair noted that development aid colleagues can be enticed to bring in examples of development aid initiatives that would feed into the TWG R&D work and open to returnees as part of their group of beneficiaries.
- DEVCO emphasised that coordination cells are key to seeing how to interlink R&D and liaise with development agencies on the ground.

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- AT stressed to keep the challenge of monitoring in mind, knowing the number of beneficiaries of extended assistance from the development side would be an important measure of assessment, which could serve as a decision factor for further activities.
- Regarding what might happen after ERRIN's mandate expires, ERRIN PMU noted that there is of course a lot uncertainty but that there might be two options for the continuation of so called "left overs" parts, which FX will not take over from ERRIN. The first option being that ICMPD takes the lead, and the second being a MS initiative, whereby specific actions are led by MS according to their willingness to join. The aim is to have two fully-fledged project proposals by the next ERRIN SMB meeting in May 2021, which gives ERRIN half a year to develop both options and look into how the AMF can play the role as main funding line.
- BE asked whether an option is to have a mixture of both scenarios to which ERRIN PMU explained that the possibility of two business cases whereby specific actions are taken over by ICMPD and others by MS depends on the actors involved.

Summary of Decisions and Conclusions

- The Chair thanks everyone for their participation and asserts that the meeting's presentation have given a lot of food for thought.
- The present members of the TWG have endorsed the roadmap embedded in the attached draft outline of the Operational Framework which entails the way forward concerning the elaboration of the operational framework and for ERRIN PMU to explore further pilot initiative.
- TWG members will be kept abreast and called upon for continuous cooperation and involvement throughout the entire process.
- Comments, concerns and recommendations were presented regarding funding, eligibility criteria, programming, the duration of different types of programmes, all of which will now be incorporated into the OF.
- When developing the OF, what will be kept in mind is that its purpose is to be a hands-on description of how linkages between the R&D can best be implemented and what challenges are likely to arise.

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Minutes of the 4th Technical Working Group meeting on Reintegration & Development

Date 28 April 2021

Location WebEx

Annexes:

- Agenda
- Presentations

Objectives of the TWG Meeting

- The objective of the fourth Technical Working Group (TWG) meeting was to provide a platform for members to share the experiences they gained in developing and implementing EU and MS common planning instruments and tools to bridge development, return and reintegration activities, pursuing a holistic and coherent approach.
- Moreover, members were invited to identify respective needs on an operational level for both sectors, development and return & reintegration, from both the perspective of the European Commission (COM) and Member States (MS).
- The outcome of the discussions shall be incorporated in the main deliverable of the TWG: the Operational Framework (OF).
- The EU Commission furthermore presented the recently adopted Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration during the fourth TWG meeting. .

Welcome and Opening

- Ruben Laurijssens, ERRIN PMU Senior Programme Manager, and the Chair of the TWG, Christina Jespersen (Chair), welcomed everyone.
- One of the founding principles of the ERRIN programme was to prevent unnecessary overlaps between the worlds of DG HOME, DG INTPA, and national funding sources. Progress can be seen in this regard, especially looking at the pilot activities launched in Bangladesh and Nigeria.
- The ERRIN programme is now at three-quarters of its lifespan, officially ending in July 2022. Most joint reintegration services will be taken over by Frontex (FX). The TWG falls outside of FX' mandate, however. Together with ICMPD and COM officials, MS are therefore developing business cases to ensure both a smooth transition and the continuation of relevant reintegration activities. Hopefully, the direction of such scenarios will become clear in the next six months.
- Prior to this meeting, a draft Terms of Reference (ToR) and draft outline of the OF were forwarded to members. These were fleshed out as much as possible following the discussions in previous TWG meetings. The Chair encouraged members to give their input and feedback so that the

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outline can be further developed and handed over to the external expert who is likely to start in September 2021.

- The Chair, further introduced the breakout sessions, underlining that the themes of the three sub-working groups are related to those seen in the outline of the OF. The OF is meant to be a practical listing of best practices, outcomes of joint experiences; as such, it will not be a policy paper but rather an overview of optional best practices that can be taken up by practitioners and project designers involved in sustainable reintegration and development at large.

Updates: Pilot R&D Bangladesh

- ERRIN PMU presented an update on the pilot activity by announcing that in cooperation with BRAC, it launched on 1 February 2021 with an initial duration period of 12 months.
- The pilot activity aims to enable ERRIN returnees to systematically access and benefit from assistance services provided by development-aid funded projects in Bangladesh. Key activities include the setup of an operational coordination mechanism that interlinks ERRIN returnees with relevant development initiatives, the continuation of mapping potential development projects that are also potentially open to returnees, and the design and testing of an operational referral flow to make use of the services provided via the development sector.
- Over the past weeks, numerous (remote) meetings were organised between ERRIN/BRAC and representatives from, for example, the EU delegation in Bangladesh, EURLO, DG INTPA, and the Danish embassy.
- The referral of ERRIN cases has already started to both projects (*for more details on which services are available to ERRIN returnees, please consult the attached presentation*).
- Some of the services available to ERRIN returnees e.g. in-person training are suspended for an interim period due to the COVID-19 lockdown in Bangladesh.
- In the upcoming period, other development-funded initiatives will be identified (as part of the mapping exercise) and contacted.
- If this pilot activity is deemed effective, its continuation (beyond the end of January 2022) will be considered.

Q & A

- DE asked if figures or examples were available to highlight to what extent and in what ways beneficiaries in Bangladesh benefit from and are involved in the reintegration activities. ERRIN PMU noted that because the pilot only just started, such figures are not available yet. The idea is to give a more detailed update in the next TWG meeting.
- DG INTPA argued that the main objective of referrals should be to refer returnees not to reintegration-specific projects such as Prottasha, but to general development cooperation projects on employment, education, infrastructure, social services, etc. There are indeed two referral systems; one is inward referral, from MS to INTPA projects (done e.g. under EURADA), and the other referral is to development initiatives and national programmes. DG INTPA prefers not to mix the two concepts of reintegrating returnees via reintegration-specific projects and via other development cooperation projects (which is what DG INTPA perceives the pilot to be doing), and would rather see referrals going to the latter projects.

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- In response to DG INTPA's comment, ERRIN PMU reiterated that they envisage the pilot to be redesigned where needed and will take on DG INTPA's input in the process. ERRIN PMU also welcomed a bilateral exchange between ERRIN PMU and DG INTPA to further the discussion.
- The Chair noted that the design of the pilot and choice of having BRAC as implementing partner were precisely based on the opportunity to engage with an organisation (i.e. BRAC) that is involved in a wide range of development initiatives and funded by a broad range of sources. The Chair would thus like to see the original pilot design maintained and encouraged ERRIN PMU to underline in the design the BRAC needs to work with funding donors to allow for the opening up of development projects' beneficiary group (to also include returnees).
- DG INTPA commented that when there are more beneficiaries than expected and in the case that reintegration-specific projects do not have the capacity to accommodate all returnees, there should be a mechanism in place to refer returnees to other development projects. DG INTPA's main point was that they want to see a broader spectrum of development projects involved and to not limit referrals to just e.g. Prottasha (a reintegration-specific development project); the idea is to refer returnees to projects that did not already include returnees as part of their beneficiary group.

Updates: Pilot R&D Nigeria

- The overall objective of the pilot activity in Nigeria is to interlink ERRIN with development aid-funded initiatives in the country and to enable ERRIN returnees to access and benefit from services provided by such development projects. The contracted service provider (SP), CARITAS International Belgium (CIB) (together with local SP Idia Renaissance) will establish an operational coordination mechanism and a referral flow that will systematically refer eligible ERRIN returnees to relevant services provided by the development sector, complementing the ERRIN reintegration package.
- The pilot activity budget will cover 20 reintegration slots. On top of the national reintegration allowance that each returnee will receive from the respective ERRIN Partner Institution (EPI), ERRIN will also finance 20 additional reintegration packages to cover the costs related to vocational training and educational courses (also giving returnees an incentive to attend the TVET programmes delivered by the development sector).
- The official kick-off meeting was organised in Benin City on 19 April by CIB and Idia Renaissance (ERRIN SP in Nigeria); representatives from GIZ, the EU-IOM joint-initiative (funded by EUTF), and Caritas Nigeria participated. Also present were two former ERRIN returnees who presented their reintegration stories. One of the main purposes of the meeting was to bring key actors together to discuss the operational coordination mechanism and identify gaps, challenges, and solutions that could have better supported returnees in complementing the basic reintegration assistance provided by ERRIN (e.g. finding accommodation, purchasing household items etc.). Another purpose of the meeting was for key actors to come to agree on a referral workflow and communication channel.
- Steps were also taken towards aligning training offers. Participants agreed to share training topics and schedules beforehand to better align the different courses in the future.
- As a way forward, participants committed to start using the operational platform for effective service delivery. The aim is to also identify other development-funded initiatives as part of the

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mapping exercise and include them in the operational coordination mechanism. Monthly meetings will be organised between participants to discuss the state of play and the implementation of referral flows as well as to continue with identifying challenges and best practices.

- The current pilot phase will go until 31 October 2021; EPIs can thus refer cases to the ERRIN PMU until then to make use of the 20 reintegration slots available. ERRIN PMU is exploring ways to extend the pilot (phase II) until June 2022 to ensure a smooth continuation of the current activities and to possibly interlink the R&D activities with the newly launched Public-Private Initiative led by ICMPD.

Q & A

- DG INTPA asked whether the EU delegation in Nigeria was involved. ERRIN PMU mentioned the delegation was informed about the pilot but that no feedback was received.
- DG INTPA noted that they had a very useful meeting with the delegation in Bangladesh and would therefore support the further involvement of the delegation in Nigeria by e.g. organising a similar meeting. ERRIN PMU stated that while there was a fruitful meeting in January 2020 as part of the first mission in Nigeria, whereby a technical workshop was organised for key actors, since the pilot was launched, ERRIN PMU has not received feedback from the delegation in Nigeria. DG INTPA offered their assistance to ERRIN PMU if they would need it to create a better linkage between them and the delegation in Nigeria.

New Pilot Activities: Public-Private Partnership in Bangladesh

- This extended TWG pilot activity is under development and to be implemented until the end of ERRIN's mandate aims to building public-private partnerships (PPP), strengthening the operational coordination mechanism by better linking reintegration services with the private employment sector's labour market needs.
- The latest project proposal was sent to all TWG members on 26 April 2021. Members are invited to comment on it as soon as possible.
- The objective is to set up an operational coordination mechanism, which would involve multidisciplinary stakeholders, mainly Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) implemented by ICMPD and the Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment (MEWOE). MRCs are mandated with the counselling of migrants as well as returnees wherever the caseload allows for it.
- Key activities include stakeholder mapping and the development of a concept for PPP in service of the reintegration of returnees in Bangladesh. After an in-depth assessment, the objective is to set up an operational PPP coordination and consultation platform meetings. If appropriate, an online platform could be established on a long run. Finally, there would also be an evaluation of results, challenges and good practices.
- The pilot will be closely linked to and complement the pilot activity (concerning the operational referral mechanism) implemented by BRAC as well as the recurrent reintegration

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services provided by ERRIN. Linkages to external activities include those organised by MRCs.

Q & A

- DG INTPA asked which part of the private sector in Bangladesh this pilot would be targeting and what the strategy is to bring the sector on board. ERRIN PMU responded that they are still assessing the situation, relying on ICMPD officers in Dhaka and the EU delegation in Bangladesh to provide more information on what is feasible and available. The first activity of the pilot will be an in-depth mapping exercise after which ERRIN PMU will be in a better position to answer DG INTPA's question.

Decision Making: Extension of Pilot Activities and Submission of New Pilot Activity to MB

- BE expressed their support for the extension of pilot activities in Bangladesh and Nigeria and for the PPP pilot to be submitted to the Management Board (MB), emphasising, however, that phase II of these pilots should include a brainstorm on the handover of their activities beyond June 2022.
- DG INTPA asked whether they could provide their comments in writing and until when. ERRIN PMU asserted that they have shared the latest pilot proposals with the EU Del in Dhaka, which will also be forwarded to DG INTPA and welcome the EU stakeholder's comments.
- DE endorsed the continuation of all activities, especially the PPP pilot in Bangladesh. DE has a concern about the continuation of such activities after ERRIN's phase-out period, stressing that it is particularly important to zoom in on referral mechanisms. It is clear that there are available institutions on the ground in Nigeria and Bangladesh to provide returnees with reintegration assistance but little is known on how the referrals actually work in practice. This gap should be filled and the information forwarded to counsellors to benefit future returnees.

New Pilot Activities: the Danish Pilot Project

- The following presentation will introduce a project, funded through a specific budget line within the Danish development assistance facility (Flexible Return Funds) and managed by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in close cooperation with its Ministry of Immigration and Integration. The project was launched in February 2021; the project's duration is 24 months, ending in January 2023.
- The *Capacity Building for Long-term Reintegration of Returnees to Afghanistan and Iraq Complementary to Reintegration Support through ERRIN* project (acronym pending) is a two-year project to be implemented by ICMPD. DK looked into the possibility of letting the funding be channelled via the ERRIN Facility but due to various technical reasons and a limited timeframe, it was not feasible to do so through the existing ERRIN framework.
- The project can contribute to the lessons learnt (from Afghanistan and Iraq) within the context of the TWG, and as such feed the operational framework. While DK recognises the divergent implementation contexts, the same project concept will be utilised in both Afghanistan and Iraq

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with the overall objective being the creation of conditions for sustainable reintegration of Afghan and Iraqi returnees (individuals as well as families) in their communities of return.

