Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

RURAL EMPLOYMENT

GUIDANCE MATERIAL

Toolkit for the sustainable reintegration of return migrants in rural areas

SAMUEL HALL.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GCM	Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
NGO	non-governmental organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RRR	return, readmission and reintegration
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TVET	technical and vocational education and training
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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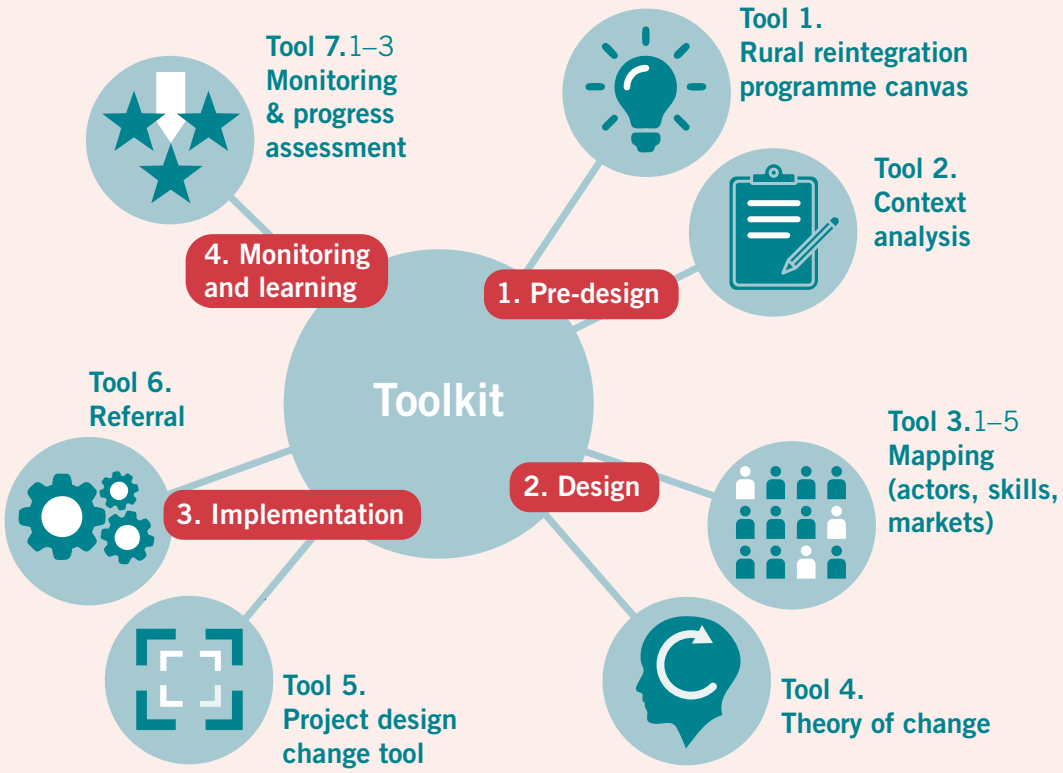
Introduction and purpose

Figure 1. **Overview of the tools contained in the toolkit**



Source: Authors' own elaboration..

Why this toolkit, and who is it for?

In 2020, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic triggered an increase in the number of migrants returning to their countries of origin. A significant proportion of these returnees moved back to rural areas. In this context, assisting returnees in the process of reintegration has become a key priority for stakeholders, both in terms of immediate and medium- to long-term support. This practical toolkit aims to support local stakeholders and actors in agrifood systems to integrate rural returnees into programmes and other initiatives to develop the agrifood sector. It is also intended for migration stakeholders working to support reintegration in rural areas.

The stakeholders who can use this toolkit range from high-level actors with policy-making influence (e.g. representatives from the government and ministries responsible for migration, agriculture, employment, youth and social affairs, the United Nations and development partners); grassroots actors working to address the needs of rural communities (e.g. faith-based organizations, civil society organizations and local authorities); and migrant support groups and transboundary actors working with migrants throughout the migration cycle.

This toolkit provides resources to design and implement programmes and projects to facilitate the reintegration of returnees in rural areas. The ultimate objective is to coordinate these reintegration efforts with larger rural development and rural transformation efforts and stimulate mutually reinforcing outcomes that support the achievement of sustainable livelihoods and well-being for local populations. In that way, the use of the toolkit is expected to help stakeholders bridge the gap between returnees and implementing agencies including international organizations, local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international NGOs, providers of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and capacity-building programmes, and better align their perspectives and approaches.

Importantly, the toolkit has also adopted a COVID-19 lens, as the needs of both returnees and rural stakeholders, as well as outcomes have evolved as a result of the on-going pandemic. Assessing the impacts of the pandemic on return and reintegration processes has become a priority for stakeholders, who have had to adapt their interventions and mitigate the risks associated with the pandemic. For this reason, the toolkit contains a COVID-19 mapping tool and provides key insights on how the pandemic has brought about new dynamics in rural communities and has increased the vulnerability of both returnees and host communities, particularly in relation to the labour market.

The toolkit is structured in four sections that mirror the programme cycle: pre-design, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. It includes a variety of tools to guide stakeholders during all phases of the programme cycle in the designing and implementing interventions that align with the recommendations given in the forthcoming publication, Global lessons learned on sustainable reintegration in rural areas study report, which was commissioned by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and produced by Samuel Hall.

Definition of sustainable reintegration

There is no universally accepted definition of 'sustainable reintegration'. For the purpose of this toolkit and the main Global Lessons Learned report, the definition endorsed by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has been used. The IOM defines sustainable reintegration as the process by which "returnees have reached levels of economic self-sufficiency, social stability within their communities, and 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" (IOM, 2017).

This definition highlights the multi-dimensional and multi-levelled nature of reintegration. It recognizes the economic, social and psychological components of reintegration, and the multiple levels (individual, community and institutional) of analysis that need to be undertaken when designing reintegration programmes. Ultimately, sustainable reintegration aims to improve the economic, social and psychological conditions for returnees so that they can gradually become self-reliant, fully enjoy their rights in their country of origin, and reclaim agency over their lives. To maximize positive outcomes for both individuals and host communities, the focus of attention should be broadened to include the needs of the host communities along with those of individual returnees.

Understanding the local context is a crucial determinant for effective reintegration. Sustainable reintegration programmes cannot be successful if they are not based on a context-specific analysis of local structures and dynamics. For this reason, it is important to link sustainable reintegration to rural reintegration, and develop tools and good practices that reflect the needs of returnees and communities in rural areas.

This toolkit aims to respond to the lack of focus of sustainable reintegration on rural communities. It is intended to fill the gap between sustainable reintegration and rural development by providing context-driven tools and proposing locally led solutions that promote dialogue, social cohesion and empowerment. These solutions are important to the realization of sustainable reintegration which can, in turn, contribute to reinforcing the migration and development nexus.

Linkages with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 interlinked global goals designed to chart a pathway to achieve a more sustainable future for everyone. The SDGs recognize that the end of global poverty must be achieved by implementing strategies for economic growth, addressing key social needs (e.g. education, health, and social protection), and tackling climate change and environmental degradation.

In *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, migration is recognized as a "multidimensional reality" that is of "major relevance for the development of countries of origin, transit and destination".[1] Eleven out of 17 goals are explicitly concerned with migration and migrants, who are acknowledged as being able to make positive contributions to inclusive growth, for example in the form of remittances. For returnees, it is important to link the phenomenon of return to the SDGs and, in particular, to the economic growth returnees can generate in their countries of origin. Returnees are often equipped with technical knowledge and skills that can be put into use in local value chains and contribute to the development of different economic sectors, in this case the agriculture sector. Enabling returnees to secure a livelihood through agricultural work will contribute to reducing poverty, hunger and malnutrition in rural areas and promote sustainable agricultural development.

Objective 21 of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) also highlights the need to "cooperate in facilitating safe and dignified return and readmission, as well as sustainable reintegration", and stresses the importance of ensuring that the "reintegration of migrants upon return to their countries of origin is sustainable".[2] As stated in the GCM, sustainable reintegration can be achieved by implementing measures that include personal and economic empowerment, inclusion, and social cohesion.

2022 report: *Global lessons learned on sustainable reintegration in rural areas*

This toolkit draws on the analysis carried out in a research project launched by the FAO of the United Nations (UN) in partnership with Samuel Hall, a social enterprise dedicated to research in contexts affected by migration and displacements. This analysis, which was published in *Global lessons learned on sustainable reintegration in rural areas* study report, was guided by the need to understand what leads migrants to become returnees, their involvement in rural areas, and the ways in which reintegration processes can be improved to ensure that adequate support is provided to returnees in rural areas.

The research consisted of a global desk review and a wide range of primary data collected across six countries in 2021: Afghanistan, Kenya, the Republic of Moldova, Nepal, Senegal and Tunisia. These countries cover South and Central Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe. Other regions (e.g. Latin America) are not included, but their specific issues were addressed through key informant interviews and global listening sessions organized by the UN Migration Network and FAO. A wide range of stakeholders, including government representatives, civil society organizations, migrants, diaspora associations, youth organizations, academia, the private sector, and development partners participated in these sessions. Along with these sessions, in each of the partner countries, interviews with key informants were conducted, together with semi-structured Interviews with returnees and community members. The team preparing the toolkit also conducted an online survey, prepared programmatic case studies and mapped 30 rural reintegration and development programmes.

1 Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is available at: https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda

2 *The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration* is available at www.iom.int/resources/global-compact-safe-orderly-and-regular-migration/res/73/195

Main lessons learned on supporting sustainable reintegration in rural areas

1. **Policy coherence and alignment** to ensure that a normative approach to rural reintegration is followed and that rural action is supported by national policy priorities. Rural actors, local respondents and communities should not be left to their own to devise plans for reintegration.
2. **Customizing policies at a sub-national level** through a sufficiently strong network in rural areas, which includes tapping into rural-based projects, providing agricultural support, and land distribution and leasing with authorities and partners.
3. **Dialogue and trust building** to ensure a conflict-sensitive approach is adopted in rural areas that is cognisant of the perceptions of all actors involved and seeks community acceptance.
4. **Multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral partnerships and coordination** including on climate change and resilience in support of rural reintegration.
5. **Inclusive sustainable reintegration** programmes in rural areas that target young people and build inclusive value chains.
6. **Financing rural reintegration through adapted mechanisms** to ensure the sustainability of initiatives at rural levels. These mechanisms can include co-financing, incentives for banks to loan to rural stakeholders, investment structures and funds for youth and rural communities.
7. **Location-based and learning-based approaches** to open up a space to connect emergency with resilience projects, mainstream agriculture in rural development and build on community-level and traditional knowledge in agricultural communities.

How can this toolkit be used?

This toolkit can be used by different stakeholders in a variety of ways. It can support them in effectively designing and implementing reintegration programmes that take into account short-, medium- and long-term impacts and effects. This toolkit can also serve as the foundation for developing action plans on rural reintegration that incorporate a gender and age focus, and reflect a deeper understanding of the different factors that influence reintegration.

Structure

To provide more practical guidance to the relevant stakeholders, the toolkit is structured in four overlapping phases of programming:

- **Section 1: Pre-design:** this section provides guidance on how to conduct in an in-depth analysis of the context in which the intervention will be implemented, identifying existing frameworks and policies at the national level and highlighting potential linkages.
- **Section 2: Design:** this section builds on the previous one and presents useful tools to conduct a more comprehensive mapping of actors active in the target area, identifying and categorising individuals, community actors, organisations and governmental authorities, among others.
- **Section 3: Implementation:** this section outlines the key factors to consider for the successful implementation of rural reintegration programmes and provides practical guidance for stakeholders to move towards a coordinated and harmonised approach to programming.
- **Section 4: Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning:** this section provides and overview of different approaches and tools that can be used to monitor reintegration programmes and reintegration outcomes, highlighting good practices for the development of sustainable monitoring systems.

In each phase, there are three distinct resources: 1) tools, 2) illustrations, and 3) checklists. These tools support stakeholders in taking concrete actions that align with the recommendations of the 2022 FAO-Samuel Hall study report, *Global lessons learned on sustainable reintegration in rural areas,* that this toolkit draws on. A proposal development template is provided in the annex.

Questions and answers about the toolkit

Why is this toolkit needed?

Many migrants come from rural areas and rely on agriculture for their livelihoods. According to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), **between 30 and 40 percent** of international remittances are sent to rural areas (IFAD, 2009). This indicates that rural areas are where migrants return to and that these returning migrant may require reintegration support should they desire to stay. Some returnees may reintegrate in a smooth manner, but others may face challenges that they cannot overcome on their own and will need support.

Reintegration programmes tend to focus more on urban areas than rural areas. There is often a shortage of reintegration support services at the local level in rural areas due to limited financial resources, limited technical capacities, and lack of specific information. There is insufficient data on the needs of returnees upon arrival in areas of origin. This toolkit provides resources to support stakeholders in addressing these gaps. The toolkit acknowledges that return migrants do not represent a homogeneous group, and provides resources tailored to the needs of specific groups (e.g. women and youth).

Is this toolkit aimed at rural reintegration or all forms of reintegration?

This toolkit has been developed for and adapted to contexts of rural reintegration in order to capitalize on the economic opportunities that agricultural and rural development can generate. In promoting sustainable reintegration, the toolkit focuses on the potential of reintegration to advance rural development, or as the International Labour Organization (ILO) expresses it: "the potential of rural areas to drive the economy, create productive jobs, improve food security, address environmental and climate change concerns (…) and generally to promote sustainable and balanced growth" (ILO, 2011). Parts of the toolkit can be used in non-rural contexts as well, but it is not specifically designed for that. The goal of this toolkit is to provide tools for sustainable reintegration in rural settings. It includes community-based approaches that resonate in rural settings, and focuses options that have been tailored to rural contexts and can be applied to enhance agricultural production and agrifood systems.

How do I know when reintegration is sustainable?

In accordance with the IOM definition, sustainable integration has been achieved when "returnees have reached levels of economic self-sufficiency, social stability within their communities, and 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" (IOM, 2017).

I am designing a programme for children returnees (under the age of 14). Can I use this toolkit?

No, this toolkit has not been designed and tested for working with children. The toolkit has been developed to support the reintegration of young men and women (between 15 and 24 years of age)[3] and older returning migrants. The only exception is for children who are 14 years old when this is the legal working age of the country in question. We strongly advise consulting other toolkits when working with children, for example the 2021 IOM and Samuel Hall *Child Reintegration Monitoring Toolkit.*[4]

I am working in a fragile and conflict-prone context. Can I use this toolkit?

Even though the general guidance provided in this toolkit applies to a variety of contexts, including fragile and conflict-affected settings, the toolkit does not directly address the specific challenges of return and reintegration in these contexts. Hence, when working in a conflict-prone environment and/or when working with forcibly displaced populations, we advise practitioners to adapt the tools provided in this document, and refer to other toolkits and resources, for example the 2004 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) *Handbook for Repatriation and Reintegration Activities*[5] and the 2019 IOM *Reintegration Handbook.*[6]

3 The United Nations, for statistical purposes, defines 'youth', as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24. However, youth is "best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence. That's why, as a category, youth is more fluid than other fixed age-groups".

4 The IOM and Samuel Hall *Child reintegration monitoring toolkit* is available at https://returnandreintegration.iom.int/system/files/resources/864da20d-c396-4e73-92a7-ca72af986c66/document/child_monitoring_toolkit_toolkit.pdf?type=node&id=941&lang=en

5 The UNHCR *Handbook for Repatriation and Reintegration Activities* is available at www.unhcr.org/411786694.pdf

6 The IOM Reintegration Handbook – Practical guidance on the design, implementation and monitoring of reintegration assistance is available at https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iom_reintegration_handbook.pdf

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1 Pre-design: Context and population specific considerations

This chapter focuses on the pre-design phase of the programme cycle and introduces two key tools:

- **Tool 1. A rural reintegration programme canvas**
  for visualizing the bigger picture of the intervention to be implemented
- **Tool 2. Context analysis**
  for carrying out a context analysis based on key informant interviews conducted at the local level

1.1 Key factors to consider before designing rural reintegration programmes

Before designing a rural reintegration programme, it is essential to understand and carefully consider the key elements in terms of the context and population demographics that will have an impact on reintegration. These main elements are synthesised in Figure 2.

Figure 2. **Key factors to consider in rural reintegration programming**

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Identifying the linkages between reintegration programmes implemented at the local level and national policies and guidelines is essential for ensuring the relevance and coherence of programmes. Understanding these linkages also helps set priorities. If, in a given context, national development goals have been set that stipulate key areas for development, rural reintegration programmes will need to be aligned with these goals.

In this regard, rural reintegration programmes will need to adhere to key principles of engagement:

1. **Reinforce** – not replace – national and local systems
2. **Localize** – from the outset – opportunities for local actors that strengthen local capacities
3. **Scale up** – to expand national systems so that they meet the needs of rural populations, especially at a time of increasing volatility caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In practice, ensuring the alignment of rural reintegration programmes with national development policies also enables greater coordination and this will contribute to identifying the relevant frameworks and stakeholders to engage with during each phase of the programme.

Another key element to consider before designing a rural reintegration intervention is population demographics. Factors such as gender, age, ethnicity, religion and disability have a significant impact on migration patterns, the reasons migrants return, their modalities of return, and the eventual success of the reintegration programmes. These factors deserve special attention in the initial stage of designing a programme, ideally at the pre-return phase in the countries of destination. A clear understanding of the interplay between these factors and the context where the programme will be implemented is essential for achieving sustainable reintegration.

Access to natural, human and financial resources also needs to be acknowledged and assessed before designing any reintegration programme. This element is critical in rural contexts, as rural livelihoods mostly depend on natural resources. Limited access to these resources and to basic services and infrastructure can potentially generate tensions and disputes at the local level. Access to these resources should therefore figure into a risk analysis. Key points to consider are how the available resources are distributed; whether specific groups have more access to them than others; and what are the factors that mediate access (Ribot and Peluso, 2003). In fragile and developing settings, rural reintegration programmes can take place in areas where the government may not be able to provide adequate access to resources and services. In situations where governments assume a leadership role but lack capacity, reintegration programmes can deliver services and set standards that should be linked to national strategies.

Lastly, opportunities for dialogue, information exchange, and collaboration play a central role in reintegration interventions. These opportunities are likely to become ever more important in a policy context that is changing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is vital for those involved in rural areas to invest in building trust to support multi-levelled reintegration processes. A conflict-sensitive approach that is cognisant of the perceptions of all actors involved is also essential. For this reason, it is important to identify what system, if any, is in place for multi-stakeholder engagement and coordination, and use this system to build links and connections with other local actors.

Setting up an inclusive model of rural reintegration: Mitigating group-specific vulnerabilities and designing gender- and age-sensitive reintegration programmes

Gender inequalities are more pervasive in rural areas than in urban ones. These greater gender inequalities are due to a broad range of factors, including social, economic and cultural barriers; stigmatization; a lack of support services and basic infrastructure (e.g. childcare); and the extra burden of unpaid work that falls on women (FAO, 2011). Women suffer the consequences of labour shortages more than men. They are often employed in low-quality jobs and are generally paid less than men. Upon their return, women often fall back into more traditional gendered social roles than the roles they occupied during their migration period. These traditional social constraints limit their potential to use their skills and knowledge for the benefit of agriculture and rural development. Consequently, the process of reintegration has proved to be more challenging for women than for men, particularly from a financial standpoint.

However, women play a key role in agricultural development in rural areas. Particularly at the early stages of their reintegration, women seem to engage more with agricultural activities than men. Their contribution to rural development is limited by patterns of discrimination, unequal access to resources, and constraints on their participation in decision-making fora. All of these limitations prevent women from applying their skills and developing their potential. CARE defines women's economic empowerment as a process

whereby women increase their right to economic resources, as well as their power to make decisions that benefit them, their families and their communities (CARE, 2020).

