

Embedding Reintegration Assistance for Returning Migrants in the Local Context

The Role of Referrals

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Executive Summary

Policymakers and practitioners in countries of origin and destination alike increasingly acknowledge that for returning migrants, reintegration into a community—at times after an extended period away—is a multidimensional process. As a result, a number of European programmes that offer reintegration assistance have moved away from standardised packages to instead provide support that takes into account the varied economic, social, and psychosocial needs of returnees and their communities. Given the complexity of reintegration processes, it has also become clear that no one service provider can offer all of the types of assistance required to meet these needs. Helping migrants achieve sustainable reintegration requires a network of support.

Embedding reintegration assistance into the local environment of public services, community initiatives, and development programmes can help create this network by expanding the variety of support measures available to returnees. Referrals to local service providers such as these are also valuable in that they connect returnees to trusted partners and a support system that will remain in place long after time-limited reintegration assistance initiatives end. In addition, referral mechanisms present an opportunity to streamline migration and development initiatives by building pathways between interven-

tions and ensuring their goals are complementary, with the aim of maximising the outcomes of both types of programmes. Referrals, particularly when combined with capacity-building and other forms of support for local actors, can thus make a critical contribution by improving both the reintegration outcomes of returnees and conditions in the communities where they live.

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Yet, there is no consensus across reintegration programmes as to how referral mechanisms should be organised, what types of services referral partners should deliver, the level of budget support these different actors need, and how their work should be monitored. The current restructuring of European return governance—in particular, efforts by European policymakers to move towards common standards for reintegration support—presents an opportunity to raise the visibility of local partnership networks and start using and evaluating them more systematically.

Based on a review of how referrals have been used to embed reintegration assistance into local communities to date and of the challenges such efforts have faced, recommendations for future work include:

▶ **Map out referral opportunities and share this information with partner organisations and returnees to improve the reintegration supports available.**

As is already done in certain countries, the organisations that are primarily responsible for operating reintegration programmes and their partners should develop a directory of existing partnerships with local actors to whom returnees can be referred for support, with updated information on contracts, eligibility criteria for these actors' projects, potential capacity constraints, payments, and number of referrals. Because directories produced through such mapping exercises can quickly go out-of-date, they should have a clear owner (e.g., governments in countries of origin) that will regularly revise them based on information provided by donors, lead reintegration service providers, and other partners (e.g., nongovernmental organisations and municipalities). This information should be systematically disseminated both to reintegration service providers, so that social workers are aware of referral opportunities and processes that exist in an area, and to migrants, to help them develop clear expectations about the support available.

▶ **Build more formal partnerships with country-of-origin governments and other entities that accept referrals.** Many referral mechanisms operate without a formal agreement and funding, relying instead on personal relationships. This approach is a good starting point to broaden the scope of services available to returnees,

but it ultimately raises questions about the different actors' responsibility for the services provided, the quality of services, data sharing, and more. Developing guidelines, standard operating procedures, and memoranda of understanding to standardise referral mechanisms helps ensure that referrals occur in a more systematic, reliable way and that the various parties involved are held accountable for the services provided.

▶ **Provide funding or capacity-building training to referral partner organisations.**

Referrals can have various benefits for reintegration programmes, but they need to be proactively managed to meet their potential, including by ensuring that the local partner organisations to which returnees are referred have the budget and capacity to provide the desired services. In many countries, civil-society organisations are keen on engaging in the provision of reintegration support, but they often do not have access to the funding and expertise needed to do this work. Training and knowledge-building efforts may also create referral opportunities with new partners, including with private-sector actors who are often unfamiliar with the profile of and specific challenges faced by returning migrants but who could be instrumental in supporting their labour market reintegration.

▶ **Monitor the outcomes of services offered by referral partners and make sure the lead reintegration service provider, referral partners, returnees, and other stakeholders (such as the origin-country government and the donor) have clear, shared expectations for each party's responsibilities.** Even when referrals do not occur based on a formal agreement that provides funding, the lead reintegration service provider should be accountable for

making referrals and how this takes place, and the local partner should be responsible for the services they are meant to deliver. Monitoring efforts to support this level of accountability require dedicated resources and technical assistance for all the relevant stakeholders that need them.

In the end, referral mechanisms should not be considered one-off, no-cost interventions, but as an integral part of returnee reintegration and broader development strategies. Well-functioning referral systems hold the potential to support returnees' sustainable reintegration, strengthen local actors' sense of ownership over the reintegration process, and improve conditions in countries of origin more broadly. But developing such systems and reaping these benefits will not happen overnight and without dedicated resources. They should therefore be seen as a long-term investment.

1 Introduction

Although European programmes that aim to support returning migrants' reintegration into the communities where they settle have expanded in scope and improved in recent years, returning—at times after years away—is never an easy undertaking. In many communities and countries of origin, there is a social stigma attached to return if individuals are perceived as having failed in their migration aspirations and return because they could not secure legal status. Many returnees who have been abroad for an extended period have also lost touch with local relatives and friends and lack the skills and networks to find their footing within the community. Helping returning migrants overcome these barriers and achieve successful reintegration thus entails helping them (re)build connections and participate in the social, economic, cultural, and political life of their country of origin.

Embedding reintegration assistance within the local environment through partnerships with actors that returnees trust is therefore a critical pillar of reintegration assistance, including assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR) projects. It helps expand the variety of support measures available to returnees, encourages local actors to develop a sense of ownership over reintegration processes, and can create synergies between reintegration efforts and other programmes, including international development initiatives.¹ Without an approach tailored to the local context, reintegration support risks being inefficient, short-lived, and may even aggravate frictions between returnees and other local community members—especially in fragile environments—if returnees are seen as receiving support that is needed by but unavailable to others.²

Without an approach tailored to the local context, reintegration support risks being inefficient, short-lived, and may even aggravate frictions between returnees and other local community members.

One way to pursue a strategy of local embeddedness is for the lead reintegration assistance provider to refer returnees to public services, civil-society organisations (CSOs), and other local stakeholders (including private-sector actors). For the lead organisation implementing a reintegration programme, referral systems are crucial because other actors may be able to provide direct assistance in locations where they are not physically present. These referral partners may also have skills and experience working with specific population groups or the budget to offer additional support activities. As such, referrals can improve the uptake of support and help streamline different actors' efforts to help returnees achieve sustainable reintegration. Referrals can also

ensure continuity of services after a reintegration programme ends.

Recognising these benefits, European policymakers and practitioners, as well as their partners in migrants' countries of origin, are exploring how to improve the local embeddedness of the reintegration assistance they offer. They are increasingly moving away from the model of reintegration projects that deliver standardised packages of support and towards one that offers assistance tailored to the individual and the local context. This growing interest can be seen, for example, in the 2021 EU Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration.³ By doing so, these actors seek to improve individual reintegration outcomes and join forces in supporting overall development in communities where returnees live.

