

Reintegration Assistance by country and activity 2002-2007

	Business	Education	Training	Other	TOTAL		Business	Education	Training	Other	TOTAL	
Afghanistan	1,130		4	16	1,150	Lebanon*	15	1		7	23	
Albania	108	6	91	119	324	Liberia	7				7	
Algeria*	28			63	91	Libya*	5			2	7	
Angola	97	9	14	2	122	Lithuania**	1				1	
Armenia	9	2			11	Macedonia	11			2	13	
Azerbaijan	31	4		5	40	Malawi	13		1	3	17	
Bangladesh	30	1		1	32	Mali	1				1	
Belarus	2	3	2	2	9	Mauritius			1	4	5	
Benin*	1				1	Mexico*	1				1	
Bolivia	36		6		42	Moldova	13			5	18	
Bosnia	16		1	4	21	Mongolia	33	2			35	
Botswana	2		3		5	Mozambique	2				2	
Brazil*	5				5	Nepal	16	1			17	
Burkina Faso*	1				1	Nicaragua	10				10	
Burundi*	5			1	6	Nigeria	75	1	2	9	87	
Cameroon	17	2		4	23	Oman*	1				1	
Chad*	1			1	2	Pakistan	376		2	20	398	
Chile	10				10	Palestine*	2		1		3	
China*	185				185	Peru	3			4	7	
Colombia	132	7	14	2	155	Philippines			1		1	
Congo Brazzaville	5		1		6	Poland**	5		10		15	
Croatia	17	7	1	6	31	Romania	2				2	
Cyprus*				5	5	Russia	67	1	11	17	96	
Czech Republic**	6		11		17	Rwanda*	7			3	10	
DRC	67		1	5	73	Senegal	3				3	
Ecuador	106	3	10	5	124	Serbia & Montenegro	10	2		1	13	
Egypt*	6			3	9	Seychelles*	1			3	4	
El Salvador	3				3	Sierra Leone	37	1		5	43	
Eritrea*	1				1	Slovakia**			6		6	
Ethiopia	50	1	6	7	64	Somalia*	32	2		11	45	
Gambia	7				7	South Africa	75	12	40	6	133	
Georgia	68		1	3	72	Sri Lanka	671	2	22	2	697	
Ghana	16	1		4	21	Sudan	61			2	63	
Guatemala	3				3	Swaziland				3	3	
Guinea Bissau	2				2	Syria*	9			1	10	
Guinea Conakry	14				14	Tanzania	2	1	2	5	10	
India	90		5	20	115	Togo*	9		2		11	
Indonesia*	1				1	Trinidad	1				1	
Iran	674	1	19	25	719	Turkey*	37			33	70	
Iraq	1,910	1	17	85	2,013	Uganda	81	1	5	3	90	
Israel*	6	5	7	8	26	Ukraine	34	1	1	10	46	
Ivory Coast	23				23	USA	1				1	
Jamaica	32		2	10	44	Venezuela	4				4	
Jordan	20				20	Vietnam	54		2		56	
Kenya	42	2	1	6	51	Yemen*	3			3	6	
Kosovo	92	2	23	57	174	Zambia	3				3	
Kyrgyzstan	5				5	Zimbabwe	265	1	5	52	323	
Latvia**			8		8							
TOTAL							7,171	86	362	685	8,304	

Key

*Country without IOM mission or where IOM mission unable to assist.
 **Country where IOM could assist before joining the European Union.



IOM International Organization for Migration

Freephone: 0800 783 2332

IOM UK

21 Westminster Palace Gardens • Artillery Row • London • SW1P 1RR

Tel: 020 7233 0001 • Fax: 020 7233 3001 • E-mail: iomuk@iom.int

www.iomlondon.org

Birmingham Office
 eOffice, Ground Floor,
 Norfolk House, Smallbrook
 Queensway, Birmingham, B5 4LJ
Tel: 0121 633 5074

Bristol Office
 Park House Business Centre
 10 Park Street
 Bristol, BS1 5HX
Tel: 0117 907 4777

Glasgow Office
 38 Queen Street
 Glasgow
 G1 3DX
Tel: 0141 548 8116

Leeds Office
 Citibase, Aspect Court,
 47 Park Square East,
 Leeds, LS1 2NL
Tel: 0113 346 6010

Liverpool Office
 5th Floor, Corn Exchange
 Fenwick Street
 Liverpool, L2 7QL
Tel: 0151 225 0142

Manchester Office
 Piccadilly House
 49 Piccadilly
 Manchester, M1 2AP
Tel: 0161 212 1463



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IOM International Organization for Migration

SELF EVALUATION REPORT
 IOM UK-REINTEGRATION ASSISTANCE

2002-2005

Synopsis of Returnees Evaluated

The below provides a snapshot profile and results that were extrapolated from the following evaluation exercise for returnees departed between the years 2002 and 2005 and assisted with reintegration activities.

2,065 returnees were assisted with reintegration during this evaluation period.

27 IOM missions were involved in this evaluation and monitoring exercise.

Out of the **2,065** returnees that were assisted, **1074** were successfully evaluated (52%), **32%** could not be evaluated for reasons such as security, road blocks, and other geographical limitations and **16%** had lost contact with IOM.

Sri Lanka (**36%**), Afghanistan (**19%**), Iran (**18%**), Albania (**12%**) and Kosovo (**9%**) represented the majority of cases evaluated.

81% of those monitored were male and **19%** were female. The average age group was 18-30 years old.

38% of returnees stayed in the UK between one to three years, and 36% between three to five years.

81.2% undertook business activities, **7.5%** job placements, **6.6%** training and **4.2%** educational support.

77% of businesses that had been funded were still operational.

56% of those evaluated were very satisfied with the information provided on the reintegration assistance, compared to **38%** who were satisfied and only **1%** who were unsatisfied.

77% took less than one month to contact the mission upon arrival to discuss their assistance, while for **46%** it took less than one month to obtain their reintegration assistance.

46% found the assistance provided very helpful, compared to **46%** who found it helpful and **2%** who found it unhelpful or very unhelpful.

45% have employed people within their local community to work in their businesses.

56% responded that following the assistance provided they would not re-migrate.

Introduction

The aim of the evaluation is to identify the: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the VARRP (Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme) in the lives of those individuals and families who returned to their home country with reintegration assistance.

This report aims to present the main findings of an in-depth analysis of the situation of returnees whilst also providing an insight into the programme's activities and the assistance provided by the Reintegration Fund.

“The assistance is good and without it I would have never considered returning home.”

Returnee from Colombia.

Contents

Synopsis of Returnees Evaluated	2
Introduction	3
Chapter One: Purpose and Methodology	4
Chapter Two: Findings of the Evaluation	12
Chapter Three: Efficiency and Impact of the Assistance Provided	16
Chapter Four: Recommendations	24
Chapter Five: Conclusion	26
Acknowledgements	26

The outline of this report will focus on the following:

The Evaluation Process: An introduction to the purpose of this evaluation, with a general overview of the Reintegration Fund since its implementation in 2002.

Methodology: This section of the report describes the methodology that was used for the purposes of this self-evaluation exercise.

Results and Statistical Findings: This chapter will provide an insight into the 2,065¹ returnees that were evaluated. There is a statistical overview of such indicators as: a) type of assistance provided, and b) breakdown in terms of countries assisted.

Impact of the Reintegration Assistance: 50 questions were used for each applicant to answer in order to identify the impact of the Reintegration Fund on their resettlement needs post-return. This section reports on what returnees told IOM through the completion of self evaluation questionnaires used throughout the implementation of the programme.

Challenges and Recommendations: The final chapter will draw conclusions from the results of the evaluation exercise and present recommendations for the future.

¹ For the purposes of this evaluation only returnees that returned between the period 2002 and 2005 and assisted with reintegration activities were evaluated. The number of returnees assisted during this period was 2,065. It is important to note that many of those who returned during 2005 were assisted in 2006.