CHECKLIST

In the pre-design phase, sample indicators that can be taken into account when envisioning rural approaches that strengthen women's empowerment are:

- Percentage of communities and families supporting women-led enterprises, including those led by Indigenous women
- Number of women, including Indigenous women, reporting improvements in their access to agricultural services, inputs and resources after the implementation of the intervention
- Number of women, including Indigenous women, reporting improvements in the terms and conditions of their work in agricultural value chains
- Number of women, including Indigenous women, with access to employment opportunities in the private sector
- Number of women, including Indigenous women, participating in public consultations processes
- Number of women, including Indigenous women using technologies and innovative productive assets
- Number of women, including Indigenous women reporting greater mobility within agricultural value chains
- Percentage of Indigenous households reporting joint decision-making involving women

Young women and men experience more obstacles than adults in reintegrating into rural areas as they may not be accustomed to a rural lifestyle and all the implications that this lifestyle entails. In rural areas, there are generally fewer education and vocational training opportunities, and less options for entertainment than in cities. Many young people tend to feel isolated and alienated. They also face additional challenges in accessing land, and they tend to be sceptical about the idea of securing their livelihood through agriculture. Their reluctance to engage in agriculture is mainly due to the lack of information about the opportunities available to them and the lack of effective mechanisms to link them to the labour market. Yet, opportunities do exist, and understanding the skills of young women and men and capitalizing on these skills would have a positive impact on both their reintegration experience and local agricultural value chains.

CHECKLIST

In the pre-design phase, sample indicators that can be considered when envisioning rural approaches that strengthen youth empowerment can include:

- Number of young women and men reporting the acquisition of marketable skills
- Number of trainings for young people in non-violence and leadership skills
- Number of youth-led associations established
- Number of young people participating in youth councils and having access to civic education opportunities
- Number of young women and men who have obtained access or referral to micro-credit schemes

1.2 Pre-design tools: canvas and context analysis

Tool 1. A rural reintegration programme canvas

Before designing any rural reintegration programme, the main actors involved, both from the reintegration and development sectors, should make a plan describing how the programme intends to address reintegration gaps and needs in rural areas, and how the programme is linked to existing policies and measures. By building on the canvas of existing models of business, this set of questions and notes helps visualize the building blocks required when starting a programme: the end users (e.g. women and men and young people); the key partners and coordination channels; and the required activities and resources.

In the pre-design phase, make sure to fill out a template like the one displayed below to identify the key elements that characterize the context of the intervention, and answer questions that will then take you to the design phase. Linked with the definition of sustainable reintegration, the rural reintegration model canvas, with its six building blocks, articulates the key elements of any programme on a single sheet of paper. The canvas provides the structure of the upcoming design plan.

CHECKLIST

To fill out this canvas, you will:

- **Start from the bottom row, identifying:**
  - Key reintegration needs and entry points that the project aims to address (bottom left)
  - Key sustainable development entry points from the national to the local levels (bottom right)
- **Then continue with the top row components, identifying:**
  - Key partners
  - Key activities
  - Value propositions of your rural reintegration expertise and approach
  - Participatory and multi-stakeholder approaches and methods that include the target population
  - Population targets, including a focus on gender and age

Figure 3. **Rural reintegration programme canvas**

Drafted by: **Date:**

Key partners	Key activities	Value propositions	Partecipatory methods	Population target
Who are the key partners you could bring in for this project?	Which activities are adapted to rural reintegration settings?	What is your comparative advantage?	How can you integrate local actors in your work and work with local communities?	How is gender factored in?
What role can each partner have?		Why is your expertise relevant to rural reintegration?	How do you plan on working with returnee family members?	How is age factored in?
What are other potential partners you could connect with?	**Key resources** What resources are available at the project level? What resources are available at government level (national or municipal/local)?		**Coordination channels** Are there specific coordination mechanisms that can be used? OR would you need to set up new mechanism for coordination?	How is the context (conflict or fragility) factored in?

Key reintegration needs and entry points	Key sustainable development entry points
What reintegration challenges are you aware of? What do you know of the profiles and needs of returnees?	What levels of government do you have to work with?
	What are the entry points in this area for sustainable agriculture?
What reintegration opportunities can you identify, for returnees to contribute to the communities of return?	What are national development plans/ government guidelines?
	What synergies are there with ongoing programmes?

Country A

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

After considering the key factors outlined in the canvas, you will need to specify contextual dynamics that can have an impact on the programme, and on which the programme interventions can, in turn, have a positive or negative impact. A robust context analysis will allow you to define the needs that you will need to address, the changes you intend to make and the actions you will need to undertake to generate these changes. Having a clear understanding of the context in which you will implement your programme is the second step to creating the theory of change.

Conducting a contextual analysis of the return and reintegration landscape will allow you to understand the specific needs and priorities of local stakeholders. This heightened understanding will enable you to design evidence-informed programmes that take into account the realities of the local context.

(i) Context analysis with a gender focus

The purpose of conducting a gender analysis before the design of the programme is to identify and address gender inequalities in the setting where the programme will be implemented. The gender analysis will involve:

- Acknowledging the differences between women and men and the multiple levels of vulnerabilities they are exposed to;
- Making sure that the differences identified are addressed in all phases of the programme cycle and the challenges experienced by a given gendered group are mitigated;
- Acknowledging that the programme will have a different impact on women and men.

CHECKLIST **Step-by-step gender-focused context analysis**

- Collect available data to gain a better understanding of the gender dynamics at play in the context within which you plan to implement your programme.
  a) Use both quantitative and qualitative data available for evidence-based analysis. The type of data will depend on the context of intervention.
  b) Make sure that the data is disaggregated by sex, age and ethnicity.
  c) Pay attention to other potentially discriminating factors that might intersect with gender (e.g. age, ethnicity).
  d) Eventually seek the participation of women and men and collect primary data on the context, which can be done through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and surveys.

- Gain an understanding of the differences in women's and men's reintegration processes and other inequalities and patterns of exclusion.
  a) Consider how the programme may be affected by intra-household division of labour, occupational segregation, female employment by sector, and educational attainment levels in rural areas.
  b) Look at migration profiles by gender (i.e. where are people moving and how, for how long, how and why are they planning for return).
  c) Assess if men and women have equal decision-making powers at the intra-household and community level and, if not, how it will reflect on your programme.
  d) Assess if men and women have equal access to resources and, if not, how it will reflect on your programme.
  e) Assess the extent to which women and men will have equal access to the programme and if there are any gender-specific barriers that you should consider.

- Define the gender-related impacts of your programme.
  a) Decide whether your programme will have a specific gender focus.
  b) If so, define how you will address the specific needs of the group you choose to target.
  c) If not, define how your programme will address the generic needs of men and women and how it will impact them differently.

(ii) Context analysis with an age focus

Age can be another discriminating factor that can make the experience of return to rural areas more difficult for young men and women than for older individuals.

CHECKLIST **Step-by-step youth-focused context analysis**

- Collect data.
  a) Use both quantitative and qualitative data available.
  b) Pay attention to other potentially discriminating factors that might intersect with age (e.g. gender, ethnicity).
  c) Eventually seek the participation of young people of different ages and collect primary data on the context, which can be done through semi-structured Interviews, focus group discussions and surveys.
- Gain an understanding of the differences between the lives of young people and adults and potential inequalities and patterns of exclusion.
  a) Focus on their understanding of what rural life implies.
  b) Focus on their aspirations and the skills they want to develop.
  c) Assess if they have equal access to the labour market, resources, finances, and commercial markets, and if there is any age-specific barrier to be considered within the programme.
- Define the gender-related impacts of your programme.
  a) Decide whether your programme will have a specific gender focus.
  b) If so, define how you will address the specific needs of the group you choose to target.
  c) If not, define how your programme will address the generic needs of men and women and how it will impact them differently.

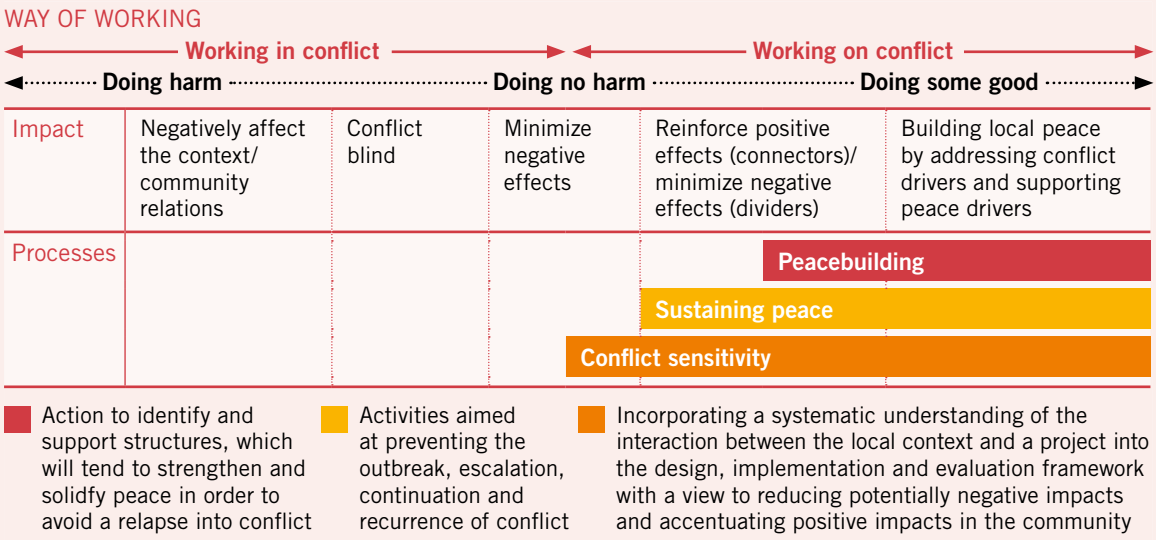
(iii) Designing reintegration programmes in conflict-affected or fragile settings

In rural areas, conflicts affect local communities in multiple ways. Disputes over natural resources and tensions within communities are likely to arise. The return of migrant workers often creates additional conflict by increasing demand and stretching the economic capabilities of host communities. In fragile settings, rural communities rely more on agriculture as a source of livelihood, and food security becomes threatened. The reintegration of returnees in post-conflict and fragile situations poses specific challenges that stakeholders need to be aware of. Carrying out a context assessment is fundamental for planning conflict-sensitive interventions.

In 2018, FAO approved its *Corporate Framework to Support Sustainable Peace in the Context of Agenda 2030*.[7] The foundational element of the Framework is understanding the contextual dynamics and integrate this understanding into all phases of the programme cycle. The FAO approach is described below.

7 The *FAO Corporate Framework to support sustainable peace in the context of Agenda 2030* is available at www.fao.org/policy-support/tools-and-publications/resources-details/en/c/1317337/ – For more guidance in this area, consult the 2019 FAO publication, *The Programme Clinic: Designing conflict-sensitive interventions – Approaches to working in fragile and conflict-affected contexts*, Facilitation guide available at www.fao.org/3/ca5784en/CA5784EN.pdf and the 2019 FAO publication, *Guide to context analysis: Informing FAO decision-making – Approaches to working in fragile and conflict affected contexts*, at https://www.fao.org/policy-support/tools-and-publications/resources-details/en/c/1268065/

Figure 4. **FAO interventions in fragile and conflict-affected contexts**



Source: FAO, 2019a. FAO. 2019a. *The Programme Clinic: Designing conflict-sensitive interventions – Approaches to working in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, Facilitation guide*. Rome. www.fao.org/3/ca5784en/CA5784EN.pdf

CHECKLIST **Step-by-step approach to designing conflict-sensitive interventions**

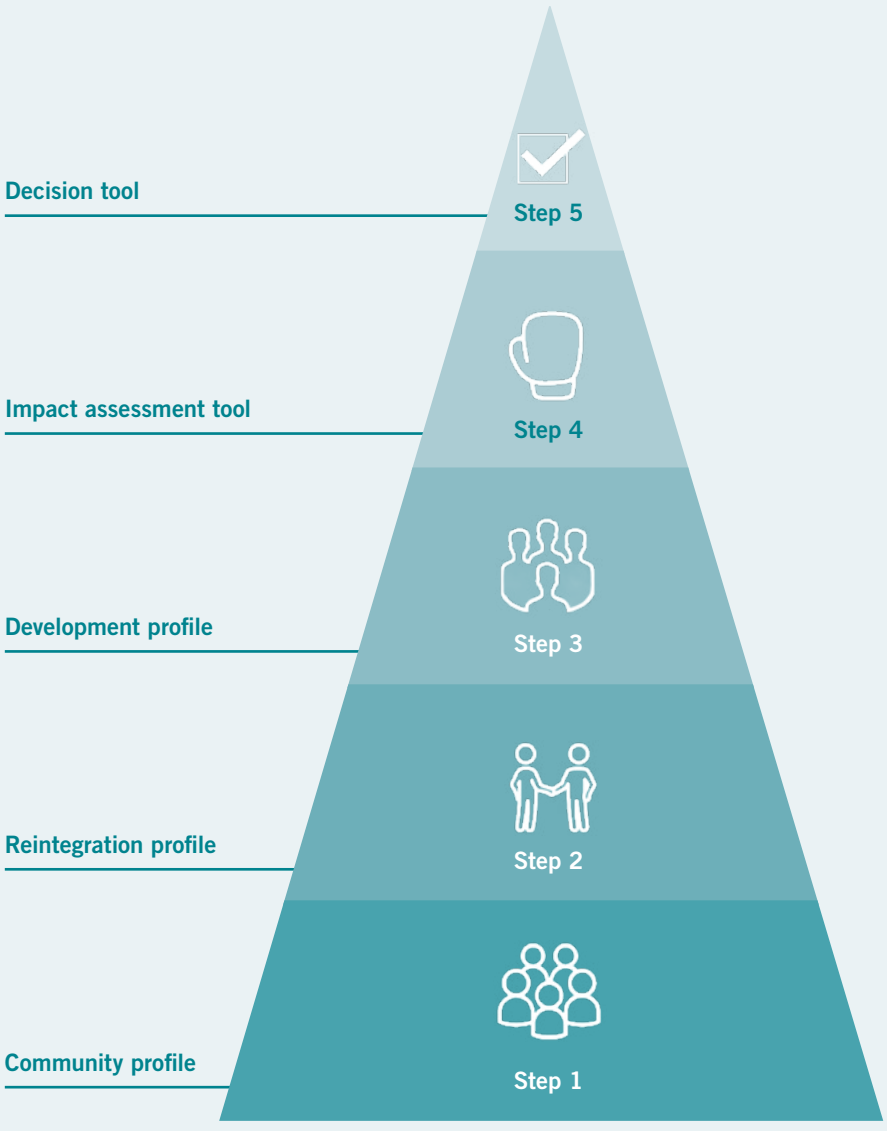
- Programme and context overview
  a) Collect key information about the upcoming programme (e.g. timeframe and geographical focus, objectives, design and implementation strategy, stakeholders involved, planned activities, targeted beneficiaries and implementation challenges).
- Understand conflict dynamics
  a) Obtain an initial snapshot of the on-going crisis. The focus here is on the big picture, and the aim is to understand the drivers of conflict and peace and the general dynamics.
  b) Hold discussions with a group of mixed participants. The key question to be asked at this stage is: "What are the key issues and dynamics relating to the thematic area that are currently producing tensions and driving conflict or helping to create and strengthen conditions for peace?"
- Understand stakeholders
  a) Identify the key groups and individuals that have a stake in the planned programme, including all groups and individuals that are either engaged with, or being affected by the programme.
  b) Discuss the actors that need to be considered because of their potential influence on the programme and explore the potential for opposition. This involves understanding who could undermine the intervention or create tension within the programme. Ideally, there should be no more than three to five stakeholders in this category.
  c) Develop strategies to address the concerns of these stakeholders and maximize the support you intend to provide.
- Understand the potential impacts on peace and conflict
  a) Brainstorm with a mixed group to identify the secondary impacts, both intentional and unintentional, of the intervention on the local context and community.
  b) Create a table with the risk and opportunities identified during the process.
  c) Reflect on the most significant risks identified and consider how to address them.
- Develop conflict-sensitive programme recommendations
  a) Identify the concrete implications of the analysis conducted to this point.
  b) Develop recommendations on how to further develop the conflict-sensitive implementation plan.
  c) Turn the recommendations into programmatic actions.

Tool 2. Context analysis

This tool allows you to go further into the specific issues in a given area or community, gain an understanding of both the development and reintegration profiles, and plan for the positive and negative impacts that your programme may have.

To collect information for this tool, you will need to speak to key informants at the local level.

Figure 5. **Context analysis tool**



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Community of return – profile

The first part of this tool allows stakeholders to capture the elements needed to understand the demographic profile of the community the migrant is or will be returning to, as well as the dynamics at play related to the use of resources and the degree of interaction between community actors and local authorities. The second section focuses on knowledge of, attitudes and perceptions towards reintegration projects at the community level.

CAPTURE

Location

Area

Natural resource

Land Use / Water Use

Environmental issues

Population / Gender

Age structure

Ethnic groups

Language

Literacy level

Educational attainment level

Local governance structure
(e.g. municipalities, local councils)

Type of labour / Livelihood patterns
(e.g. self-employed in non-agriculture, agricultural labour, other labour, self-employed in agriculture)

Social services available
(e.g. health, schools, electricity, water)

Rural reintegration project – knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions

FOCUS

History of community reaction to reintegration projects (If any)

Social perceptions towards returnees

Other projects in the community related to reintegration

Local ownership

Main Benefits And Resources Generated By The Reintegration Project

Are there natural, human, and financial resources available at the national or local government level to support reintegration projects

Does the local government require support to build capacities on sustainable reintegration in rural areas?

What skills and knowledge do returnees bring to contribute to this project intervention? What existing skills will this project tap into?

Reintegration profile

This tool can be used to identify challenges that might emerge upon the return of migrants to their communities of origin and categorise them under four dimensions: structural, economic, social and psychosocial. Besides identifying these challenges, the tool encourages stakeholders to reflect on the factors that could amplify them and the root causes underneath them.

WHAT?

Reintegration profile		
Manifestations	**Proximate causes**	**Root causes**
What economic, social, psychosocial reintegration challenges do you see in the community and location under study?	What are the factors that accentuate these challenges?	What are the structural or underlying causes of these reintegration challenges?
Examples:		
Structural		
– lack of or limited access to policies and programmes on reintegration in rural areas	– dissatisfaction with government services	– marginalized areas not receiving government funding, and having weak institutional structure
Economic		
– female-headed rural households in extreme poverty	– lack of remittances from abroad	– imbalance of economic opportunities for women in migrant households
Social		
– family disintegration upon return of female family member	– stigma of female migration or return	– sociocultural attitudes
Psychosocial		
– returnees feel unsafe	– violence	– lack of social cohesion

Development profile

Stakeholders can use this tool to map the development assistance landscape in the target area, highlighting eventual gaps that need to be addressed and factors that can support and reinforce development programmes or objectives.

WHAT?