But while there is growing interest in referral systems and how they can help embed reintegration assistance into the local context, little is known about their implementation across programmes. The term 'referral' is used in a variety of ways to describe any type of cooperation between stakeholders involved in the reintegration process, and there have been few systematic analyses to date of the different approaches that fall under this label. This terminological ambiguity and lack of evidence hamper monitoring and evaluation (M&E) efforts and thus risk undermining improvements made in the overall design and evaluation of reintegration projects.

This policy brief aims to help fill this gap by discussing referral mechanisms' objectives (Section 2) and offering a typology of approaches taken in the implementation of these mechanisms across different reintegration programmes, according to the stakeholders involved and levels of formality (Section 3). It then discusses recurrent challenges and emerging good practices (Section 4). Finally, the brief offers recommendations for strategies to step up the local embeddedness of reintegration programmes, including by producing better evidence on what

works (Section 5). This analysis draws in part on interviews conducted between February and June 2022 with representatives of reintegration service providers, government agencies, and CSOs in 29 countries.

2 Why Local Embeddedness Matters

Embedding reintegration programmes into the local environment by relying on partners to deliver at least part of the support offered to returnees has four main benefits. First, local partners' geographic reach is an important advantage, especially when migrants are returning not to a country's capital but to other (at times remote) regions. Physical proximity between returnees and service providers lowers travel costs and risks for the returnees and allows for more frequent interactions. In addition, having referral partners with a presence in different locations helps protect certain vulnerable returnees, such as victims of trafficking or forced labour, who often cannot go back to their region of origin. In Albania, for example, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) helps victims of trafficking settle in areas where they have not previously lived, or in the capital city of Tirana, where IOM has local partners that can provide direct assistance.⁴

The needs of returnees are diverse, and the lead reintegration service provider may not have staff with expertise in all relevant domains.

Second, working with partners via a referral network is useful because it can bring complementary skills to the table. The needs of returnees are diverse, and the lead reintegration service provider may not have staff with expertise in all relevant domains, especially when it comes to delivering support to returnees

with the most acute vulnerabilities. In Senegal, for instance, both the French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII) and the Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, the German development cooperation agency, collaborate with a local nongovernmental organisation (NGO) called House of Hope to deliver psychosocial therapy to returnees.⁵ Referrals to private-sector actors, meanwhile, can support returnees' labour market integration. In Nigeria, IOM and the country's government have sought to develop a network of private companies that will offer traineeships and job placements to returning migrants, so that they can gain relevant experience, build professional networks, and ultimately access long-term employment.⁶

A third benefit that comes from involving partner organisations in the reintegration process is that it can make it possible to tailor support to different social, economic, and cultural groups. Such efforts can build on trusting relationships that exist between returnees and local actors to ensure the former have effective access to and feel comfortable seeking reintegration services. This is particularly important given that mistrust can be a major barrier that keeps returnees from accessing support services.⁷ For example, Roma communities in Serbia—which have long faced discrimination and exclusion—tend to mistrust authorities, which frequently leaves them without personal documents and with limited access to public services.⁸ To be able to reach returning Roma with reintegration assistance, GIZ partners with several NGOs that have staff who work directly with these communities and help them overcome barriers.⁹

Finally, referral mechanisms can pave the way towards more sustainable reintegration for returnees and support development within their community, particularly when these mechanisms build links between reintegration and development programmes. In practice, few reintegration initiatives operate re-

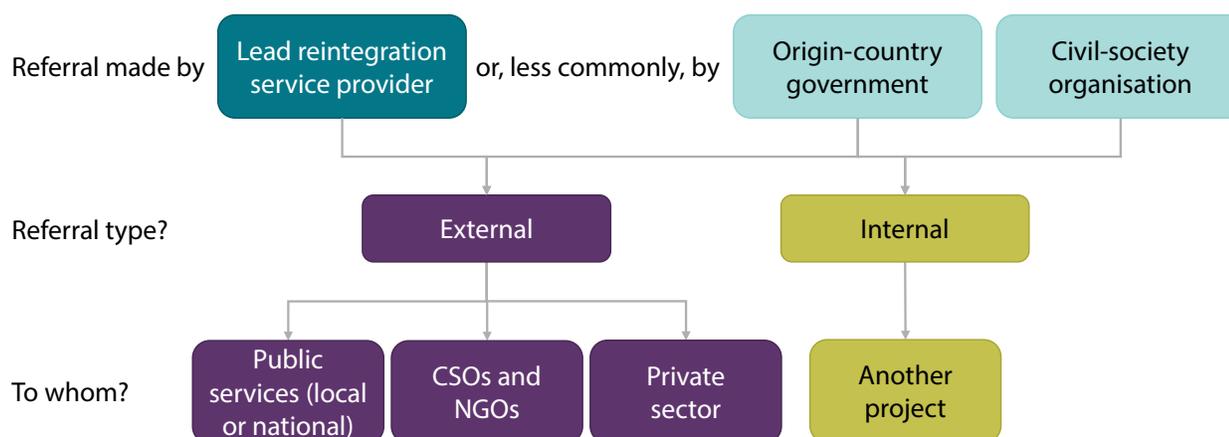
ferred to development programmes because both are still predominantly developed and implemented in silos.¹⁰ But there are a few exceptions, such as the cooperation between IOM and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Sudan. Between 2020 and 2022, IOM referred 170 returnees to FAO so that they could benefit from FAO's agriculture-specific support, in addition to the cash assistance provided by IOM.¹¹ The two UN agencies reported that this cooperation allowed returnees to receive more comprehensive reintegration assistance, benefited broader communities in the target regions, and enhanced social cohesion.

3 A Typology of Referral Mechanisms

While there is consensus that referrals are useful to enhance the local embeddedness of reintegration services, the term 'referral' is used to describe a wide range of practices.¹² As a result, 'referral systems' can mean anything from informal engagements and personal networks to formalised agreements involving contractual commitments and multiannual grant allocations. Many referral partners' work complements the assistance provided by the organisation that is in the lead on implementing the reintegration programme, but in some cases they may be responsible for the whole package of reintegration supports for returnees who are referred to them.¹³ In addition, every country comes with a different landscape of institutions, CSOs, and development programmes, which shape the ability of the primary reintegration service provider to work with local partners.

The ways referral systems differ depend fundamentally on the combination of two factors: (1) what type of partner organisations returnees are referred to, shown in Figure 1, and (2) what type of agreement is established between the parties, shown in Figure 2.

FIGURE 1

What Type of Partner Organisations Are Returnees Referred to?

Source: Compilation by the authors.