“IOM gave me a start off in a business and I am grateful. IOM is doing a good job.” Returnee from Kenya.

What is Reintegration Assistance?

The Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme (VARRP) aims to facilitate the voluntary, orderly and dignified return of asylum seekers in the UK who decide they wish to return to their country of origin, but do not have the means to do so. Developed in 1999, the Voluntary Assisted Return Programme (VARP) later became known as the Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme (VARRP) when reintegration assistance was introduced in March 2002.

The programme provides help in obtaining travel documentation; a flight ticket home, departure, transit and arrival assistance; and reintegration assistance in countries of return.

The reintegration assistance was introduced to provide financial support in three categories:

Business Set Up	Vocational Training/ Job Placements	Education
<p>With over 80% of returnees choosing this option, business set up offers the possibility of earning an income with relative speed.</p> <p>This is delivered not in cash but most often (85% of cases) in the form of targeted payments on the basis of agreed business plans, for equipment and supplies to establish a small business.</p>	<p>Although not predominantly chosen by returnees, vocational training aims to provide the opportunity for returnees to learn new skills that would enable the returnee to find a job, or provide the opportunity to retrain on already existing skills.</p>	<p>Support with primary, secondary school and university courses is another option available to returnees of all ages.</p>

There have been other types of assistance that have been implemented through the Reintegration Fund, namely assistance with medical care and housing needs. These two types of assistance are provided on a case-by-case basis, and unlike the three types of assistance mentioned above, housing and medical care require the fulfilment of several criteria before such assistance can be considered.

The Reintegration Process

The process of implementing reintegration activities requires not only IOM offices worldwide to assess the profile of the individual, determining what would lead to a successful activity based on local circumstances, but more importantly it requires the returnee to be proactive in determining what he/she would like to do, and undertake substantial research in ensuring that the assistance provided will be successful.

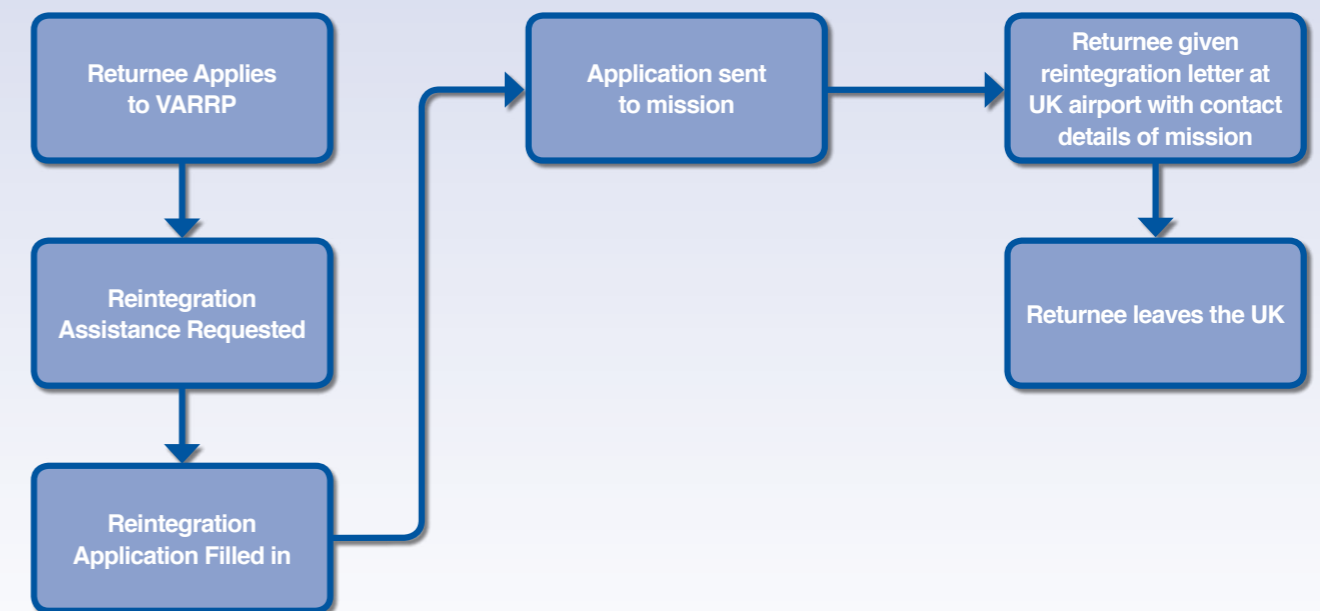
A dialogue between the IOM office and the returnee is paramount in ensuring that all goes according to plan, and very often the whole process of finalizing a reintegration activity can take between 4-6 weeks. It is extremely, if not practically impossible to determine a time frame by which someone can be assisted.

The following chart provides an overview of the reintegration process as it was for applicants who returned during the period 2002-2005.

“I was explained all forms of assistance available and I made the proper choice as a result of this very good co-operation. It has been a very fruitful co-operation and assistance.” Returnee from Albania.

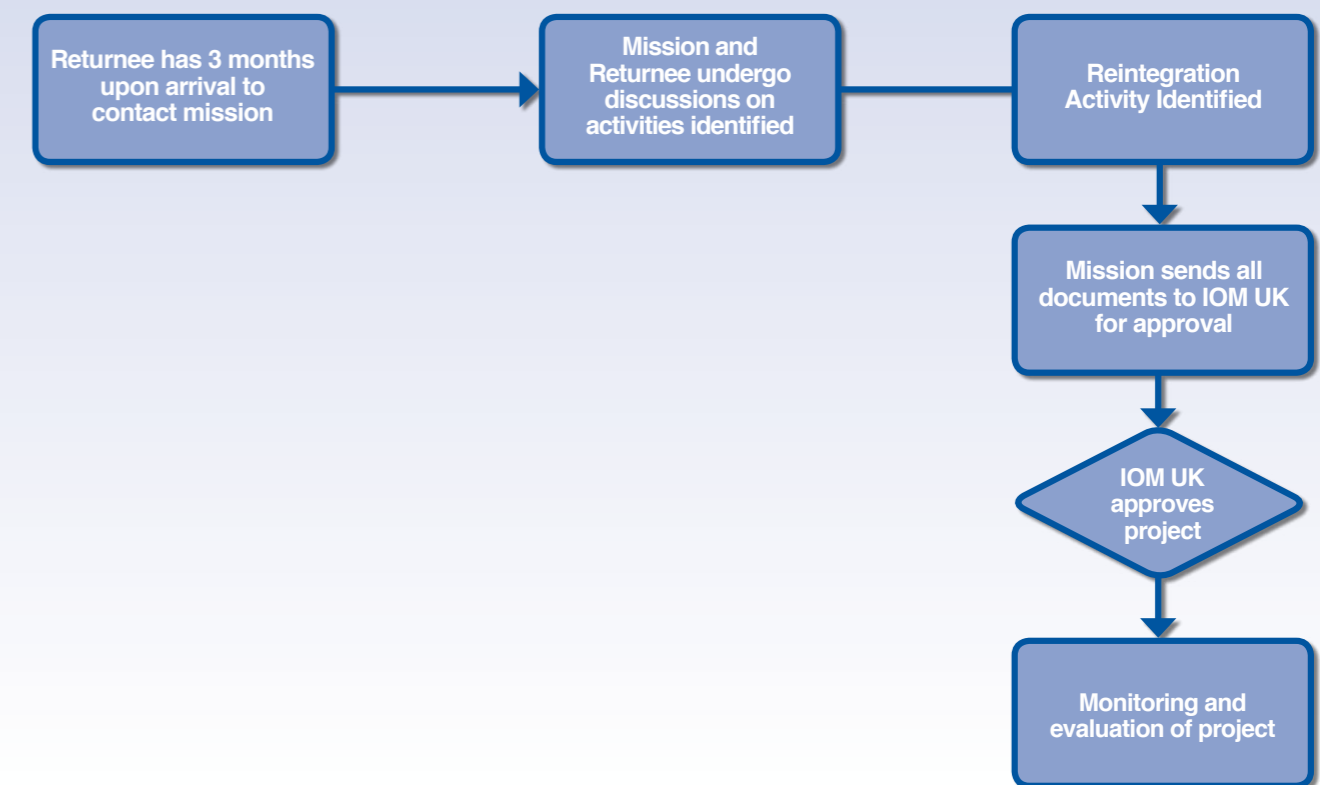
Prior to Departure:

The following flow chart provides an illustration of how the reintegration process takes place prior to departure from the UK.