- The project has two components, each with their own outcomes. The first component seeks to pilot a model of long-term reintegration assistance in return communities in the two countries and to strengthen the capacities of the Afghan Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation and Iraqi Ministry of Migration and Displacement at a national level as well as those of community-based organisations in both countries. This plan will be tied to the implementation of the model of long-term reintegration.
- In that way, the project activities foresees the provision of extended reintegration support to a cohort of returnees who have been supported through ERRIN interventions, by creating linkages between ongoing ERRIN efforts and development objectives of the communities to enhance ownership. In Afghanistan, for example, reintegration-specific programmes could be linked to the Citizens' Charter Afghanistan Project (an area-based development programme), amongst others.
- Component II follows the same concept as the extended PPP pilot activity in Bangladesh, but was adjusted to the specific Afghan and Iraqi context. The first desired outcome (2.1) under Component II is to develop a concept for this specific PPP that allows for the reintegration of returnees in the two countries. This will be relevant for returnees coming from MS as well as those coming from other countries (external migrants) or returning internally displaced persons.
- The second desired outcome (2.2) is to set up multi-stakeholder platforms for the reintegration of returnees, which is needed to forge elements of both the private and public sector.
- The project not only aims to enhance the ownership of national authorities in the two countries, but also links returnees to these local authorities, to their families, and communities of return. Fundamental to the sustainable reintegration of returnees is the ability to connect them to the local development ambitions of their national authorities, communities, and families.

Q & A

- DG INTPA asked, with regard to the multi-stakeholder platform, whether this would involve national authorities. If so, how would DK approach this? DG INTPA also commented that DK should take existing structures and ongoing development projects in the two countries into account to ensure that this project complements what is already there. If need, DG INTPA can put DK in touch with their colleagues at the EU delegations in Afghanistan and Iraq for better coordination between key actors.
- DK replied by saying that the project's design was based on observed results from existing projects and from reaching out to relevant stakeholders; building on what is already in place in the two countries is indeed the whole point of this initiative.
- DG HOME wanted to be reassured that the project does not duplicate the established PPP policies in Afghanistan; in Iraq, there are no such policies. The success of this project may therefore rely on what has already been established as well as on the willingness of governments to engage in this form of cooperation.
- DK recognised the vastly different contexts the project would be working in and understands the project's aim to be to build on existing structures to ensure the ownership of national authorities and local communities. DK also remarked that results from ERRIN initiatives in Afghanistan (led

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by SE) and in Iraq (led by FI) can be useful in this regard. As the initiative is still in its early stages, there is the need to further flesh out the approach, especially making sure that the approach in Iraq is in line with national authorities' priorities.

- FI mentioned that in having worked in Iraq, they have experienced a lack of cooperation on both a higher and structural level. FI is looking forward to seeing this developed further via the Danish initiative.

The New EU Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration

- DG HOME presented the new Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration, which was adopted by COM one day before the TWG meeting (27 April 2021). The Strategy will officially be discussed on 12 May 2021.
- The Strategy is ambitious given how it is placed within a new ecosystem on returns, whereby the EU is looking at increasing cooperation on readmission, improving the governance framework, equipping Frontex with a new operational mandate on returns and appointing an EU Return Coordinator. It also aims to develop a more uniform and coordinated approach among MS to unlock their full potential concerning (voluntary returns).
- The Strategy is clear on its (three main) objectives, wanting to focus on raising the number of voluntary returns, (the quality of) reintegration assistance, and the EU governance framework around reintegration services.
- The Strategy proposes a set of measures, which, when translated from the nuanced policy wording used, simply outline who will do what and possibly by when. The measures are not legally binding, but provide COM and MS with a to-do list, including innovative techniques and tools to execute reintegration efforts (including the engagement with Third Countries).
- The strategy identifies challenges that complicate the uptake of voluntary returns and suggests a coherent approach based on measures under seven pillars:

    - **Strengthening the legal and operational framework** – having a coherent, strategic approach to reintegration services requires solid legislation adopted by MS. Such legislation is proposed in the New Pact, and discussions (with co-legislators) on finalising the legal framework are expected to conclude as soon as possible. This part of the Strategy also elaborates on FX' future role, focusing on quantifiable expectations (i.e. number of return operations) and FX' takeover from ERRIN.

    - **Facilitating effective coordination between all stakeholders** – in Third Countries, when it comes to implementing grants, COM (together with the High Representative/Vice President (HR/VP)) ensures effective coordination among all parties involved and specifically refers to EU delegations; the latter being best equipped to engage with local stakeholders given their better understanding of the local context as well as of local priorities. In MS, an important role is set aside for the Return Coordinator and High Level Network for Return to facilitate a forum for (technical) exchanges on best practices.

    - **Supporting voluntary return and reintegration of migrants located in non-EU countries** – there is a need for continued support (e.g. via the EU-IOM Joint Initiative)

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towards the voluntary return and reintegration of migrants from and between transit and destination countries (and not just returnees going from MS to Third Countries). This will require further exploration of possible partnerships at a regional and multilateral level, including those with the United Nations (UN), African Union (AU) etc.

- **Improving return counselling and referral practices through dedicated tools and guidance** – MS are to streamline their outreach to irregular migrants and base the structure of their counselling on the EU framework. ERRIN is to finalise their curriculum on return counselling by mid-2022 for FX to then apply it and train return counsellors accordingly. MS are expected to regularly use and update RIAT and RAA. COM has committed to making the referral tools interoperable with partner and national systems and to training its users.

- **Promoting common quality support** – reintegration assistance should be tailor-made and take the individuals needs of especially vulnerable groups into account. While approaches to such support cannot be harmonised entirely, it is important to maintain common standards to ensure quality of practice and make voluntary return more favourable. Moreover, upholding a standard allows for better alignment between reintegration programmes. COM and partners (MS, FX, ERRIN etc.) are to finalise the quality framework around reintegration by mid-2022 for FX to apply it in the future and promote it to SP for their capacity building.

- **Fostering the sustainability and the ownership of reintegration in partner countries** – COM wishes to support and promote the gradual increase in ownership of Third Countries over return and reintegration processes in targeting their private sectors and civil societies. The objective is to reduce structural deficiencies and bolster local (public sector) responsiveness to return needs (e.g. by creating synergies with national development strategies), ensuring that Third Countries are able to guarantee solid socio-economic prospects for their own nationals. FX has a role to play in this through their liaison officers (EURLOS) in helping EU delegations with readmission processes and local capacity-building initiatives. The Strategy pledges to strengthen existing migration governance bodies without setting up parallel structures and to avoid duplication of activities. COM is committed to facilitating dialogue on both a policy and operational level. Through these dialogues, the Strategy's priorities will be set in designing better coordination and concrete referral and information-sharing tools, maximising resources and interlinkages between reintegration activities.

- **Using financial resources in a better-coordinated manner** – national funding of Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) will continue for EU to Third Countries returns as well as COM's financial support through AMIF funding. FX will also be counted on for support around pre-departure and post-arrival activities, but the idea is that there will be a principal focus on the early stages of reintegration assistance to individual returnees. External funding can come from the Neighbourhood, Development

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and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) as 10 per cent of its financial envelope is dedicated towards migration-related development assistance (which includes support directed at the reintegration of returnees and the implementation and development of reintegration structures in partner countries).

Q & A

- NL commented that while the presentation underlined the multiplicity of FX' tasks, it is important to note that FX' mandate has not yet been clearly defined. It is predicted that FX will not be able to take over all ERRIN activities. NL also asked why the role of the Return Coordinator was classed as an 'external' role; is the Coordinator responsible for external relations? Lastly, NL noted that to their understanding the quality framework is a short-track framework and hopes that work will be done on a long-track quality framework so as to broaden the scope and include more elements e.g. from the procurement side.
- DG HOME clarified that they misspoke when talking about the Return Coordinator; it is an internal (intra-EU) role and will not represent the EU on reintegration matters externally. Due to time constraints, DG HOME decided not to provide in-depth details concerning the Coordinator's job profile at this stage. DG HOME continued by underlining how the Strategy acts as a vehicle through which MS are encouraged to engage in return sponsorship and to facilitate return and reintegration assistance in accordance with a quality framework that is clearly defined and elaborated.
- DG INTPA added that at the core of their external dimension lies AVRR from and between any partner countries (not just transit countries or those bordering the EU). DG INTPA will continue with their actions according to lessons learnt from previous activities (e.g. through the EU-IOM Joint Initiative). The Strategy's chapter on such assistance is one that applies most to INTPA's work.
- DE expressed their appreciation for COM's approach, which is in line with policies currently applied by the German federal government, in facilitating close collaboration between the DG HOME, DG NEAR, and DG INTPA (i.e. between the reintegration and development side). Building on what NL said, DE agreed that the Strategy could be misleading as it states that all return and reintegration activities will be continued by FX, but the ERRIN leftovers should not be forgotten. There is a need to discuss how these leftovers can be continued and financed as well as a need to create valuable spaces for exchanging ideas and information (such as the TWG) on the issue. DE wondered whether, during the next Working Party on Integration, Migration and Expulsion (IMEX), the Strategy would be presented alongside a timeline, whereby the current state of play and way forward are outlined.
- DG HOME does not think a timeline will be presented during the next IMEX meeting, asserting timeframes to best be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The very (legal) nature of the Strategy does not allow COM to make such commitments on behalf of reintegration actors (who also exert more control over the timeframes). DG HOME reassured DE that they are aware of the need for continuing discussions on the leftovers and of the two related Scenarios that are currently being developed by DE and ICMPD.

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- BE echoed DE and NL in underlining that several important reintegration activities that form part of the ERRIN leftovers have not been named in the Strategy (e.g. a post-ERRIN quality framework). Concerning financing, BE asked whether the separation in funding, whereby AMIF takes care of short-term reintegration assistance and NDICI covers long-term assistance, has been discussed on an operational level. To BE, such a division seems rather artificial and likely unfeasible to implement.
- DG HOME mentioned that discussions on the dividing lines between funding streams are still ongoing. These discussions do not involve external actors (i.e. those from the operational side) as their input might not be as relevant given how they are subjected to very different constraints. The main priority is to come to an agreement between relevant COM actors first. DG HOME asserted the separation to be logical and reasonable for the moment.
- DG INTPA emphasised that we are only at the beginning; a lot more work lies ahead. For example, the legal basis of different instruments for development funds will still need to be reviewed.

Inputs & Round Table Discussion: EU and MS common planning instruments, experiences, tools & needs

Input OFII: Follow-Up to the 'International Migration and Development' Action Plan

- On 8 February 2021, the Prime Minister convened the Interministerial Committee for International Cooperation and Development (CICID), whereby the strategic orientations of development aid and a national monitoring framework were defined and set out under the Action Plan. The Plan was drawn up by the French Development Agency (AFD), the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of the Interior, Expertise France and the French Office for Immigration and Integration in consultation with representatives of local authorities and civil society organisations.
- The Plan includes five objectives linked to thirty actions between 2018 and 2022:
  - Governance – improving migration governance for human security and development
  - Contribution of migration – valuing the contribution of migration to development
  - Sectoral policy – integrating the migration dimension into development policies
  - Forced displaced persons – ensuring respect for fundamental rights and protecting migrants
  - Responsible discourse – promoting a responsible discourse on migration and the migration and development nexus
- OFII asserted that complementarity between actors' areas of expertise leads to a complementarity of actions. Different thematic working groups were set up on Reintegration and Development, the Rabat Process, Responsible Discourse, and Environmental Migration *(for more details on what areas of expertise fall under each actor and the thematic working groups, please consult the attached presentation).*
- The gathering of different institutions and their expertise make for a co-constructed and co-supported national monitoring framework that is collegial, collaborative, following a participatory

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approach facilitated by the monitoring of the Action Plan; members provide data on projects in their area of expertise that are in line with the objectives and planned actions.

- A digital platform (operational since 2021) will be used as a tool to monitor the Action Plan; it is a user-friendly and evolving tool that will be enriched with users' feedback. It is also a collaborative tool that is updated with real-time information from members (about project implementation, financing etc.). It is a secure tool that utilises an identification system administrated by AFD.
- The platform provides an overview of the statistical processing of all projects, supported and implemented by the institution (e.g. annual progress or the ongoing financial volume of a concerned country by objective/pilot/project). There are two statuses that can be assigned to users of this platform; a contributor status (institutions, project leaders) and reader status (reserved for non-permanent members e.g. civil society organisations).
- Monitoring reports are produced on an annual basis (the 2019 report has been finalised; the 2020 report is still in the making). Two annual meetings are organised to share information between members.

Q & A

- The Chair asked whether the monitoring report could be shared. As of right now, it is an internal report in French but OFII will look into the possibility of translating and sharing the report.

Input Germany: Whole-of-government Approach and Joint Action Plan

- DE emphasised that a whole-of-government approach is important to them and that they have a joint action plan centred on collaboration between the German Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry for Development. DE highlighted that it has gained some experience on how short-term, individual-level approaches to reintegration assistance (often taken by Ministries of Interior/Home Affairs) can phase into more long-term, community-level and structural approaches. Reintegration is not an individual matter and needs to be viewed within a larger context, including not only governments but also civil society organisations on the ground.
- The second point made by DE pertained to pre-departure preparation; sustainable reintegration is more likely when returnees and their families can properly prepare for their return through e.g. pre-departure (business) training. There are quite a few success stories around the coordination of such ways of pre-departure preparation in DE, leading to an interest in funding such preparatory courses.
- DE also urged ERRIN PMU not to wait with digitalising certain elements of the pilot activities (e.g. counselling, training, job fairs etc.) as there is no guarantee that (ramifications of) the COVID health crisis are to end soon. Rather than waiting for things to 'go back to normal', one should see the current situation as an opportunity to take new, innovative approaches to return and reintegration assistance.
- DE underlined that interlinking voluntary return, reintegration and development would be a good base for creating sustainable solutions for migration issues, not just for the MS themselves, but also on an EU level. DE appreciated the emphasis COM's new Strategy placed on partnerships with countries of origin and the need for a coherent approach to reintegration, and highlighted the increasing importance of such an external dimension to migration policies.