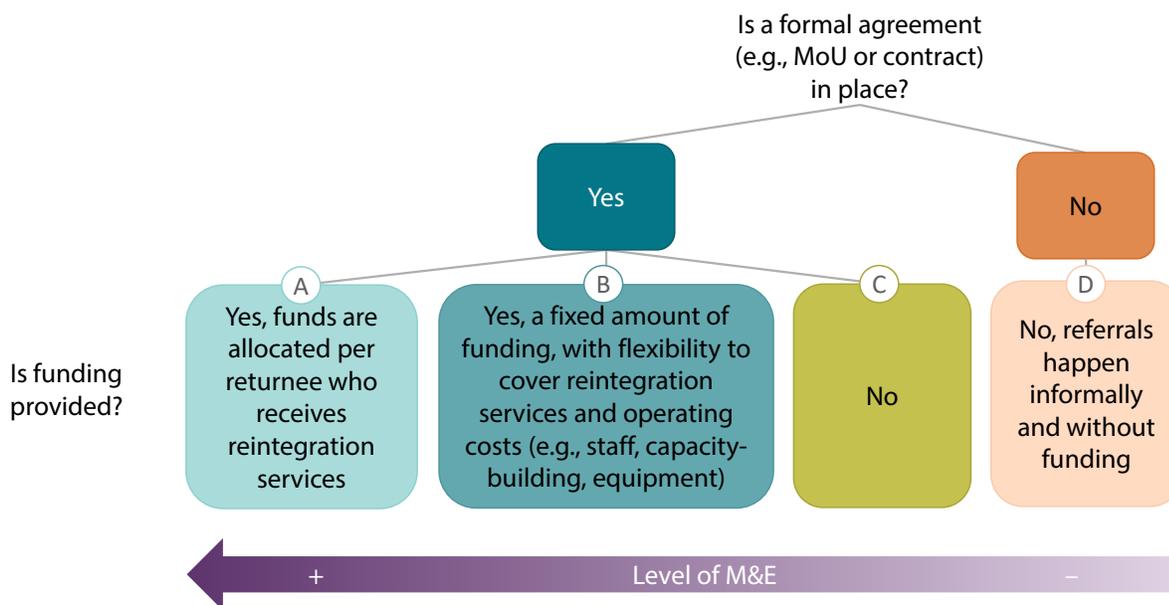
The starting point of a referral is typically the lead service provider contracted by the donor(s) (e.g., EU Member States, European Commission, EU agency) to provide reintegration assistance to migrants upon their return. These organisations are usually the first ones to meet with returnees after they arrive in their countries of origin. In a few cases, government-run referral hubs, such as the Armenian One Window information centre or the Iraqi National Referral Mechanism,¹⁴ act as entry points and initiate referrals. IOM is a major provider of reintegration assistance globally, but international NGOs, local CSOs, and some private actors also deliver these services.¹⁵ In a more limited number of cases, the government of the country of origin implements reintegration activities itself. While the lead reintegration service provider tends to be the initial starting point for referrals after arrival, local actors may develop their own ecosystems and become more dominant in referral networks over time. Once in the country, returnees may be referred from one CSO to another in circular referrals, or from a reintegration project to public services.

At the receiving end of referral systems, there are four main types of actors. These differ depending on whether the referrals involved are external or 'outward' referrals, as IOM calls referrals to a third party

or programme,¹⁶ or internal referrals to another project implemented by the lead reintegration service provider. Most often, the lead reintegration service provider refers returnees to government entities that issue identification documents, register them with social protection schemes, and provide access to public services such as education and health care. For example, the Women Empowerment Literacy and Development Organization (WELDO), a reintegration assistance provider in Pakistan, prepares returnees for appointments with public authorities and helps them gather all the necessary documents to register with the public services.¹⁷ In Brazil, IOM has developed partnerships with the governmental unit responsible for combatting trafficking, since some cases involve individuals who are both returnees and victims of trafficking. CSOs and NGOs, including religiously affiliated groups, play a crucial role in assisting returnees who are referred to them for support, especially vulnerable groups, and many offer trusted, ongoing support that is available in the localities where returnees settle. Lastly, businesses can be involved in referral mechanisms, with the goal that referrals will help returning migrants enter the labour market.¹⁸

Internal referrals are possible only in a context where the lead reintegration assistance provider

FIGURE 2

What Type of Agreement and Funding Are behind Referrals?

Source: Compilation by the authors.

operates several initiatives in the same country and it is possible to make transfers from one programme to another. When internal referrals can be made, representatives of several reintegration service partners described them in interviews as convenient and efficient.¹⁹ Referring a returnee to another project or colleague within the same organisation is usually easier and quicker, information about the case has already been collected, and coordination tends to be straightforward (even if it can be more informal and therefore less systematic). In Serbia, for example, GIZ's Programme on Migration for Development recommends such linkages between projects in its standard operating procedures.²⁰ In the few cases where governments operate their own reintegration programmes, such as the Return and Reintegration Assistance Program for Diaspora Youth (PARI-JEDI) in Cameroon,²¹ intragovernmental referrals allow for a whole-of-government approach to reintegration.

Next to differences in the type of actors involved in referral systems, a second major source of variation is these systems' levels of formality (see Figure 2). And indeed, the degree of formality can vary con-

siderably, regardless of which partners are involved. In this, referral systems typically follow one of four models, ranging from a formal agreement with comprehensive funding and contractual obligations to referrals that are not based on an agreement and happen informally. Each entails tradeoffs.

- A. Formal agreement with funding per returnee.** This first approach to referrals involves the lead reintegration assistance provider allocating funding to the referral partner to cover the costs associated with service delivery for each individual returnee. This 'per returnee' funding typically includes costs arising from training courses or health services a returnee receives. For instance, IOM Georgia has longstanding agreements with several private clinics that treat returnees. The costs incurred are directly covered by IOM, without returnees having to pay upfront.²² The advantage of this form of cooperation is that it gives returnees access to services that may otherwise be inaccessible to them. Through funding, the referral partners can

adapt their capacity to arriving returnee populations and continue to offer these services over time. Yet, per returnee funding is rarely enough to cover a referral partner's overhead costs, such as permanent staffing or equipment, which can make this aspect of sustaining operations a challenge.

- B. Formal agreement with a fixed amount of funding.** Another approach to referrals involves broader financial support that is not tied to the number of individual returnees served and that allows the partner organisation to cover operating costs and distribute the funding as it chooses to returnees (and potentially other beneficiaries). The German NGO HELP Serbia assists returnees as well as a broader group of vulnerable persons, with support from GIZ. Whereas nonreferred individuals wishing to receive support from HELP can apply only during the NGO's open calls, the eligibility of applicants referred through GIZ before they depart from Europe is assessed immediately; as a result, the support they receive is more flexible and can be adapted to individual returnees' arrival timelines and reintegration needs.²³ Such funding arrangements are advantageous as they provide the local partner with more flexibility in how it manages its caseload. Yet, it also requires greater trust between the donor (and the lead reintegration service provider) and the referral partner, as a foundation for this heightened spending flexibility.
- C. Formal agreement, no funding.** The lead reintegration assistance provider may have a formal agreement with referral partners, even if it does not provide funds for the services provided. Such agreements can consist of simple letters of intent, memoranda of understanding (MoUs), or standard operating procedures describing the role of

the respective partners in assisting returnees. Among other things, MoUs can regulate how information about cases is shared between the lead reintegration assistance provider and its referral partners, to ensure both efficiency and data protection. For instance, the National Referral Mechanism in Iraq, run by the Iraqi government and developed with the support of IOM Iraq, functions under agreements that do not involve funding. Returnees are referred by the Iraqi authorities to local CSOs, international organisations, and other government services that assist them using their existing budget.²⁴ These agreements have grown in recent years, with a clear move towards better regulating informal referral practices.²⁵ However, they are not always fully operationalised as capacity constraints may limit the ability of referral partners to add returnees to their existing caseload.²⁶

- D. Informal referrals with no formal agreement or funding.** In the least formal type of engagement, the lead reintegration assistance provider refers returnees to a partner without an agreement that outlines standardised procedures or offers funding. This generally occurs when there is overlap in the two entities' missions and target groups, meaning the referral partner can simply add returnees to their ongoing caseload. This form of engagement is usually based on personal relationships and can allow for quick responses to emerging needs, but it is rarely as sustainable as other referral models and may not support the same level of thorough case management practices.