In country of Return:

This flow chart provides an illustration of the reintegration process in the country of return.



Capacity Building Initiatives

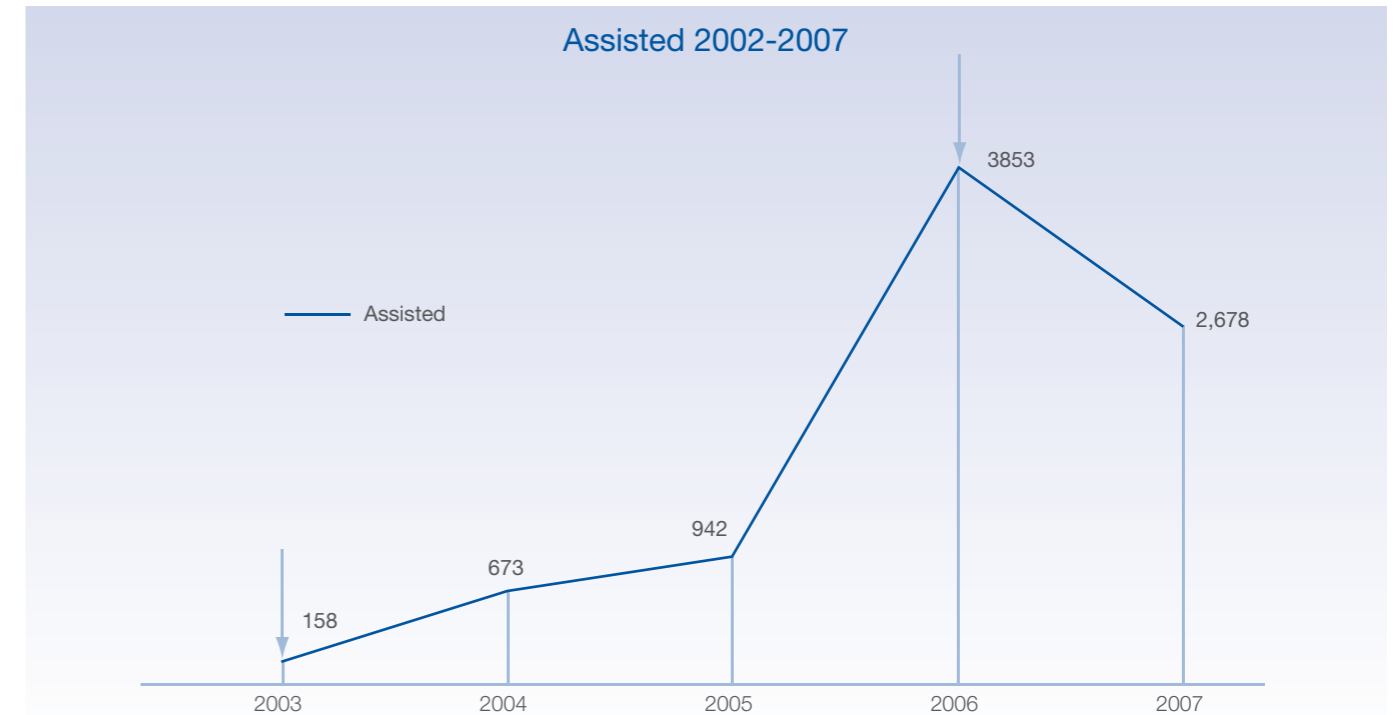
In addition to directly assisting returnees with their reintegration activities, assistance aimed at the local community in which the returnee is settling back is also key in determining the success and impact of the Reintegration Fund.

The table below is an overview of the capacity building initiatives that have been funded over the last few years.

Country	
Sri Lanka	<p>IOM Colombo and CEFE - an NGO based in Sri Lanka – agreed to a programme to increase business training for Sri Lankan returnees. The programme contracts qualified and established training organisations or freelance trainers who possess well developed tools for business development and have a minimum of five years' training experience. The aim of the training is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the entrepreneurial competencies of the returnees; • Make participants aware of their strengths and weaknesses and help them set goals in terms of business skills • Help identify available resources and explore market opportunities.
Zimbabwe/South Africa/Nigeria	<p>IOM UK, through a partnership with Interims for Development (a UK company, specialising in business training) ran several workshops in Zimbabwe, Nigeria and South Africa on <i>Planning and Managing your Business</i>.</p> <p>Returnees are engaged in a broad spectrum of businesses, from welding to hairdressing, from manufacturers of school uniforms to internet cafes and photocopy services.</p>
Angola	<p>IOM Angola and IOM UK, in conjunction with the Ministry of Assistance and Social Reinsertion (MINARS), NGOs (Mulemba) and UTCHA (Technical Unit for Coordination of Humanitarian Activities) provided training for 20 returnees in 2006.</p> <p>The general objective was to contribute to the socio-economic reintegration of Angolan returnees from United Kingdom by improving their skills in management, book-keeping, marketing and an understanding of the micro credit issues.</p>
Albania	<p>Hope for the Future became a partner in 2002 and has proved to be very successful in helping returnees from Albania find job placements and apprenticeships. As a result, IOM has continued to work in close collaboration with Hope for the Future. They have assisted over 80 returnees so far in finding job placements throughout Albania.</p>
Colombia	<p>IOM UK began working with AESCO in 2003. AESCO works in a region of Colombia (Pereira) where there is no IOM office, but to which a high number of people return. AESCO provides assistance by guiding returnees on how to set up businesses.</p>

An increase in assisted reintegration cases

During the period 2002-2007 a total of 8,304 cases have been assisted with reintegration activities. The principles of the reintegration assistance have remained the same but the delivery of assistance has changed throughout the years which explain the steady increase in the number of cases assisted up to the end of 2006.



A number of factors have contributed to the increase in such numbers namely

- IOM missions in countries of return now have reintegration focal points that can assess and deliver reintegration assistance in a timely manner.
- The success stories of returnees that have been assisted through IOM means those returning home are much more proactive in identifying and following up with IOM missions so that they can also benefit from the programme.
- New partnerships with local NGOs ensure that other mechanisms of delivering and identifying assistance are possible where there is no IOM mission.

“IOM fulfilled what they promised. Perhaps IOM could assist with accommodation.”

Returnee from Afghanistan.

Methodology

The following methodology was used for this self-evaluation:

Interviews with returnees: 2,065 returnees assisted from those who returned between 2002 and 2005, served as the targeted group to be evaluated. Returnees were interviewed by the IOM missions in countries of return in person or by phone. Questionnaires completed by returnees in participating countries were then analysed by IOM UK.

In country visits: a number of countries were visited by IOM UK staff during the reporting period of 2002-2005, and the data that was collected throughout these visits have also been used to draw up conclusions regarding this exercise.

In both cases, the field visits consisted of IOM staff visiting the returnees personally in the business premises, training centres or colleges or houses where they were interviewed in depth in order to discuss their return home and the progress of their re-settlement. In cases where visits were not possible, interviews with returnees were conducted by phone with IOM staff in country and returnees.

Participant countries

Only countries with IOM offices took part in the evaluation exercise and in order to address the key elements of the evaluation, 27 IOM missions were requested to undertake an evaluation of all applicants assisted with reintegration activities and who returned to their country of origin between 2002 and 2005.