Development profile		
Development effort	**Development gaps**	**Development synergies**
Are there existing or complimentary development efforts in place, and if not, what development is needed to address the challenges above?	What initiatives require attention to sustain development?	What factors combine to reinforce other development factors?
Examples:		
Structural – explicit measures to improve government support to the agriculture sector to generate employment and entrepreneurial opportunities attractive for returnees	– vocational and business training – mechanisms to facilitate financial inclusion, remittance transfer costs, diaspora engagement	– demand for infrastructure that fosters growth in employment and encourages people to migrate back to rural areas and reduces poverty
Economic – local and national anti-poverty groups – active civil society supported by NGOs – opportunities for agricultural entrepreneurship – skills training programmes	– lack of access to empowering technologies for those in rural areas – gender inequality that creates an obstacle to women in the fight against poverty – unethical recruitment or exploitation (forced labour, restricted right to work)	– access to financial institutions to reach returnees – access to land, inclusive land tenure systems
Social – budget commitment to social and protection programmes, education, health and housing	– exclusion of the poor – people have to pay bribes for services	
Security – basis for an independent judiciary	– low salaries – high levels of corruption	
Environmental – natural resources available (including land)	– *unsustainable agricultural practices and mismanagement of natural resources*	

When building the development profile, the key questions that were considered were drawn from the 2021 FAO and IOM publication, *Integrating migration into rural development interventions: a toolkit.*[8] They can be used as a starting point to fill out the above table.

8 Integrating migration into rural development interventions: a toolkit is available at https://eea.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl666/files/mmicd/toolkit-integrating-migration-rural-development-interventions.pdf

CHECKLIST **Pre-Design: questions to ask before designing a programme**[9]

1. Do agricultural and rural development policies and programmes include explicit measures to improve the performance of the agriculture sector to generate more employment and entrepreneurial opportunities that are attractive to young women and men and migrants?
2. How can access to financial institutions be improved to ensure that innovative financial services and products reach men and women migrants?
3. How does access to land influence migration, including returns to rural communities?
4. Are land tenure systems inclusive? Do return migrants have access to land?
5. Do some groups of migrants face specific challenges in entering the agricultural sector, including unethical recruitment for the domestic labour markets or exploitation (e.g. forced labour, child labour, sub-standard occupational health and safety, wages less than minimum wage, right to work)?
6. Are there mechanisms in place to encourage the return of skilled migrants in rural areas, including opportunities for agricultural entrepreneurship?
7. Are remittances invested in agriculture and rural livelihoods? How are they invested?
8. Are there educational training opportunities available to returnees, including technical vocational education training?

At this point, it is critical to assess, for the purposes of conflict sensitivity, the impact of the programmes you are designing. This will also help inform your theory of change in the design phase. The following section of the tool aims at identifying and evaluating the positive and negative impacts of a project on:

- strengthening peaceful coexistence;
- decreasing the likelihood of conflict in communities of return;
- strengthening local governance and local development processes.

The following section aligns with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and its Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria. These criteria are based on the rationale that development aid must contribute not only to rebuilding and rehabilitation, but also to conflict prevention. This integration allows for plans to made in response to complex environments and ensures the actions adhere to key operational principles and to the triple nexus approach (humanitarian–development–peacebuilding).

9 If the reintegration project is to be implemented in a fragile setting, this list must be refined to include questions such as: are there any potential protection risks for returnees? Is there a robust protection monitoring mechanism in place to allow the rapid identification of risks? What are the existing vulnerabilities at the individual and community level?

Expected impact identification tool

This tool aims to support stakeholders in assessing and visualising the potential impact of the intervention they plan to design and implement, including positive and negative impacts. The tool is composed of two sections and allows stakeholders to separately consider the impact that their projects might have on the economic, social and cultural dimensions on the one hand, and the security situation on the other.

WHAT?

Economic, social, cultural impact tool		
Possible Impact	**Positive**	**Negative**
The project might impact YES / NO	The project might…	The project might…
Examples:		
Economic capacities and vulnerabilities		
– equitable sharing of project benefits	– increase in number of micro-entrepreneurs	– tensions within families
Social attitudes and traditional coping mechanisms		
– impact on people's self-reliance – mutual respect and trust between groups	– youth skill acquisition – formation of associations	– power struggles
Root causes		
– sociocultural attitudes	– leads to growth in financial services and employment	– contributes to corruption

WHAT?

Security impact tool		
Possible impact	**Positive**	**Negative**
The project might impact… YES/NO	The project might…	The project might…
Examples:		
Conflict between communities	– contribute to the emergency of community self-help groups and improved security	
Conflict in the community	– contribute to the establishment of coalitions and associations	
Underlying causes		– upset opposition groups by diverting their resources
Conflict resolution and local forms of community-based protection		– displace elder circles that deal with disputes

Decision tool

The decision tool builds on the issues identified through the previous exercise and aims to guide stakeholders in developing a plan for action to address the problems and opportunities that might present themselves during the implementation of the intervention. The tool encourages stakeholders to reflect on the actors who might be in favour or against a specific option to have a complete scenario and make more informed decisions while designing their intervention.

WHAT?

Decision tool		
Issue	**Options for action**	**Support / Constraints**
Of the issues listed above, which are the problems or opportunities that you will aim to address in your project?	How can the project address the harm or take a new opportunity to benefit people?	Who or what are the obstacles to your proposed options for action? Who will support your options?
Examples:		
Structural		
– youth disinterest in agricultural livelihoods	– offer training for youth in marketing and leadership skills – invite project manager to provide briefing to youth council	– trader support
Economic		
– Anger due to limited opportunities for employment	– support cooperatives and micro-credit schemes	– banking institutions with prohibitive loans
Social		
– reduced self-reliance and culture of dependence in youth	– support civic education, peace and non-violence in schools	– local government will have to find the money to fund civic education projects
Conflict		
– project creates tensions that leads to conflict in the community	– improve sharing of economic benefits of project	– non-state opposition groups

Resources

The table below contains a list of resources that can be consulted when operationalizing sustainable approaches to reintegration in rural areas.

Organization and year	Output name	Link	Comments
UNHCR (2004)	*Handbook for Repatriation and Reintegration Activities*	https://www.unhcr.org/411786694.pdf	The Handbook is a guide for field staff of UNHCR and its partners to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate repatriation and reintegration activities.
Samuel Hall and IOM (2017)	*Setting standards for an integrated approach to reintegration – Summary Report*	https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/our_work/DMM/AVRR/IOM_SAMUEL_HALL_MEASURE_REPORT%202017.pdf	This paper discusses recommendations towards initiating a more principled, sustainable and protection-focused approach to reintegration.
IOM (2019)	*Reintegration Handbook - Practical guidance on the design, implementation and monitoring of reintegration assistance*	https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iom_reintegration_handbook.pdf	The Handbook has been designed as a hands-on tool for stakeholders involved in providing reintegration-related support at the different levels and stages of the project cycle.
OECD (2020)	*Sustainable Reintegration of Returning Migrants: A Better Homecoming*	https://www.oecd.org/publications/sustainable-reintegration-of-returning-migrants-5fee55b3-en.htm	This paper examines factors that can help improve the sustainability of reintegration at the individual level and at the programme level in countries of destination and origin.
ECDPM (2021)	*A sustainable development approach to return and reintegration: dilemmas, choices and possibilities*	https://ecdpm.org/wp-content/uploads/Sustainable-Development-Approach-Return-Reintegration-Dilemmas-Choices-Possibilities-ECDPM-Discussion-Paper-291-2020-1.pdf	This discussion paper provides guidance for how international development cooperation can best navigate existing dilemmas and possibilities in the area of return, sustainable reintegration and development.
IOM (2021)	*Fostering and strengthening linkages between sustainable development and reintegration programmes*	https://returnandreintegration.iom.int/fr/resources/knowledge-paper/knowledge-paper-2-fostering-and-strengthening-interlinkages-between	This knowledge paper examines the interlinkages between sustainable development and reintegration to promote engagement and coordination between practitioners.
IOM (2014)	*Reintegration – Effective Approaches*	https://returnandreintegration.iom.int/en/resources/report/reintegration-effective-approaches	This paper looks at sustainability as a key component of successful reintegration.
World Bank Group – Global Program on Forced Displacement, Cross Cutting Solutions Area on Fragility Conflict and Violence (2015)	*Sustainable refugee return: Triggers, constraints, and lessons on addressing the development challenges of forced displacement*	https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Sustainable%20Refugee%20Return%20study.pdf	This study demonstrates that well thought-out development actions that are responsive to the circumstances of specific displacement situations can contribute to the sustainable return and reintegration of displaced people.

ILO (2017)	*Reintegration package for Ethiopia*	https://www.itcilo.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/Reintegration-Package-for-Ethiopia_web.pdf	The Reintegration Package outlines a recommended approach to facilitate returnees' reintegration in local labour markets, focusing on the economic, sociocultural, and psychosocial components.
ILO (2019)	*Effective return and reintegration of migrant workers with special focus on ASEAN Member States*	https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---sro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms_733917.pdf	This paper discusses the key principles to be followed in reintegration programmes and includes good practices in ASEAN and beyond.
ILO (2020)	*How to Facilitate the Recognition of Skills of Migrant Workers: Guide for Employment Services Providers*	https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---migrant/documents/publication/wcms_748721.pdf	This guide assists service providers in recognizing prior learning of migrant workers to bridge the gap between employers and workers.
OECD (2020)	*What improves the sustainability of the reintegration component in Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration programmes (AVRR)?*	https://www.oecd.org/els/mig/MPD-24_Sustainable-Reintegration%20(002).pdf	This policy review document includes recommendations to improve the sustainability of reintegration programmes.
FAO (2020)	*Agricultural finance and the youth prospects for financial inclusion in Kenya*	http://www.fao.org/3/cb2297en/cb2297en.pdf	This paper discusses rural youth unemployment and prospects.

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2 Design: Addressing profiling and mapping needs

This chapter focuses on the design phase of the programme cycle and introduces six key tools:

- **Tool 3.1 Central actor mapping tool**
  for mapping national stakeholders
- **Tool 3.2 The alignment, interest, influence matrix**
  for visualizing the levels of the relationships that can be established with different actors
- **Tool 3.3 A community actor mapping matrix**
  for mapping community-based organizations and actors
- **Tool 3.4 A skills assessment tool**
  for conducting an initial assessment of the skills of returnees
- **Tool 3.5 A rapid market assessment tool**
  for carrying out a market assessment
- **Tool 4. A theory of change template**
  for ensuring that the factors identified through the previous tools are integrated into the programme

2.1 Key factors to consider during the design of a rural reintegration programme

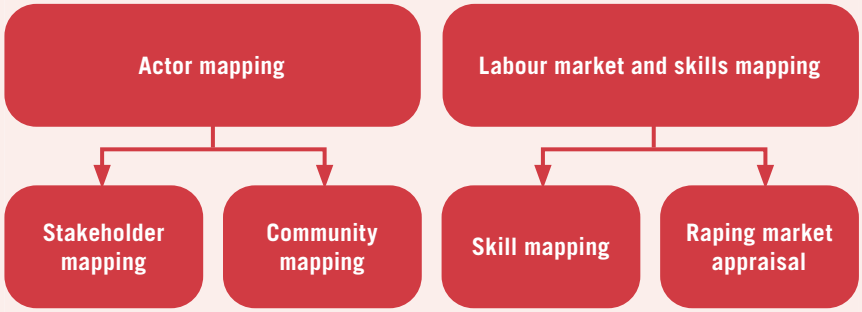
In the pre-design phase of the programme cycle, an initial mapping of key stakeholders and potential partners has already been conducted. This section builds on this initial mapping to gather more in-depth information about the actors involved in the programme to be implemented. Reintegration processes are complex and multi-layered. Gaining an understanding of the dynamics that returnees find themselves in will increase the chances of designing and implementing an impactful intervention. Given the critical importance of the local context in reintegration processes, the emphasis in data collection activities should therefore not only be placed on the needs of the returnees but also on those of the host communities. Particular attention should be paid to the institutional context to gain an understanding the laws and policies that govern migration in the context where the project is being implemented. The following sections focus on the interactions among different stakeholders, local communities and returnees, and on the significant impact that each of these actors can have on rural reintegration.

An essential tool for collecting information about the actors mentioned above is mapping the profiles of stakeholders, communities and individuals in return settings. Mapping entails identifying and categorizing individuals, organizations, partners, governmental bodies and other actors that can either influence or be influenced by a proposed intervention, or have an impact on the returnee's reintegration processes in any way. Step-by-step tools on how to conduct accurate mapping of different groups are presented in the following sections. A value chain mapping tool has also been included, as understanding the value chains in a given area can be extremely useful for identifying employment trends and the skills returnees need to enter the labour market.

The process of reintegration after return is characterized by the involvement of numerous actors interacting to varying degrees with the returnee. Being aware of the influence of these actors on the returnee's reintegration experience is crucial for designing successful reintegration programmes. This focus on partnership analysis emerges from the recognition that actors must make intentional efforts to support and work more closely with national and local organizations, institutions and individual groups. A commitment to the localization agenda is built on years of advocacy and the recognition that local responders are the best-placed actors to deliver on humanitarian and development programming.

2.2 Design tools: mapping and theory of change

Figure 6. **Mapping and theory of change**



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

(i) Actor mapping

Stakeholder mapping

Stakeholder mapping acknowledges that different actors, from national to community-based actors, have different attributes that can facilitate interventions. Examples of this type of coordination that have been put into practice include the ILO stakeholder mapping for migration that was outlined in the 2018 publication, *Mapping of Stakeholders Working on Migration and Coordination Mechanisms at Federal Level in Ethiopia.*[10] The ILO approach, which is described below, is the recommended approach for mapping the stakeholders and actors involved in the returnee's reintegration process in rural settings.

CHECKLIST **Step-by-step process: mapping stakeholders and actors**

- **Step 1.** Map national stakeholders using a stakeholder chart (see Tool 3.1).
- **Step 2.** Use the descriptions of types of actors provided and locally contextualized knowledge of actors to build strategic national partnerships and create coordination fora.
- **Step 3.** Map community-level stakeholders in communities of concern using the stakeholder chart provided (see Tool 3.3).
- **Step 4.** Within coordination fora, consult the guidance provided to design interventions that link national and community levels (e.g. livelihood engagement, social service provision). Delegate responsibility among partners who have the greatest comparative advantage.

10 *Mapping of Stakeholders Working on Migration and Coordination Mechanisms at Federal Level in Ethiopia* is available at www.ilo.org/africa/information-resources/publications/WCMS_712784/lang--en/index.htm

Tool 3.1. National actor mapping tool

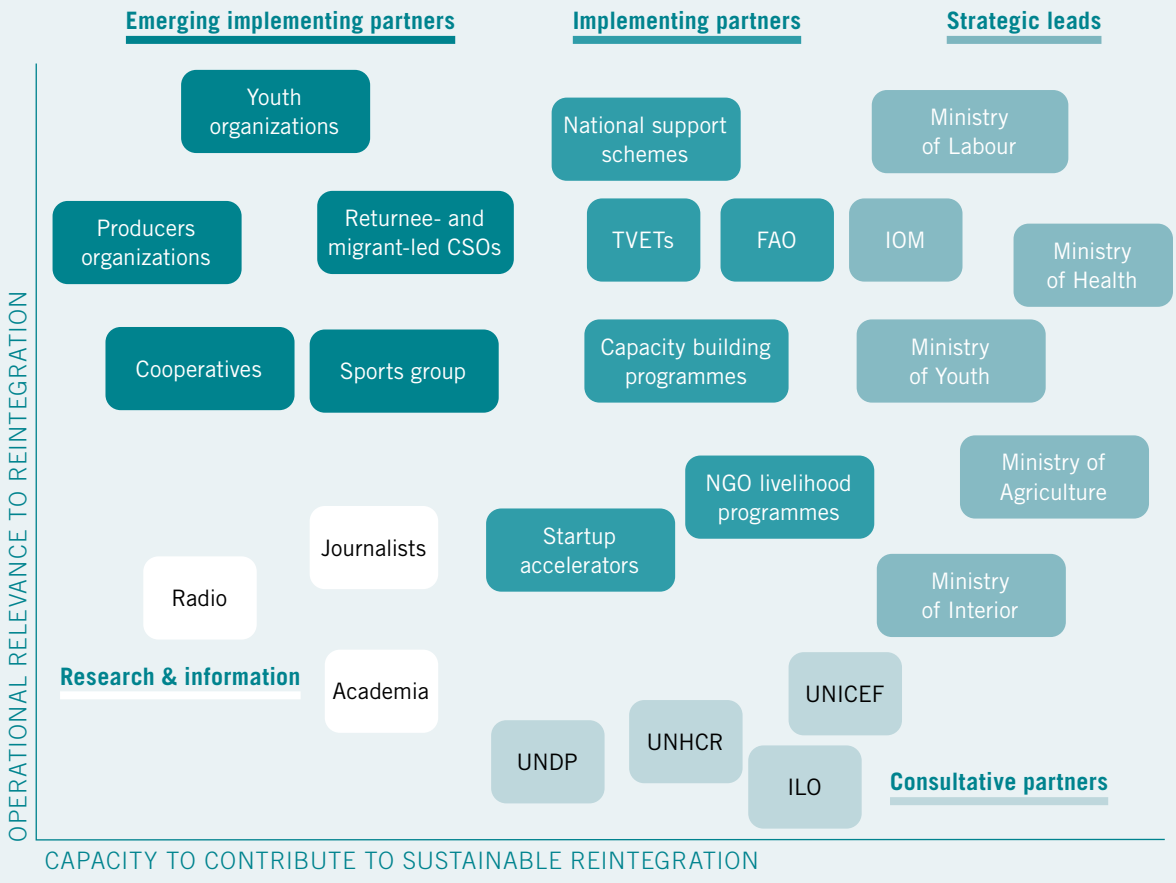
In Step 1 the following questions are asked: Which national actors can contribute? What are their capacities? The response to these questions serves to build a typology of central-level partnerships. Figure 1 outlines the partnerships with i) operational relevance to rural reintegration processes, and ii) the capacity to contribute to sustainable economic, social and/or psychosocial reintegration, if they have the resources to enact change. You will pay attention to:

i. strategic leads (ministerial level)
ii. consultative partners (associations, UN agencies)
iii. implementing partners (institutions, NGOs)
iv. emerging implementing partners (community-based organizations, chambers of commerce)
v. research and information entities (academics, journalists, media)

Make a list and compile them on a graph as in the example provided in Matrix 1.

MATRIX 1

Figure 7. **Mapping national stakeholders tool**[a]



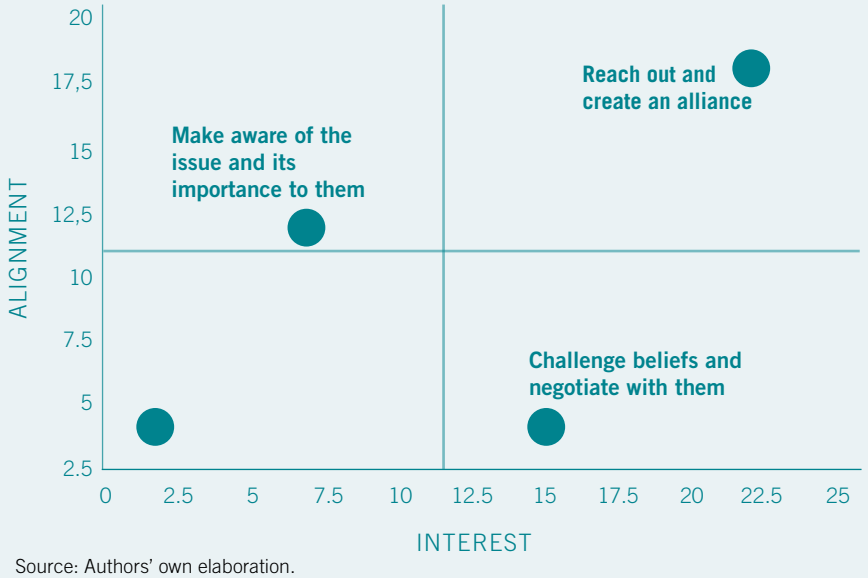
Note: Please note that the positioning of the different actors in the visual representation of the tools is an example. The operational relevance of each actor and its capacity to contribute to sustainable reintegration must be assessed on a case-by-case basis before adding them to the matrix.