The type of agreement concluded between the lead reintegration assistance provider and its referral partners has important implications for M&E. While partnerships under Model A tend to adhere to close monitoring practices, Models B and C typical involve

looser monitoring and/or fewer requirements. As for the informal engagement in Model D, this hardly ever involves systematic monitoring and follow-up on cases.

4 Common Challenges in Referral Systems

While donors, governments in countries of origin, lead reintegration service providers, and referral partners all advocate for enhancing the local embeddedness of reintegration programmes, many challenges remain that can hinder referral systems' ability to deliver on this goal and pave the way towards sustainable reintegration. Difficulties can range from limited awareness among reintegration assistance providers and returnees about the available referral options, to capacity constraints among referral partners, to gaps in ownership, responsibility, and accountability over referral operations.

A. *Limited awareness of the full range of referral options*

In most countries of origin, several entities operate their own reintegration programmes, each involving contracts with different donors and destination countries. These reintegration assistance providers usually develop their own network of referral partners with the expertise to provide certain kinds of services, serve certain populations, or reach certain locations, but they rarely exchange this information with each other. This is mainly the result of the overall limited cooperation between these actors, who sometimes do not have formal communication channels and can compete for funding.²⁷

As a result of having more limited information about potential referral options, reintegration assistance providers may not direct returnees to the support that is best suited to their needs, nor are they able to capitalise on the relationships and capacity-building

efforts of other actors operating in the same context. This carries the risk of doubling up on certain efforts and creating fatigue within referral partners. By comparison, increased awareness of how other reintegration assistance providers operate would help referral partners, who could adopt a standardised approach when engaging with them. Finally, for donors and origin-country governments, better information sharing could help improve oversight and the monitoring of assistance provided by third parties.

A better system for information sharing could entail, for instance, a mapping of all entities active in supporting returnees' reintegration in a particular country and potential linkages to development programmes, as well as the eligibility criteria, timeline for referrals, funding agreements, and other operational considerations for each referral partner (e.g., geographical scope).²⁸ This mapping could then be regularly updated by the government, the lead reintegration service providers operating in the country, and the referral partners themselves.²⁹ Where possible, involving the central and local governments in the mapping exercise would enhance their sense of ownership over reintegration activities.³⁰ However, the role these authorities play should depend on the social and political context in each country, especially when returnees have certain vulnerabilities (e.g., victims of sexual and gender-based violence) or belong to a minority group and, as a result, are at risk of being discriminated against. In these environments, CSOs or international actors may be better positioned to take the lead in the mapping exercise.

The mapping should ultimately feed into an information-sharing mechanism for returnees and a coordination body for reintegration service providers, so that they can all proactively navigate the referral process and set clear expectations for the types of support available. For returnees, such information could be made available immediately after arrival, later in the reintegration process, or be available via

a magazine or online. For example, in Armenia, the One Window information centre at the airport in the capital city of Yerevan provides information about all the reintegration services available to returning migrants in one central place.³¹ In Guinea, IOM holds information sessions for new returnees once or twice a month, which involve representatives of partner organisations and previous beneficiaries who share relevant information.³² Finally, in Serbia, the GIZ's Programme on Migration for Development publishes a catalogue of available support services twice a year, which is available through a mobile phone app or as a physical catalogue.³³ All of these initiatives aim to consolidate information on the various types of support available to returnees and keep it regularly updated.

B. Referral partners' limited capacity and resources

Working with a variety of local partners via referrals has the clear advantage of being able to draw on their skills, presence on the ground in different localities, and ability to offer continuity of services, which is especially important when assisting vulnerable migrants. Yet, the impact referrals have on returnee reintegration outcomes depends on these partners' capacity and resources, as well as their ability to dedicate these assets to work with returnees. In their absence, referring returnees to such an organisation rather than providing direct assistance risks delaying support or offering services of sub-standard quality that do not live up to the expectations of returnees or the lead reintegration service providers.

A major capacity constraint in many contexts is the skills and knowledge of the broader partnership network to which returnees are referred (those that are not formally responsible for implementing the reintegration programme).³⁴ While these partners may have a geographical presence in a region where returnees settle, expertise in providing a particular type of service, and relationships of trust with local

communities, they may have little or no awareness of and training on the specific challenges returnees face, and they may not consider them a priority service population.³⁵ This is a concern when working with CSOs that cater to a wide variety of beneficiaries, development projects that do not specifically target returnees, as well as government actors for whom returnee reintegration is not a core part of their mission.³⁶ For example, a CSO delivering assistance to victims of sexual and gender-based violence may not be equipped to respond to the trauma experienced by female returnees who have been the victims of trafficking or targeted during their migration journey.

Where these services are unable or providers are unaware of how to cater to the needs of returnees, this may derive from a lack of resources in a context of competing priorities and different vulnerable groups in need of assistance. In addition, government services and development programmes sometimes rely on a universal operating logic, which means they do not adapt their services and processes to different populations, including returnees.³⁷ Yet, without such tailored support, there is a risk that returnees may not take up these services or their access may be severely delayed. For example, in Georgia and Serbia, a recurrent challenge for returnees (or children of returnees) who have lived abroad for most of their lives is limited proficiency in the local language. This can constitute a serious hurdle when it comes to attempting to access services and social protections, including when applying for public support programmes or registering with schools or training courses.³⁸

In turn, referral partners that have the knowledge and experience to deliver services suited to returnees' reintegration needs may still lack the resources to do so.³⁹ This challenge is more pronounced when no funding is involved in the referrals (Models C and D in Figure 2), as it means returnees referred by a lead reintegration service provider are added to that organisation's existing caseload but its level of

resources remains the same. This can lead to bottlenecks and hinder the partner's ability to deliver the services required, even in the case of government actors. The Armenian government-led reintegration programme, for instance, operates referrals to publicly funded hospitals and primary health care centres. Although the referral system is well-established on paper, in practice it often faces challenges linked to the Armenian health service's capacity to manage its regular caseload, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.⁴⁰

As a key stakeholder in referral mechanisms, CSOs have regularly reported difficulties accessing international partnerships and funding that are linked to their own institutional capacity. Indeed, a certain amount of institutional knowledge is necessary for local partners to engage with donor countries, from an awareness of their policy priorities to the ability to effectively formulate how the organisation's work aligns with them and develop proposals that meet international standards. This was stressed in an interview with a representative of the Centre for Youths Integrated Development in Nigeria, who noted that the organisation has aimed to strengthen the network of local CSOs involved in reintegration but that donor interests do not (yet) extend to strengthening the overall civil-society environment. To date, their efforts to secure funding with which they would provide training to Nigerian CSOs on reintegration topics have been unsuccessful.⁴¹