The IOM missions which undertook this exercise include the following:

Europe	Asia	Africa	Latin America	Middle East
Albania*	Afghanistan*	Angola*	Bolivia	Iran*
Kosovo*	Azerbaijan	DRC	Colombia*	
Russia	Bangladesh	Ethiopia*	Ecuador*	
Serbia and Montenegro	Georgia	Kenya*		
Ukraine	India	Nigeria		
	Pakistan*	South Africa*		
	Sri Lanka*	Sierra Leone		
	Vietnam	Sudan		
		Uganda		
		Zimbabwe*		

* countries visited by IOM UK since 2003

In conjunction with IOM offices in the above countries, the evaluation aimed to answer the following questions:

- What types of reintegration assistance are currently being provided in participating countries?
- Was the assistance provided helpful in generating an income for the individual or family?
- What impact does reintegration assistance have on the beneficiaries, their families and, where applicable, the local communities?
- Were there any general difficulties that could have been recorded?
- What are the factors affecting the impact of reintegration assistance (i.e. timing of delivery, availability of information regarding opportunities in participating countries, conditions of employment, etc)?

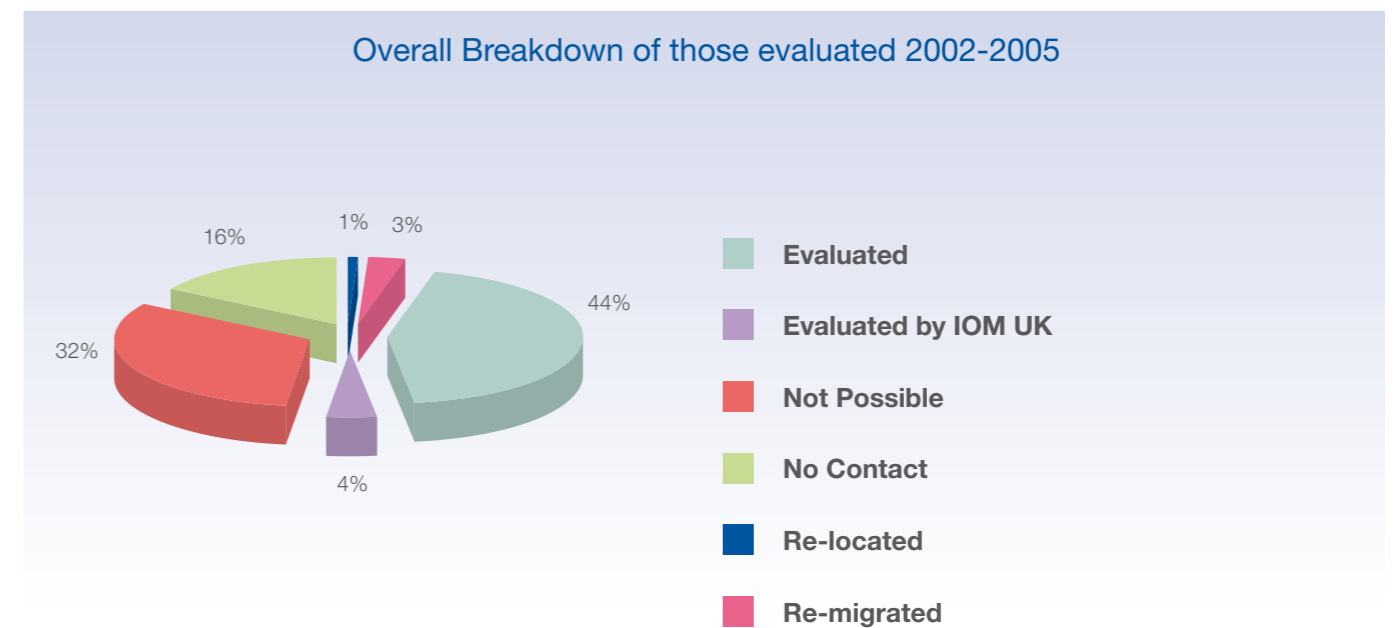
“ IOM supported me to adapt again to my country. I am very happy with the assistance although my business is not generating enough income and I would like more assistance to buy more supplies and go forward. ”

Returnee from Colombia.

General Statistics on the Evaluated Cases

The 27 IOM missions managed to find out the case status of 52% of the 2,065 returnees assisted with reintegration. 48% of applicants could not be evaluated for the following reasons:

- Contact with 32% was not possible due to a number of reasons such as security, road blocks or impossibility of travelling to remote areas.
- In 16% of the cases no contact was possible as returnees had changed their contact details and did not provide their new details to IOM offices in country.



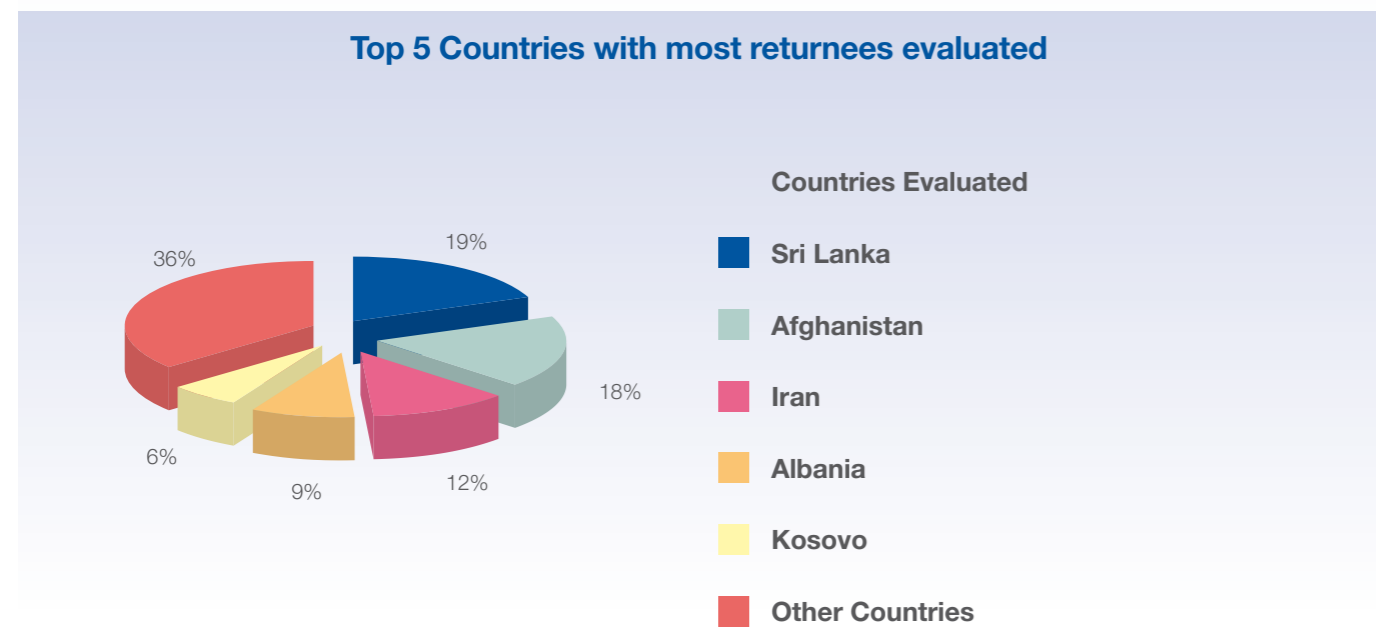
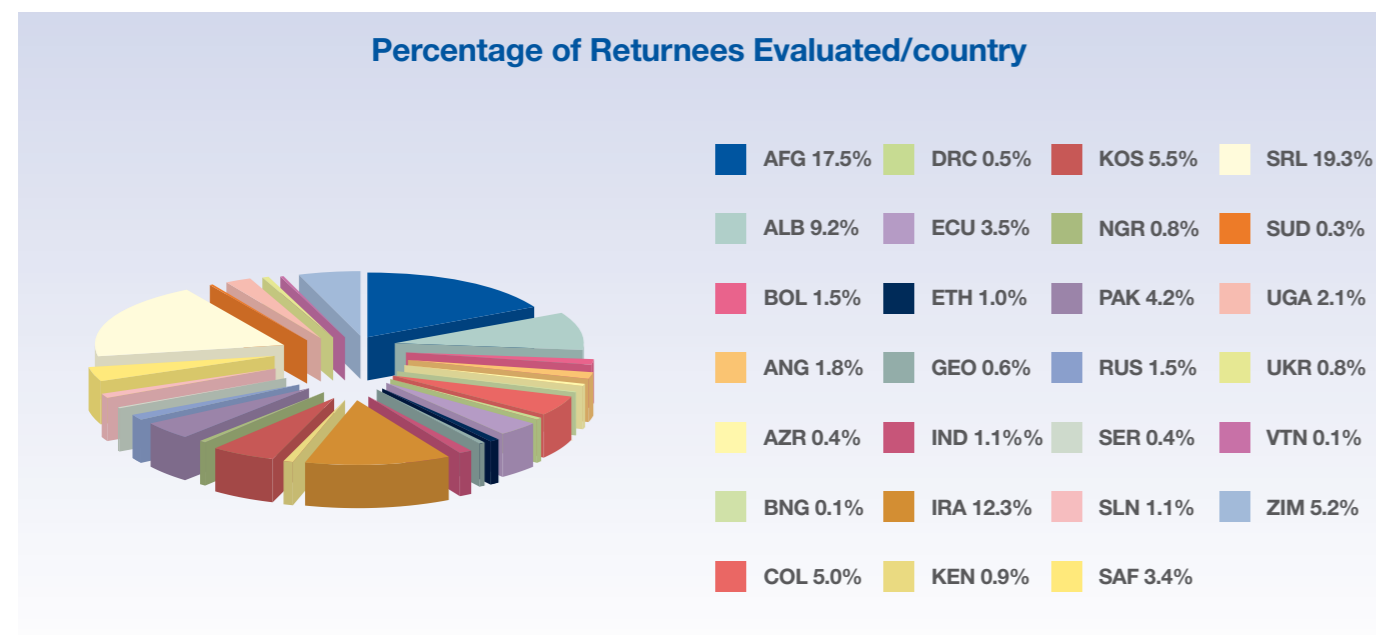
“ Everything happened as IOM said and the assistance was given very quickly. When I returned I was able to support myself with IOM’s money. The assistance was 100% helpful. On arrival the returnee arrives with a lot of dreams and with an idea of the country which does not reflect reality. The returnee should do business administration courses, check the job market and find what is necessary. Only then should the returnees decide the type of business to do. ”