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- Lastly DE underlined that a qualified voice in the use of various national and European financing instruments in the field of migration is of particular importance, and is consciously designed to include overlapping funding purposes at programme level (e.g. AMIF or NDICI). Strong participation by EU MS is particularly helpful when it comes to designing the funding content in line with needs. DE therefore supports the early and broad involvement of MS in programming the AMIF Thematic Facility as has already been done for NDICI in some areas.

Input DG INTPA

- There is a platform to share knowledge bites (which can be developed on request) on return and reintegration, including relevant studies and resources. The link can be found here: https://returnandreintegration.iom.int/system/files/resources/document/02_knowledge_bite_en_final2.pdf?type=node&id=843.
- The importance of referral flows is stressed in the Strategy, and COM will continue to work on the matter, interlinking it with coordination mechanisms (an action point in the Strategy). However, referring returnees to existing projects is easier said than done. Not all such projects can accommodate high numbers of returnees, and it has always been difficult to indicate how many returnees might join the programme given how this number easily changes before and during the implementation phase.
- Challenges around referring returnees to broader development projects can already be observed during the design phase of referral services. Referral mechanisms need to be conceptualised in the initial design of new projects to avoid misaligned project durations and delays in implementation. Countries might indeed limit the time period in which beneficiaries can attend vocational and education training (i.e. the start of training does not align with the arrival of returnees). In AFG, for example, some partner projects had limited durations in certain districts/communities, causing a lack of continuity of services (which affects the sustainability of reintegration).
- The capacity and availability of referral services is another issue. There is not always enough incentive for (development) partners to support referral flows. For a more effective system, coordination with national authorities also needs to be improved.
- A main challenge is the mismatch between returnee profiles and the locations where referral opportunities are provided or development projects are implemented. Returnees might not always be eligible to access the available reintegration services or the available (development programme) opportunities do not match the returnees' interests and/or needs.
- Context-specific challenges may pertain to security issues in countries or limited opportunities to refer returnees to development programmes. To move forward, more qualitative research needs to be done on the development cooperation services returnees are referred to; how do these services impact their reintegration in practice (in comparison to services under reintegration-specific projects)? An overview and mapping of potential SP (who can offer specialised services) prior to establishing partnerships in a region/country is crucial. Having a network at an early stage strengthens coordination mechanisms.
- On a local level, training needs to be provided and linkages between SP and referral flows should be solidified to strengthen SP's local capacity. Mapping the needs and priorities of community-based projects in close consultation with communities and selected partners is key

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to strengthening community engagement. Such engagement can facilitate e.g. mentorship programmes in host communities.

- Improving returnees' access to information on available referral services (e.g. in pre-departure counselling sessions) and the kind of assistance returnees can benefit from is crucial.

Discussions

- BE noted that reintegration assistance is often narrowed down to economic activities. BE appreciated the focus on psychosocial counselling in the last TWG meeting and hopes that conversations on broad reintegration assistance will continue; returnees often need counselling before they are ready to think of the economic aspects to their return.
- BE also highlighted that referrals to development projects are talked about as if they were a one-way street; referrals are rarely viewed with the local development perspective/level as a starting point. To enhance third country ownership, projects should not just include returnees; they should also integrate components that are strongly aligned with local development objectives and needs. Expectations of returnees must match with what is relevant and needed in countries of origin. FI reiterated that since migration/reintegration is dynamic, it not always easy to bring together different (national) stakeholders (e.g. Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and make plans for sustainable reintegration assistance. FI asked how DG HOME and DG INTPA foresee to close this gap.
- DG INTPA stressed that MS should continue implementing their national AVRR programmes, (NDICI will not replace these programmes) and that there should be flexible parts to the programmes that could respond to emergency/urgent needs if necessary. While DG INTPA believes that there is a need to see how different instruments (e.g. NDICI) and MS can work together to mitigate the challenges that come out of reintegration's dynamic nature, they noted that NDICI will have many (migration) needs to address (10 per cent of NDICI's financial envelope is not just dedicated towards reintegration-related development assistance).
- DK highlighted that through the Flexible Return Funds, programming and referral challenges are not addressed in the way that DG INTPA has stipulated. Under the fund, there is a specific budget line dedicated towards a joint task force (i.e. the Danish Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and programming with partner countries of return (but not necessarily in a systematic manner). Collective intelligence is vital in transcending the issue of linking reintegration assistance offers and local development needs at the level of the community.
- DG NEAR reiterated the importance of the structural building up of country-owned, long-term, and sustainable reintegration mechanisms in countries of origin. Discussions are ongoing on linking AMIF- and DG NEAR-funded reintegration activities.

Input Luxemburg

- LU commented that there are currently no established linkages between the reintegration and development directorates in LU (no common approach, no common instruments or tools etc.). As voluntary and forced returns are outsourced to IOM, LU did not deal with the return and reintegration side of migration. The country has started to use RIAT but is still at the beginning of the establishing a framework for return and reintegration.

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Input Norway

- The immigration service is responsible for AVRR and the police department for forced returns (both fall under the Ministry of Justice – here, 3 million euros of the Ministry of Justice's 5 million euro budget is targeted at return and reintegration in priority countries). The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for aid programmes. A whole-of-government approach is therefore also a goal for NO; different avenues and tools for working together are already available, especially concerning country-specific strategies. NO also has partnership reintegration programmes, whereby liaison officers (EURLO) and embassies in target countries are key partners.
- There is a separate aid budget line dedicated towards migration issues. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is tasked to see how it can facilitate return and reintegration assistance through the aid budget, though there is not much progress in this regard and better alignment between Norwegian aid and its reintegration assistance is needed. Nevertheless, support has been given to migration related development programmes in e.g. Somalia and Ethiopia.

Input Austria

- In AT there is no formal linkage between reintegration and development; migration issues as a whole are part of the development project, but not return and reintegration specifically. Luckily, AT's development colleagues will be more involved in TWG progressions in the future. AT also encouraged the takeover of TWG activities after ERRIN's mandate ends.

Input Netherlands

- NL noted that migration is part of a whole-of-government approach in NL and that the Dutch reintegration budget is divided in three parts; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is in charge of the largest portion while national AVRR programmes are financed by the Dutch Repatriation and Departure Service (under the Ministry of Justice).

Input Sweden

- The partnership between the Swedish Migration Agency and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) is limited. SE is also looking into a whole-of-government approach, with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Justice recently taken the initiative to enter into dialogue on sustainable reintegration. The hope is that cooperation with Sida will improve.

Summary of the Outcomes of the Sub-Working Group Discussions

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During the breakout sessions, participants were divided into the following three sub-working groups (WGs) in order to discuss topics enshrined in the outline for the OF aiming to deepen discussions for the final product of the OF: WG A Cluster denominators; (2) Shared Objectives and Monitoring Tools; and (3) WG C Approaching Joint Programming at Field Level: Ghana Case Study. The below paragraphs describe summaries presented during the plenary session. The outcome of the discussion will be scrutinised in a more analytical document attached to these minutes.

- **Working Group A – Cluster Denominations**

  - WG A discussed the so-called cluster denominators, in recognition of sector-wide commonalities between reintegration and development.
  - One of the key elements discussed was the need to move beyond individual needs assessments (as is the norm within the reintegration context) and move towards assessing the needs of communities at a territorial and community level. A challenge in this context might be whether or not communities plan for their development, whether they know which members they might need to plan for (e.g. returnees), and whether they foresee the return of diaspora members, returnees, and other migrants.
  - Challenges concerning development work (not just on a national level but also on a local level), and tensions around different development ambitions and methodologies between these levels were recognised.
  - The priority of ownership and the need for needs assessments on both levels was also emphasised, whereby the needs assessments should be designed and executed with community members as well as those expecting to return and contribute to the development process in mind.
  - Contributions to development include those targeted at the health, education, social protection, infrastructure, land ownership, (etc.) sectors.

- **Working Group B – Shared Objectives and Monitoring Tools**

  - WG B's discussion started with an interesting suggestion to introduce an additional Key Performance Indicator (KPI) to projects from both the reintegration and development sector to measure how well they link to each other.
  - Sustainable reintegration was mentioned as a common objective, and there was discussion on how it is nevertheless difficult to create a common understanding around the concept of sustainability. Good coordination mechanisms to oversee the different offers available to beneficiaries were identified to be crucial for sustainable reintegration.
  - While developing common indicators was seen as a challenging process, members agreed it is something that needs to be looked into and discussed further.
  - Discussions on shared objectives and monitoring tools on a political level were considered more complicated as political perspectives do not always reflect what goes on at an operational level, where it is perhaps easier to find common approaches and solutions. There is a need to first find tools that can, in turn, help find such common grounds.
  - Moreover, a country-specific approach, bottom-up approaches, the Flexible Return Fund, and having a clear division of tasks for each sector were also discussed.

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- **Working Group C – Approaching Joint Programming at Field Level: Ghana Case Study**

  - WG C focused on a concrete case study in Ghana. Exploring coordination and joint programming at a field level creates a unique opportunity to assess synergies and create bridges between return and reintegration and development cooperation worlds.
  - The key role that EU delegations should play in Third Countries was asserted to be to bring key stakeholders together. For example, in Mali, the delegation reached out to MS embassies that appear to be difficult to get a hold of otherwise.
  - The EU delegation can have a leading coordinating role in accessing and including Ghanaian partners (and authorities) under a common framework for referral mechanisms and reintegration assistance. Such a framework is currently lacking.
  - Long-term perspectives on ownership were underlined; Ghanaian stakeholders from both the reintegration and development side should be involved from the very beginning of reintegration processes. Nevertheless, the challenge that some Third Countries are not willing to cooperate on migration issues and respective incentives for third countries were also discussed.
  - Identifying specific operational clusters that could be relevant for both sectors was mentioned to be important to ensure that returnees can be included in future development initiatives. At times, there is the belief that returnees should not benefit or be eligible for development-aid funded programmes seeing as they already receive a reintegration allowance.
  - Careful attention was raised to avoid giving members of local communities the impression that returnees are receiving more assistance than other citizens. Such a perception could lead to pull factors that foster migration to the EU because of a prospect of additional assistance upon return. From this point of view, a more detailed separation of assistance between returnees and other locals could be a better option.

Presentation of First Draft ToR for Expert and Revised Outline of Operational Framework (OF)

- The draft ToR and revised outline for the OF were shared with TWG members prior to the meeting.
- Next steps: submission of the extended PPP pilot activity proposal to ERRIN MB and the extension of the pilot activities in Bangladesh and Nigeria until June 2022. The way forward envisages the following timeline:

  - **April 2021 – September 2021**
    - ERRIN PMU will finalise the ToR by end of May 2021, submit it to ERRIN MB; hire an external expert to elaborate the main deliverable of the TWG: the OF.
    - The deadline for feedback/comments on the ToR is 15 May 2021.
    - Monitoring of the implemented pilot activities will continue.
    - The next TWG meeting (autumn 2021) will introduce the external expert and facilitate further discussions on the financial instruments (NDICI and AMIF). TWG members are invited to forward any other related topics they wish to discuss on this platform.

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- **September 2021 – March 2022**
  - The OF will be further elaborated by the external expert, who will be tasked to evaluate the pilot activities and other fact-findings as stipulated by the outline for the OF (i.e. lessons learnt and best practices).
  - For the TWG meeting in March 2022, the expert is expected to present an assessment report on the evaluation and findings concerning the pilot activities and a first draft of the OF, which will be shared prior to the meeting to give TWG members the chance to review it.

- **April 2022 – June 2022**
  - In close consultation with TWG members, the OF will be finalised.
  - The last TWG meeting under the ERRIN mandate will take place in June 2022 and will include a presentation on the final OF.

➢ There are three phases foreseen in the current draft ToR:

- **Phase 1 – Inception and Desk Research Phase**
  - First activity: kick-off meeting and briefing of the expert by the Chair/ERRIN PMU.
  - Second activity: introduce the expert to TWG members
  - The geographical scope of Phase I aligns with the outline for the OF, including Bangladesh (BGD), Nigeria (NGA), Ghana (GHA), Afghanistan (AFG), Iraq (IRQ), Tunisia (TUN), Morocco (MAR), Senegal (SEN), Cameroon (CMR), and Mali (MLI).
  - SEN, CMR, MAR, and MLI are included in the desk research phase to incorporate the OFII mapping conducted in these countries in the OF.
- **Phase 2 – Assessment of Pilot Activities, Field Research and Analysis of Data**
  - Under this phase, field research (in the respective countries) will be conducted to speak with relevant stakeholders, including beneficiaries, on their assessment and evaluation of the pilot activities (activity 3).
  - After analysing the gathered data, an assessment report will be compiled (activity 4), which will serve as a basis for the OF.
  - This phase envisages field visits (by the expert) to geographic focus areas in NGA, BGD, IRQ, AFG, GHA, and possibly TUN.
- **Phase 3- Elaboration of the Draft Operational Framework**
  - Activity 5 pertains to the elaboration of the draft OF; consultation rounds will be organised to ensure ownership of the TWG member over design of the OF.

➢ Whilst the ToR needs to be finalised in order to complete the recruitment procedure of the external expert, the outline for the OF continues to be a living document inviting further discussion as well as the inclusion of topics suggested by TWG members or concrete outcomes from TWG meeting discussions, such as the break-out group discussions today etc.

➢ Enshrined in the outline are some less specified topics such as the overall challenges of interlinking reintegration services with the development sector and important factors to be

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considered to ensure interlinkages between reintegration and development programmes/projects from the perspective of both sectors. Other ideas and proposals on topics for further discussions in the coming TWG meetings are welcome.