Finally, operational hurdles can hinder effective referrals, especially when trying to link up reintegration and development programmes. Even in countries where reintegration stakeholders have a good overview of the development landscape, previous efforts to refer returnees to development initiatives have frequently been thwarted by a mismatch of eligibility criteria, locations, and timelines.⁴² In Guinea, for instance, IOM, the Belgian development agency Enabel, and the UN Development

Programme (UNDP) attempted to work together to refer returnees to ongoing livelihood initiatives. Yet, the partnership faced many operational challenges, from selection criteria that not all returnees could meet to difficulties related to the need to travel to the project location, which ultimately resulted in the absence of referrals and high dropout rates.⁴³ This and similar experiences in other countries point to a need to improve coordination between these two streams of programming, beginning in the inception phase, so that referrals to development projects are more straightforward.⁴⁴

C. Gaps in ownership and responsibility

Referrals entail a shift of responsibility, completely or partially, from the lead reintegration assistance provider to a partner. That move should come in three steps: (1) reaching an understanding on what services the partner needs to deliver and the responsibilities of the different parties involved; (2) creating processes to accomplish these aims, such as for sharing information about returnees between organisations; and (3) following up to verify that referrals are meeting the expectations and needs of returnees. Formal agreements such as contractual arrangements, MoUs, and standard operating procedures can be used to regulate the responsibilities of each party.⁴⁵ In addition, assigning a dedicated point person for returnees in each partner organisation in a referral network can help ensure that returnees are taken care of and receive the agreed-upon level of support.⁴⁶

Yet in practice, not all reintegration programmes have formalised referral systems with these features. Many operate informally (Model D in Figure 2), and the lead reintegration service provider refers returnees to partners based on its staff members' networks. While strong personal relationships are often the starting point for setting up referral mechanisms

and allow the parties to quickly react to emerging needs,⁴⁷ this informality also leads to gaps in ownership and responsibility.

In contrast, when referrals are organised around MoUs and standard operating procedures, they can create a shared understanding between the lead reintegration service provider and its partners, make collaboration more consistent, and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of referrals. Greater levels of formality also increase the chances that service quality and data protection standards are adhered to. In recent years, IOM has supported local efforts to develop such formal systems. As part of the EU-IOM Joint Initiative in Ghana, for instance, IOM assisted the government in drafting standard operating procedures and delivered a training to all government and nongovernmental partners on how to use these tools.⁴⁸

Greater levels of formality also increase the chances that service quality and data protection standards are adhered to.

Still, formal agreements can be difficult to reach and maintain, especially for smaller CSOs, and they often need to be tested and refined. In Brazil, for example, IOM prefers to send simple letters of intent to smaller CSO partners in their broader network, as they have found them to facilitate understanding and partnership while not overwhelming the CSOs with the formality of standard international contracts.⁴⁹ In Georgia, meanwhile, demand for referrals in the health sector is high among returnees, but there are no partnerships between IOM Georgia and clinics outside of the capital; this is due partly to the fact that agreements would be drafted in English, which could pose challenges for smaller clinics.⁵⁰ In some cases where formal agreements are reached, these may not be comprehensive enough. For instance,

IOM found that in Guinea there had not been a clear delineation of the roles IOM, Enabel, and UNDP would play in a referral system, and as a result, some returnees who were referred to the development organisations but could not participate in their programmes due to an eligibility mismatch had not received follow-up support.⁵¹ An agreement covering this scenario could have filled the gap and made clear which organisation was responsible for assisting these returnees.

D. Limitations in accountability mechanisms

The shift of responsibility initiated through referrals raises questions about how to report on the outcomes of reintegration assistance after a referral, specifically on the quality and relevance of the services provided by the partner(s). Donors, lead reintegration assistance providers, referral partners, and other stakeholders (e.g., national governments) often lack clarity as to who should take ownership over reintegration outcomes, but also who should set up accountability mechanisms and conduct oversight of referrals.

A first factor that hinders more systematic assessment is that lead reintegration assistance providers generally do not have benchmarks as to what constitutes a good network of referral partners, how many partners they need, and what the scope of the partners' services should be. Most also do not make a clear distinction between referrals to national or local authorities and partnerships with nongovernmental actors. In the former case, referrals are necessary because only public authorities can provide certain services, such as issuing identification documents. As to support provided by other actors, their relevance largely depends on the capacity and local embeddedness of the lead reintegration assistance provider and the extent to which outsourcing services to partners is more effective and efficient (and for whom). This distinction is important because

it should inform how reintegration programmes think about appropriate funding allocation and capacity-building efforts to improve the quality of referral mechanisms, and ultimately reintegration support (e.g., work towards clarifying governance questions among migration actors at the government level, provide funding to CSOs to deliver services to returnees).

A second challenge is that few reintegration service providers and their partners regularly assess how referral processes take place. Here, relevant questions include: whether the referral is necessary and/or appropriate with regards to the needs of the returnee, how long it takes, whether it takes place according to the agreed-upon procedure (when one exists), how clearly the parties' respective responsibilities are defined, whether and how information about the services available and processes for accessing them has been shared with the returnee, whether the partners have data-sharing agreements, and how such agreements are enforced.⁵²

Few reintegration service providers and their partners regularly assess how referral processes take place.

In turn, lead reintegration service providers often do not systematically follow up with returnees they refer to another organisation, which means they rarely document the results of previous referrals. While efforts to step up accountability mechanisms are gaining a foothold among European reintegration programmes,⁵³ there is a persistent lack of clarity (and agreement) among donors, lead reintegration service providers, and their partners as to the extent to which a reintegration programme should be held accountable for how individuals fare after being referred to a third-party organisation.⁵⁴ There is a need

to define these boundaries, both temporally (over what time period should outcomes be documented) and when partnerships are involved (which party is responsible for documenting which outcomes). This is particularly difficult in the case of referrals that do not involve a formal agreement or funding, given that the referral partners have no incentives and no additional resources to document their activities and track their results.

Even when referrals are formalised and involve funding, the agreements at the heart of these mechanisms do not necessarily factor in a specific budget for data collection and analysis. As a result, only a few studies have conducted dedicated evaluations of referrals and produced interesting results, including on the satisfaction of returnees with reintegration support they received via referrals and on potential mismatches between the support they desired and what they were offered.⁵⁵ Such reports represent a valuable starting point in assessment efforts, but they are rather preliminary in both geographical and thematic scope.