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Tool 3.2. The alignment, interest, influence matrix

The alignment, interest, influence matrix (AIIM) is a simple stakeholder mapping tool developed by ODI as part of the RAPID outcome mapping approach (Mendizabal, 2010). This tool can help you visualize the levels of the relationships you can establish with different actors and get from a long list of stakeholders to a more concise one, based on their potential engagement in your intervention.

Figure 8. **Alignment, interest and influence matrix (AIIM)**



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

CHECKLIST **Step-by-step process: how to use the AIIM matrix**

- **Step 1.** Identify the main list of actors you could potentially engage with
- **Step 2.** Map these actors into the matrix according to their alignment to your intervention and interests

  Alignment
  - Do they agree with your approach?
  - Do they agree with your assumptions?
  - Do they share the same priorities as you?

  Interest
  - Are they committed to the issue at the centre of your intervention?
  - Are they currently working to address this issue?
- **Step 3.** Analyse the matrix and consider what actions to take (e.g. reach out to them, raise their awareness)
- **Step 4.** Prioritize some actors over others and finalize the list of stakeholders that you will engage with.

Community mapping

What role do local communities play in the reintegration of returnees?

Community mapping is a participatory exercise conducted at the community level to gather information about the needs, priorities and aspirations of a given community. For returnees to rural communities, community mapping is a valuable tool that can be used to assess the role of local communities in the returnees' reintegration process and identify the eventual barriers that need to be addressed in the programme.

Return migrants often face stigmatization upon their return to their areas of origin. For example, migrants who have been in Europe may be perceived as 'westernized', and women who migrated tend to face even more barriers to reintegration than men. On the other hand, returnees may also feel pressured to present themselves as successful, and wear expensive clothes and bring gifts to relatives and friends. Since the pandemic outbreak, the stigma associated with returnees has increased. Returnees have started being seen as COVID-19 carriers, which has a negative impact on their ability to reintegrate. Overall, both returnees and local communities often share a feeling that returnees no longer fit in and that reintegration into the community is not possible.

Understanding these dynamics is key to designing a successful reintegration process because, as stated above, reintegration does not only involve the returnees, but the 'ecosystem' that surround them. Consequently, this ecosystem, which consists of several layers, must also be mapped. The ecosystem approach can be used by case workers or project officers to identify the enabling and inhibiting actors of sustainable reintegration of returning migrants, and engage with these actors through complementary approaches. Stakeholders will need to reflect on the following questions: Who are the central actors in each layer? Who facilitates the connection between the different layers? and How can these layers be integrated into a mutually reinforcing reintegration strategy?

CHECKLIST **Step-by-step process: community mapping**

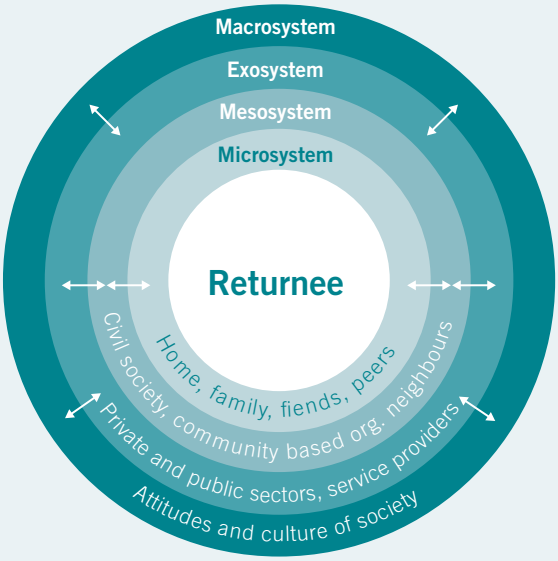
- Conduct an initial review of available information on the relationships between returnees and local communities in rural areas to determine the scope of the mapping and refine the follow-up, in-depth desk review.
- Consult existing literature, reports and information to provide a list of issues to be examined for the mapping.
- Select community members to engage in the mapping process. Include participants of different ages, gender, and different roles within the community.
- Engage in participatory exercises (e.g. focus group discussions) to gather information about the community and the specific issues identified through the secondary data previously collected (e.g. their perspectives on migration and what they consider the main barriers to reintegration).

Tool 3.3. A community actor mapping matrix

Individuals and organizations at the community level have the most direct interaction with and influence on migrant populations. They have the most knowledge of local developments and resources, and have the greatest access to target populations. Nevertheless, these actors are often not sufficiently involved in broader reintegration processes. The community actor mapping matrix helps identify community-based actors that have the most potential to facilitate or hinder reintegration programming.

There is no standard 'community of return'. In the design phase, an ecosystem approach will be used to define returnee communities and identify the actors who are able to support or hinder returnee reintegration. Figure 9 displays the ecosystem approach, a model that stakeholders can use to identify the different actors involved in reintegration. The model can be used to identify the enablers and inhibitors of sustainable reintegration, and engage with those actors through complementary approaches.

Figure 9. **Ecosystem model adapted to return settings**



Source: Samuel Hall & IOM. 2017. *Setting standards for an integrated approach to reintegration. Summary Report*, commissioned by IOM and funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID). www.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl486/files/our_work/DMM/AVRR/IOM_SAMUEL_HALL_MEASURE_REPORT%202017.pdf

You will identify the four layers of the ecosystem surrounding the returnee that have a direct impact on the returnee's experience according to their proximity to them. However, the level of influence of these actors is not directly proportional to the position that they occupy in this model, and might vary according to the individual case.

The ecosystems around which this model is formulated are:

- **Macrosystem**
  This includes the attitudes and culture of the society. You will identify social norms, customs and traditions that can lead to stigmatization in cases of return migration.
- **Exosystem**
  This layer covers private and public sector service providers. Access to services is a key issue in rural reintegration. Understanding the services that are available to returnees in rural areas and those that are lacking is important to assess where additional support may be required.
- **Mesosystem**
  This layer encompasses civil society organizations, community-based organizations, trade unions and neighbours. The mesosystem may include other returnees who have

been able to work together to set up community-based organizations or who have supported each other in reintegrating into the local communities. The actors that fall within this category can create a support network for returnees.

- **Microsystem**
  The microsystem includes home, family, friends and peers. Generally, rural returnees are initially supported by friends and family in their area of return. However, returnees' families may be a source of pressure and expectations. For example, the family may demand a loan repayment at a time when the returnee may need to invest in his or her rural enterprise.

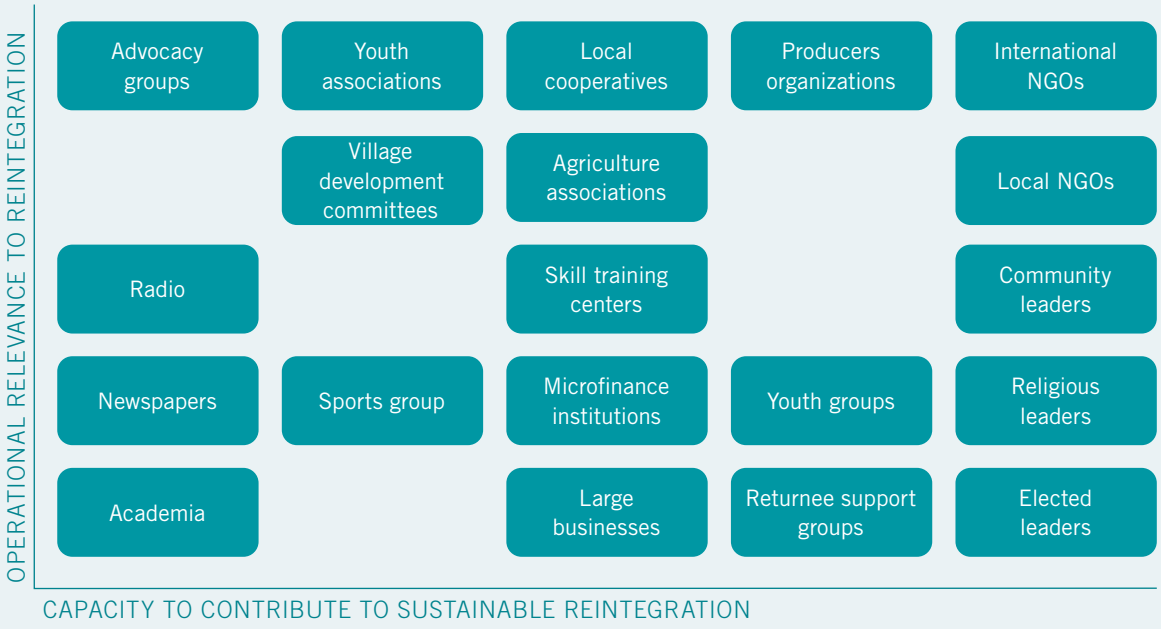
You will then use the information acquired through this four-system community mapping exercise to chart the layers with the most operational relevance to integration. These layers should be part of the rural reintegration programme and contribute to sustainable reintegration. An example is given in Matrix 2. Compared to the national level matrix, this one is more dynamic.

You will pay attention to:

1. local leaders
2. youth associations
3. women's groups
4. local government authorities
5. the private sector, including small businesses, producer organizations, cooperatives
6. social service providers, including teachers
7. media outlets that can disseminate information
8. worker organizations

MATRIX 2

Figure 10. **Mapping community-level stakeholders tool**[b]



Note: Please note that the positioning of the different actors in the visual representation of the tools is an example. The operational relevance of each community actor and its capacity to contribute to sustainable reintegration must be assessed on a case-by-case basis before adding them to the matrix.

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

These local actors will then need to be included, consulted and their capacity built so that they can engage in reintegration programming.

(ii) Labour market and skills mapping

Skill mapping

Depending on their backgrounds, personal histories, circumstances, and migration trajectories, returnees have very different skill sets that are likely to be useful for developing the rural area they return to. However, these skills and qualifications need to be capitalized on in an appropriate manner, which involves adequately recognizing them.

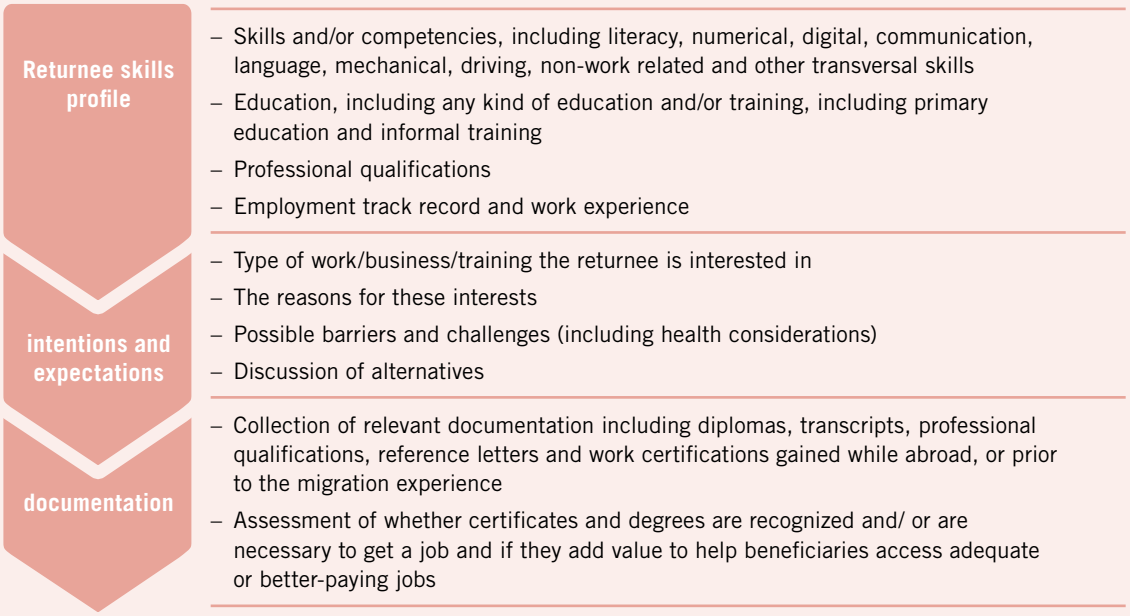
There are different options for securing livelihoods in rural areas. Returnees might need to learn new skills or adapt their skill set to fit into the rural context and take advantage of these options. For opportunities in the agricultural sector and related value chains, returnees may need to acquire technical skills and discover the stage of the value chain where their skills can be of the greatest benefit.

Gathering information about the experiences and the consolidated skills of previous returnees is needed to design specific training and support them in accessing available employment opportunities; recognize mismatches between their skills and the demand in the labour market; and support them in a coherent process of personal and professional development.

Figure 11 illustrates the three key steps in assessing returnees' skills as laid out in the 2020 IOM Reintegration Handbook, Module 2.2. Assessing the returnee's needs and skills.[11]

Mapping and profiling the skills of returnees can be followed by stakeholders working together in different settings. However, when following this approach in rural contexts, it is recommended to map the skills and experience the returnees have gained through both formal and informal training, even if no track records are available. Only focusing on formal education and employment track records can be misleading.

Figure 11. **Steps of assessing skills of a returnee**



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

11 Module 2.2 – Assessing the returnee's needs and skills is available at https://uat.reintegrationhb.iom.int/module/assessing-returnees-needs-and-skills

CHECKLIST **Step-by-step process: mapping skills and profiling returnees**

- Start with a scoping of the available information on rural reintegration and rural returnees. Focus on the country where the programme will be implemented and the location where the returnees have been working before. This step can be carried out independently.
- Consult existing literature, reports and information to provide a list of issues to be examined for the mapping (e.g. different skill sets of return migrants coming from different countries). If necessary, this step can be carried out independently with the support of research institutions or local NGOs, or in consultation with local experts.
- Narrow down the number of issues and look for more in-depth information. Contact local stakeholders to acquire more information on the needs and skills of the returnees. This can be done for example through key informant Interviews and semi-structured interviews. For this step, it is recommended to work closely with employers and trade unions.
- Speak to rural returnees to gain more information on their needs and skills. This can be done through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and surveys with the rural returnees. If necessary, this step can also be carried out independently or with the support of research institutions or local NGOs.
- Go beyond formal education and employment records. Focus on the technical and soft skills learned by the returnees that can be applied in rural areas and agrifood systems, and jointly with local institutions consider the possibility of developing local systems for recognizing the skills and experience of returnees.

Tool 3.4. A skills assessment tool

Target group assessment tool	
Issue	**Questions**
Background	What is your age, sex and marital status? What is your native language? How long have you lived abroad or elsewhere? How long has it been since you returned to this location?
Education and skills	What is your highest education qualification? Did you complete any formal technical and vocational training? Do you have any agricultural-specific skills and strengths? Are you currently engaged in education or training activities?
Work experience	Are you currently engaged in any income-generating activities? If so, of what kind (e.g. sector, salaried or entrepreneurial, formal or informal sector)? Do you have work experience from your country or area of destination during your stay abroad? If so, of what kind and for what duration? In which sector? Do you have proof (e.g. certificate of employment, contract) of your work experience?
Ability to work	Do you have any physical impediments that inhibit your ability to work? Are you obliged to care for any dependents (e.g. children, elderly, or disabled people) in your household? Does this limit your ability to work and generate an income?
Aspirations	What is your current job? Is there any job or sector that you would like to be engaged in?

Source: ILO and UNHCR, 2017

Rapid market appraisal

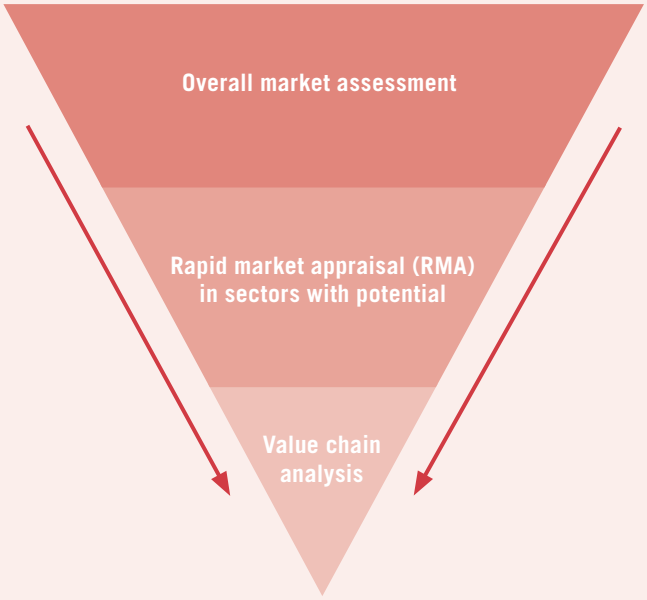
The demand side of the local labour market will have to be considered when targeting livelihood interventions to address the economic dimension of reintegration. A rapid market appraisal can be conducted in sectors with potential for inclusion of returnees (ILO and UNHCR, 2017).

If returnee inclusion is possible, the objective of this step is to assess whether returnees can contribute as producers, workers or consumers in specific sectors, and whether it makes sense to focus on specific sectors to support returnee reintegration.

The next step will be to develop programmes specifically targeted to respond to the value chain analysis, and provide a range of options for returnees to intervene on the agriculture value chain (e.g. connecting rural areas to other locations). Different value chains will offer a range of roles and possible entry points for men, women, and young people.

This model is based on the market systems analysis model developed by ILO and UNHCR in refugee hosting settings. The same model can be applied to return settings.

Figure 12. **Rapid market assessment**



Source: ILO & UNHCR. 2017. *A guide to market-based livelihood interventions for refugees*. Geneva. www.unhcr.org/594b7d7f7.pdf

Tool 3.5. A Rapid Market Assessment Tool

Rapid market assessment tool

Issue	Questions
Potential for growth and employment creation	What are the sectors that require support and labour? What is the overall size of the sector or sub-sector? What is the job creation potential? What is the current and forecasted growth of the sector? What are the current levels of innovation, productivity and competitiveness and/or collaboration in the sector? What are the main issues in relation to working conditions, and are there opportunities to improve them? Do returnees face barriers to accessing markets in this sector? If so, what are they?
Relevance to the target group (returnees)	What is the estimated number of returnees already engaged in this sector (gender and age disaggregated)? How do returnees participate in the sector, as producers, workers, or consumers? What are the major problems returnees face in the work they do in this sector? Is there potential to integrate (more) returnees in the sector? Do skills needed in the sector correspond to the profile of returnees in the location?
Feasibility of interventions	What is the feasibility of addressing the most significant challenges faced by returnees? What are the relevant government policies and programmes that influence the sector? Which donor programmes are present, where, and what are they doing or funding? Are there market players willing to change their business models and adapt new practices? Are there available training institutions, government ministries or other partner organizations willing to take part in, or take responsibility for some elements of intervention in this sector?

Source: ILO and UNHCR, 2017.

Tool 4. A theory of change template

Designing a theory of change will ensure that all the key factors described in the previous sections are included and addressed in your programme. The theory of change will also ensure that all four factors previously outlined, from the linkages to national plans, to coordination and reflection over available resources, are addressed through specific activities, outputs, and results.

Figure 13. **Theory of change template**

Rural reintegration programme goal: returnees in rural areas reaching levels of economic self-sufficiency, social stability within their communities, and psychosocial well-being that allow them to cope with re-migration drivers.

Activities	Outputs	Partners	Short-term outcomes	Mid-term outcomes	Impact
What are the main things the project will do/ provide?	How many and what sort of observable/ tangible results will be achieved?	What level of engagement will you have with central, community level partners and returnees	What will occur as a direct result of the activities and outputs? Typically, changes In knowledge, skills, attitudes)	What results should follow from the initial outcomes (Typically changes In behavior, policies, practices)	What results should follow from the initial outcomes? What do you ultimately want to achieve within the scope of the project?
Economic activities	Economic	National actors	Innovative and interdisciplinary approaches	Stakeholders buy-in	Contribute to the sustainable reintegration of returnees
Social activities	Social	Community actors	Integrated budgets for reintegration	Common good/social connections	
Institutional and normative framework activities	Psychosocial	Returnee skills to be tapped into	Coordination platforms and linkages between stakeholders	Capacity building and enhanced data and knowledge	
	Institutional/ policy	Development policies		Increased confidence in the reintegration process	

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Resources

The table below contains a list of resources that can be consulted when mapping the skills and needs of returnees.