Decision Making: Submission of ToR to MB and Endorsement of ToR and OF Timeline

- The Chair remarked that input from the TWG meetings could be used to revise the draft Outline, which can then be shared to TWG members for their feedback. The Chair also highlighted that the minutes of the TWG meetings will be part of the expert's evaluation and desk research (phase 1).
- DE flagged that the NDICI programme is in progress and quite advanced already in its set up. DE worries that discussing it in the next TWG meeting might be too late.
- ERRIN PMU explained that the original idea was to discuss NDICI in this meeting, but given that the funding proposal under the NDICI has yet to be endorsed (which will most probably happen in June 2021), COM advised to discuss it in autumn 2021 instead (despite its programming cycle being in progress).
- DE also asked when the external expert is expected to start.
- ERRIN PMU reiterated that the expert should start their assignment in September 2021.
- OFII commented that together with ERRIN, they are to launch a series of studies (through an external consultant) on what reintegration budget is necessary to provide (economic) reintegration assistance to returnees in OFII-target countries in Western Africa and the Maghreb. The research will be carried out along the same timeline as that of the ToR phases and the OF, and so OFII is happy to share the results of the studies and put their consultant in touch with the TWG external expert. ERRIN PMU encouraged OFII's and welcomed the input.
- The Chair wondered why the Maghreb has been included as a geographical zone of interest as the area is covered by OFII and there are no pilot activities implemented in the region.
  ERRIN PMU remarked that the region has been included for desk research in Phase 1 to incorporate the findings of the OFII mapping in the OF. Concerning Tunisia, ERRIN had intended to launch a pilot activity in close cooperation with BMZ/GIZ as a result of the last TWG meeting in December 2020. However, due to time constraints this could only be done via a cooperation agreement. Since ERRIN will soon have a SP in the country, it could be an excellent opportunity, but no decisions on a potential cooperation agreement have yet been taken.

Summary of Decisions and Conclusions

- The Chair thanked everyone for their active participation and asserted that great progress has been made through the TWG meetings with pilot activities now being well on the way. A lot of development can also be seen from COM's side via the Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration.
- The Chair looks forward to receiving the minutes from the three breakout sessions as the feedback provided in the working groups can serve as great additions to the draft outline for the OF. The hope is to have a draft that includes divergent viewpoints and best practices for the soon-to-be-recruited expert to finalise.
- Finally, the Chair thanked the ERRIN PMU Team who successfully organised the meeting.

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4th Technical Working Group on Reintegration & Development meeting on 28 April 2021

Minutes of the break out session on

Cluster denominators

1. Objective of the sub-working group:

Development projects and reintegration activities share common grounds. Through the analysis of the data, clusters (common denominators) appeared within the MS landscape that are strategically interesting when considering the design of projects that interlink the return and the development perspectives.

2. Main outcomes of the discussion:

Sectors – inclusion of migration

Some actors, including OFII, have started to represent migration as an element of interest in different social sectors. There is still a long way to go before programming all sectors under the consideration of migration. Migration is still regarded as an anomaly in broad development planning. Reintegration is regarded as stand-alone programming.

The inclusion of migration as a "point of view" in several social sectors is a step in the right direction of recognising that reintegration goes beyond issues of immediate income generation. Actors with focus on reintegration have typically focused on income generation as central in reintegration schemes. Inspiration from development actors, who has broadened the understanding from income generation to livelihood. However, the more nuanced livelihood approach to local development typically does not include migration related complexities.

The question of where to include, on the one hand, migration related issues into the broader development planning and, on the other, recognizing sector development priorities when programming reintegration was recognized as, to some degree, a programming methodology issue.

Programming Levels

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Individual level

- Reintegration programming is typically done at the individual level. Typically, standard needs are assumed and expected numbers of beneficiaries are applied on the basis of existing caseload. As far as planning, it was agreed that it is a recommendation to include beneficiaries of reintegration when doing needs assessment. As an example of the importance of including beneficiaries in programming, DK supported a land distribution project in Afghanistan, where the government agency in charge of demarking and ultimately distributing titles to land under the remit of national ownership. Therefore, relevant Afghan authorities developed a process whereby Afghans could apply and receive a piece of land. The assumption was that returnees from Denmark would be interested in applying for land under this national scheme proved not to hold true as the majority of returnees did not have need for land or were not interested in applying for other reasons. While the project itself was relevant for the Afghan development context, and perhaps might be of interest to other returnees, this was not a project, which was relevant for linking to the specific persons returning from Denmark.
- It is recognized that in order to be relevant in the context of voluntary return, the programmes on offer to potential returnees must be individualized. Standard packages of support are not sufficient for reintegration purposes.
- At the same time, elements of community are among the needs of the individual returnee. The receiving community thus has to be recognized. This is recognized by a.o. DE, where forced return was not considered for returnees [to Afghanistan] if there was not a receiving network. Community is in this context linked to psychosocial outcomes. Likewise, other MS have experienced successful return and reintegration outcomes for persons with networks, where life-projects are continued in receiving communities in home-countries. In contrast, MS find more difficult to foster return and reintegration for persons in more complex situations (e.g. no network, health/psycho-social issues etc.) In order to provide positive outcomes at the individual level, individual needs of potential returnees have to be expressed in needs assessments assessment in the sectors aside of the economic one (e.g. health, education, housing etc.).
- For reintegration planning, a good practice for host country based programming has been beneficiary based programming, as practiced by France.

National level

National development planning traditionally bases planning on existing planning figures, i.e. does not traditionally include estimation of potential returnee numbers or their needs expressed in sector planning.

One recommendation would be to find ways to include estimated returnee figures when articulating national development plans.

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Local level

- There was agreement that local development plans are best placed to reflect existing needs plus estimate potential returnee needs. The communities have information about migrants living abroad from their communities. Information about potential returnee needs are mor difficult to gauge at the community level, as the community may not have the full picture of up-coming plans for returns, nor the full picture of what the potential needs of their returnees will be. However, the potential for linking individual level planning and national level sector planning is high at the local development level.
- Several participants from the development sector finds that the programmes that work best are those developed on a local basis, whereas planning from the national level cannot recognise the priorities which local does. From a development perspective, the main gap is that there is a difference when one works based on individual needs and on local/community needs. Development cooperation starts from the needs perceived and expressed by the territories. It was found that the new Strategy of the European Commission still very much focuses either on the individual or national network, but not local.
- An example of area based development is the World Bank supported Afghanistan citizens' charter, by the World Bank, where vulnerable communities identify their own needs. In identifying vulnerable communities, one parameter was the presence of returnees (whether from internal displacement or from international migration). The goal was to quantify their needs and express them in Area Based Development Programmes, where they include returnees in their community development planning.
- In this context, planning is possible based on the presence of returnees and thus planning can be done on the basis of expectations of returnees, and not in terms of volumes but specific issues and themes.
- Important to look at what the needs of the community the returnee is returning to are.

Key conclusions

There is a need to move beyond individual level, fundamental to look at the needs of the communities at the territorial and community levels.

The main recommendation would be for programming for both reintegration and development to take point of departure in beneficiary needs and to be able to feed forward the assessed needs, which would have to be included in local and fed forward into national development planning. This requires adjustment of both the reintegration and the development sector planning.

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4th Technical Working Group on Reintegration & Development meeting on 28 April 2021

Sub-working group B: Shared objectives and monitoring tool

Summary of the discussion outcomes

1. Objective of the sub-working group:

The participants were invited to identify and examine opportunities and challenges on how return & reintegration sector on one hand and development aid sector on the other hand can share monitoring, steering and coordination tools for different programmes and funding streams?

Joint monitoring, steering and coordination is at first glance only possible, if there is an intersection of shared objectives. However, this does imply a level of agreed shared objectives by both sectors.

The sub-working group was composed of representatives from both sectors, the Return & Reintegration Sector and the Development Sector.

2. Main outcomes of the sub-working group discussion

2.1. Challenges and opportunities identified

Interaction on political and operation level

- Discussions on shared objectives and monitoring tools on a political level were considered more complicated as political perspectives do not always reflect what goes on at an operational level, where it is perhaps easier to find common approaches and solutions.
- A conflict of perspectives between political and operational players was therefore identified
- At the same time, the need for pressuring decision making on a higher political level down to the operational level was identified
- The need to complement migration strategies with practical operational tools that would facilitate both the provision of reintegration support and better coordination among the several actors in terms of identifying common ground was highlighted
- Bottom-up approaches, flexible return funding, and having a clear division of tasks for each sector were considered to be important.

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- It is often challenging to identifying third countries that are of common interest on an EU level. If programmes stay at a lower, operational level and target individual country perspectives, it is sometimes easier to find tools and approaches that are effective.
- A country specific approach might be more useful in terms of piloting new activities. Target countries that are identified at higher political level are rarely of interest to for all EU MS.
- There is a need to first find tools that can, in turn, help to find such common grounds.

Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

- Linking reintegration and development is currently in a piloting phase. It is a good start to think about monitoring and evaluation criteria, but in view of different funding streams and in order to improve a referral systems and ensure the continuation of projects, the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) should be linked to both development and reintegration approach.
- Indicators for return and reintegration programme often focus on the service, whereas indicators in the area of development mainly focus on the general impact rather than the individual impact. There is the option of finding additional indicators that apply to both areas, such as analysing the community impact of reintegration assistance.
- While developing common indicators was seen as a challenging process, members agreed it is something that needs to be looked into and discussed further.

Sustainable reintegration:

- Sustainable reintegration could potentially be a common shared objective and serve as an indicator, however, currently there is no common understanding or concept of sustainable reintegration.
- Sustainable reintegration is considered to be the ultimate objective of complementing the reintegration approach with development approach. However, two different assessments that are related to the successful parts of reintegration and development need to take place before common KPIs can be drafted.
- However, the lack of a universal definition of sustainability, on which indicators could be based on, remains a great challenge

Coordination

- An overwhelming quantity of actors and programmes were identified as a challenge for coordination.
- There is also the challenge of bringing development actors together on the same platform in order to provide services/programmes to beneficiaries.
- Development organisations are often better placed to work on a structural institutional setting in third countries in order to support ownership of national authorities.
- Duplications of activities and programmes should be avoided as much as possible.
- Best practise based coordination mechanisms to oversee the different offers available to beneficiaries were identified to be crucial for sustainable reintegration.

2.2 Possible recommendations for a way forward:

- Bottom-up approach: Open dialogue for needs based assessment between political and operational actors in the area of reintegration and development initiatives
- Introduce an additional KPIs to projects from both the reintegration and development sector to measure how well they link to each other.
- Develop a common understanding, concept, objective and criteria for sustainable reintegration applicable for both sectors.
- Set-up effective coordination mechanisms based on good practices for information exchange on project/programs returnees could benefit from in specific countries.
- Develop tools that facilitate the identification of common grounds for both sectors.

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4th Technical Working Group on Reintegration & Development meeting on 28 April 2021

Sub-working group C: Coordination in the field - Ghana case study

Summary of the discussion outcomes

Objective of the sub-working group:

The participants were invited to identify and examine opportunities and challenges of coordination at field level in the migration area for Ghana in the coming years.

The objective was to come up with a set of recommendations for EU Delegation (EUD) in Ghana concerning specific cooperation niches that could be key for development as well as for return/reintegration stakeholders and where the EUD can make the difference in light of ongoing preparations in designing the next programme cycle (NDICI 2021-2027).

The sub-working group was composed of representatives from both sectors, namely DG Home, Fedasil, OFII, German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees and the Austrian Ministry of Interior, Dep. for Return, Reintegration and Quality Development from the Return & Reintegration Sector, and GIZ, DG NEAR from the Development Sector.

Key Priorities within the current EU policy framework

The new Strategy on voluntary return and reintegration presented by the EU Commission the same day this sub-working group discussion took place, sets out a wide range of measures under seven pillars to tackle the challenges identified in that area, such an effective coordination between all stakeholders; supporting voluntary return and reintegration of migrants from and between third countries; ensuring quality of support; fostering sustainability of reintegration support and ownership of partner countries; and funding for voluntary return and reintegration.

Main outcomes of the sub-working group discussion & key recommendations for EUD in Ghana

Participants expressed appreciation for the presence of the EUD in Ghana - that is an open country to international cooperation, which is not the case in other 3rd countries that with more reluctant approach to cooperate with EU and its MS. This presents an excellent opportunity for the EU Del to play a key role in coordination on the ground.

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Recommendations:

The key role of EU DEL in coordination could be enhanced towards the objective to contribute in mapping and bringing key stakeholders together, foster the migration dialogue and strengthen overall cooperation amongst the national and international actors in the field of migration and development:

- The EUD is best suited to assume a leading coordinating role in accessing and including Ghanaian partners (and authorities) under a common framework for referral mechanisms and reintegration assistance.
- A more coordinating role for responsible governmental authorities in Ghana involved in the area of return and reintegration or, in other words, more local ownership over referral and reintegration related processes would further contribute to the sustainable reintegration of returnees.
- EUD is in the best position to play an active role in ensuring transparency of development projects and activities present in Ghana.
- Including also returnees as beneficiaries of long term planning in the field of migration within new financial cycle under the NDICI 2021-2027 development programming could improve sustainable reintegration of returnees, if well balanced with the community needs.
- Establishing a coordination platform between development aid and return and reintegration actors from the EU and the MS facilitate dialogue on operational and policy level could improve the interlinking and potential for joint planning of both sectors.
- Exploring coordination and joint programming at a field level creates a unique opportunity to assess synergies and create bridges between return and reintegration and development cooperation worlds on a long term.