A leading factor behind this low level of M&E to date is that, across the board, lead reintegration service providers and their partners have limited capacity to collect data and systematically follow-up with returnees after they receive support. As a result, comparable, high-quality data on the impact of referrals on reintegration are rarely available.⁵⁶ Whether and how data collection occurs often depends on whether the necessary capacity already exists within the partner organisation. For instance, the CSOs that GIZ partners with and funds in Serbia conduct M&E to varying degrees, ranging from years-long follow-up and evaluation studies to more limited monitoring by organisations with capacity constraints.⁵⁷

BOX 1**Challenges Associated with Data Collection, Sharing, and Analysis**

Data sharing between the lead reintegration service provider and its partners is particularly important to facilitate referrals and to make sure all stakeholders are held accountable for their work through follow-ups and comparative analysis of returnee outcomes. Improving data sharing can be challenging, however, because EU actors need to comply with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) by ensuring that personal data are protected, but many referral systems are informal and/or have a weak framework for data sharing. The local partners to whom returnees are referred also often lack the technical skills and resources to manage databases that are GDPR compliant. Moving towards better data collection and sharing would therefore require large-scale capacity-building efforts to provide all partners with the necessary equipment and skills—an investment that could come at the expense of other pressingly needed supports for returnees.

Still, there have been some concrete efforts in recent years to step up the monitoring of referral systems within reintegration programmes. For instance, the IOM's Migrant Assistance Portal (IMAP) works as a complement to the established Migration Management Operational System Application (MIMOSA) to support migrant case management. IMAP aims to coordinate inward and outward referrals and ensures that data protection rules are adhered to, both on the procedural side (defining who can grant access to returnee data) and on the technical side (implementing encryption and multifactor authentication, among other measures).⁵⁸ For such tools to be effective, they require significant investments in terms of due diligence, engagements with partners, capacity-building, and maintenance.⁵⁹ But even if those mechanisms are limited in their use to specific programmes, countries, or referral partners,⁶⁰ they constitute a promising first step towards gathering better monitoring data and enhancing learning across all stakeholders.

As monitoring efforts pick up steam and data-sharing issues are addressed, it will be important to ensure that M&E systems adequately capture key information about referrals. A good M&E system should start by assessing the tree of referral options available and distinguishing between referrals that are essential for the returnee to reconnect with pub-

lic services (e.g., registration with the national social protection scheme) and those that provide a specific or additional service (e.g., job placement to follow a certain career path). Second, the monitoring system should review the extent to which the needs of returnees were adequately identified and matched with referral partners, and what the referral process looked like (e.g., whether delays happened, if data protections were in place and followed, how information sharing occurred). Finally, the M&E system should seek to capture the outcomes of the referral, while also recording the funding mechanism at play (e.g., did the referral partner receive funding to deliver this service, was the service provided as part of a broader support grant).

Such monitoring is crucial to crack open that black box that often surrounds referral mechanisms, but the introduction of M&E processes needs to come with adequate resources and capacity-building support for the entities in charge of data collection and analysis, from lead reintegration service providers to their referral partners, donors, and government partners. Finally, monitoring reports and recommendations should be shared with all relevant actors, in a format appropriate to each target audience, and feed into real-time learning that improves reintegration programmes.

5 Conclusion

The objectives of European reintegration programmes have expanded in recent years, a shift clearly reflected in the EU Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration that was released in 2021. As a result, reintegration assistance has gone from being merely incidental support to programming that increasingly seeks to take into account the multiple dimensions of returnees' reintegration in their countries of origin—economic, social, and psychosocial.⁶¹ Given the increasing complexity of these programmes, it is clear that no one service provider can offer all of the many services that are needed to meet returnees' diverse needs and profiles and to deliver sustainable reintegration outcomes.

Embedding reintegration support within the context of the communities in which returnees settle by partnering with local actors and initiatives can help expand the variety of support measures available to returnees, connect them to trusted partners, and strengthen origin-country governments' sense of ownership over reintegration efforts. The referral systems that facilitate these connections, particularly when combined with capacity-building assistance, also present an opportunity to build better linkages between migration and development programmes and ensure their goals are complementary.⁶²

Making good on the promise of referrals in reintegration programmes will require building up the evidence base for referral systems, which is still very weak and mostly consists of anecdotal evidence and a few more rigorous empirical studies.⁶³ The current restructuring of European return governance—in particular, efforts by European policymakers to standardise the return and reintegration process—presents an opportunity to shine a light on local partner-

ship networks and start using and evaluating them more systematically. Recommendations for future work include:

- ▶ **Gain a more systematic understanding of referral systems, and use this knowledge to improve them.** Currently, understanding of how referral systems are organised and operate is limited, for returnees, governments in countries of origin, and donors alike. This complicates the oversight process and can invite inefficiencies. As is already done in certain contexts, lead reintegration service providers should work to map their local network of partners and other relevant actors and programmes. This exercise can form the basis for a directory of partnerships that is regularly updated with information on existing contracts, payments, number of referrals, eligibility criteria for a partner's services, and potential capacity constraints. Information on programme eligibility and partner capacity are especially important to make sure the services delivered to returnees by referral partners match their needs. Governments in countries of origin could take ownership over these mapping projects and be responsible for regularly updating them based on information provided by donors, lead reintegration service providers, and other partners (e.g., NGOs, CSOs, and municipalities).
- ▶ **Design and implement formal partnerships with country-of-origin governments and other referral partners.** Relying on informal referrals is a good starting point to broaden the scope of services available to returnees. However, these systems ultimately miss out on certain quality standards that come with

a more formalised partnership, and they raise questions in terms of responsibility and accountability. For these reasons, it is critical that governments in countries of origin, donors, and lead reintegration service providers develop guidelines to standardise referral mechanisms to public services and other local partners. This process should involve drafting MoUs and standard operating procedures, and training all relevant stakeholders on how to use and abide by these agreements.

- ▶ **Provide funding or capacity-building training to referral partners.** Referrals can have a variety of benefits for reintegration programmes, but they often need to be more proactively managed and adequately funded to meet their potential.⁶⁴ This includes assessing whether and how reintegration programmes can better support the partner organisations to which they refer returnees. This support may take the form of either financial or capacity-building assistance, and it can help to ensure referral partners can provide relevant, high-quality services to meet the specific needs of returnees.
- ▶ **Monitor the outcomes of services offered by referral partners and make sure the lead reintegration service provider, referral partners, returnees, and other stakeholders have a clear,**

shared understanding of each party's responsibilities. Even when referrals are not made based on a formal agreement that includes funding, a level of accountability is needed to ensure that the lead reintegration service provider is making referrals and gauge how the referrals are taking place, and to ensure the local partners are delivering the needed services. However, such monitoring requires dedicated resources and technical assistance for all of the stakeholders involved. In turn, the outcomes of the monitoring should be systematically disseminated among key stakeholders to improve programming.

Moving forward, referral mechanisms should be seen as an integral part of returnee reintegration and broader development strategies. Building relationships with local partners and setting up well-functioning referral systems—ones with a clear definition of responsibilities, agreement on data protection measures, and monitoring systems—will take both time and resources. Funding the lead reintegration service provider to operate and manage referrals as well as building and maintaining the capacity of partners in origin countries constitute long-term investments. But only with this continued support will reintegration programmes be able to move towards a system in which the lead reintegration service provider is an entry point to a more robust range of local services and supports for returning migrants.