Returnee from Angola.

Countries that Participated in IOM evaluation by percentage

From the 27 countries that undertook the evaluation process, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Iran, Albania and Kosovo represented the top five countries in terms of case load evaluated.

The chart below represents the percentage breakdown of cases evaluated as per the 27 countries evaluated and Chart Two is the percentage represented by Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Iran, Albania and Kosovo, which were the five countries with the largest caseload to be evaluated.



The questionnaire used to conduct this evaluation exercise comprised 50 questions addressing the following issues:

- General Information on the returnee
- Housing
- Details on the reintegration activity that was undertaken
- Sustainability of the assistance
- Information on the current financial situation

To undertake an analysis of the impact of the Reintegration Fund, 15 questions out of the 50 were chosen as a means of extrapolating the data, and the results of these questions are presented in the following chapter.

The 15 chosen questions are shown below:

General Information

- 1.0 How long were you in the UK?
- 2.0 After your return, how satisfied were you with the information and advice you received from IOM?
- 3.0 After your return, how long did it take before you first contacted IOM or before IOM contacted you?

Business Analysis

- 1.0 At what stage is your business?
- 2.0 Do you employ people?
- 3.0 If so, how many?

Education Assistance

- 1.0 Are you currently employed?
- 2.0 Did the skills gained from the training/education help you find a job?
- 3.0 If unemployed, do you expect the skills gained from the training/education to help you find a job?

Job Placement

- 1.0 Did you remain employed in the same company at the end of the placement?
- 2.0 If not, did the experience and skills gained help you secure a job elsewhere?

Financial Situation

- 1.0 Upon returning home, how did you support yourself financially?
- 2.0 Would you consider leaving your home country again?
- 3.0 If so, why?
- 4.0 Has IOM's assistance been helpful to permanent resettlement permanently in your home country?

“The fund helped me a lot because I did not know what to do and it helps me to earn an income and support my family.”

Returnee from Kosovo.

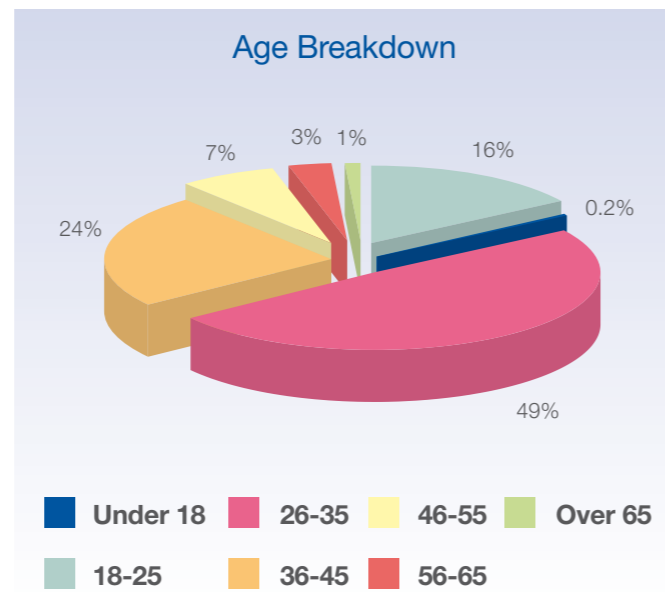
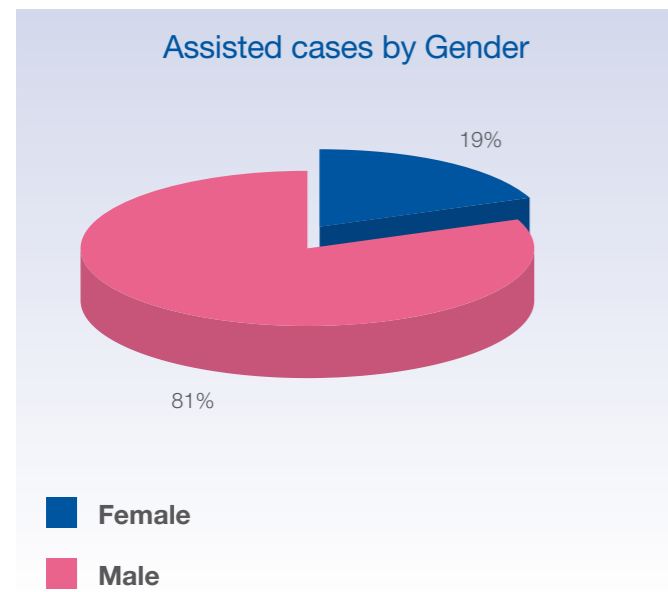
This section presents a general overview of the statistics taken from the interviews conducted by the IOM missions. Findings are related to the following:

- Gender breakdown in terms of assistance provided
- Age breakdown
- Types of activities that have been implemented for those who were surveyed
- Gender versus activity provided
- Overall cases that were evaluated versus those that were not evaluated
- Further analysis of those who were evaluated, including a status breakdown of their respective activities.

General Profile of the Returnees

Gender

81% of those who were evaluated were male compared to 19 % who were female. Most returnees were aged 18-30 years old.



Reintegration Activities

Education, Training and Job Placement

Despite the fact that the majority of returnees chose to set up small businesses, a considerable number of returnees chose education or training courses and job placements. This is particularly the case for returnees to Africa or Eastern Europe, where unemployment is high and gaining further skills or qualifications can make the difference to access the job market.