Organization and year	Output name	Link	Comments
ILO and UNHCR (2017)	*A guide to market-based livelihood interventions for refugees*	https://www.unhcr.org/594b7d7f7.pdf	This guide provides an assessment framework to help practitioners determine the right combination of interventions to achieve a holistic approach that is well adapted to the local context and labour market.
IOM (2017)	*Towards an Integrated Approach to Reintegration in the Context of Return*	https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/our_work/DMM/AVRR/Towards-an-Integrated-Approach-to-Reintegration.pdf	This document outlines the IOM approach to reintegration and includes recommendations for facilitating sustainable reintegration.
FAO (2020)	*Characteristics, patterns and drivers of rural migration in Senegal*	http://www.fao.org/3/ca2510en/CA2510EN.pdf	This paper explores migration and rural returns in Senegal and explores the needs of returnees.
African Union and Samuel Hall (2021)	*Study on Return, Readmission and Reintegration Programmes in Africa*	https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5cfe2c8927234e0001688343/t/60d4243240c3f824e459bc72/1624515637613/SH_RRR_Executive_Summary_EN_For_Upload.pdf	This report includes (i) an overview analysis of legal frameworks at regional, continental, and international levels, (ii) an in-depth review of RRR initiatives and programming in 10 African Union member states and (iii) lessons learned from countries of return, including RRR best practices, standards and procedures.
European Network for Migration (2015)	*Practical approaches and good practices in return and reintegration to Afghanistan and Pakistan*	https://emn.ie/publications/practical-approaches-and-good-practices-in-return-and-reintegration-to-afghanistan-and-pakistan-emn-inform-2/	This article highlights good practices on policies on return and reintegration in Afghanistan and Pakistan
German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) (2018)	*Skills for Reintegration. Target-Group-Specific Approaches to Reintegration for Education and Technical Vocational Education and Training in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Contexts*	https://www.giz.de/de/downloads/giz2018-en-skills-reintegration-brochure.pdf	This study reviews and revises concepts, strategies and approaches in a reintegration situation. It further emphasizes the need for a target-group-specific approach and underlines the crucial role of education and TVET in rebuilding livelihoods

Thinking of the 'what' and 'who' of rural reintegration programme design

How can sustainable reintegration programmes be implemented in rural areas?

1. Including returned in food system programmes
2. Inclusive value chain analysis
3. Return on investment in rural reintegration

2.3 Initiatives to support sustainable livelihoods for returnees

Including returnees in food systems programmes

The approach

The need to strengthen value chains and market systems when designing rural, multi-sectoral programmes, has been widely recognized. The inclusion of actors and institutions specialized in value chains can ensure the viability of new business projects, which are often a key focus of reintegration programmes. The value chain approach is also central to identifying the roles and occupations that match the specific needs of women and young people.

Informants for this research agreed that rural reintegration programmes must adapt to and focus on food systems and agrifood value chains in order to fight increasing food insecurity and poverty, and connect rural to urban market systems. These value chains are connected to crop, livestock, forestry, fisheries, and aquaculture production, as well as the construction industry and the transportation sector.

Promoting youth rural employment (PEJ II)

In Morocco, through the programme, Promoting youth rural employment (PEJ III),[12] the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) has been working in partnership with the Agence Nationale de Promotion de l'Emploi et des Compétences (ANAPEC) and the Ministry for Labour and Professional Integration (Ministère du Travail et de l'Insertion Professionnelle (MTIP) since 2015 to support the reintegration of returnees in rural areas. PEJ II has adopted an approach that combines the following measures:

- monitoring labour markets and identifying economic sectors with employment potential;
- establishing information and advisory centres in rural areas to assist young people in their vocational orientation and support young entrepreneurs; and
- improving employability, especially through suitably adapted training courses.

For example, PEJ III supports the production and commercialization of organic fruits and vegetables. The Programme provides financial support to returnees to enable them to buy seeds. It also supports them in obtaining a certification for organic production (Ecocert), and refers the returnees to government institutions that organize agricultural training and to organizations that can support them in their work. In a plant nursery project, a returnee was connected with an Italian organization that markets organic products to restaurants in Europe, and a group of returnee women growing strawberries was put in contact first with a Spanish NGO that provides training and mentorship and then with cooperatives of women producers in Morocco.

Key actions to be taken to support the integration of returnees in the agricultural value chain are:

- connecting farmers and customers, on and off the farm
- establishing collaborations with social enterprises committed to maintaining labour standards
- providing technical training and putting into use returnees' technical skills acquired in the migration period to upgrade traditional farming practices in their areas of origin

12 For more information on the PEJ III programme visits: https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/33842.html

Inclusive value chain analysis

The approach

A value chain encompasses "the full range of activities that are required to bring a product or service from conception, through the intermediary phases of production and delivery to final consumers, and final disposal after use" (Kaplinksy, 2004). According to the ILO, "this includes activities such as design, production, marketing, distribution and support services up to the final consumer. The activities constituting a value chain can be contained within a single firm or divided among different firms, within a single geographical location or spread over wider areas" (Nutz and Merten, 2015).

Using a value chain approach for sustainable reintegration, or reintegration-smart interventions, requires an understanding of the stages of the value chain that can provide employment opportunities for returnees, and leverage their skills and knowledge on multiple levels.

A value chain approach is applicable in the development context as to fragile contexts, with common lessons learned about the role of markets in building resilience to crises, and building prospects for sustainable reintegration. Value chains-based reintegration programmes can lay the foundation for recovery efforts in fragile and conflict-affected settings. The steps described below illustrate the approach to value chain mapping recommended by the ILO (Nutz and Merten, 2015).

CHECKLIST **Step-by-step process: mapping value chains**

- ▶ Identify the core transactions involved in your target sector.
- ▶ Create a flow chart to identify and map key market players and create an inventory of market players.
- ▶ Use the flow chart to identify opportunities and constraints (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats – SWOT)) at each stage of the value chain.
- ▶ Identify the different players responsible for a given product or service.
- ▶ Understand which markets are being catered to by the various market players that you have identified.
- ▶ Add additional information to the chart (e.g. the number of women or disadvantaged groups working at particular value chain levels, financial weaknesses).

This model is not specifically tailored to rural areas and agricultural value chains. To adapt it to our mapping, we encourage stakeholders to include in the mapping the factors that match the profiles and capacities of the returnees.

Elements to be considered when conducting the mapping are:

1. Socioeconomic, social and psychosocial factors and actors:
   a) government or institutional actors, rural institutions, and producer groups
   b) social and psychosocial actors
   c) housing, land and rural development actors
   d) agriculture and agribusiness partners, including producers, input providers, buyers, aggregators, and other involved in transformation, innovation, commercialization and transport
   e) training and capacity building partners
   f) transportation and security partners

2. Funding and standards
   a) financial partners and social investors
   b) ethical, social and environmental standards
3. Research and innovation
   a) Research partners
   b) universities and TVET institutions
   c) information and communication technology

Developing a diaspora engagement mechanism

The approach

The diaspora community is a significant force for development for their countries of origin. Migrant workers have the potential to become agents of local agricultural development and supporters of rural reintegration. Along with sending remittances, the diaspora community can also invest in local agribusinesses. This creates employment opportunities for young men and women in their countries of origin and generates livelihoods for rural communities. Investments from remittances can open up more opportunities for rural returnees and provide them with an incentive to return and settle in their areas of origin and make the process easier. However, there is a lack of effective diaspora engagement mechanisms in place in rural areas. The programmes presented below are examples of how this gap can be filled.

FAO in Uganda, Strengthening capacity to harness positive effects of migration

The FAO "Strengthening capacity to harness positive effects of migration" programme launched in Nepal, Senegal and Uganda works to enhance the benefits that migration can have on agricultural and rural development. In Uganda, the objective of this programme is to create income-generating opportunities in agribusinesses by tapping into the entrepreneurial potential of the diaspora. This is achieved by providing tailored business management coaching to diaspora actors willing to invest in businesses in their home countries. Within the scope of this programme, FAO supported the government in considering agribusiness in the development of the national diaspora policy, engaged in awareness-raising activities through the production of radio shows, organized diaspora agrifood investment conferences with the public and private sector as well as investor awards. FAO also supported the setup of the Uganda Diaspora Agribusiness Network and diaspora-youth entrepreneur matching mechanisms.[13]

The programme Migraventure

The programme Migraventure in Italy was the result of a partnership between IOM, Etimos Foundation and Italian Cooperation. The programme targeted African migrants residing in Italy who were interested in becoming entrepreneurs and starting their own business in their countries of origin. After sharing their business plans and ideas, migrants were supported in developing a business project with the potential to deliver immediate social, environmental and economic dividends. In this process, the migrants were offered training and technical assistance to implement the project. In addition, they had the chance to present their plan to investors and received support in looking for funding. This allowed them to create new jobs and generate income in their country of origin, also providing an incentive for return.

13 For more on the Strengthening capacity to harness positive effects of migration programme in Uganda go to: https://www.fao.org/rural-employment/work-areas/migration/fmm-programme/en/

CHECKLIST **A step-by-step process: creating a diaspora engagement mechanism**

- Adopt a transboundary approach to reintegration by mobilizing diaspora networks, including those of migrant workers, and harnessing the potential of remittances for productive investment in local agricultural development.
- Conduct a mapping exercise to identify diaspora associations and reach out to them.
- Coordinate with these associations to identify members of the diaspora interested in participating in your programme.
- Support members of the diaspora in developing plans for businesses they would like to invest in in their country of origin.
- Provide them with technical, business and marketing training and financial support to implement their project and establish their business.
- Introduce them to market actors in their country of origin that can help them commercialize their operations.

Resources

The table below contains a list of resources that can be consulted when mapping community needs, opportunities and value chains.

Organization and year	Output	Link	Comments
ILO (2017)	*Value Chain Development for Decent Work*	https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/---ifp_seed/documents/instructionalmaterial/wcms_434363.pdf	The report provides guidance on how to design and implement value chain development interventions.
IOM (2019)	*Reintegration Handbook Module 3: Reintegration Assistance at the Community Level*	https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/module_3.pdf	This module of the IOM Reintegration Handbook includes valuable resources on how to provide reintegration assistance at the community level and foster community participation and engagement.
IOM and Samuel Hall (2018)	*Mapping and Socioeconomic Profiling of Communities of Return in the Gambia (Synthesis Report)*	https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/sites/default/files/eu-iom-ji_cartographie_gm.pdf	The methodology used for the community mapping can be applied in more communities in the Gambia and other West African countries. The pilot approach has made it possible to identify the best practices of development depending on the community profile.
GIZ (2018)	*Skills for Reintegration. Target-Group-Specific Approaches to Reintegration for Education and Technical Vocational Education and Training in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Contexts*	https://www.giz.de/de/downloads/giz2018-en-skills-reintegration-brochure.pdf	This publication reviews and revises concepts, strategies and approaches in a reintegration situation. It emphasises the need for a target-group-specific approach and underlines the crucial role of education and TVET in rebuilding livelihoods.
FAO (2020)	*Toolkit for value chain analysis and market development integrating climate resilience and gender responsiveness*	https://www.fao.org/publications/card/en/c/CB0699EN/	This toolkit helps countries to selecting and analysing value chains for opportunities to improve climate change resilience and reduce gender inequalities.

Thinking of programmes for youth returnees (15–24) in rural areas

How can you foster youth engagement in agriculture?
By including and mentoring them, by strengthening their potential for a social impact on their communities of return.

1. Training and incubation programmes
2. Youth champions' programmes
3. Future looking jobs for youth: social impact

2.4 How to design programmes targeted at young returnees to rural areas

For reintegration programmes that specifically target young men and women, examples of programmes that can foster youth engagement in agriculture include:

Training and incubation programmes

The approach

Incubation programmes are designed to provide mentorship and training opportunities to young people in a specific sector and allow them to develop skills they can apply in the labour market. In the context of rural reintegration, incubation programmes tailored to young returnees can equip them with agricultural knowledge and skills, which can they can use to find work in agriculture-based value chains and contribute to the sustainable development of rural areas. By learning about agricultural production and services, young returnees have opportunities to find employment and secure a livelihood in their areas of origin, without having to relocate to urban areas.

The FAO Integrated Country Approach (ICA) for promoting decent rural employment in Senegal

Since 2015, FAO has been working to make Senegalese agrifood systems more youth-inclusive under the framework of its Integrated Country Approach (ICA) for promoting decent rural employment. Through the ICA, along with contributing to the implementation of the national youth employment policy, FAO has designed models for promoting youth engagement in agriculture: the Modèle d'Insertion de Jeunes dans l'Agriculture et les chaînes de valeur agricole (MIJA) Platforms and the Bureaux communaux d'accueil, orientation et de (BCAOS). The MIJA Platforms and the BCAOS make it easier for rural young people to find the information they need to set up agribusiness ventures and support them in launching their own (FAO, 2018).

The MIJA Platforms and the BCAOS are rural hubs that provide support to local agribusiness and help young people in rural areas learn about agriculture production and services. The aim is to provide rural men and women with training on agriculture-related topics (e.g. horticulture, aquaculture, agricultural innovation), entrepreneurship and marketing, and encourage them to build cooperative partnerships to ensure the economic viability of their businesses.

FAO, together with its partners at the national level, have piloted a training programme directed to groups of young returnees along with other youth and prospective migrants. The programme has provided agricultural training in four value chains and included modules on business development and migration. The two-week training is followed by a period of follow-up sessions to guide the formulation of business plans and the initial steps in business development. The training is part of a set of support services offered to young returnees, which includes the piloting of BCAOS in six municipalities. The BCAOS support the returnees by offering counselling, coaching, orientation and support services to ensure a sustainable reintegration process.

The model developed by FAO is an excellent example of an approach to encourage the engagement of young rural returnees in the agricultural sector.

CHECKLIST

A step-by-step process: planning a youth incubation and reintegration programme

- Conduct a context analysis to identify the key skills needed by young returnees to secure a rural livelihood by starting an agricultural enterprises (e.g. farm management, use of modern technologies for agricultural production) and the gaps that's need to be filled to ensure that they can acquire these skills. If the returnees have been working abroad in agriculture, consider how the skills they have acquired can be adapted to fit the local context, and/or how their resources could be suitably invested. Training should also cover business and marketing skills, and include migration-specific modules on the particular needs of returnees.
- Make sure that your context analysis is gender-sensitive and takes into account the different aspirations of gendered groups in terms of the skills they want to develop. Particular efforts need to be made to ensure young women are adequately represented in the target group and are given equal opportunities to participate in and benefit from proposed activities.
- Identify a target group of young people who will take part in the incubation programme based on profiles and business ideas and proposals. For cost efficiency, ensure that the returnees live near the incubation facility and the duration of the training and incubation is carefully planned to ensure all returnees can participate, especially young women and those with care responsibilities.
- Liaise with local stakeholders to identify a network of trainers and a group of mentors who have specific expertise, can support the formulation of business plans and the incubation process, and guide the participants in obtaining financing and attracting investors.
- Organize training-of-trainers activities for the trainers and mentors to ensure they are aware of the specific needs of young rural returnees, can help them obtain the skills identified in the context analysis, and accompany the participants as they start their own agricultural enterprise. Along with agricultural training, focus should also be placed on entrepreneurial and marketing training.
- Engage with local stakeholders and authorities, particularly local governments that can make land available for the incubation training, to ensure the sustainability of the pilot programme and its replicability.

A supportive 'ecosystem' and 'champions' for young farmers

The approach

One of the main barriers preventing young people from engaging in agriculture are negative preconceptions associated with agricultural work, particularly the ideas that agriculture is not profitable and that it is not possible to work in agriculture without owning land. Building an 'ecosystem of support' around teams of young farmers can help dispel these misconceptions and encourage more young people to engage in agriculture. In this ecosystem, young farmers are recognized as 'champions'. By sharing their positive experiences working in agriculture, these champions can attract more young people to agribusiness ventures in rural communities. In the context of return migration, building this supportive ecosystem can contribute to fighting the stigma surrounding returnees working in agriculture and invite them into a welcoming environment that would facilitate their reintegration into the local community.

YOFCHAN in Uganda

In Uganda, YOFCHAN (Young farmers champions network) is an association created under within the framework of the FAO Integrated Country Approach (ICA) in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industries and Fisheries (MAAIF). YOFCHAN is a network of rural young men and women who are willing to work in agriculture. The young people receive technical training and legal and financial support to consolidate their skills and increase their employability in the agricultural sector. YOFCHAN seeks to build an 'ecosystem' of young farmers who interested in developing their agribusiness skills and transferring these skills to others in their rural communities. These farmers, who are presented as young 'champions' of agriculture, act as local ambassadors, inspiring young Ugandans, including young returnees, to follow their lead.[14]

CHECKLIST

A step-by-step process: creating an ecosystem of support and youth reintegration 'champions'

- Identify the main barriers preventing young returnees from becoming involved in agriculture (e.g. stigmatization).
- Organize sessions at the community level where young people can share their experiences, young returnees can connect with other young people working in agriculture, and discussions can be held about the positive impacts of agricultural work on young people and their lives.
- Create 'youth farm teams' that include members of the diaspora. This can give these members of the diaspora the opportunity to invest in their country of origin and potentially establish a livelihood in the event of their return.
- Bring on board extension workers to deliver training with young people in rural areas.[15]

14 For more information go to the YOFCHAN website: www.yofchan.org/

15 According to FAO "Extension is a process of working with rural people in order to improve their livelihoods. This involves helping farmers to improve the productivity of their agriculture and also developing their abilities to direct their own future development."

Jobs with a future for young people

The approach

A strategy to provide incentives to young men and women to work in agriculture and agrifood systems involves increasing awareness about the environmental or social risks that threaten the livelihoods and well-being of the rural communities and identifies pathways for reducing these risks. Building and reinforcing a clear narrative around the need to stop and reverse environmental degradation can encourage young returnees to engage in environmentally and socially-conscious agricultural work and green jobs, give them a sense of purpose, and facilitate their reintegration into the local community.

Ajico in Tunisia

Ajico in Tunisia[16] is an investment network and advocacy group founded by a returnee in Tunisia. This network works in rural areas to provide technical and financial support to young innovators and organizes awareness-raising sessions on migration-related issues. Ajico's activities serve to create a sense of social solidarity and instil in young people the value of investing their time and efforts in making their native areas flourish. The goal is to make young men and women less inclined to migrate because of the unfavourable circumstances in their rural communities, empower them to become actors of change at the local level, and inspire others.

CHECKLIST

A step-by-step process: creating environmentally and socially sensitive programmes to attract young returnees

- Conduct a context analysis to identify the most pressing local problems.
- Conduct focus group discussions and key informant interviews with young returnees to understand the circumstances that led them to leave their rural area, the problems they feel are the most urgent, and the solutions they propose.
- Encourage and support young returnees to create social businesses that can solve a specific environmental or social problem in their community. Young people in rural areas are aware that they, and generations before them, have been compelled to leave their areas of origin due a number of hazards (e.g. environmental degradation), and are aware of the threat that these hazards continue to pose to their communities.
- Ensure that the profit generated by the social business is reinvested so that it has a sustainable social impact and maintains the company's social mission.

This model will also generate profits, and young returnees will likely be their primary customers.

16 For more information go to the Ajico website: www.ajico.pro/

Thinking of the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on reintegration in rural areas

How can you assess the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on reintegration process?