Potential lessons learned from the ERRIN project activities in Ghana

- ERRIN government to government project activities, such as the organisation of the "stakeholder meetings" composed of participants from different institutions active in the area of migration in Ghana with the aim to foster inter-institutional dialogue and cooperation
- Capacity Building activities for Ghana Immigration Service to strengthen their institutional and administrative structures and support them in steering the whole reintegration process of their returning citizens
- TWG R&D operational framework : GIZ – ICMPD MoU and AG Care –GIZ MoU

Final Minutes of the 5th Technical Working Group meeting on Reintegration & Development

Date 13 January 2022

Location WebEx

Annexes:

- Agenda
- Presentations

Welcome and Opening

- ERRIN PMU and the Chair welcomed the participants to the 5th Technical Working Group (TWG) on Reintegration and Development.
- At the last TWG in April 2021, the participants had identified the need of the operational level across sectors and had exchanged the perspectives of both sectors, together with actors from the European Commission (COM) and the member states (MS). Furthermore, the TWG R&D members gathered valuable findings and approved the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the engagement of a think tank that will assist with the finalisation of the operational and practical framework, which is the main deliverable of the TWG.
- The tender was launched and successfully concluded in summer 2021. As a result, Samuel Hall, a social enterprise, has been commissioned to conduct a data collection and evaluation aiming at assisting the TWG R&D in finalising the operational framework, by embedding their findings from the R&D pilot activities in Nigeria and BGD as well as other activities as stipulated in the outline of the operational framework.
- The 5th TWG started in the morning with various presentations entailing updates from the pilot activities and other activities from multiple involved actors. Additionally, Samuel Hall introduced themselves, their methodology and research approach.

Pilot Activity in Nigeria

Please refer to the PPT and the PDF "Operational Workflow: Referral Mechanism" for more information

- The pilot activities are completed. The overall aim was to interlink ERRIN activities with existing development aid-funded projects, programmes and initiatives in order to extend the support offered to returned migrants and enhance the sustainability of the reintegration process in Nigeria (NGA).
- Key activities: ERRIN partners, Caritas International Belgium (CIB) and Idia Renaissance (IR) set up an operational coordination mechanism with key Reintegration & Development (R&D) partners (GIZ, IOM, local NGOs). They also carried out a mapping exercise, which identified other relevant development aid-funded initiatives.
- The coordination mechanism led to the establishment of a referral flow among these R&D partners. The pilot covered a financial envelope for each referred returnee to allow ERRIN beneficiaries to obtain cost-

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related support and attend vocational trainings, delivered by the development partners. The focus on vocational training was already agreed in the research phase in 2019, since it was remarked that beneficiaries rarely made use of vocational training, despite being delivered by all R&D partners.

- Oftentimes, returnees use a large proportion of their allowance for income generating activities, housing etc. Therefore, they have limited funds to invest in education and training, which could have an important long-term impact in their reintegration process. For this reason, ERRIN has decided to top up the budget of the reintegration allowance, to be allocated to these kind of services.
- Pilot activity ended in October 2021. The way forward is to incorporate the findings in the operational framework that will be developed.
- Operational challenges: 1) limited period of time, seven referred cases of which four approved; 2) there were no development projects identified in the eastern part of the country, which has significant numbers of returns; 3) returnees were not willing to attend long period trainings outside of their state of residence.
- Recommendations: 1) extension of the project period; 2) extension of the project to all categories of returning migrants, expect for those who voluntary decline; 3) monitoring and evaluation activities for the project beneficiaries.

Q&A

- GIZ Ghana representative inquired whether there was a voucher system implemented or beneficiaries were referred "non-financially" and "unconditionally" from ERRIN Service Providers (SP) to the development partners/NGOs. ERRIN PMU informed that the idea of the referral was to refer returnees, regardless of the availability of additional funding. Nonetheless, ERRIN managed to add a budget top up, in order for the returnees to engage with other reintegration services offered by development partners.
- COM asked which were the difficulties in mapping and whether public authorities were helpful in the process. COM also inquired whether the recommendations referred to an extension of the project lifetime or to the length of period returnees would be eligible to receive reintegration assistance. ERRIN PMU clarified that the project had a limited lifespan, which was a challenge, reason why the recommendation included the extension of the project, not the assistance period. Moreover, during the mapping exercise it was difficult to identify partners across NGA. ERRIN PMU would recommend a longer life cycle (of at least three years) to establish and develop broader and better networks on the ground.
- BAMF inquired where returnees usually reside, whether in cities or rural areas, and which challenges were identified when implementing the project for those living in rural areas. ERRIN PMU informed that most of the returnees live in urban centres and only some in rural areas. The main challenges were in the eastern side of the country and in convincing returnees in rural areas to travel to the cities to attend the trainings.
- COM asked if one of the recommendations was also to target mainly returnees who have returned recently and if there was a cut-off date in terms of how long ago returnees should have returned in order to benefit from the referral. ERRIN PMU informed that the caseload was impacted by Covid-19. Hence, it was decided to focus and provide further assistance to the returnees who had already returned and had benefited from the ERRIN programme. Eligibility period: one year from the date of return.

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Pilot Activity Bangladesh – BRAC

Please refer to the PPT for more information

- Objective: enable ERRIN returnees to systematically access and benefit from assistance services provided by development projects in Bangladesh.
- 12-month service contract with BRAC (value 19,999.00 EUR). The pilot started in February 2021 and runs until the end of January 2022.
- The referral flow is complementary to the ERRIN reintegration service and contract with IRARA.
- Overview of the services: more than 117 people were referred via BRAC, which is an organisation present in the whole country. BRAC also referred people to other projects implemented by other international organisations or organised by the government.
- Main service: psychological and business counselling, entrepreneurship training, financial literacy and some more technical skills. Some services were extended to family members also.
- Challenges: some services considered less relevant, Covid-19 and lockdown, and increasing prices. Difficult to motivate people to attend training if it meant losing an income-generating day, in addition to resistance in psychosocial counselling. People showed less interest in long courses, trainings with fees and distant centres.
- Recommendations: transportation, accommodation, food allowance and alternative salary should be provided; psychosocial counselling and financial literacy should be mandatory, and provided before the in-kind support; separate budget for training and counselling services should be allocated from ERRIN; continuous monitoring and assistance for the returnees after in-kind assistance; family members should be considered as referral.

Q&A

- BE noted and appreciated that both projects established links with IOM-managed projects. Appreciating the recommendations represented, there remain doubts about whether specific aspects of counselling should be made mandatory.
- FR asked what the difference is between the ERRIN counselling and the referral counselling of the pilot action. BRAC clarified that ERRIN counselling means providing required information to the returnees. Referral counselling means usually psychosocial counselling for their psychological reintegration as many of them return with depression and anxiety. Psychosocial counselling helps the returnees to think positive and help them get mental peace.

Cooperation between GIZ and ERRIN Service Provider CARITAS

Please refer to the PPT for more information

- The collaboration between GIZ and CARITAS is new. The German-Tunisian Centre for Jobs, Migration and Reintegration (CTA) works closely with its institutional partner, the Tunisian employment agency ANETI, working with their team and strengthening their capacity, but also using their expertise.
- The CTA offers support to both the local population and returning migrants.
- The following services supporting economic integration are available: personalised advice on professional opportunities in Tunisia; job placement; job and training opportunities on site in the country of origin;

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promotion of entrepreneurship and support session for developing business plans; provision of information on possibilities and requirements for regular migration.

- The following services supporting socio-economic inclusion are available: psychological support.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between GIZ and CARITAS. CARITAS offers reintegration support to voluntary returnees as ERRIN SP in Tunisia. However, there are limited cases of voluntary returns in Tunisia.
- Objectives of the MoU are:
    - to establish a mutual operational referral mechanism of returning migrants from ERRIN Member States and third countries;
    - to facilitate the communication, exchange of information, and technical cooperation in the field of Return & Reintegration (R&R) in Tunisia;
    - to ensure the complementarity of existing programmes in the field of R&R in Tunisia;
    - to embed cooperation into the national reintegration mechanism (national programme 'Tounesna') to strengthen it in a sustainable manner.
- Beneficiaries: Tunisian citizens voluntarily returning from Germany or other ERRIN Member States, to whom ERRIN MS have confirmed eligibility for reintegration services to CARITAS; returnees who are not eligible for ERRIN reintegration services or who have already completed accompaniment may be referred to the CTA if they have additional or complementary support needs upon validation by CARITAS.

Q&A:

- COM asked whether no referrals were done in Tunisia. GIZ confirmed, considering the limited timeframe (three months) and CARITAS restrictive referral criteria.

OFII Mapping Outcomes

Please refer to the PPT for more information

- Update in Senegal and Mali. The mapping also included Morocco and Cameroon, however, no new developments have been noticed in these countries.
- Senegal: building on the mapping done in 2020, OFII streamlined the process to cooperate with the National Agency for Youth Employment (ANPEJ). A joint reintegration plan ANPEJ/OFII was developed to avoid double funding.
- Participation on a Selection Committee to evaluate and ensure common reintegration plan and joint basic training in financial literacy accounting and management.
- ANPEJ/OFII hold joined visits to ensure a joint monitoring of the project. They also refer candidates to each other.
- Mali: recently started working with GIZ to support microbusiness projects, livestock and gardening. Collaborated only on one case because of strict criteria to be applied. Available kit: vocational training and starter kit.

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Capacity building for long-term reintegration of returnees to (Afghanistan) and Iraq complementary to reintegration support through ERRIN CAIR: DK initiative – pilot update

Please refer to the PPT for more information

- DK tried to incorporate this Danish-funded initiative into the ERRIN portfolio. However, due to difficulties in coordinating both financial administrative structures, it was not possible. Therefore, it was implemented by ICMPD and funded by DoDA.
- Objectives: due to the tumultuous situation and insecure time of the ICMPD colleagues in Afghanistan, they are no longer active in the country. All activities have been focussed in Iraq, a project of approximately 1,5 US million dollars, which runs over 24 months and started in 2021.
- Objectives:
    - Strengthen capacities of the MoMD (Iraq), as well as of community based organisations for provision of extended reintegration support to a cohort of returnees to Iraq, supported through ERRIN interventions, by creating linkages between the ongoing ERRIN efforts and development objectives of the communities;
    - Enhancing sustainability of reintegration efforts by creation of public-private collaborations and partnerships towards better access to employment opportunities for returnees, and better linkages between reintegration support and market needs.
- Status of the activities in Iraq: two workshops took place in September and December 2021 in Erbil. The main outcome was a draft for developing additional sustainable reintegration processes in Iraq. ICMPD envisages a new mission to Iraq at the end of January 2022 to discuss the way forward with MoMd. Other workshops shall take place beginning of March 2022.
- Creating synergies in Iraq with other activities in MS is the process aiming at finding ways to better link different initiatives. DK is in talks with FI on how they can create synergies together and start the activities already during the pre-departure phase. DK follows a close exchange with stakeholder of other Iraq based activities, which is part of the ongoing mapping exercise.

Q&A

- COM inquired if DK was in touch with the EU Delegation in Iraq concerning their upcoming 75M programme. DK confirmed they are in close contact with the delegation in Baghdad.

R&D: Cooperation between GIZ and ERRIN in Ghana

Please refer to the PPT for more information

- The programme “Returning to New Opportunities” supports partner countries in the enhancement of individual prospects for local population, internally displaced persons and returnees, by offering several services.
- Important to provide a holistic approach to the returnees on the ground, being able to intervene in all stages of the migration cycle.
- The Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations is the political partner, which represents an advantage. The Ministry is mandated to provide migration support.

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- Collaboration between GIZ and ERRIN/GA Care: has been embedded into a MoU since April 2019, enabling cross referral and share client information with the objective to facilitate a sound referral mechanism on the reintegration activities that both organisations offer to returning migrants. Progress: Referral of about 170 returned migrants for processing.
- Collaboration between GIZ and ERRIN/ICMPD/AG Care: MoU since July 2021. Objectives:
    - to build on the existing framework of cooperation and strengthen the referral mechanism of returning migrants and their access to post arrival services in Ghana via AG Care;
    - to explore synergies for cooperation and coordination of R&R support offered to returnees in Ghana;
    - to effectively cooperate, coordinate and contribute to the established migration platform implemented within the EU-IOM Joint Initiative;
    - to enhance the capacity of GIS officers and other stakeholder in the R&R process.
- The Migration Coordination Platform (MCP) in Ghana is mostly development partner-initiated. However, the government of Ghana is included as well.
- COM commented that it is an important development having set up the MCP and involve the government of Ghana among the stakeholders. It represents a step forward to a gradual building of the country of origin's ownership.

Sustainable Reintegration in Iraq (SRI) – Finland

Please refer to the PPT for more information

- ERRIN Facility Project implemented by the Finnish Immigration Service, with the aim to provide sustainable reintegration to returnees and develop better future activities and projects.
- Budget inferior to what initially envisaged because one activity was not implemented. Moreover, travel budget almost not used.
- Three main activities:
    - Pre-departure business training provided online (StartUp Refugees). This activity received more attention;
    - Post-arrival business training, in person, in Baghdad (ETTC);
    - Survey of the challenges faced by the returnees to Iraq (SEEFAR).
- The plan envisaged a mapping, followed by a consultation with potential implementing partners, which led to a revised plan and the development of new activities, which fed into the new project.
- Initial idea to run a survey. It was noticed that stigma was not a problem for returnees in Iraq. Yet, there is a fear of stigma, which is common among returnees and which could prevent some of them to return. SEEFAR (the selected SP) provided some campaigning proposals and ideas to tackle the fear of stigma.
- Most returnees to Iraq choose to start their own business. However, they do not have a formal training on how to set it up, which often leads the businesses to fail. Therefore, the idea is to support the returnees to make their businesses more sustainable. Business training should be done pre and post departure, providing psychological support as well. A good option would be to tailor the trainings for returnees.
- People who finished the training were very satisfied. However, due to the short period of implementation and insufficient number of referrals from MS, the training have partially not been seen as a success story in terms of being regarded as valuable and useful.