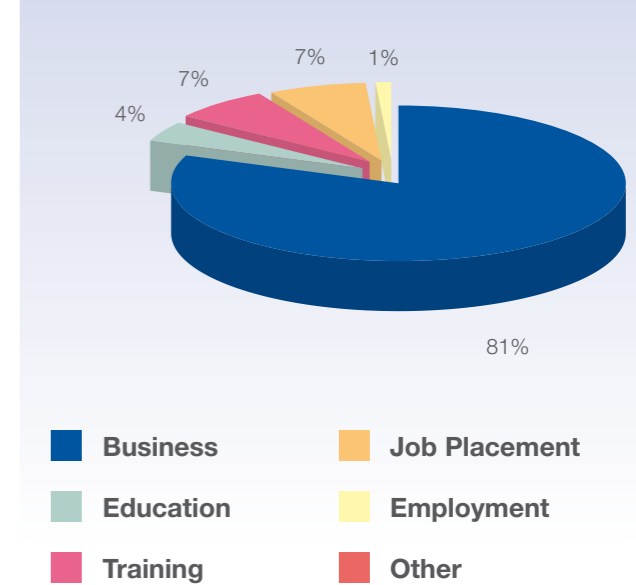
A returnee from Kosovo reflects the problem of employment: **“My business lasted less than a year due to low income. There was not enough work in that region and income was low. This is the reason why I was forced to find a job as a Pizza cook. Unemployment is the main problem in Kosovo. The problem is Kosovo not IOM.”**

“It is a help and I wanted to return to my family. Life is hard. The job placement salary is welcomed but with a family to support I am struggling.”

Returnee from Albania.

The breakdown of reintegration activities was as follows:

Assistance Provided for Returnees Evaluated

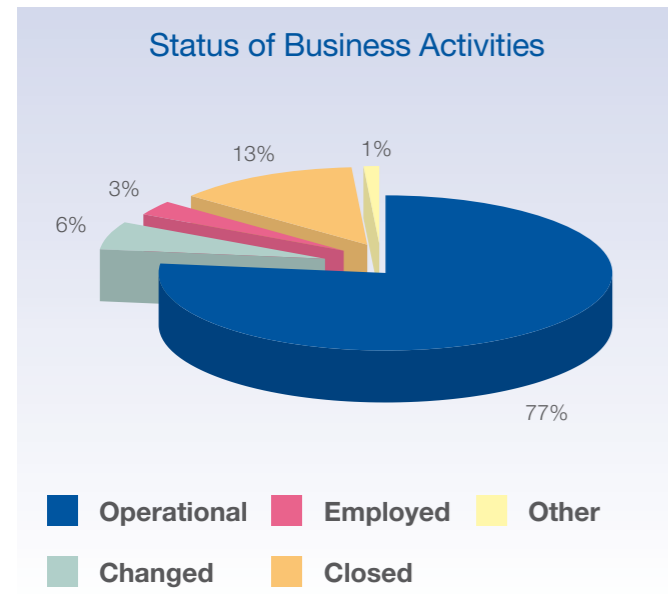


Despite the fact that business is the preferred activity in all the countries of return, the uptake of education and vocational training activities varies considerably from country to country. This is the case in Angola where 30% decided to use the grant to fund educational or training courses in order to enhance their skills and increase the opportunities of finding a job. This contrasts with the case of Afghanistan where 99% decided to open a small business.

Activity-Status

Another key indicator assessed as part of the evaluation and monitoring exercise was the status of the reintegration activities implemented. In the following pages, the four pie charts show the activity status of the four main reintegration activities.

Business



“IOM really helped me to get my small business started, enabling me to support my family.”

Returnee from South Africa.

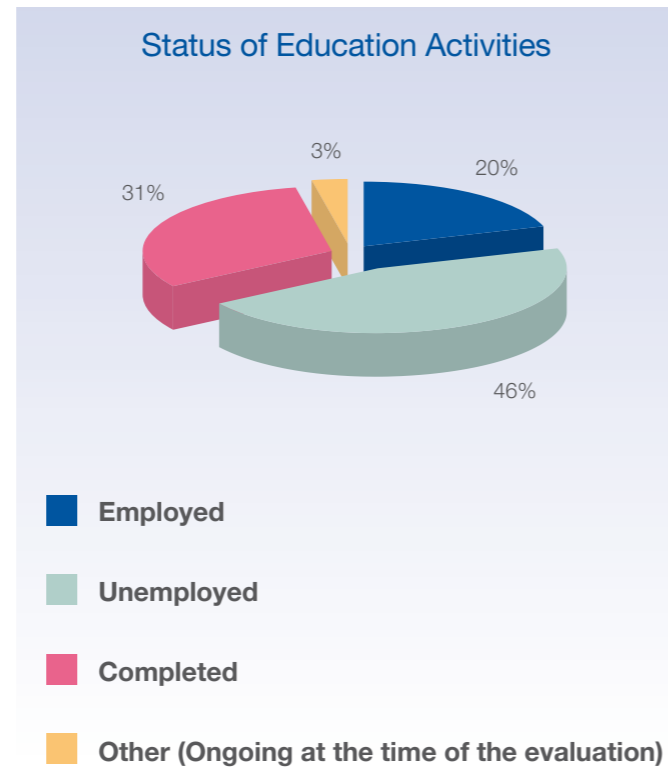
In terms of business activities, the majority of returnees were very successful with 77% indicating that they managed to keep the venture operational and generating an income. Another 6% of businesses are also operational but are not the original businesses funded by IOM. Only 13% of businesses closed. The reasons were as follows:

- lack of further funds to consolidate, expand or relocate the business;
- lack of proper planning or of management skills;
- level of experience and motivation of the returnee;
- competition in the area where business is opened;
- poor business location in an area with little business activity.

3% decided to close the business because they found employment where they obtained a higher income than was generated by the original business.

Education

For those who chose education activities, 20% found long term employment after completing their courses. Another 31% have completed their courses and have done temporary jobs but are still in the process of finding a full time job, while 46% are unemployed.



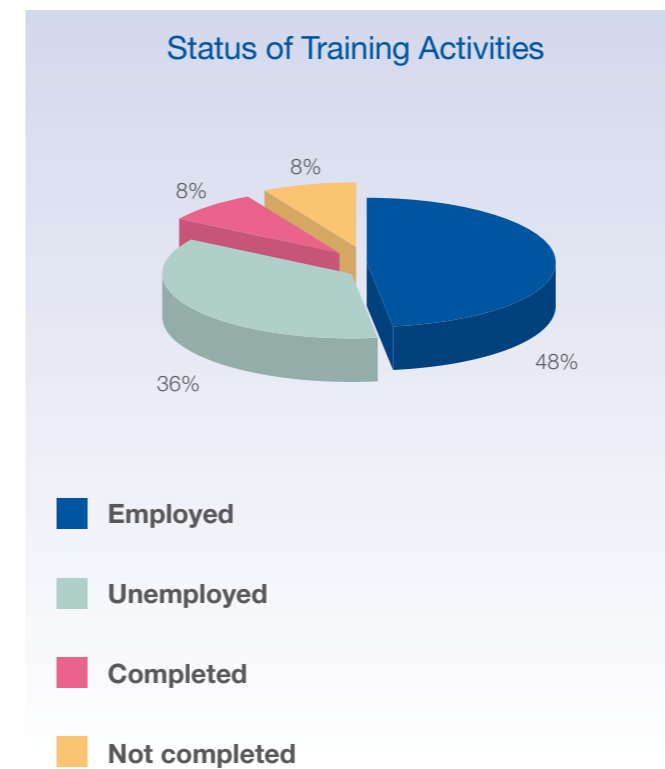
“I am very satisfied with the courses. The teachers were very good and I learnt a lot despite not having followed higher studies in the past. Without this assistance it would have been very difficult to study. IOM has done a lot for me.”