Referral mechanisms should be seen as an integral part of returnee reintegration and broader development strategies.

Endnotes

- 1 International Organization for Migration (IOM), 'IOM's Policy on the Full Spectrum of Return, Readmission and Reintegration' (policy document, IOM, Geneva, 2021); Samuel Hall, 'Proposed Operational Framework for Reintegration and Development' (internal document, updated version from 6 May 2022).
- 2 Jorrit Kamminga and Akram Zaki, *Returning to Fragility: Exploring the Link between Conflict and Returnees in Afghanistan* (Oxford: Oxfam, 2018); Richard Black and Saskia Gent, 'Sustainable Return in Post-Conflict Contexts', *International Migration* 44, no. 3 (2006): 15–38.
- 3 European Commission, 'Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: The EU Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration' (COM [2021] 120 final, 27 April 2021).
- 4 Author interview with a representative of IOM Albania, 17 February 2022.
- 5 Author interview with a representative of House of Hope, 7 February 2022; author interview with a representative of the French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII) Senegal, 22 February 2022.
- 6 IOM, 'Invitation | 24-25 May | Lessons Learned from the EU-IOM Actions: Building Partnerships and Strengthening Systems for Sustainable Reintegration', accessed 7 June 2022.
- 7 World Bank, *Supporting the Effective Reintegration of Roma Returnees in the Western Balkans* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2019), 26; Olga Evans, *The Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme (VARRP) 2006: A Process and Impact Assessment* (London: UK Home Office, Research, Development, and Statistics Directorate, 2010); Eleni Diker et al., *Comparative Reintegration Outcomes between Forced and Voluntary Returns through a Gender Perspective* (Geneva: IOM, 2019), 50; International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), *Study on Return, Readmission and Reintegration Programmes in Africa* (Vienna: ICMPD, 2021), 17.
- 8 World Bank, *Supporting the Effective Reintegration of Roma Returnees*, 26; Slobodan Cvejić, *Socio-Economic Position and Reintegration of Returnees under the Readmission Agreement in Serbia in 2021: Report on Research on Returnees and Service Providers at the Local Level* (Belgrade: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit [GIZ] Serbia, 2022).
- 9 Author interview with a representative of GIZ Serbia, 22 February 2022; author interview with a representative of HELP Serbia, 11 March 2022; author interview with a representative of the International Aid Network (IAN) Serbia, 15 March 2022; author interview with a representative of the Center for Youth Integration Serbia, 11 March 2022.
- 10 ICMPD, *Study on Return, Readmission and Reintegration Programmes in Africa*.
- 11 IOM, 'Fostering and Strengthening Interlinkages between Sustainable Development and Reintegration Programmes' (Sustainable Reintegration Knowledge Papers Series, Knowledge Paper #2, IOM, Geneva, 2021); IOM, 'Invitation | 24-25 May | Lessons Learned from the EU-IOM Actions'.
- 12 The Knowledge Hub at IOM has noted, for instance, that IOM offices in Cameroon, Guinea, Senegal, and The Gambia had different understandings of what constituted a referral. See IOM, 'Qualitative Study on Outward Referrals' (Sustainable Reintegration Knowledge Bites Series, Knowledge Bite #4, IOM, Geneva, December 2021).
- 13 As such, the Knowledge Hub at IOM distinguishes between returnees who received assistance from IOM (the lead reintegration service provider) and a referral partner and those who only received reintegration support from a referral partner. See IOM, 'Fostering and Strengthening Interlinkages'.
- 14 Author interview with a representative of the Migration Service of Armenia, 23 February 2022; author interview with a representative of IOM Iraq, 7 February 2022.
- 15 This is the case, for instance, with Caritas international, the Danish Refugee Council, the European Technology and Training Centre, and the Women Empowerment Literacy and Development Organization (WELDO).
- 16 IOM, 'Qualitative Study on Outward Referrals'. See also Samuel Hall, 'Proposed Operational Framework for Reintegration and Development'.
- 17 Author interview with a representative of WELDO, 9 February 2022.
- 18 One example of this is the mentorship offered under the IOM-UK Department for International Development (DfID) project Operationalizing an Integrated Approach to Reintegration. See IOM, 'An Integrated Approach to Reintegration: A Focus on the Mentoring Approach' (webinar recording, IOM Return and Reintegration Platform, 31 May 2021). In Guinea and Nigeria, the government and IOM have also tried to set up a range of public-private partnerships with companies to offer apprenticeships and job placements to returnees. Author interview with a representative of IOM Guinea, 24 May 2022; IOM, 'Invitation | 24-25 May | Lessons Learned from the EU-IOM Actions'.
- 19 Author interview with a representative of Caritas Ethiopia, 25 February 2022. During a virtual workshop that the Migration Policy Institute Europe (MPI Europe) and the European Return and Reintegration Network (ERRIN) convened on 2 May 2022, entitled 'Enhancing Local Embeddedness of Reintegration Assistance through Referral Mechanisms', a participant from GIZ Serbia said that the German Information Centre on Migration, Training, and Employment (DIMAK) frequently refers returnees to other GIZ projects in Serbia.
- 20 GIZ Serbia, 'Standard Operating Procedures for the Work of Advisors at the German Information Centre on Migration, Training, and Employment (DIMAK) Serbia' (internal document, GIZ Serbia, Belgrade, 2021).
- 21 This programme is run under the Cameroonian Ministry of Youth and Civic Education. Among other things, it provides reintegration services within OFII-ERRIN's pilot action framework.