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Building public and private sector partnership (PPP) Pilot – Bangladesh

Please refer to the PPT for more information

- The main purpose is to strengthen the operational mechanism in terms of dialogues, cooperation and engagement among several reintegration actors, emphasising on the role of the private sector. Additionally, to better interlink reintegration services with the labour market needs of the private employment.
- The implementation started in August 2021 however, the pilot kicked off only in November due to Covid-19. Pilot implemented by ICMPD in Vienna and the office in Dhaka.
- Several activities implemented, including finishing the stakeholder mapping and the ToR for the formal set up of the PPP.
- Progress:
    - Approved and chaired by the Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas employment, which is leading the whole migration process and prioritising reintegration in their own programming. This shows that the leadership of the Ministry is present and available, which is a key instrument;
    - Initially it was planned to bring together 35 stakeholders. However, in the past two events the stakeholders were 46 with different profiles (e.g. labour, youth, government and foreign affairs);
    - The PPP can contribute in four areas: 1) reintegration; 2) private sector and stakeholder engagement; 3) access to service; 4) access to finance.
- In the kick-off meeting, the government reemphasised the need for partnerships between private and public sectors, with destination and origin countries, and to open other paths for *legal* migration.
- Recommendations from participants (kick-off meeting):
    - Inclusion of other organisations in the mapping and in the PPP platform;
    - Generate a comprehensive, accurate and timely data on returnees;
    - Involve micro-finance institutions, real estate groups, garments, pharmaceutical companies;
    - Expertise of private sector (e.g. training) can be tapped by the government;
- PPP members are also unions and associations; therefore, it would be important to ask these actors to be PPP advocate in furthering the partnership within their own members.
- In the second training session, three major activities were confirmed: 1) data; 2) serving mapping; 3) the publication of the information material, which could help the private sector.
- In the next three months the goal is to finale the ToR, receive a confirmed commitment from participants, and do a set-up for the activities identified.

European Commission update

- General update on development in the field of migration from DG HOME's perspective.
    - One of the pillars in the AVRR Strategy entails to quicker legislate the framework in which reintegration operates. The delivery in this regard did not advanced as COM wished.
    - In terms of legislation, it is worthwhile to mention that EASO has become a fully-fledged agency for asylum, with an extended field of action. It can now assist much more MS with

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funding packages at hand, which affects the housing and detention centres where asylum seekers and returnees are awaiting the decision on their asylum applications or where they take their decision to voluntary return.

- Two worth-mentioning developments: 1) the Blue Card Directive was revised after reaching a political agreement, which will have an impact on legal migration matters, which is envisaged to replace illegal migration; 2) on a more operational level, in summer 2021, the initiative for legal partnership was materialised, which gives MS and partner countries the support to host third-country nationals to study or work for a limited period. There is an interesting component to it, which foresees the integration of talented migrants.
- Adoption of the EU Action Plan against smuggling of migrants. In light of the current events in Belarus, COM has taken into account how third-countries' play a role in organising these kind of illegal migration flows. A number of responding measures have been put in place. Actions taken against Belarusian government officials (such as visa restrictions), blacklisted several airline operators that assisted in the smuggling of migrants. 1M Euro of humanitarian assistance mobilised to help those who were already stranded at the Belarusian border. 3,5M Euro foreseen to support assisted voluntary return from Belarus.
- COM also filed a report on the Employer Sanction Directive concerning a number of rules that should address the illegal employment of illegal migrants.
- COM have 10 M set aside for the AMIF for the next two years for the thematic facility activities, to which COM have invited ICMPD to submit their RRF proposal.

- Update from DG INTPA
  - At the policy level, R&R is a key priority. COM is working with MS on two migration Team European Initiatives (TEI) in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA): 1) the Atlantic/Western Mediterranean, led by Spain; 2) the Central Mediterranean, initiated by France and Italy.
  - Regional Africa Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP) adopted at the end of last year. Migration is a key priority area, with 1,6 billion EUR. R&R remains a key priority there, demonstrated by the adoption of the first individual measure under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instruments (NDICI) regional programme: a 103M EUR measure to continue the activities of the EU-IOM Joint Initiative throughout 2022.
  - This individual measure was adopted as an urgent measure to avoid a gap in supporting stranded and vulnerable migrants. It also gives COM some time to reflect on their future approach to migrant protection, assisted voluntary return and sustainable reintegration in SSA, as COM is aware that great outcomes have been achieved, but at the same time key challenges remain ahead.
  - Key challenge is to improve local ownership, in particular for the long-term sustainability of reintegration; this includes building capacities of national and local authorities, as well as and NGOs, which are the key service providers.

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- Need to find ways to improve referrals, to ensure cost-effective support but also to improve the reintegration of the returnees into local communities as well as the ownership of governments.
- Limited funding unfortunately, especially if compared to the EU Trust Fund for Africa where over 450M EUR was spent in return and reintegration in SSA. The same amount is not available, therefore COM needs to look at better and more efficient way to work without reducing the sustainably of the programme.
- COM is now reflecting on a future Migrant Protection, R&R programme, which should better address these challenges. COM is also working at the national level, trying to work as much as possible at the local level notably by ensuring, from the design phase, that national development programmes can be accessible to returnees and migrants, which is a key area where referrals are difficult.

- General update DG NEAR
  - DG NEAR developed a new programme: the Multi Country Migration Programme for the Southern Neighbourhood, which covers all the relevant migration areas. A top priority area is return and sustainable reintegration.
  - The goal of the programme is to support partner countries in building functioning systems and capacity for safe and dignified return. COM wants to prioritise already existing national local structures, to encourage their ownership and accountability.
  - There is an ongoing programme on reintegration in Tunisia, which contract for the second phase was signed in 2021. In this phase, the goal is to support the operationalisation of Tunisia's own mechanisms and make them more sustainable. Tounesna is a good example of reintegration mechanism and could be used in the future with other interested countries.

Q&A

- DK inquired whether COM foresees MS's engagement in the design of the activities, in order to align the programmes. COM informed that when designing programmes, they already take into consideration MS's positions and reflect what is discussed in these TWGs. Furthermore, COM stressed that they look at MS and ERRIN in the design of future programmes, also by using EU embassies and delegations on the ground, which enhances the coordination at the field level. Additionally, the **Migration Coordination Group** recently set up, has the objective to bring all involved actors (***COM DGs, EEAS and EU MS***) around the table to discuss and collect the collective knowledge, and incorporate the initiatives and lessons learnt, especially those that have been successfully implemented.
- DK noted that TWG discussions showed it is very difficult to add through referrals once beneficiaries are decided. Therefore, any point about when reintegration programmers can influence the programming on the beneficiaries would be helpful. COM confirmed that it is an area they are working on by looking at the criteria for deciding the beneficiaries of the national programmes on

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job creation, education etc. Moreover, the interest of the returnees in joining these programmes is a variable to take into consideration.

- GIZ Ghana expressed the interest on any information COM can provide about how the Team Europe Initiative (TEI) can fit in the bigger picture, where they stand and where the main responsibility in COM is located. COM informed that the TEI are still a relatively new initiative; COM foresees a role of coordinator. It is also envisaged to form different thematic working groups, such as Germany has expressed their interest in chairing one of the working group. However, we are in the middle of internal discussions and shall get back to you in due time ones the development of the initiative has been finalized.

Introduction and methods used by Samuel Hall

Please refer to the PPT for more information

- Samuel Hall's presentation focused on three core elements: 1) presentation of the team; 2) objective and methods; 3) discussion to take place in the breakout sessions.
- Samuel Hall (SH) is a research organisation born to better connect academic standards with operational standards on research in the field of migration. It was founded in Afghanistan in 2010 and it conducts research in countries of origin, transit and destination countries affected by displacement matters. Its aim is to connect the voices of returnees and change-makers like the TWG R&D members to create more inclusive societies. The main aspect covered by the organisation in the last years is sustainable reintegration.
- The core task is to develop an operational framework between R&D: aiming at creating more synergies among their actors and delineating good practices and lessons learned, reflected in a set of recommendations. These recommendations can serve you as guidance for the future development of project activities in the area of reintegration.
- SH will conduct their assignment along five research phases: 1) the week following the TWG, they will submit the Synthesis Report & Work Plan; 2) in the course of February, they will conduct the data collection and field visits; 3) they envisage having a first draft of the operational framework ready in the course of March, and 4) make it available for review in the month of April, followed by a 5) validation TWG R&D meeting in the second week of May.
- Presentation of the Cluster Approach: a selected country of origin (Bangladesh, Ghana, Iraq, Nigeria and Tunisia) is paired with a cluster of receiving countries. This will result in case studies, adopting a migration cycle approach, meaning that the reintegration process will be followed from the pre-departure stage in receiving countries onwards, and engage with R&D actors on the ground in both contexts.
- Objectives of the Breakout Sessions: to have an informal conversation with the TWG R&D members on how to be better involved in the cluster approach. Collect suggestions, capture challenges, establish a communication channel and underscore the ownership of the TWG R&D at every stage of the process. The participants attending the 5th TWG R&D were divided in 3 Groups, discussing: Cluster Approach, Coordination and Collaboration.
- Several MS informed that due to the short time given they are not in the position to provide their comprehensive feedback on the documents shared and asked for further clarifications. DK clarified

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that the decision should not have to be taken immediately during the TWG R&D, as what was shared is only an initial proposal about the involvement.

- DE asked about the envisaged timeline for implementing the clusters. ERRIN PMU informed that the main delivery will be ready within the ERRIN mandate. SH informed that the field work will take place in February, the analysis will be conducted in March and the finalisation and presentation of the results will be shared in April.

Takeaways of the Breakout sessions

Group A – Cluster Approach

- Group A discussed the role of the primary and secondary stakeholders in the clusters. Primary stakeholders will receive weekly updates, introductions to data collection and will focus on group discussion. The following topics were discussed:
    - Involvement of local authorities and local population;
    - National authorities and reintegration mechanisms;
    - Complementarity of interventions among the different programs in place;
    - Reintegration financial assistance;
    - Transnational case management;
    - Psychological support;
- COM noted that in the future, profiling the returnees would be very useful to answer their lack of interest in the trainings provided.
- FR expressed the importance of the project TOUNESNA in Tunisia, which aims at creating national reintegration programmes. Tunisian authorities are really involved in the reintegration of their nationals and in the implementation of the reintegration assistance programme. The project is there to assist them, so all stakeholders involved are partly contributing to the implementation of the reintegration.
- NO and SE asked to be included in the Cluster with Iraq.
- Action point: From the 26th of January onwards, a feedback is expected on the involvement of the MS in the Clusters.

Group B – Coordination

- Group B discussed three topics: 1) Coordination Fora; 2) Funding Streams; 3) Cases.
- The new Migration Coordination groups/mechanisms within the EU Institutions, on the reintegration and development side and in all relevant third countries. However, even if coordination funds are earmarked for reintegration, there is not the same strong link with a broader development agenda.
- Existing national level coordination mechanisms between reintegration and development actors should be look at, such as BE/FR/DK.
- Funding training and funding of national development plans were discussed. There is a difficulty of getting a full picture of the national funding schemes and how to development for returnees should be addressed in a more specific way.

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- Examples of good practices can be included while implementing the cluster approach, if not identified already (e.g. Mali and Cameroon).

Group C – Collaboration

- Group C focused the discussion on the need of a top-down approach, on strategical thinking and ensuring a coherent approach.
- Cooperation should start at a National level and then reach the EU sphere. The actors on the top level should meet and exchange information regularly.
- Cooperation should not only stay at a national level but also go from the bottom to the top.
- The role of "facilitator" played by the TWG R&D is unique, that should take place more often.
- Council Working Groups w composed of different actors involved in the field of migration , not only reintegration and development actors, but also actor involved for example in smuggling of migrants or readmission, shall offer a platform to exchange ideas and inputs on operation and coordination on migration outside the European Union.
- During the planning phase, more collaboration is also needed to ensure coherence.
- Thinking about how to involve certain stakeholders and their role, technical mandates and personal connections between actors in ministries play an important role.
- Mainstreaming returnees in all EU development programming as beneficiaries.
- Compared to 5 -10 years ago, instruments aiming at common planning have improved, particularly in terms of exchanges between different players from the reintegration and development world, however, there is still a long way ahead of us to reach what should be the joint objective of common planning.
- Sovereignly facing next challenge ahead with the takeover of ERRIN by Frontex will be very crucial, and the EU Com as well as MS will have to support this process via different platforms for networking and exchanges with different partners involved in the field of migration.
- Pilot activities fostering local ownership, setting up referral mechanism, Public & Private Partnership cooperation, pre-departure and post-arrival training as presented this morning should continue and build on lesson learned.
- Pre-departure measures and buy-ins on the ground are also key for successful implementation of project activities in third countries.

Conclusion

- DK, chair of the TWG R&D, thanked the participants and underlined the important takeaways that have been discussed. The approach that will be followed by Samuel Hall for the operational framework will involve all the stakeholders in countries of destination and countries of origin. An important discussion is still ongoing on how the TWG will look like under the framework of the RRF project.

Brussels, 13 January 2022

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Minutes of the 6th Technical Working Group meeting on Reintegration & Development

Date 6 May 2022
Location WebEx

Annexes:

- Agenda
- Presentations

Welcome and Opening

- ERRIN PMU and the Chair of TWG on Reintegration and Development (TWG R&D) welcomed the participants to the 6th ERRIN Technical Working Group meeting on R&D.
- Prior to the meeting the participants received the first draft of the Operational framework (OF) and the Assessment Report (AR), the latest being a comprehensive analysis of TWG R&D pilot projects and other activities implemented within ERRIN. The AR serves as a basis for the elaboration of the OF. Thus, the purpose of the meeting is to discuss the first draft of the OF and start the validation process of the document.
- A short summary was delivered on the concrete steps and endeavours that TWG R&D as whole undertook for the elaboration of the OF. Samuel Hall (SH) is the consultancy enterprise that was selected to support the development and finalisation of the OF by evaluating the TWG pilots and other ERRIN activities.
- OF does not aim to be prescriptive, nor holds a policy character, but is rather a wrap-up of lessons learned and good practices gathered and accumulated during the course of the TWG R&D work. The OF is intended to be handed over to the Member States (MS), who are free to decide to which extend they wish to use this operational policy tool for future project designs.
- The Chair reminded how the work of ERRIN TWG R&D started back in 2018 and evolved until today, and how the group has set the task of seeking to reach out and to engage in a dialogue across the two sectors. TWG R&D has set the task as well of trying to enlarge the reintegration value chain and engage with the development actors in order to see how far we get in this new collaboration framework.
- TWG R&D has evolved in three phases, first in a research and foundational phase, then in a piloting phase, and ultimately in a consolidation stage ending in the development of the main deliverable, which is the OF.
- Today's meeting serves as an opportunity to discuss the OF and collect comments and feedback, in order to finalise the final version in in the coming weeks until the validation meeting scheduled for 31 May.