1. Collect data and map risks
2. Work with local authorities to sensitize them
3. Plan for mitigation measures and additional support

2.5 Assessing the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on reintegration process of returnees

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to an unprecedented increase in returns and added an extra layer to the already complex process of return and reintegration in rural areas. The pandemic affected rural returnees on the micro, meso and macro level. It is strongly advised that the impacts of the pandemic be taken into account when formulating policies on rural return and reintegration.

The increased return to rural areas has impacted the livelihoods of both returnees and their families in a number of ways, often resulting in the exacerbation of their vulnerability back in their host community.

Exacerbated vulnerability of returnees due to COVID-19 pandemic

- **Unemployment**
  During the pandemic, many returnees have found themselves out of work.
- **Barriers to self-employment**
  Returnees have experienced a lack of access to credit, vocational training and agricultural business opportunities.
- **Reduction and loss of income**
  Many rural families depend on remittances and earnings from migration, which have fallen away during the pandemic. Returnees not only suffer a loss of income, but so do their family members and the host community.
- **Food and nutrition insecurity**
  The impact of the pandemic (e.g. loss of jobs, unstable incomes, disruption of local supply chains and food price increases) has threatened access to food for returnees and their families.
- **Increased vulnerability and more precarious social, environmental and economic conditions**
  Returnees faced increased discrimination in the community of origin during the pandemic. Many were thought to be carrying the virus resulting in some returnees being unwelcome in the host community.

COVID-19 mapping process

- Collect secondary data and statistics on:
  - the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the local community
  - the impact of the pandemic on the labour market (e.g. unemployment, barriers to self-employment, remittances flows)
  - the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the agricultural value chain and food insecurity
  - the secondary factors brought about by the pandemic (e.g. returnees being seen as virus carriers and becoming unwelcome in the host community)
  - how the COVID-19 pandemic affected the drivers and the deterrents of migration, and the reasons and modalities of return
  - the increased vulnerability of specific groups (e.g. women, farmers, elderly)
  - the capacity needs for a sustainable recovery from COVID-19.
- Collect primary data on the above topics by conducting surveys, focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews (both in person and over the phone) with returnees, members of the host community and other stakeholders (e.g. development actors working in the health sector, members of the local government).

- Work with local government authorities and other partners to:
  - Identify high-risk individuals in local communities and assess factors that have exacerbated vulnerabilities. Make sure the data collected is disaggregated by sex. The focus is on economic, social and psychosocial needs and risks.
  - Plan measures to mitigate the risks that have been identified and provide additional support to respond to economic, social and psychosocial needs.

Resources

The table below contains a list of resources that can be consulted when operationalizing sustainable reintegration in a COVID-19 context.

Organization and year	Output	Link	Comments
Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD) and World Bank (2021)	*Resilience: COVID-19 Crisis Through a Migration Lens*	https://www.knomad.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/Migration%20and%20Development%20Brief%2034_0.pdf	This brief provides an overview of COVID-19 and migration issues and looks at return migration.
FAO (2021)	Reverse migration to rural areas of origin in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic	http://www.fao.org/3/cb4712en/cb4712en.pdf	This information note focuses on returns to rural areas.
ILO	*COVID-19 and the world of work - Global impact and policy recommendations*	https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/impacts-and-responses/lang--en/index.htm	This web page is regularly updated with assessments of the global impact of COVID-19 on economies and labour markets.
IOM (2020)	Cross-Border Human Mobility Amid and After COVID-19	https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/defaul/pp_cross-border_human_mobility_amid_and_after_covid-19_policy.pdf	This policy paper looks at mobility during the COVID-19 pandemic.
UN (2020)	Impact of COVID-19 on Migrants and Refugees in the Arab Region	https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_764756.pdf	This technical paper prepared by multiple UN agencies, includes a chapter on returns during the pandemic.
European Commission (2021)	*Impact of covid-19 pandemic on voluntary and forced return procedures and policy responses*	https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/library-document/inform-5-impact-covid-19-pandemic-voluntary-and-forced-return-procedures-and_en	This working paper highlights the main concerns and topics to take into account regarding returns during COVID-19.
IOM and The Migration Policy Institute (MPI) (2021)	*COVID-19 and the State of Global Mobility in 2020*	https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/mpi-covid19-impact-global-mobility_final.pdf	This report presents comprehensive analysis of data to understand how the pandemic has reshaped border management and human mobility, and what the lasting ramifications may be.
ILO (2021)	*Locked down and in limbo: The global impact of COVID-19 on migrant worker rights and recruitment*	https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/fair-recruitment/publications/WCMS_821985/lang--en/index.htm	This report provides a global overview of the impact of COVID-19 on migrant workers with a specific focus on recruitment.

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3 Implementation

This chapter focuses on the implementation phase of the programme cycle and introduces two key tools:

- **Tool 5. Project decision tool**
  for improving the planning of the activities of your programme
- **Tool 6. Referral tool**
  for developing a referral mechanism.

3.1 Key factors in the successful implementation of rural reintegration programmes

Customizing responses at the sub-national level

Connecting national efforts to local action is a fundamental factor that contributes to successful sustainable reintegration. However, several countries have not adopted a holistic approach to rural reintegration. There is no harmonization between activities implemented at the national and local levels. This lack of coordination often results in a duplication of efforts and reduces the potential for establishing more impactful programmes. Addressing this lack of coordination is crucial for consolidating existing programmes and magnifying their impact, and enhancing the design and implementation of more effective reintegration programmes in the future.

CHECKLIST **A step-by-step process: mapping coordination entry points**

- Conduct a mapping of the current mechanisms (if any) in place at the local, regional and national level. Particular attention must be paid to:
  - national coordination mechanisms,
  - sectoral working groups,
  - the cluster coordination system in settings where humanitarian interventions are being carried out,
  - SDG-related coordination and reporting structures in development contexts, and
  - private sector actors, trade unions, employer and worker organizations
- Review institutional arrangements between:
  - the national government,
  - local governments and institutions, and
  - development and migration actors.
- Map potential for funding available from:
  - national development programmes,
  - donors, and
  - grants for reintegration in rural areas.

- Set up a project coordination mechanism or steering committee at the local level.
  - Reach out to government actors and implementing partners.
  - Draft clear terms of reference to ensure a common understanding about coordination goals, leadership, and membership, and the nature, scope and objectives of coordination activities.
- Prepare a memorandum of understanding with the government and the other actors involved that outlines the arrangements for practical cooperation, coordination mechanisms and systems for referrals. The memorandum should be signed by all the actors involved.
- Engage in discussions with the other stakeholders and prepare standard operating procedures.

Dialogue and trust building

The research findings of the FAO and Samuel Hall study, *Global lessons learned on sustainable reintegration in rural areas*, have emphasised the pivotal importance of dialogue and trust building in implementing sustainable rural reintegration programmes. Open dialogue and exchange should be at the heart of any interactions among stakeholders, returnees and their families, and the host communities. Communication takes place on different levels. For the purpose of this toolkit, this section has been divided into parts: (i) communication with stakeholders, and (ii) communication and trust building with the rural community.

(i) Communication with stakeholders

Working with trade unions

Trade unions are worker organizations have been established to expand and defend workers' rights, improve working conditions, and give workers a voice to express their demands. In rural areas, trade unions are operating within the agricultural sector, and they can be one of the first contact points for returnees looking for employment in agriculture. Given the key role trade unions play in the agriculture sector, involving them in reintegration programmes and activities is essential. The unions can act as mediators between employer organizations and returnees, assess the needs of both parties, and take appropriate actions to ensure that the skills of the returnees meet the demands of the labour market.

The Nigeria Labour Congress

The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) is a major trade union in Nigeria advocating for workers' rights, including the rights of migrants and returnees, at the global and national level. The NLC is a member of the technical working committee on labour migration. NLC, which promotes a tripartite approach to return and reintegration programming, has called for the inclusion of governments, employer organizations and trade unions to collaborate in this process. Initially, reintegration programmes were exclusively developed by the government. Only rarely did the government work with employer organizations and civil society organization, which caused a disconnect between the needs of the returnees and those of the employers. The NLC advocacy work aims to strengthen tripartite social dialogue mechanisms in Nigeria. Although the value of tripartite coordinated action has been recognized at the policy level, the policies have not been translated into practice. The institutionalization of tripartite social dialogue mechanisms would enable trade unions to contribute to the mapping and profiling of returnees, and the implementation and monitoring of reintegration programmes.

CHECKLIST **Step-by-step process: establishing collaborations with trade unions**

- Identify and engage in dialogue with local trade unions.
- Work together to identify mechanisms to jointly support returnees and facilitate their access into the labour market, particularly by linking returnees to employers' organizations and creating a system to ensure that demands of the labour market are in line with the skills of the returnees.
- Institutionalize the mechanisms identified.

Working with employer and producer organizations

Engaging with the private sector and encouraging employer and producer organizations to set up mechanisms to employ rural returnees is crucial for the reintegration of returnees. Along with ensuring that the returnees' skills match the employers' demands in the labour market, it is also important to set up mechanisms to link employers and returnees in ways that benefit both parties. These mechanisms could enable employer organizations to gain access to rural and remote areas that they would be otherwise unable to reach, and provide services and sell their products to a broader range of clients in areas where they are likely to have minimal competition.

The Federation of Egyptian Industries

To meet it corporate social responsibilities, the Federation of Egyptian Industries, which is composed of 10 000 member companies in 19 industrial sectors, has been encouraging its members to launch training and employment programmes for young returnees. This initiative emerged from the Federation's awareness of the misalignment of returnees' skills and the skills required to find employment in rural areas. The approach adopted by the Federation is based on the assessment of the returnees' skills and the skills needed by local employers. After conducting an initial assessment, the Federation works to identify opportunities that match the returnees' profiles, and supports NGOs in identifying and reaching out to returnees. For instance, some rural young people have been recruited by companies to become distributors in rural areas where the company previously had no access. In this way, both the returnees and the company benefited from this agreement, which can be seen as a model of sustainable reintegration.

CHECKLIST **Step-by-step process: establishing collaborations with the private sector**

- Conduct a mapping of local employer organizations and select the most pertinent ones.
- Connect with the selected organizations.
- Engage in discussions with representatives of these organizations to determine the skills returnees require to enter the labour market.
- Conduct an initial profiling of a group of randomly selected returnees.
- Create a database with information on both employers and returnees, and highlight the skills and experience required by the employer organizations and the skills of the returnees.
- Work together with other partners to identify the more effective approaches for matching the returnees' profiles with suitable employers.

(ii) Communication and trust building with the community

In rural settings, host communities have a significant influence on the return experience of migrant workers and an even more significant impact on their reintegration process. Therefore, building trust within and with local communities is extremely important for creating successful reintegration programmes. Building trust can be accomplished in many ways. The section below provides an example of successful communication and trust-building strategies that can be used with local communities.

FAO Dimitra Clubs

FAO Dimitra Clubs are discussion groups that have been established in sub-Saharan Africa. Operating for more than 10 years, Dimitra Clubs are open to women, men and young people who want to talk about issues that are affecting the community, and find solutions to address them by working collectively and using local resources. The discussions often revolve around agriculture-related topics, but other issues (e.g. climate change, health, infrastructure, nutrition, social stigma) can also be discussed. FAO facilitates the logistics of the meetings and offers training and coaching opportunities, but the groups and their internal discussions are self-managed. These groups, which have proven to be powerful tools for ending taboos and fighting social stigma in rural communities, could also be effective in supporting rural reintegration.[17]

CHECKLIST

Step-by-step process: connecting and building trust with the local community

- Identify actors in the community (e.g. community leaders, committees or community-based organizations and local authorities) who can facilitate connections with community members.
- Become familiar with community practices to identify the most appropriate way of approaching the community.
- Connect with the actors identified and carry out initial outreach with the community.
- Ensure to reach out to and connect with more marginalized groups (e.g. women, young people, the elderly and persons with disabilities).
- Organize the first meeting in an easily accessible venue at a convenient time.
- Set clear objectives for the meeting and provide detailed information to the participants beforehand.
- During the meeting, encourage active participation and focus on learning and listening to the experiences and perspectives of the participants.
- Collect feedback and encourage participants to attend subsequent meetings.

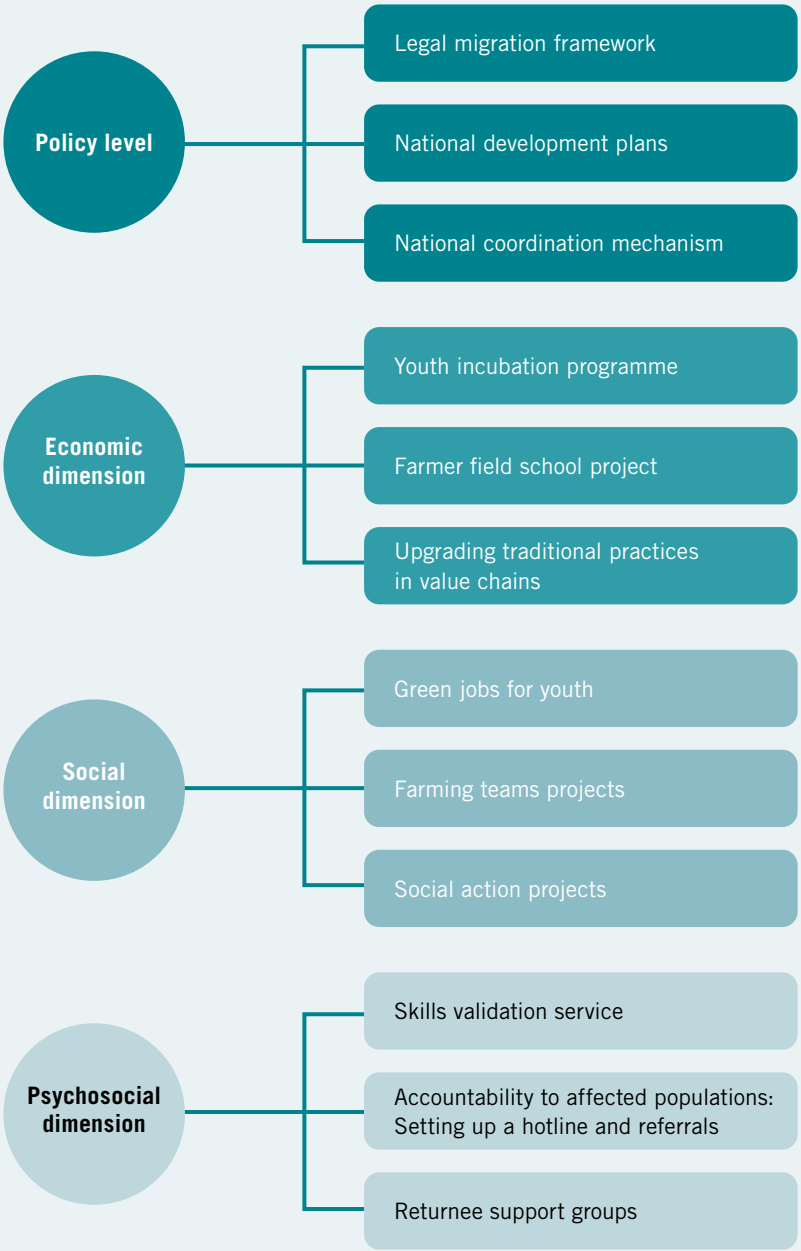
17 For more information go to the FAO Dimitra Clubs webpage: www.fao.org/in-action/dimitra-clubs/en/

3.2 Planning and implementation tools

Tool 5. Project decision tool

Reintegration always presents multi-dimensional and multi-levelled challenges. Decisions will have to be made on what activities will be the focus of your programme, and whether you will be able to cover different levels and dimensions of intervention. In the planning and implementation process, list out your activities and make sure they are planned for adequately. Seek partners where needed and consider referrals for projects that might not be your area of expertise.

Figure 14. **Project decision tool**



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Tool 6. Referral tool

When working with returnees, it is crucial to have in place a referral mechanism for their protection and to adequately address their needs. A referral system ensures that each returnee receives adequate support or assistance and is directed towards the appropriate services. The 2019 *IOM Guidance on Referral Mechanisms* can provide initial guidance on how to develop a referral mechanism for vulnerable migrants, and can serve as a basis for the development of a referral mechanism specifically for rural reintegration contexts.[18]

Before developing a referral mechanism, it is important to conduct a protection risk analysis. The purpose of protection risk analysis is to identify the risks that can result from specific threats (e.g. violence, exploitation, discrimination) and vulnerabilities in the context where you are planning your intervention. By conducting a protection risk analysis, you will be able to:

- gather information of existing protection risks
- identify the most significant risks and vulnerabilities
- identify the potential links and interactions between these risks and your intervention
- design strategies to mitigate these risks and limit the chances of negative effects of your intervention

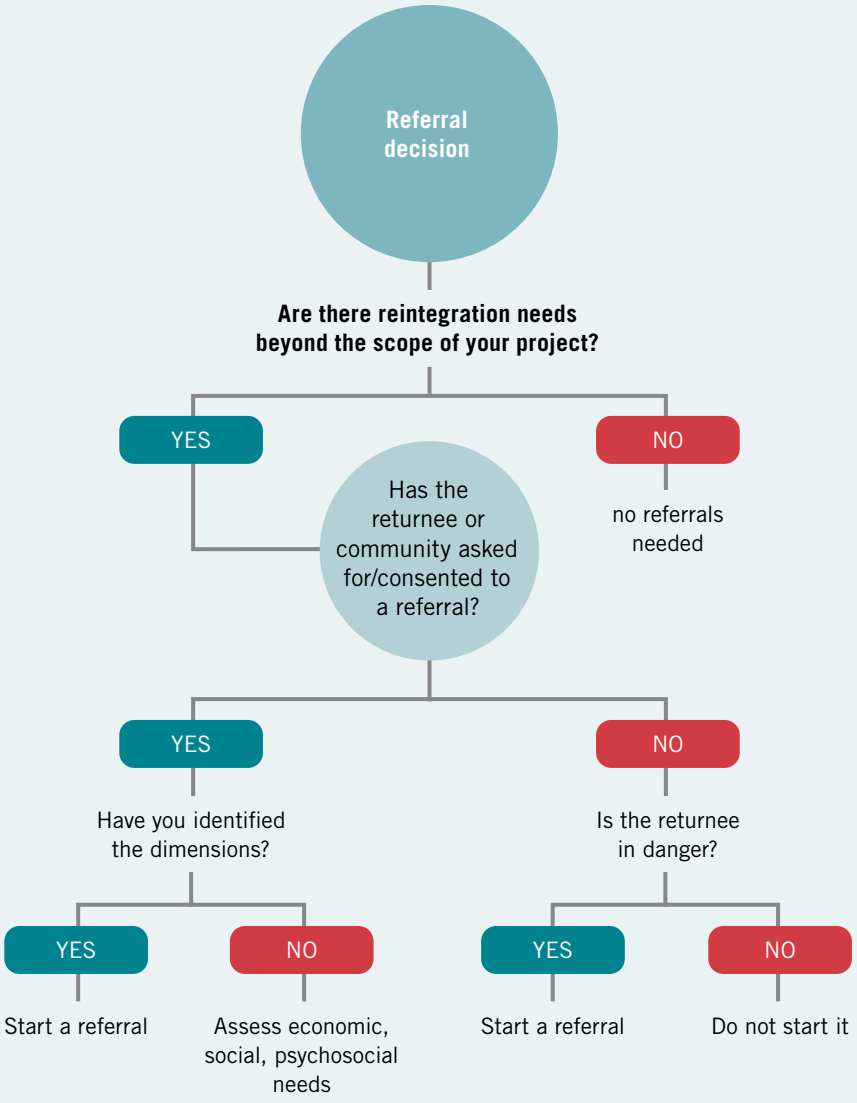
The table below includes key protection risks for rural returnees. It can be used as a model and adjusted as needed, depending on the context of your intervention.