Returnee from South Africa.

Training

The findings in the case of training activities are more balanced with 48% of returnees finding employment after finishing their training courses. Another 8% are still in the process of finding permanent work and 36% remained unemployed. Only 8% did not complete their training.

The success rate of employment is higher in these cases due to the fact that skills learnt in training courses are tailored to fill vocational gaps in the job market such as carpentry, IT and plumbing.

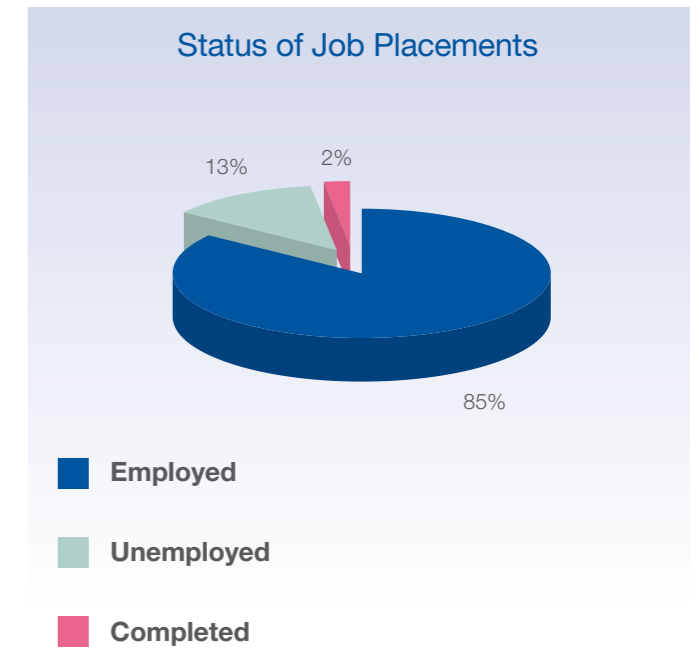


“After 4 years abroad, training was important to learn the skills needed in my country and the local labour market.”

Returnee from Ecuador.

Job Placement

In these cases, once the returnee finds a job placement, IOM will fund a salary supplement for a period of time and the company must sign a contract guaranteeing employment for the returnee for at least six months (unless performance is poor). This type of reintegration option is highly successful as 85% of those who found a job placement remained employed at the same placement or found employment elsewhere.



As a returnee from Kosovo said: *“Skills learned in a placement gave me good experience in market. For one year I had a good income and employment.”*

Reflecting on the importance of placements, an Albanian returnee stated, *“IOM Tirana found me a job in an NGO for 9 months where I had the chance of gaining new skills.”*

“ Thanks to IOM for giving me a chance in my life. ”

Returnee from South Africa.

This self-evaluation does not attempt to measure the levels of sustainability of returns assisted during the reporting period, nor does it aim to determine the socio-economic impact of returns. Such analysis would have had to involve longitudinal studies over a long period of time. IOM's evaluation focuses rather on the efficiency of the programme in delivering the assistance as well as the impact of this assistance provided in the self-sufficiency capabilities of the returnees in their home country one year after the assistance was completed. With this aim in mind, IOM analysed the following factors: Length of stay in the UK; levels of satisfaction with the services provided by IOM, in both the UK and the country of return.

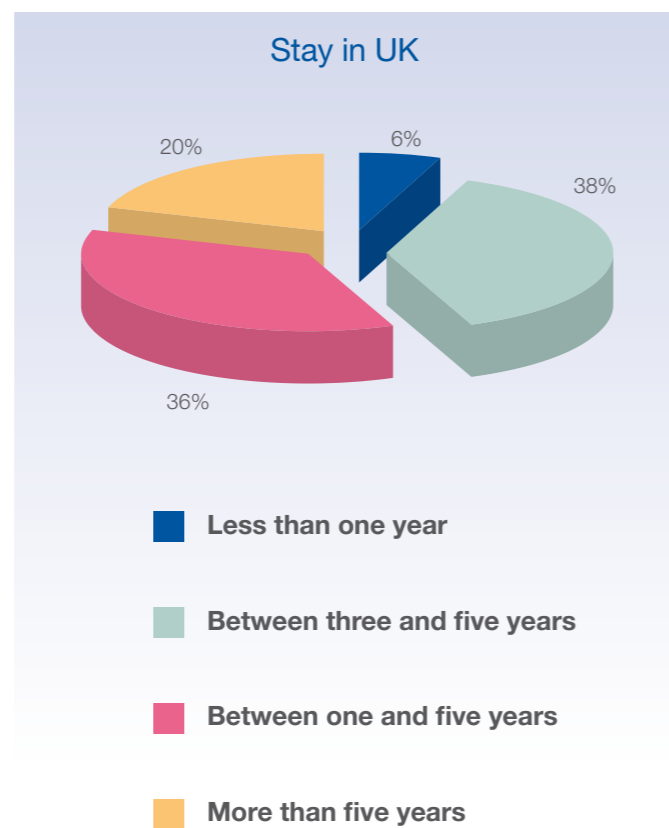
“ After 4 years abroad, training was important to learn about the skills needed for the labour market in my country. ”

Returnee from Ecuador.

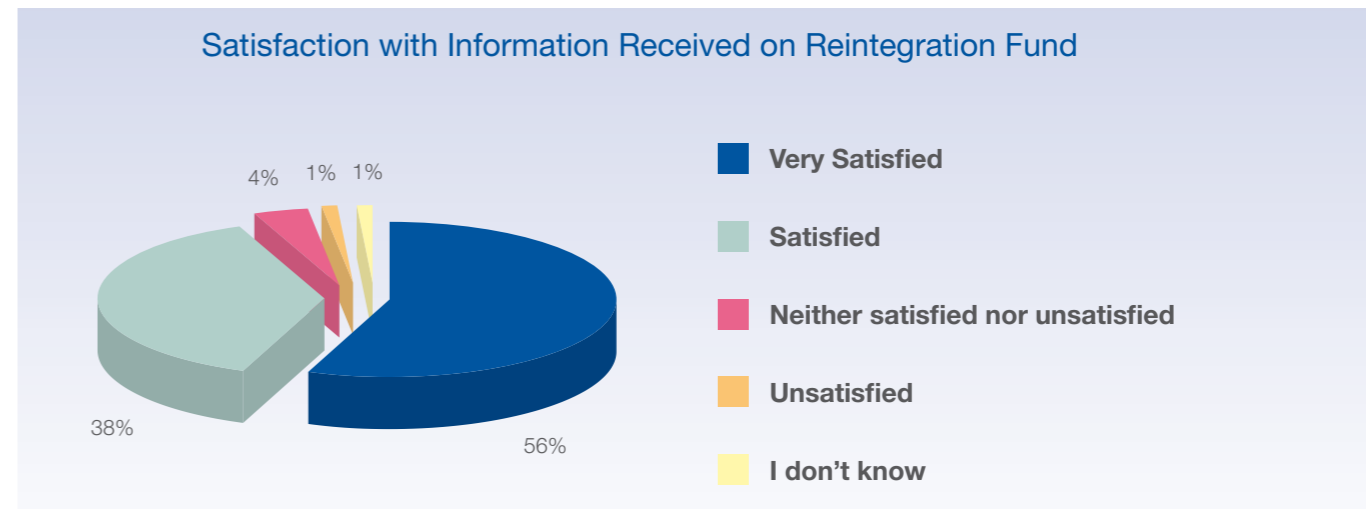
Length of stay in the UK

The majority of returnees under VARRP remained in the UK for a considerably length of time: 38% stayed in the UK between one to three years and 36% between three to five years.

This is an important factor influencing a successful long term return. Having been away from one's country for such a long period of time can affect the ability of an individual to adapt quickly to a new environment. A number of returnees did not contact IOM on return in order to start the reintegration process and the reasons remain unknown; but having been away from their countries could be one of the factors why returnees lose interest in the reintegration process.