General Overview of the Operational Framework (OF), Samuel Hall - Nassim Majidi

(For more detailed information, please refer to the attached PPT)

- SH welcomed the participants to the meeting, and expressed gratitude to all of those key informants (also present at the meeting) that actively participated and contributed to the data collection and assessment phase that lead to the elaboration of the OF.
- The objective of the OF is to provide guidance to strengthen the practical links between the two worlds, the world of reintegration and the world of the development actors. The two different actors have different

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ways of working and they don't always speak the same language. Without the development approach, you can't achieve the goal of sustainable reintegration.

- In terms of the structure of the OF, it provides 10 guiding principles that can speak to both reintegration and development actors. They are a result of some of the key dilemmas highlighted in the OF.
- The analysis and way forward is detailed in the OF and is based on a four phase operational approach. In order to highlight where there is a need to broaden the conversation towards a more inclusive one, an ecosystem of actors is embedded in the OF.
- Key elements are detailed in the document with an overall focus to showcase what a common approach could look like between the two worlds. One of the elements is to understand what it means linking reintegration and development, having in mind the importance of applying the multidimensional objectives (economic, social, and psychosocial). Another element is the challenge to define what a referral mechanism means. OF highlights the process of cooperation that is needed to bridge the gaps in assistance between reintegration services and ongoing development projects. Lastly, the ultimate element is to define what we mean by development referrals and how we can get there.
- The data collection phase reveals the need of a staged approach in working together across these sectors of interest. The proposal offered by the OF is to break down the cooperation in 4 stages: pre-design, design, implementation, and monitoring.
- Key lessons learned and key practices were highlighted from the implementation of TWG R&D pilots and other activities of ERRIN, comprehensively detailed in the AR (annex to the OF).
- As for the key dilemmas, two scales of miscommunication were identified: geographically, between countries of destination and countries of origin, and thematically between reintegration and development actors. This is due to elements such as different timelines, different locations where interventions happen, different funding streams. It proved not always easy to make that link as concretely and operationally as needed.
- The intention of the meeting is also to discuss the operational standards that the OF brings forward. This is where practical links can emerge for integrating reintegration and development actors. OF defines this standards by phase.
- Thus, in the predefined phase (for example of a referral mechanism), this is where the programme mapping, scenario mapping, can be done jointly, to help actors map out together the existing structures and processes in countries of origin. This will ensure that referral mechanisms are embedded in resources and cooperation that exist, which can be enhanced to avoid redundancy and ensure local ownership.
- In the design phase, OF shows that the focus should be around ensuring that there is less competition and redundancy between actors, and more complementarity of cooperation. During the planned sessions of the meeting, the participants have the opportunity to discuss solutions on how to achieve more formalised coordination mechanisms across countries of origin and destination, but also within the country of origin and local actors.
- Moreover, the implementation phase will be extensively discussed with an emphasis on referrals. The sessions will reveal a range of experiences and learnings about different approaches to referral mechanisms.
- The fourth phase, which is the monitoring, will not be touched extensively during this meeting as there are parallel discussions at the moment on how to monitor reintegration and it could be a meeting of its own.

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- OF provides indicators that can speak as much to development actors as to return and reintegration actors. The purpose is to find common agreements on what it that can provide a basis for these actors to actually plan jointly and have the same aims together.

Session 1, Pre-design phase (mapping and scenario planning)

- The aim of this session is to touch upon some dilemmas and trying to address them, whether it is competing programme mismatch priorities or lack of trust and communication. The objective of programme mapping is to have local buy-in and local ownership, and ensure that mechanisms are built on the ground realities. Scenario planning, on the other hand, is an opportunity to allow actors to anticipate the needs of returnees and to anticipate how collaboration can look like. ERRIN activities and TWG R&D pilots reveal many good practices in that direction, which involved mapping, whether it's the OFII field activities, the PROSPECT project, the pilots initiative in Bangladesh, or the action in Ghana.
- The Chair highlighted that the reintegration support provided in the planning of individuals is delivered at an individual level, while the programming needs to take place at an aggregated level. Already at the pre-departure phase, the knowledge of what are the interests and the specificities of the beneficiaries allow the returnees to contemplate their return and their individual plans, the capacities that they bring with them and where exactly they are returning to. Further, what are some of the capacities that they would like to bring back to their country/communities of origin. There is a need to consider the makeup of the targeted beneficiary and see how that fit is reflected in the programme. This would permit to do a better scenario planning as the last step. Demography of returnees who are in countries of destination in various parts of Europe may look different, and each returnee has different migratory experience.
- DG INTPA stressed that - for the pre-design phase and the mapping - an amount of endeavours have been undertaken already by development partners. A lot of influence and advocacy can be undertaken to influence the process beforehand. Pre-design at DG INTPA is partly programming and partly identification. For the programming 2021-2027, 80 billion have been earmarked for cooperation with third countries outside of the EU - that opens the opportunity for linking everything in terms of development with EU return programmes. The board programming framework where the priorities are set is based on 3 pillars (geographic, thematic, and rapid response). In terms of programming, there are multiannual indicative programmes, which are done thematically, but also in individual countries. When it comes to migration (both a priority in terms of cross-cutting issue, but also in its own right), a legal commitment from DG INTPA side is to spend indicatively 10%, from the total amount mentioned above, on migration and forced displacement. Another set commitment is the establishment of a coordination mechanism, though which EU MS will be involved, in particular at the pre-design phase. At this stage, via the coordination meetings, DG INTPA presents initial ideas (e.g. concept notes) gathered from the work with partner countries, civil society, EU Delegations, and other various sources. This forum allows space for discussions and consultations on specific subjects concerning migration, including return and reintegration. This a new initiative never undertaken before, which represents an opportunity for influencing the programming phase and to foster collaboration by working together in these areas.
- Further, DG INTPA emphasised that the OF is extremely interesting and addresses a lot of existing gaps. Reintegration actors don't have necessarily a full picture of what is happening at the development level in terms of what DG INTPA is doing through EU Delegations. The mapping phase is essential and it has to

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happen on a country and regional basis. EU Delegation can play a significant role in that and is further a key partner in this process in terms of cooperation with partner countries.

- BE remarked that the OF constitutes a leading document in the further conversations and agreements with the development sector. The proposed 10 guiding principles are in line with BE's vision and the challenges identified are similar to the challenges experienced in their work. The emphasis made on complementarity and on co-design is welcome. Local embeddedness is important as well as referral mechanism towards private and public initiatives, and the links with development cooperation.
- BE considers that, in order to refer their returnees towards these programmes, the responsibility should be with local reintegration partners. These partners have built the necessary relationships of trust due to their daily contact with beneficiaries. Nevertheless, in the early stages of return/reintegration, all actors should be involved. Experienced of parallel systems produced bottlenecks in the process. BE welcomes pilot projects where from the start all actors are actively involved in the process.
- BE expressed the need to be involved in all discussions regarding NDICI fund or other types of funding and to look for the link with their own programmes.
- FI echoed the idea expressed by DG INTPA on the involvement of EU Delegations and mentioned the need of a 'shoulder broad' enough to do the mapping. FI also echoed BE's intervention on the importance of involving all the actors together from the beginning, which is a very central challenge. In that sense, through the implementation of SRI project, in order to increase local ownership, a local (Iraqi) consultant was engaged to do the mapping, and certain challenges were identified (e.g. agenda misalignment). It was also highlighted the multitude of actors in the field which very often creates some sort of competition and becomes challenge to bring them around the same table. Therefore, there is enormous contribution that the mapping could bring in practice to avoid this type of challenges in the future.
- SH's national researcher in Iraq shared his insights from his experience working for the data collection in Iraq and explained that for the country, as whole, return from Europe is not a priority, due to the millions of IDPs and displaced people, and quarter a million of refugees from Syria. Nevertheless, the importance to establish a national coordination mechanism or any kind of cluster coordination mechanism is high, and should be led by the government. It was also added that the private sector involvement is mostly inexistent either due to poor promotion by reintegration and development actors or due to dim clarity around the benefits of contributing.
- Representative from NCFRMI (National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced persons in Nigeria) highlighted the existence of a national framework for managing returnees and reintegration, in the form of an SOP, which is a national document in Nigeria. This document also contains a mapping, which outlines various stakeholders that are involved in return, readmission, and reintegration.
- BMZ stressed that when they conduct the mapping the foremost important is to map stakeholders, including local organisations (the drivers behind the reintegration process) that provide services to everyone, including returning migrants. Important to have a regular dialogue between the two sides: the interior policy and development policy. Within target countries is essential to develop a whole of government approach.

Session 2, Design phase (validating priority areas, gov-to-gov initiatives, local coordination model)

- FR emphasized that in the design phase the bottom-up approach is important, with the involvement of local authorities, community leaders, experts from the ministries, and stakeholders in charge of thematic links

to development. FR's reintegration national programme is a committee of selection and applies this approach, with a strong involvement of local stakeholders.

- ETTC echoed this approach that is able to reveal at an earlier stage the reintegration gaps in the country of origin that could result in conducting a survey among cluster of returnees to know more about their needs and interests in origin country. A comprehensive analysis of different aspects of the country of origins can also contribute to an efficient reintegration of returnees.
- Danish Refugee Council stressed the importance of pre-departure counselling which help returnees to draw a vision of development opportunities before return. An easy and accessible digital catalogue of existing opportunities will facilitate counsellors' work.
- SH National Researcher in Ghana pointed out the importance to understand the two categories of returnees (forced and voluntarily) which have different needs that have to be taken into account.

Session 3, Implementation phase (development of (types) referrals and KPIs to monitor referrals)

- The aim of this session is to identify system of referrals and clarify how referrals can look like.
- DG Home stressed its support for the guiding principle on local ownership of return and reintegration. State actors are becoming increasingly involved in the design or implementation of activities funded by the EU from the design phase. The role of EU delegations is crucial in this process. If state actors in countries of origin are made aware, by MS or the COM, in a timely manner of the numbers and profiles of returnees coming from the EU, then they are well placed to secure the necessary linkages in the implementation phase. This can be done by either directing groups of returnees to the communities in which activities are ongoing, or in the next cycle, they can impact, to the extent that is possible. EU or MSs, as donors, are freed, from the outset, to bear the responsibility that development projects must cater for the needs of returnees.
- Enabel echoed the intervention from BMZ and agreed with the fact that development actors/programmes, led by different organisation and CSOs, are not geared specifically towards returnees and reintegration. This is a good thing, as development programmes don't have to be 'forced' to be geared in that direction. The OF talks about a coordination level where the migration actors are very much at the centre of the scene. Whereas, if we consider reintegration embedded in a much more society-oriented and local development-oriented manner, these are not the actors that we should be dealing with.
- ICMPD emphasised that coordination with and referral to development programmes is key in the field of reintegration assistance. This can help in many ways - providing access to existing services, ensure eligibility criteria are met and that the support is available in the communities of return. It also helps to combine support provided under different plans as a top-up system, it can also help ensuring the continuation of provision of services after the end of the assistance period under the reintegration programmes.
- MPI raised the question of accountability and validity of referrals, how to monitor if referrals work and if they meet expectations. ERRIN, together with MPI, is currently working on developing the quality-monitoring framework.
- IOM provided insights on a recently published study on outwards referrals which investigated the extent to which reintegration support measures offered through referrals met beneficiaries' needs and expectations in four countries (Cameroon, the Gambia, Guinea and Senegal). The most important findings of this study highlights that mismatch between migrants' needs and the content of potential referral partners' programme as well as respective eligibility criteria remain the most important challenges. As a result, this

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points to the need to discuss and formalize synergies as early as possible during the respective programmes' design stage.

Summary of the Outcomes and Conclusions

- The Chair confirmed that many of the contributions delivered during the meeting are viewpoints that have been reflected throughout the work of the TWG R&D. From the start of this working group, it was acknowledged that development and reintegration determine reintegration; how they have specific objectives, sets, tools and actionable ways forward that are distinct. The aim is not to force or to change objectives, but to see how these can work together. Many of the contributions today have reiterated that there are ways to share that we have common areas of work.
- As ERRIN programme comes to an end in June 2022, TWG on R&D will continue under RRF (return and reintegration facility). MS strongly supports the continuation of the dialogue and the gathering of development and reintegration actors.
- The Chair and ERRIN PMU closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their valuable contribution to the elaboration of the OF, which will be disseminated during the last TWG R&D meeting on 31 May, and published on ERRIN website in the next couple of weeks.

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Minutes of the 7th Technical Working Group meeting on Reintegration & Development

Date 31 May 2022
Location Permanent Representation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the European Union

Annexes:

- Agenda
- Presentations

Welcome and Opening

- ERRIN PMU and the Chair welcomed the participants to the 7th Technical Working Group (TWG) on Reintegration and Development (R&D).
- ERRIN PMU presented the final version of the Operational Framework (OF) and shared it with the participants prior to the meeting. It is an important document towards a more coherent reintegration policy within the EU framework. Three important annexes are included in the OF:
  - The 1st Annex, which is the syntheses report compiled by Sabine Boeltken, is divided in two parts: Part 1) includes the analysis of 27 interviews conducted with members of EU institutions and EPIs from the reintegration and development sectors; Part 2) entails fiches illustrating if and how anchorages of reintegration and development sectors exist and work within these 15 MS.
  - The 2nd Annex is the a Assessment Report, that is being finalised, while
  - The 3rd Annex includes the minutes of the TWG R&D meetings held under the ERRIN umbrella between 2018 - 2022.
- The goal of finalising the main deliverable of the TWG R&D was achieved.