- 22 Having IOM directly cover the medical costs can be a major advantage since the fee is frequently too high for returnees to cover, even if they were to later be reimbursed. Author interview with a representative of IOM Georgia, 21 February 2022. Similarly, the EU-IOM Joint Initiative in Sudan entered an agreement with the national insurance system to cover participating families' annual premiums, in order to secure the returnees' access to primary health care. See IOM, 'Sudanese Migrant Returnees to Access Health Insurance' (news release, 26 July 2019); IOM, 'Medical Coverage Provides a Lifeline for Returning Migrants in the Time of Covid-19' (news release, 2 September 2020).
- 23 Author interview with a representative of HELP Serbia, 11 March 2022.
- 24 Author interview with a representative of IOM Iraq, 7 February 2022. IOM Iraq also reported in June 2022 that they are collecting lessons learnt from the National Referral Mechanism implemented in the regions of Ninewa and Anbar and noted that they needed to build stronger connections to government services for returnees.
- 25 IOM, 'Invitation | 24-25 May | Lessons Learned from the EU-IOM Actions'.
- 26 Author interview with a representative of IOM Iraq, 7 February 2022.
- 27 This limitation was also noted in a study conducted by the African Union, ICMPD, and Samuel Hall, which refers to the difficulties of encouraging data sharing between stakeholders. See ICMPD, *Study on Return, Readmission and Reintegration Programmes in Africa*, 45.
- 28 In its previous research, IOM noted that it was particularly important to train staff of lead reintegration service providers so that they understand and make referrals that align with referral partners' eligibility criteria. See IOM, 'Qualitative Study on Outward Referrals', 19.
- 29 For example, mapping exercises have been carried out by OFII and ERRIN, see Awa Ly and Marion Grégoire, *Mapping System of Stakeholders and Reintegration Assistance: Cameroon-Mali-Morocco-Senegal* (N.p.: OFII and ERRIN, 2020), and by ERRIN in Bangladesh, see ERRIN, *An Operational Coordination Mechanism for ERRIN Returnees in Bangladesh* (N.p.: ERRIN, 2022). See also IOM, 'Qualitative Study on Outward Referrals'. In addition, the mapping can serve as a basis to create a community of practitioners that can be consulted in national policy processes or invited to engage in national fora on return and reintegration policies, as is done at the annual Return and Reintegration Forum organised by the Migration Service of Armenia. See Migration Service of Armenia, 'Return and Reintegration Forum 10th Meeting Took Place' (news release, 14 July 2021); Samuel Hall, 'Proposed Operational Framework for Reintegration and Development'.
- 30 A report by the African Union, ICMPD, and Samuel Hall on return, readmission, and reintegration in Africa also argues for a centralised referral mechanism, so as to encourage cooperation between institutions and ultimately achieve better reintegration outcomes. See ICMPD, *Study on Return, Readmission and Reintegration Programmes in Africa*.
- 31 Author interview with a representative of the Migration Service of Armenia, 23 February 2022. Similarly, IOM Cameroon provides information to returnees upon arrival with its government partners. See IOM, 'Sustainable Reintegration Outcomes: Following Referrals for Reintegration Support' (Sustainable Reintegration Knowledge Bites Series, Knowledge Bite #2, IOM, Geneva, March 2021).
- 32 IOM, 'Sustainable Reintegration Outcomes'.
- 33 GIZ, 'Standard Operating Procedures for the Work of Advisors at DIMAK Serbia'.
- 34 For instance, this capacity limitation on the part of origin-country institutions was noted in Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Sustainable Reintegration of Returning Migrants: A Better Homecoming* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2020).
- 35 Author interview with a representative of IOM Brazil and IOM Portugal, 29 April 2022; IOM, 'Qualitative Study on Outward Referrals', 10.
- 36 ICMPD, *Study on Return, Readmission and Reintegration Programmes in Africa*, 25; Samuel Hall, 'Proposed Operational Framework for Reintegration and Development'; IOM, 'Fostering and Strengthening Interlinkages'.
- 37 Author interview with a representative of IOM Albania, 17 February 2022.
- 38 Author interview with a representative of IOM Georgia, 21 February 2022; author interview with a representative of the Centre for Youth Integration (CYI) Serbia, 11 March 2022.
- 39 IOM, 'Qualitative Study on Outward Referrals'.
- 40 Similar challenges were reported in Cameroon. See IOM, 'Qualitative Study on Outward Referrals', 10.
- 41 Author interview with a representative of the Centre for Youths Integrated Development (CYID) Nigeria, 8 March 2022.
- 42 Several interviewees from referral partner organisations described the difficulties of trying to include returnees in development projects, given the number and timeline of returns was unpredictable. They noted that even when partners managed to match returnees with a development project, the reintegration actor may still need to cover transportation and daily expenses to ensure that the returnees remain involved. Author interview with a representative of IOM The Gambia and IOM Regional Office in Dakar, 5 May 2022. See also IOM, 'Qualitative Study on Outward Referrals', 10.
- 43 Author interview with a representative of IOM Guinea, 24 May 2022; IOM, 'Qualitative Study on Outward Referrals', 11–12.
- 44 Author interview with a representative of OFII Paris, 11 May 2022; author interview with a representative of IOM The Gambia and IOM Regional Office in Dakar, 5 May 2022; author interview with a representative of IOM Guinea, 24 May 2022. As part of the ERRIN project, Samuel Hall developed an operational framework for reintegration and development that outlines key steps towards setting up such referral mechanisms. Samuel Hall, 'Proposed Operational Framework for Reintegration and Development'.
- 45 Samuel Hall, 'Proposed Operational Framework for Reintegration and Development'.
- 46 Author interview with a representative of OFII Paris, 11 May 2022.

- 47 Author interview with a representative of CYID Nigeria, 8 March 2022.
- 48 IOM, 'Training Workshop on Standard Operating Procedures for Reintegration of Returnees in Ghana to Make Multifaceted Assistance Sustainable' (news release, 20 April 2021).
- 49 Author interview with a representative of IOM Brazil and IOM Portugal, 29 April 2022.
- 50 Author interview with a representative of IOM Georgia, 21 February 2022. As a result, this increases the pressure on clinics in Tbilisi and leads to a gap in health services available in more rural regions. It should be noted, however, that cooperation with these clinics is still relatively recent and so IOM Georgia is still building its relationship with these partners.
- 51 IOM, 'Qualitative Study on Outward Referrals', 13.
- 52 A rare example is a study produced by the IOM Knowledge Hub; see IOM, 'Qualitative Study on Outward Referrals'.
- 53 ICMPD, *Study on Return, Readmission and Reintegration Programmes in Africa*, 115; Lucía Salgado, Radu-Mihai Triculescu, Camille Le Coz, and Hanne Beirens, *Putting Migrant Reintegration Programmes to the Test: A Road Map to a Monitoring System* (Brussels: MPI Europe, 2022).
- 54 Participant discussions during a workshop convened by MPI Europe and ERRIN, entitled 'Enhancing Local Embeddedness of Reintegration Assistance through Referral Mechanisms', 2 May 2022.
- 55 See IOM, 'Fostering and Strengthening Interlinkages'; IOM, 'Qualitative Study on Outward Referrals'.
- 56 Author interview with a representative of CEPALIM Spain, 7 April 2022.
- 57 Author interview with a representative of CYI Serbia, 11 March 2022; author interview with a representative of HELP Serbia, 11 March 2022; author interview with a representative of IAN Serbia, 15 March 2022.
- 58 IOM and GIZ, *Migrant Protection and Assistance during Covid-19: Promising Practices* (N.p.: IOM, 2020), 11.
- 59 Author interview with a representative of IOM The Gambia and IOM Regional Office in Dakar, 5 May 2022.
- 60 In The Gambia, the government does not yet rely on IMAP. A representative of IOM noted that investments in IT infrastructure and technical capacity would be needed to expand access to this system in the future. Author interview with a representative of IOM The Gambia and IOM Regional Office in Dakar, 5 May 2022.
- 61 Ruerd Ruben, Marieke van Houte, and Tine Davids, 'What Determines the Embeddedness of Forced Return Migrants? Rethinking the Role of Pre- and Post-Return Assistance', *International Migration Review* 43, no. 4 (2009): 908–937.
- 62 Richard Black, Michael Collyer, and Will Somerville, *Pay-to-Go Schemes and Other Noncoercive Return Programs: Is Scale Possible?* (Washington, DC: MPI, 2011); OECD, *Sustainable Reintegration of Returning Migrants*.
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- 64 On this point, see also Samuel Hall, 'Proposed Operational Framework for Reintegration and Development'.

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