Protection Area	Protection Risk	Likelihood	Is the risk specific to my intervention?	Existing community-based mitigation measures	Existing development/ migration agencies mitigation measures	Mitigation strategy
Sexual and gender-based violence **	Sexual violence, psychological violence, socioeconomic violence (e.g. discrimination)	**A: (high)** Frequent Almost certain **B: (medium-high)** Common Likely **C: (medium)** Occasional Possible **D: (medium-low)** Isolated **E: (low)** Almost never Unlikely	Analyse possible interactions with your programme/ intervention	To be identified and added by context	To be identified and added by context	Design measures to mitigate the protection risk and minimize the negative effects of your intervention
Safety of the returnee **	General insecurity, thefts, inter-household/ inter-group tensions **					
Housing, land and property **	Loss of access to property, land, tenure documentation, unsafe or inadequate housing, lack of housing, land and property rights for women **					
Access to services **	Lack of documentation, other barriers to access to services, exclusion and discrimination **					
Psychosocial	Anxiety, loss of social network and stability, difficulty in adapting to rural lifestyle					

18 The IOM Guidance on Referral Mechanisms is available at: https://publications.iom.int/books/iom-guidance-referral-mechanisms

On the basis of the protection risks identified through this analysis, you will be able to identify returnees who are at risk and set up a more effective referral system.

Figure 15. **Referral flow template**



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

CHECKLIST

Step-by-step process: developing a referral system for rural returnees

- **Component 1: Profiling**
  The primary objective of profiling in the referral mechanism is to determine whether the returnees or the reintegration project needs assistance and from whom, all in a coordinated and standardized manner. The members involved with the referral mechanism should decide whether any entity or organization can identify the returnees for the purpose of 'activating' the referral process, or if this task should be assigned to a few stakeholders.
- **Component 2: Determination of status or case type**
  As in the original mechanism, this step remains optional in some contexts or countries. In some settings, it may not be possible to refer returnees for assistance without having an authority determine their status as a specific type of vulnerable returnee.
- **Component 3: Recording referrals**
  Record the referral (economic, social or psychosocial) that will be put in place and the systems there are for integration into existing programmes. A prominent aspect of this component for rural returnees is that of value chains and how the returnee can be integrated in the value chain. Another core component is financing reintegration and potential referrals to funding mechanisms (e.g. matching grants) to be made available and accessible to returnees.
- **Component 4: Support systems**
  The overall aim of the referral system is to provide the support to the returnees and indicate their entry points for the implementation of their reintegration plan. For many rural returnees, matters such as access to land and provision of livelihoods are likely to be among their needs. Many countries do not have a returnee-specific protection or systems in place, so other systems need to be used to address the main challenges to their reintegration.

CHECKLIST

Step-by-step process: developing a referral mechanism according to IOM guidance

- **Set up a project steering committee**
  The project steering committee, which provides guidance and coordination, should be multi-sectoral to ensure that referrals can be made across the different sectors and levels of intervention.
- **Prepare a memorandum of understanding**
  The memorandum of understanding covers the various aspects of the referral mechanism, including details on its members and the services they offer. The memorandum should clearly define the target group (rural returnees in this case), the responsibilities of each member, the chosen coordination methods, the financing arrangements, and the duration of the agreement, and included any appropriate annexes. The memorandum of understanding should be signed by all involved stakeholders
- **Prepare standard operating procedures**
  This should be a document containing detailed, clear, and precise guidance on how to carry out the actions and procedures that have been agreed on, which should be tested and approved.

- **Develop an monitoring and evaluation framework**
  This framework should be used to regularly monitor the extent to which the referral system meets the pre-set objectives and contributes to facilitating returnees' sustainable reintegration.
- **Prepare other documents as required**
  The steering committee should develop other additional tools (e.g. informed consent forms and data protection forms) to be shared with and signed by all involved stakeholders.

CHECKLIST

Step-by-step process: ensuring the sustainability of the referral mechanism

- Consider the availability of the financial and human resources needed for the referral mechanism.
- Prepare detailed guidelines on the functioning of the referral mechanism.
- Ensure that a monitoring system of the referral system is in place to conduct regular monitoring.

3.3 Initiatives that support effective reintegration implementation

Ensuring equitable access to natural resources

The approach

For migrants, particularly those originating from rural areas, the ability to reclaim their land upon return or to obtain access to land elsewhere is critical. The areas of return are often remote and marginal and have limited resources. Rural areas are also frequently affected by policies that limit access to agricultural land and other natural resources (e.g. water).

Property restitution is a central theme in reintegration programmes, but it is a sensitive issue. Restitution programmes provide for the restitution of land and property rights to returnees who left their areas of origin. Alternatively, these programmes may provide compensation or other remedies, particularly in cases where restitution might risk compromising livelihoods and food security for those who had settled on abandoned land and risk being evicted. Land disputes can potentially develop into major obstacles to a successful return and cause rural returnees to move to urban areas in search of opportunities.

Property restitution can be the key to successful rural reintegration programmes (FAO, 2019b). However, for restitution to succeed, the process must be institutionalized. Mechanisms need to be put in place to regulate the process effectively, so that there are no perceptions of injustice that could create tensions that could potentially escalate into conflict. These mechanisms can include compensation frameworks with special arrangements for farmers and land and property owners, individuals who hold land and property rights and individual who have unduly occupied the land or property. These mechanisms should include a gender perspective. The rights of women to inheritance and land ownership should be carefully considered.

Thinking of effective implementation in rural reintegration programmes

What do you need to plan for when implementing reintegration programmes in rural areas?

1. Equitable access to natural resources
2. Financing rural reintegration

Conseil National de Concertation et de Coopération des Ruraux in Senegal

In Senegal, the Conseil National de Concertation et de Coopération des Ruraux (CNCR) supports men and women, who have been granted access to lands of national domain, to establish a sustainable farm. According to a member of the CNCR interviewed, what is needed to support these families involved in agriculture is to communicate in local languages clearly and widely ("vulgarize") the processes for obtaining access to land and support for agribusiness development. Local communities need to be able to easily access information about the requirements for acquiring land and the related procedures. Access to land is a key element for attracting youth to work in the agricultural sector in Senegal. Connectivity, in terms of telecommunications and public infrastructure and transportation, is another element that should be taken into account.[19]

CHECKLIST

Step-by-step: establishing an advocacy process to demand equitable access to resources

- Collect secondary data to become familiar with the legal and policy frameworks on natural resources and how these frameworks are implemented in your context
- From the issues that have been identified, select those that are the most pertinent for your programme (e.g. lack of rules that regulate restitution in rural areas, discriminating against traditional laws on land possession and use, in particular regarding women).
- Conduct a power analysis, which involves listing the actors involved or groups and individuals who might have an interest in the issues you have chosen to focus on and gain a better understanding of how they are connected to them. For example, returnees may be claiming restitution of their land, local farmers may be at risk of evictions and loss of livelihoods, and the national government policy may have no system in place to address these claims and fairly regulate this process.
- Connect these actors to each other and initiate dialogue to gauge the possibility of potential alliances, incentives, and solutions.
- Connect with other stakeholders interested in working with you to address these issues at the community, national and international levels and create a group working to address them.
- Develop a strategy with clear objectives stating what you would like to change and how.

Financing rural reintegration

The approach

Given the nature of investments in value chains and market systems, the cost of rural reintegration activities is usually higher than in urban areas and requires a diversified source of financing to make it sustainable.

Promoting Inclusive Economic Growth through Matching Grants in Tajikistan

In Tajikistan, FAO has assisted migrants, families, and communities in their fruit, vegetable, livestock production and value addition activities. The pilot project, Promoting Inclusive Economic Growth through Matching Grants, adopted a '1+1 approach', in which the amount of money invested by the returnee is matched by the project funds, with a maximum grant set at 5 000 USD. To be eligible for this project, applications should

19 For more information (in French) go to the CNRC website: https://www.cncr.org/

be either migrant workers or returnees, women with household responsibilities who are receiving remittances from a first degree relative, or a forced returnee with the intention to migrate back abroad.

These types of grants and capacity development programmes provide incentives to returnees to build the skills needed to run small and medium enterprises in the agricultural sector. The project In Tajikistan established an oversight committee for transparency at all levels. The committee, which included representatives from various ministries and international organizations (FAO and IOM), also worked to raise awareness among government bodies and increase programming sustainability. The locations were selected based on a baseline survey that had identified regions in Tajikistan with high rates of returns and significant remittance flows. After conducting the survey, to ensure information about the project reached the target groups, awareness-raising activities were carried out that informed the residents about the opportunities this programme could offer them.[20]

CHECKLIST **Options for financing reintegration**

- **Matching grants**
  Matching grants, for example, can adopt a 1+1 approach whereby the amount of money invested by returnees in a business is matched by non-refundable grants of the same value.
- **Incentives for banks to grant loans**
  Grants and capacity development programmes encourage returnees to invest in business ventures, which in rural areas are generally agricultural enterprises.
- **Trade and exports**
  Transnational exchanges can maintain demand for specific sectors and productions in specific value chains. There are historical partnerships tying destination, transit and origin countries through trade and exports. Diaspora actors can play a key role in this.
- **Financial services and solutions for migrants abroad**
  These services, particularly in the pre-return stage, can improve preparations for reintegration.
- **Investment structures and programmes for youth and women**
- **Community investments and funds for reintegration**
- **Diaspora engagement and support for agribusiness investments**
- **Backstopping agricultural entrepreneurs and encouraging returnees to start their own agricultural enterprises**

20 For more information go the FAO news article, Matching grants help migrants' businesses take off in Tajikistan at: www.fao.org/fao-stories/article/en/c/1287874/

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4 Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning

This section focuses on the monitoring and learning phase of the programme cycle and introduces three tools

- **Tool 7.1 Building a reintegration scoring system**
  for monitoring reintegration by considering economic, social and psychosocial dimensions
- **Tool 7.2 A qualitative w model to monitor reintegration**
  for marking the progress made since the inception of the intervention
- **Tool 7.3 Progress mapping tool**
  for mapping progress outcomes based on the theory of change

4.1 Key facets and principles of reintegration monitoring

Monitoring is key practice to inform programme management decisions. It involves collecting and analysing data to identify and bridge any potential gaps between the actual performance and the expected performance. Monitoring activities can be of two kinds:

- programme monitoring, which focuses on the activities implemented (e.g. number, outputs, costs); and
- reintegration monitoring, which focuses on the outcome of reintegration itself and provides a snapshot of the well-being and resilience of the returnee.

Reintegration monitoring, which is the focus of this section, assesses whether the reintegration of the returnees can be considered sustainable and if returnees have reached levels of economic self-sufficiency, social stability within their community, and psychosocial well-being. Reintegration monitoring is a longitudinal process, which takes place at all phases of the programme cycle and beyond. Reintegration needs to be monitored across time and space to map outcomes, learn from these outcomes, and adjust the programmes to maximize their utility to returnees and their communities of return.

Reintegration monitoring is a long-term process that periodically assesses and re-evaluates the progress the beneficiaries are making in their reintegration and the challenges they are facing. The monitoring process should include built-in feedback loops to promptly adjust outputs and services accordingly. Reintegration monitoring must not end with the closure of the programme, but continue through the whole reintegration cycle. Short-term monitoring reduces the likelihood of drawing meaningful conclusions and lessons from individual experiences of the returnees. It could also potentially increase a sense of disillusionment in the returnees and create distrust in structures of aid; the same feelings that drove many migrants away in the first place.

Developing evaluative criteria and measures collaboratively

The key to representing the wide range of outcomes related to knowledge and practices to all collaborators is to engage as many participants as possible (if not all) in defining evaluation criteria and the metrics for those criteria. Because of the longitudinal component of reintegration monitoring, this will require the consent of returnees and other stakeholders to be part of monitoring initiatives over a period of time.

A key principle to keep in mind when designing reintegration monitoring is the co-evaluation and participatory evaluation, which should be integrated into the design of programmes to allow the continuous assessment of progress. This process requires a commitment by all the actors involved in the programme to reflect on their own practices or delegate this responsibility to other 'external' evaluators. This process is made possible by implementing specific evaluation activities, including those conducted jointly by social scientists with research collaborators from within project teams.

Using monitoring to adapt programming

Reintegration monitoring is a means to an end. As noted in the IOM definition, sustainable reintegration takes returnees along a pathway to greater economic, social, and psychosocial well-being, so that they become self-reliant and have agency to make their own choices.

At each step, reintegration monitoring provides a snapshot of the returnee's well-being and resilience, and points to gaps to be filled by programming. This monitoring can guide subsequent programming interventions and make them contextually relevant.

Using monitoring to map outcomes and track progress

Outcome mapping is a methodology for monitoring and evaluating development initiatives and track progress towards change. It is necessary at this stage to return to the theory of change and the intended outcomes of the project. Progress can be tracked through specific progress markers that indicate the amount of change that is expected and the amount of change that has been observed (see Tool 8.C.).

4.2 Monitoring approaches and tools

What is a sustainable approach to monitor rural reintegration?

A sustainable approach to monitor rural reintegration:

- Selects the appropriate monitoring model that fits the social context. To make this selection, programme implementers must conduct a feasibility study to gauge the appropriateness and necessary conditions for effective implementation of a specific monitoring approach.
- Encourages processes of local ownership, whereby with time, the empowerment of community members stimulates the self-organization of a community-led monitoring system. These processes foster 'organic' innovation and design-thinking and hasten the flow of good ideas in the service of sustainable reintegration.
- Uses a contextualized system to track returnees' reintegration that is informed by individual and community-level indicators. The measuring and scoring system should be institutionalized to ensure traceability and accountability, and should include a built-in information management system that can be operated by local actors.
- Is guided by local experts capable of tapping into local knowledge, which is often a combination of indigenous knowledge and practices, and modern science and technology. These experts can include local agronomists, market specialists, gender specialists and social workers.
- Enables experiential learning and its internalization through built-in feedback loops that provide opportunities to community evaluators to identify and build on programmatic strengths and address challenges to improve outcomes and impact.

Who can conduct reintegration monitoring?

To fulfil the different requirements for successful reintegration monitoring, key community figures of the target location, endowed with high levels of social capital, can be empowered to lead reintegration monitoring in their community. These community figures can be municipal workers, members of local associations and civil society organizations, or community leaders and mentors. After receiving sufficient training, these figures would be initially responsible for receiving returnees when they arrive. They would be tasked to register returnees on a follow-up list, facilitate the initial needs and skills assessment, brief the returnees on life in the community, and refer them to the relevant programme services. An internal monitoring system can then be designed for community evaluators to ensure long-term follow up and evaluation of reintegration outcomes beyond the programmatic outputs. To accomplish this, context-sensitive and population-sensitive well-being assessments must be designed that include a set of key indicators for sustainable reintegration, which will be used at different stages in the reintegration of returnees. These assessments should be able to gauge the returnees' level of satisfaction in relation to their return, the impact of the programme, and particularly how they are able to cope with the factors that initially drove them to migrate. Further details on how to operationalize this process can be found in the sections below on community-based monitoring and social monitoring.

Best practices for monitoring sustainable reintegration

In the 2017 publication, *Setting Standards for an Integrated Approach to Reintegration*, the IOM and Samuel Hall have developed a reintegration sustainability survey that provides a standardized overview of the level of reintegration that has been achieved by beneficiaries of assisted voluntary return and reintegration. The survey can be used to assess the extent to which returnees have achieved a level of sustainable reintegration in the communities to which they have returned. The results of the reintegration sustainability survey are used to create a sustainability index, a set of 15 field-tested indicators covering the economic, social and psychosocial dimensions of reintegration that are used in a scoring system to measure reintegration outcomes.

The economic dimension includes indicators on:

1. sources of income
2. the reliability and adequacy of employment or income-generating activities
3. the debt to spending ratio of returnees
4. food security
5. self-assessment of economic situation satisfaction

The social dimension includes indicators on:

6. adequate housing
7. access to public services and social protection schemes
8. access to effective remedies and justice
9. access to health services
10. access to education for school-aged children

The psychosocial dimension includes indicators on:

11. social and community involvement
12. non-discrimination
13. considerations given to further migration
14. signs of distress
15. feelings of safety and security in daily activities

These indicators are captured through 32 questions in the reintegration sustainability survey and the results are in a scoring system, which is used to shape adjustments in IOM reintegration programming.

Tool 7.1 Building a reintegration scoring system

The 15 reintegration indicators used to build the IOM reintegration scoring system are detailed and described below. Tested in a variety of contexts, these indicators have been rolled out globally by IOM.

Economic dimension	Question	Response	Notes
1. Source of income	Do you currently work? One answer	Yes No I don't know/refuse to answer	Variable coded as a binary term, where 1 = currently working
	Do you own any of the following productive assets? Multiple answers	Land Animals Trees Buildings and structures Vehicles Equipment and tools Other	Variable coded as a binary term, where 1 = owns at least one kind of productive asset.
2. Reliability and adequacy of employment or income-generating activity	Are you currently looking for a job? One answer	Yes No I don't know/refuse to answer	Variable coded as a binary term, where 1 = NOT currently looking for a job
	How would you rate your access to employment and training opportunities? One answer	1. Very good 2. Good 3. Average 4. Poor 5. Very poor	Variable coded on a 5-point scale, where very good = 1 and very poor = 0
3. Debt to spending ratio	Does your household currently hold more debt than it spends in a month? One answer	Yes No I don't know/refuse to answer	Variable coded as a binary term, where 1 = does NOT hold more debt than monthly spending
	How frequently do you borrow money? One answer	1. Very frequently 2. Frequently 3. Sometimes 4. Rarely 5. Never	Variable coded on a 5-point scale, where never = 1 and very frequently = 0
	Are you able to borrow money if you need to? One answer	Yes No I don't know/refuse to answer	Variable coded as a binary term, where 1 = can borrow money
4. Food security	In the past, have you had to reduce the quantity or quality of food consumed for lack of means? One answer	1. Very frequently 2. Frequently 3. Sometimes 4. Rarely 5. Never	Variable coded on a 5-point scale, where never = 1 and very frequently = 0
5. Self-assessment of economic situation satisfaction	Are you satisfied with your current economic situation? One answer	1. Very satisfied 2. Satisfied 3. Neutral 4. Unsatisfied 5. Very unsatisfied 6. Do not know /refuse to answer	Variable coded on a 5-point scale, where very satisfied = 1 and very unsatisfied = 0

Social dimension	Question	Response	Notes
1. Adequate housing	Do you have adequate access to housing in your community? One answer	1. Yes 2. No 3. I don't know/refuse to answer	Variable coded as a binary term, where 1 = has adequate access to housing
	How would you rate the standard of the housing you live in today? One answer	1. Very good 2. Good 3. Average 4. Poor 5. Very poor	Variable coded on a 5-point scale, where very good = 1 and very poor = 0
2. Access to public services and social protection schemes	How would you rate access to public services in your community? One answer	1. Excellent 2. Good 3. Fair 4. Poor 5. Non-existent 6. Don't know/refuse to answer	Variable coded on a 5-point scale, where excellent = 1 and non-existent = 0
	Do you have identification documents? One answer	1. Yes 2. No 3. I don't know/refuse to answer	Variable coded as a binary term, where 1 = has identification documents
3. Access to effective remedies and justice	How would you rate access to justice and law enforcement in your community? One answer	1. Excellent 2. Good 3. Fair 4. Poor 5. Non-existent 6. Don't know/refuse to answer	Variable coded on a 5-point scale, where excellent = 1 and non-existent = 0
4. Access to health services	Do you have access to formal healthcare? One answer	1. Yes 2. No 3. I don't know/refuse to answer	Variable coded as a binary term, where 1 = can access formal healthcare
	How would you rate access to healthcare in your community? One answer	1. Excellent 2. Good 3. Fair 4. Poor 5. Non-existent 6. Don't know/refuse to answer	Variable coded on a 5-point scale, where excellent = 1 and non-existent = 0
	How would you rate the adequacy and quality of healthcare in your community? One answer	1. Excellent 2. Good 3. Fair 4. Poor 5. Non-existent 6. Don't know/refuse to answer	Variable coded on a 5-point scale, where excellent = 1 and non-existent = 0