(Please refer to the PPT and the PDF "ERRIN TWG on Reintegration and Development" for more information)

- The initial aim was to make reintegration and development actors work together and enable ERRIN returnees to access development-oriented services. A few pilot activities were tested in two countries of origin (Bangladesh and Nigeria).
- The OF is a result of the entire endeavours since 2018, when TWG R&D had the foundational meeting of the group. The aim was to gather together reintegration and development actors, to see how to work together. Prior to the meeting, no objectives and high ambitious were set. At that time it was difficult to figure out how to work towards common objectives. The group agreed to test and compile experiences in an OF. It started with the research phase, followed by interviews with 27 EU and MS institutions in Europe. For the second phase a field research was done. Fact finding missions to Bangladesh and Nigeria took place in 2019. The next phase was about defining the activities and start with the implementation of pilot activities.
- The implementation of the pilots paved the way for a more structured dialogue. The existing structures were interlinked. Also, the recommendations of seeking clarity and stay operational were achieved.
- The implementation of the pilot activities were useful to forge the OF. These efforts will lead the TWG R&D to reflect on the next steps, towards the inclusion of returnees in their communities.

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Presentation Operational Framework (OF), Samuel Hall - Nassim Majidi

(Please refer to the PPT and the PDF "Operational Framework R&D Revision Update" for more information)

- The main objective of the OF was to provide guidance on how to bring together reintegration and development actors, by focusing on the synergies. The key findings are based on 1) assessment of ERRIN activities; 2) interviews with 66 representatives across 10 countries; 3) assessment report of ERRIN activities, provided as an annex to the OF.
- The operations standards, ecosystem of actors, and standard processes constitute the heart of the OF. 10 guiding principles were identified as a common goal for the actors involved. Also, 10 key dilemmas were presented as barriers for reintegration and development collaboration. An important miscommunication has been found across the geographical and thematic scale.
- The OF puts forward 4 operational standards, highlighting the key elements of integrating reintegration and development fields through referrals mechanism. Also, 4 phases have been identified: 1) pre-design phase, 2) design, 3) implementation and 4) monitoring of reintegration. Given that funding for reintegration usually only runs for a 12-month period after return, the OF encourages mutual indicators amongst the sectors. The standard processes illuminate the steps required to achieve the operational standards per stage.
- The ecosystem of actors is also a key element of the OF. The ERRIN TWG on R&D is the core group for discussion, often joined by civil society and public sector actors from countries of origin where ERRIN implements pilots and other activities (Ghana, Nigeria, Bangladesh and Iraq). The OF sets common standards where reintegration and development actors can base their cooperation and collaboration across time (from pre-departure to post-arrival) and across space (from countries of destination to countries of origin).
- At the pre-design and design stages, it is critical for EU delegations in the countries of origin to facilitate the meetings, bringing all actors together in the same country. The key for the implementation phase is not to force unions, but to build the buy-in through previous stages, and ensure accountability.
- SH concludes by underling that all the feedbacks mentioned in the presentation are incorporated in the OF. A continuum of services supporting countries of origin with key actors across time and space represent the outcome of the learning experience from the TWG R&D.
- The ERRIN PMU and DE thanked SH for their indispensable efforts done in structuring and shaping the process.

Outlook and Q&A (round table discussion)

- The ultimate objective of the ERRIN TWG R&D was to finalize the OF and its annexes within the ERRIN TWG R&D life-cycle. It is important to build a nexus with humanitarian aid and the challenges coming from the war in Ukraine. To reach out at policy level and how to link it with the operational framework is something that needs to be developed. What can be done in the future to link the ministerial level and the policy level at a national and EU level?
- SE highlighted that the discussion about reintegration and development remains a challenge. The OF is a very important tool to be used to orientate further policy dialogues. It can be used as a foundation for a whole of a government approach on reintegration and development, and more widely on migration. The OF is a valid instrument that can also be used for the dialogue with local actors.
- The MS complimented the work done by the TWG R&D on the elaboration of the Operational Framework.

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- DE stressed that in Germany the Federal Ministry of the Interior (BMI), Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) are working in close cooperation on reintegration and development, by making it a whole of a government approach. The OF can be used as a blueprint and a foundation for the chapters that will follow. DE expressed its hope for this approach to be followed by other MS as well as at the EU level.
- BE stated that the OF and the key challenges that were presented represent a useful instrument to further pilot projects with the development partners. Building an embedded referral system is one of the main task for the RRF. BE also highlighted the key role played by the local reintegration partners. In the context of the OECD, BE asked the COM colleagues what is officially included under the development aid (NDICI fund) and whether reintegration will be included or not.
- DG NEAR confirmed that the discussion is ongoing, not only on reintegration but more widely on migration management. DG INTPA is leading the process and DG NEAR is involved; but, in general, the COM supports the idea of reintegration being included under the Official Development Assistance (ODA).
- DG HOME stressed that apart from migrants in transit, there are no projects that are geographically clustered. Migration does not encounter geographical limitations anymore, and whatever is funded under NDICI will be spend for returnees, migrants, and refugees. The eligibility criteria will be defined in a less confusing way. A discussion on how to link the next programming should take place. The COM described the OF as a solid work to start with when planning the future AMIF – AVRR Programmes and Strategy. The OF describes in the implementation phase the steps that lead to local ownership and how to reinforce the role of local stakeholders.
- NL commented that in the Netherlands, readmission is part of the return and reintegration process. Bottom-up approach is very important. The MS, third countries authorities and NGOs play a major role in this process. The next challenge is to bring them together and find a way to work jointly. The NL is looking forward to adding readmission to the discussion, find solutions for each of the third countries and serve the MS's interest in that country.
- BE underlined the importance of the link between return and legal migration, and how they would like to find synergies between these programmes.
- FR echoed everything that was mentioned. The development authority in FR did not get on board of these TWG R&D, which is huge step down. The RRF project is a good way to ensure continuity of TWG R&D, and the bottom-up approach is important to achieve concrete results. Within the OFII pilot action, we are proud to mention that we managed to bring these two worlds closer in Senegal, Mali, and Morocco.
- BMZ noted that in the framework of the dialogue on the R&D, it is important to integrate both ways of thinking, by including the different agendas. BMZ highlighted that the focus should be on voluntary return, as it is easier for development actors to accept it.
- DG NEAR supported BMZ in accepting the different perspectives also on a EU level. They look at broader development processes instead of individual returns. This approach will be incorporated in the planning of new actions in North Africa, currently under discussion. The operational and policy level should work together, having in mind what is happening in the other regions of the world (for instance, in Georgia).
- BMI commented that the MS should focus on the synergies and what these two sectors have in common, by looking at the common grounds. Reintegration support is also important for forced returnees, since they are those experiencing most challenges upon their return in the country of origin.
- BE pointed out that the cooperation between the different agencies is strictly linked to the political momentum the countries live. The effort is to try to facilitate the political debate, by presenting some ways forward.

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- DG HOME encouraged MS to live up to this spirit and invited MS to provide respective contributions to the TOR concerning the high level network and its meetings to be led by the recently appointed return coordinator.
- DG NEAR referred to the meetings of the "Coordination Group on Migration under the NDICI-GE and the Member States' bilateral cooperation instrument". The next meeting will present new ideas for projects on migration and forced displacement planned in Sub-Saharan and in North Africa.
- The Chair highlighted the importance of the cluster approach and humanitarian aid & peace nexus, for instance in Iraq, Ukraine and Pakistan, as a context where players from the third countries are active. In reply to the Coordination Group meetings mentioned by DG NEAR, DK commented that usually only attachés are invited, who are not migration experts. Most of the time they also don't have time to consult with respective MS migration experts prior to their attendance of the coordination group meetings. DK has funded reintegration support from ODA – official development assistance. These are resources, agents of change returning with experience and they should be seen as assets.
- North Macedonia expressed interest in joining the next phase of the TWG R&D work under the RRF.
- AT informed the attendees on the various pilot activities tested and recognised the difficulties encountered in keeping an updated overview of all the activities and actors involved in the process.
- Norway expressed its concern on how to build solid relations with countries of origin.

Closing Remarks

- DK informed that the OF has been validated by the TWG R&D members, and it is ready to be published and applied as appropriate. It can now be used as a blueprint for specific actions, to spark conversations and bring operational aspects to a policy level. All the ideas reflect the different stages we are at as individual MS. Different aspects have to be led by the COM. The discussion today has exemplified that everyone is ready to continue the conversation which, under RRF, will continue. The Chair thanks all the MS present for joining the meeting giving insightful inputs to the discussion.
- ERRIN PMU also thanked the ERRIN Team, the participants and the Chair of the TWG R&D.

OFII Presentation

(Please refer to the PPT and the PDF "ERRIN-OFII Pilot Action" for more information)

- The study focuses on three countries where OFII is present: Tunisia, Senegal and Mali. The aim is to replicate it to other states. The final report will be soon available online. Methodology: 1) an external consultant was hired to conduct the studies, 2) review of results through a technical workshop and 3) Final results delivered.
- Key findings for Mali on 4 economic factors: cattle fattening, market gardening, poultry farming and corner shop. The study highlighted that poultry farming was the most expensive activity with lower margins. Corner shop was average and the incomes resulted from the low rental expenses.
- Key findings for Senegal on 4 economic sectors: poultry farming, market gardening, retail trade, multi-service centre. To different extents, all the activities were profitable.
- Key findings in Tunisia on 3 economic sectors: restaurant industry, cattle breeding, inshore fishing. Inshore fishing is very profitable, but it is difficult for the returnees to get a license.
- In Mali the average living cost is EUR 4095 per household (7 people), market gardening and corner shop cover the average living costs. In Senegal the average living cost is EUR 6180 per household (5 people), none of the business generated enough revenues to cover the costs. In Tunisia the average living cost is EUR 6797 per household (4 people), restaurant industry in big touristic cities covers the average living cost.
- Learnings: 1) The reintegration assistant is only part of the aids and cannot be considered the sole source of income for the returnee. 2) There are many solutions to supplement the capital needed ranging from

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personal contribution to search for complementarity to strengthened training. 3) Pre-departure information must include the start-up cost of the preferred business activity so that returnees can be aware of the economic conditions prior to return and plan their reintegration.

Q&A

- NL asked if the main conclusion out of the study is that MS are not offering enough for reintegration support to returnees. In 2016 under the Dutch EU presidency, non-binding guidelines were adopted on this matter. Also at the Global Meeting in Dubai it was discussed whether MS should harmonise the reintegration packages, having in mind the living standards. NL asked the COM if this is part of their future strategy.
- BMI (DE) answers that the numbers presented by FR should only be used as recommendations to return counsellors and returnees, and to decide on which activities the MS should invest. In general, paying flat fees is an advantage that makes the process easier and quicker. Even if the countries of origin have different costs of life, it is not feasible to have different fees. A compromise would be to create country cluster if at all safe guarding flexibility aspects.
- BE stated that all policies should be evidence-based. However, it is very difficult to translate these findings into policy. In the future, the discussion should aim at adapting the reintegration support to the living costs in the different countries. Maybe, based on the collected data, the fees paid by the MS could be indexed and regularly revised.
- DG HOME stated that when talking about the harmonisation of reintegration fees, it is important to look at the progress done in the past years. At present, the harmonisation of the JRS and the convergence of the rates should be considered as an intermediate step to the process. It is now clear that reintegration should be tailored to the needs of the returnee when it comes to vulnerability cases and, also, to the receiving country of origin's conditions. About the possibility of replicating the study to have a better evidence, some concerns are raised. 1) The added value from a returnee's perspective. Why would a person that migrated abroad, go back to the country of origin and replicate what did not work in the past? 2) Why would RRF replicate the study, if this is a task of the involved Development Agencies? There is not an immediate need of replicating the study for every country of origin.
- DG NEAR highlighted that the figures showed are useful and can be used, but it cannot be the only solution for a sustainable reintegration.
- DK said that discussions on the best business plan have always been there. However, it is not always replicable since e.g. poultry farming in Mali cannot be approved in DK as a business plan. Every returnee needs an individual solution and planning. In any case, the reintegration partners need to do market research for the industries that are of potential interest for the returnees upon return. Unfortunately, it is clear that the provided packages in place are not sufficient for a sustainable reintegration. Since not every cost of the reintegration process can be covered, it is important to work with the development actors. Diversifying the funds according to the living standards may be feasible only for returned migrants and not pre-departure cases. About the standardised JRS under Frontex, for DK the national policy remains more relevant than the attempt to harmonise since the latter has rather underlined the differences among the MS.
- BAMF stressed that DE is solely committed on providing reintegration assistance to allow returnees to start a business, and not to fund a full reintegration project from a long-term perspective. A discussion on clustering target countries would not be supported by Germany. The reintegration partners are skilled to provide information on the countries of origin and sustainable perspectives for the returnees trying to start a business. The MS are in charge of deciding, together with the counsellors, about potential additional amounts for each single return case.
- OFII explained that the financial assistance provided to returnees in FR is taken from their (limited) budget. The idea behind the study was to have a better understanding and clearer overview on what was happening

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in the third countries. Local consultants were hired to have a local perspective, while development stakeholders were involved in all stages of the process. The results of the study will be used in complementarity with other projects ensuring sustainable reintegration projects. In France, the Committee of Selection is the authority responsible to decide which projects are feasible and eligible for funding. Concerning the sum allocated to the reintegration packages, in France it already differs from country to country and according to the individual needs. The returnee is only informed on the amount of money he will get during the post-arrival phase. The reintegration package depends on the needs, where a maximum amount is established.

- OFII answered DK that he replication of the study is supposed to take place in some of the countries were OFII is present like Congo, Georgia and Armenia. FR underlined that it is important to focus on a long-term perspective and have the possibility to develop a more sustainable reintegration. Returnees should be considered among the other development stakeholders.

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