Social dimension	Question	Response	Notes
5. Access to education for school-aged children	Are all school-aged children in your household currently attending school? One answer	1. Yes 2. No 3. I don't know/refuse to answer 4. Not applicable	Variable coded as a binary term, where 1 = all children enrolled
	How would you rate access to education in your community? One answer	1. Excellent 2. Good 3. Fair 4. Poor 5. Non-existent 6. Don't know/refuse to answer	Variable coded on a 5-point scale, where excellent = 1 and non-existent = 0

Psychosocial dimension	Question	Response	Notes
1. Social and community involvement	Do you participate in social activities within your community? One answer	1. Very frequently 2. Frequently 3. Sometimes 4. Rarely 5. Never	Variable coded on a 5-point scale, where very frequently = 1 and never = 0
	Do you have a network you can rely on for support? One answer	1. Yes 2. No 3. I don't know/refuse to answer	Variable coded as a binary term, where 1 = has a support network
	I feel like I belong to the community where I currently live. One answer	1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Neither agree/disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly disagree	Variable coded on a 5-point scale, where strongly agree = 1 and strongly disagree = 0
2. Non-discrimination	Have you ever felt discriminated against based on your age, gender, religious group, ethnicity, or any other factor? One answer	1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Neither agree nor disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly disagree	Variable coded on a 5-point scale, where strongly disagree = 1 and strongly agree = 0
3. Considering further migration	Do you want to move away from this location over the course of the next 12 months? One answer	1. Yes, we would like to move away 2. No, we would like to stay 3. We are unsure	Variable coded as a binary term, where 1 = does not want to move away
	If you migrate in the future, will you migrate using legal and formal channels?	1. Yes, we will use legal and formal migration paths 2. No, we will use illegal and informal migration paths 3. We are unsure	Variable coded as a binary term, where 1 = plans using legal and formal migration channels

Psychosocial dimension	Question	Response	Notes
4. Signs of distress	Do you suffer from the following feelings on a regular basis? Multiple answers	1. Feeling angry 2. Feeling sad 3. Feeling afraid 4. Feeling stressed 5. Feeling lonely 6. Feeling of low self-worth 7. Difficulty concentrating 8. None of the above	Variable coded as a binary term, where 1 = none of the above
	Has there often been tension between you and members of your household over the past three months? One answer	1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Neither agree nor disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly disagree	Variable coded on a 5-point scale, where strongly disagree = 1 and strongly agree = 0
	Would you like to receive / access to specialized psychological support? One answer	1. Yes 2. No 3. I don't know/refuse to answer	Variable coded as a binary term, where 1 = does not need to receive psychological support
5. Feeling safe and secure in daily activities	Do you feel secure for yourself and your family outside when engaging in daily activities? One answer	1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Neither agree nor disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly disagree	Variable coded on a 5-point scale, where strongly agree = 1 and strongly disagree = 0

Tool 7.2 A qualitative W-model to monitor reintegration

A W-model can be used to monitor reintegration and describe the processes newcomers experience during their reintegration or lack of reintegration into their areas of origin. This model allows stakeholders to identify the key moments that define the returnee's experiences of reintegration, and the main elements that fall within the scope of the monitoring. By using the W-model, the individual conducting the monitoring can identify challenges and opportunities experienced by the returnee in a timely manner, and adjust the programme to address the gaps identified.

Overall structure

- Start by drawing the W-model and explaining that you want them to take you through the highs and lows of their personal education and economic cycles. You will ask questions, they will respond and you, acting as the enumerator/moderator, will write down the information on the W-model.
- The interview will cover the three key dimensions of the reintegration process and will be divided in three parts.
    1. Start with the economic dimension
    2. Follow with the social dimension
    3. Finish with the psychosocial dimension
- Explain the purpose of the interview and get to know the respondent. Introductory question that you can ask at this point are:
    1. Why did you want to leave the country or your area of origin?
    2. What were the reasons for your departure?
    3. What were your reasons for coming back?

Explain how the interview process will work.

> *"We would like to map this process. You will be provided with a timeline on a separate sheet. Together, I would like you to walk us through your reintegration journey. Start with when you first returned to your area of origin. Then, please note any specific events that you consider relevant to understand your reintegration process within the local community, including finding (or not finding) employment, developing your skills in a specific sector, and anything else you consider relevant."*

Conduct the interview. Key questions to guide you in the interview process are listed below.

Part 1: Economic dimension

- Are you currently employed? In which sector? Under what conditions?
- How long did it take you to find employment after you returned to your area of origin?
- What challenges did you experience in looking for employment after returning to a rural area?
- In your process of building your skills and networks, what were the most challenging setbacks? How did you overcome them?
- Were you able to put in use the skills and experiences acquired abroad or where you migrated?
- Is your income enough to cover your basic needs and those of your household?
- In the past, was there any point when your income wasn't enough to cover your basic needs?
- Did you have a debt when you returned to the country? Do you have a debt now?
- Have you ever had to borrow money since your return?

Part 2: Social dimension

- Is your housing situation comfortable?
- How long did it take you to find a house after you returned to your area of origin?
- What challenges have you faced in accessing health services since your return?
- Have you attended any training since your return? Would you like to do so?
- Have you experienced any challenges related to accessing services in your area or origin?

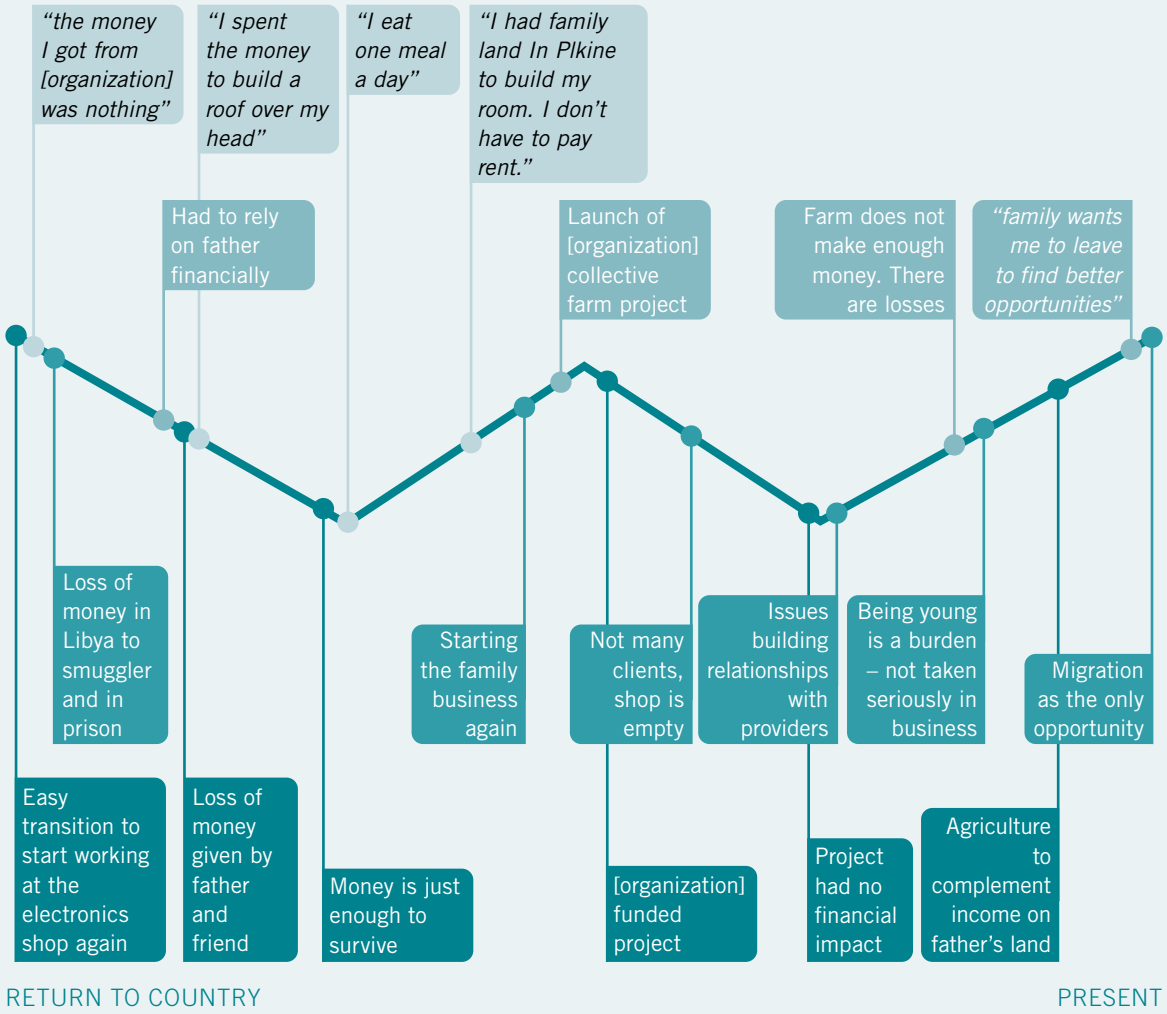
Part 3: Psychosocial dimension

- How would you describe your relationship with the local community immediately after your return? Is this relationship different now?
- How did other community members react to your return? Did you feel accepted?
- Have you ever felt discriminated against because of your status of returnee? If yes, why?
- What kind of influence did others have on your decisions? Who are/were they?
- How has interactions with the local community affected your reintegration process? How have they influenced your desire to continue living in your area of origin?
- Have you ever experienced feeling sad, angry, or distressed for a prolonged period since your return? Was there a particular time when you felt like that?
- Have you ever experienced feeling lonely and isolated since your return? Was there a particular time when you felt like that?
- Do you feel safe within your community now? Have you ever experienced not feeling safe within your community since your return?
- Have you at any point considered moving away from this location in the next 12 months? If yes, why?

Create your W-model graph. Consider that each high is for the positive things that happened since the individual's return (e.g. finding employment, feeling integrated), and each low is for the negative thing that happened since return (e.g. feeling rejected by potential employees, not finding support)

See Figure 16 for an example of what the final output could look like.

Figure 16. **W-model example**



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Tool 7.3 A progress mapping tool[25]

To map the progress being made, based on your theory of change, break down the progress markers (below) associated with each of your outcomes. You can then either rate the levels of achievement (low, medium or high) or use a traffic light system (green, orange, and red) to assess progress, and use the result to maintain an 'outcome journal. The changes can be monitored regularly (e.g. every fixed number of months) with updates made to the progress markers or colour coding (Earl, Carden and Smutylo, 2001).

Progress markers (example)	
Outcome challenge: The programme intends to see local authorities and communities that recognize the importance of, and engage in, the planning of the reintegration in partnership with different actors (e.g. local government, rural institutions, private sector institutions and civil society organizations).	
Expect to see local authorities	
1	Participate in the design of reintegration programmes in their area
2	Integrate returnees in local decision making and political processes
3	Share/lease land and water resources for agriculture-based livelihoods for returnees
4	Provide relocation stipend for returnees for six months after their return
Like to see local authorities	
1	Request new opportunities for capacity building and training
2	Call on central government experts to provide mobile resources for training and extension activities
3	Identify synergies with national development plans and social protection programmes
4	Identify opportunities for and obtain funding from a range of sources and donors
Love to see local authorities	
1	Playing a lead role in resource management for reintegration
2	Participating in community-based and mobile-based monitoring systems
3	Sharing lessons learned and experiences with other communities
4	Influencing national policy and policy formulation on reintegration
Required programme changes	
Lessons	
Review (date)	
Next update for (date)	

21 https://www.outcomemapping.ca/download.php?file=/resource/files/OM_English_final.pdf

Thinking of monitoring approaches

How will you monitor your rural reintegration programme, who will you involved and how? Different approaches are possible:

1. Community-based monitoring
2. Social monitoring
3. Mobile-based monitoring

4.3 Examples of monitoring sustainable reintegration in practice

Community-based monitoring

Rationale

Community-based monitoring is the practice of collecting information from a committee of actors at the community level. Ideally this committee would include community leaders and representatives from local government, civil society organizations, community-based organizations, and international NGOs. The committee describes conditions at the community level rather than individual cases. Community-based monitoring can provide cost-effective progress reports or status reports on specific programmes, which can reduce the human and financial resources that international agencies would need to invest for similar monitoring. For example, community-based monitoring would help agencies evaluate a vocational skill development programme designed for both returnee and non-returnee community members in a target rural community. The monitoring would be based on community feedback, and could be complemented by the input of external evaluators. Community-based monitoring is particularly valuable in hard-to-access rural areas that are not well served in terms of public infrastructure, such as transportation and roads.

Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA) provides an excellent example of how community-based monitoring can empower communities and provide quality data across sectors in Afghanistan. The community-based monitoring also fosters accountability, which serves to minimize corruption, IWA identifies local community members to serve as monitors in a variety of sectors, including infrastructure, education, extractive industry, and justice. The monitors are trained by IWA to regularly assess projects on behalf of their communities. The community-based monitoring approach has enabled IWA to engage roughly 1 700 monitors on 900 infrastructure projects since 2007.

CHECKLIST **Step-by-step process: community-based monitoring tool**

- Select local monitors in the pre-identified areas.
- Offer technical and social training to the local monitors. The training should cover a wide range of issues, including key monitoring theories and practices, community mobilization, and problem solving. Technical training should include sessions on the indicators that will be used in the monitoring.
- Provide the local monitors with monitoring tools, checklists, and survey templates for data collection.
- Ask the local monitors to visit project sites on a regular basis to conduct regular follow-up monitoring and report to you on a monthly basis.
- Give incentives to local monitors. Even though their work is voluntary, you can offer to refund them for transportation and communication expenses and give them other financial incentives.

Considerations to keep in mind

Community-based monitoring can provide valuable information on the community conditions, social cohesion between returnees (as a whole) and the local community, and other key community-level indicators of rural development and economic self-sufficiency. Community-based monitoring benefits the community because it allows the local population to have a voice in community-wide interventions that both returnees and non-returnees can benefit from. The primary limitation to community-based monitoring is that it should focus strictly on information collection and monitoring at the community level. Community-based monitoring can raise individual protection concerns and potential conflict of interests. It is recommended that community-based monitoring be led by local civil society organizations whose purpose is to provide services that benefit both the community and returnees.

Feasibility of the approach

Community-based monitoring has required selecting, vetting and training community representatives as monitors across communities of return in nine provinces of Afghanistan. Overall, community-based monitoring is a feasible approach in many countries, as it can be modified to assess a broad range of conditions and projects. It can help agencies and local actors understand not only the conditions experienced by returnees, but also the conditions experienced by community members. This approach serves to triangulate information and situate individual-level data in the community context.

Social Monitoring

Rationale

Social monitoring follows many of the same principles of community-based monitoring, but applies them at the individual level. Members of the community, which may include former returnees successfully reintegrated into society (i.e. returnee mentors), are identified, selected, and trained to become social monitors. They are responsible for regularly checking in with beneficiaries to collect a standard set of information. A key benefit of the social monitoring approach is increased social contact between beneficiaries and the local community, as social monitors may serve as a social touchstone for returnees, many of whom lack support networks or social networks.

CHECKLIST **Step-by-step process: social monitoring**

- Assess if social monitoring is appropriate in the local context.
- Select social monitors based on their experience of reintegration, willingness to carry out this role, and communication skills.
- Offer social training to social monitors on key monitoring theories and practices.
- Provide the social monitors with technical tools to conduct monitoring activities, training on data protection to safeguard the privacy of those involved in the monitoring, and any other additional resources that might apply to the specific context they will be working in.
- Ask the social monitor to conduct regular on-site monitoring follow-up visits, keep records of each visit, and prepare monthly reports with the information collected over that period.
- Offer incentives to the social monitors (e.g. expenses refunds and transportation allowance). They could also be provided with tablets or phones to allow them to regularly update key reintegration indicators for particular beneficiaries, which could be viewed in real-time by programme managers.

As with community-based monitoring, social monitoring offers a cost-effective means of collecting information in hard-to-access rural communities. However, individuals who may be effective community-based monitors may not be suited to also serve as social monitors. Unlike community-based monitoring, the social monitoring approach lacks the flexibility to be appropriate for every type of programme (development or migration).

Feasibility of the approach

Ultimately, social monitoring will succeed in environments with low levels of discrimination towards returnees and where agencies are able to implement rigorous vetting protocols to select trustworthy monitors. The selection of suitable monitors is critical for successful monitoring.

Mobile-based monitoring

Rationale

Mobile surveys (text, recorded voice, or live voice formats) can be an effective way to monitor the situation of returnees and verify data, particularly in harder-to-access rural areas. The effectiveness of these surveys, however, this will depend on connectivity and phone usage in the area. Phone availability and the popularity of mobile technology can be harnessed by agencies to improve monitoring. Mobile phone surveys can be quicker, more accurate and done more frequently than in person surveys. They can also improve the timeliness with which data is received, often at lower cost.

CHECKLIST **Step-by-step process: mobile-based monitoring**

- Consider if using mobile-based monitoring tools is appropriate in your case by asking the following questions:
  - Do the survey participants have access to a phone or other technological devices? (Take into consideration gender dynamics as rural women are less likely than men to have access to a phone).
  - Do they have internet access and coverage?
  - Can mobile-based surveys integrate the kind of questions you require?
  - Can you manage your mobile-based instruments and easily access the collected data?
  - Do you have the technical expertise needed to manage mobile-based instruments and software or would you require technical training and/or external support?
- Decide on the kind of software you will use for your mobile-based survey.
- Prepare the survey.
- Conduct training sessions for the staff members and participants involved in the monitoring and explain the modalities of completing the surveys.
- Collect and analyse the data.

Feasibility of the approach

In some contexts, mobile surveys can be particularly useful. However, an obstacle to the feasibility of this approach is the potential for high non-response rates. The phone numbers may be out of service or not working, or in the hands of non-beneficiaries. It is notoriously difficult to trace returnees by phone, especially in areas with poor connectivity and coverage, and low usage.

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Annex

Rural reintegration proposal development template

The template presented below is an example of how rural reintegration project proposals might look and the main elements they include. However, templates vary from donor to donor, and this resource can only be used as a general reference point, as it is not tailored to a specific donor.

Project Title	
Partner 1 (Lead)	
Partner 2	
Partner 3	
Locations of implementation	
Proposed project dates	
Requested amount in USD	

Executive summary (1 page)

Projection rationale (2.5 pages)
Use your rural reintegration programme canvas and context analysis tools to explain how you designed your approach.

Project design and results (4 pages)
Use the actor mapping and theory of change to map the activities, partners, short- and medium-term outcomes and the overall impact sought.

Technical approach and methodology (5 pages)
Use the project design tool to explain the activities that will be the focus of your programme and the referral and coordination mechanisms that are being put in place. Reflect on the participatory methods that you outlined in your canvas.

Cross cutting issues (3 pages)
Reflect on the gender-sensitive, youth-sensitive and conflict-sensitive elements of the programming, as developed using your context and conflict analysis tool.

Monitoring, accountability, evaluation and learning (3 pages)
Present the results of the outcome mapping process and any specific quantitative and qualitative methods you will be using, including the timeframe for evaluation and feedback loops for adaptive programming.

Risks to successful implementation

Financial

Budget breakdown

Budget justification and assumptions

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www.fao.org/rural-employment
www.fao.org/migration/en/

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