Satisfaction



“ I am very satisfied that IOM assisted me to attend college. I am working for a company and IOM's assistance was very helpful to find this. The course opened the door to future employment in South Africa. IOM gave me a new chance in life in South Africa. ”

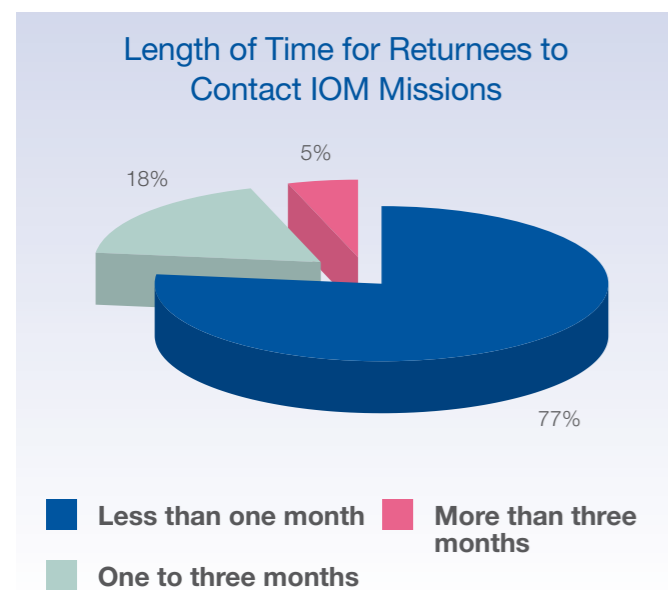
Returnee from South Africa.

Providing up to date information on how returnees can best be assisted is key in ensuring the success of the Reintegration Fund. The period of discussing what assistance can be provided, and looking into various possibilities with IOM missions in countries of return, begins once a returnee applies for Voluntary Return. The evaluation found that the majority of returnees were either very satisfied (56%) or satisfied (38%) with the information and advice they received during the application process.

Contacting IOM Missions Upon Arrival

To follow up with their reintegration assistance, returnees are provided with an introduction letter upon departure from the UK with all the relevant contact details of IOM offices in countries of return. Returnees are encouraged to initiate the contact early with the mission so that the discussion on their reintegration assistance may begin as soon as possible².

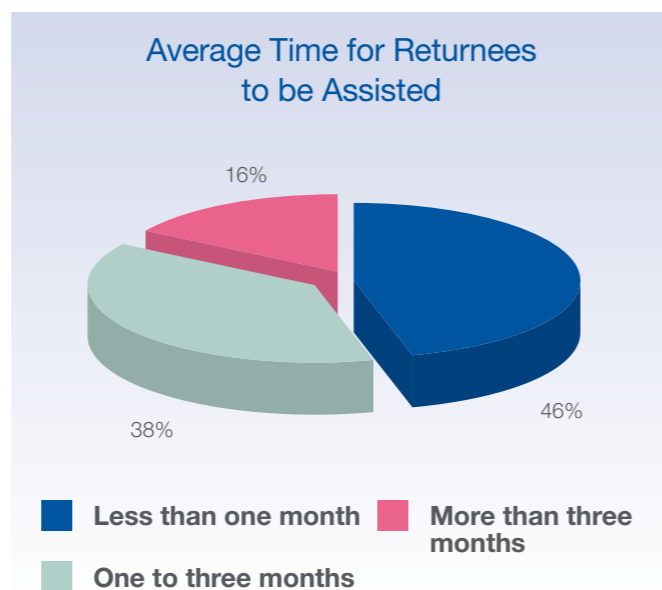
The results show a high level of interest and motivation with 77% of returnees contacting IOM within a month of return and 18% between one to three months.



Following contact and ongoing discussions about their proposed activity, the evaluation shows that 46% of returnees obtained their reintegration assistance in less than one month while 38% between one to three months. It should be noted at this stage that defining an exact time scale in terms of delivering assistance is not possible. A key factor in ensuring that returnees are assisted within a short period upon arrival lies primarily with the returnee since it is he/she that needs to provide the relevant documentation to IOM to begin the assistance.

Factors that can lead to reintegration assistance being delayed are as follows:

- returnees can take considerable time in deciding their reintegration activity; in identifying material providers or institutions providing courses desired.³
- Providing documentation may also take considerable time in the process of obtaining business licenses, registration or tuition fees.
- Country factors such as local bureaucracy, efficiency, corruption, scarcity of material/equipment can slow the reintegration process.⁴



“ IOM responded quickly and the assistance is somehow helpful. ”

Returnee from Sierra Leone.

Taking into account the issues raised, only 16% took more than three months to start their reintegration activity which indicates a high level of efficiency by IOM in delivering assistance.

“ I was happy because of the humanitarian approach displayed. The business is not doing well due to the low stock levels. The assistance could improve by offering a more complete and individualized reintegration package. ”

Returnee from Kenya.

² Returnees must contact IOM missions within 3 months of return.
³ In particular, having been away from their countries for considerable periods of time. Many returnees also change their businesses plans on arrival.
⁴ Every country is different and whereas one type of business may be set up faster in one country it may take longer to open in another one.

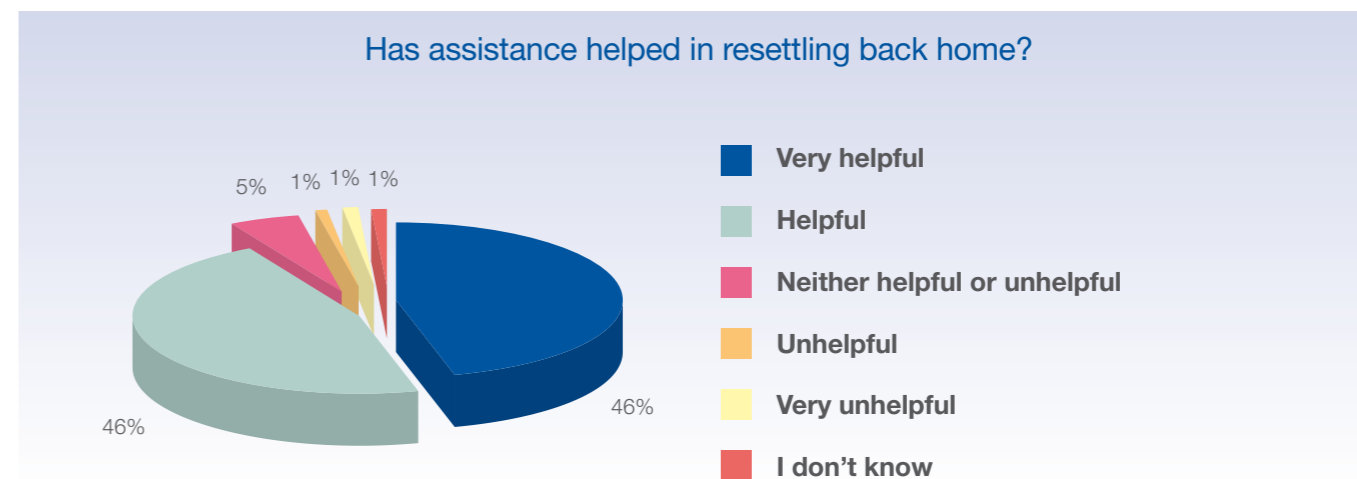
Impact of the reintegration assistance

“ It is a great endeavour and extremely helpful to many. ”

Returnee from Pakistan.

The majority of returnees find the assistance provided by IOM valuable during the particularly vulnerable period after their arrival home when they are “finding their feet”. Charts in the previous chapter show that 77% of businesses which have been funded are still operational, meaning an income is being generated and a considerable number of returnees who chose education or training have found long term employment using the skills or experience they gained during the courses.

In the opinion of most returnees, the assistance provided was a useful contributing factor in their permanent resettlement. 46% of returnees assisted responded that the assistance was “very helpful” and 46% “helpful”.

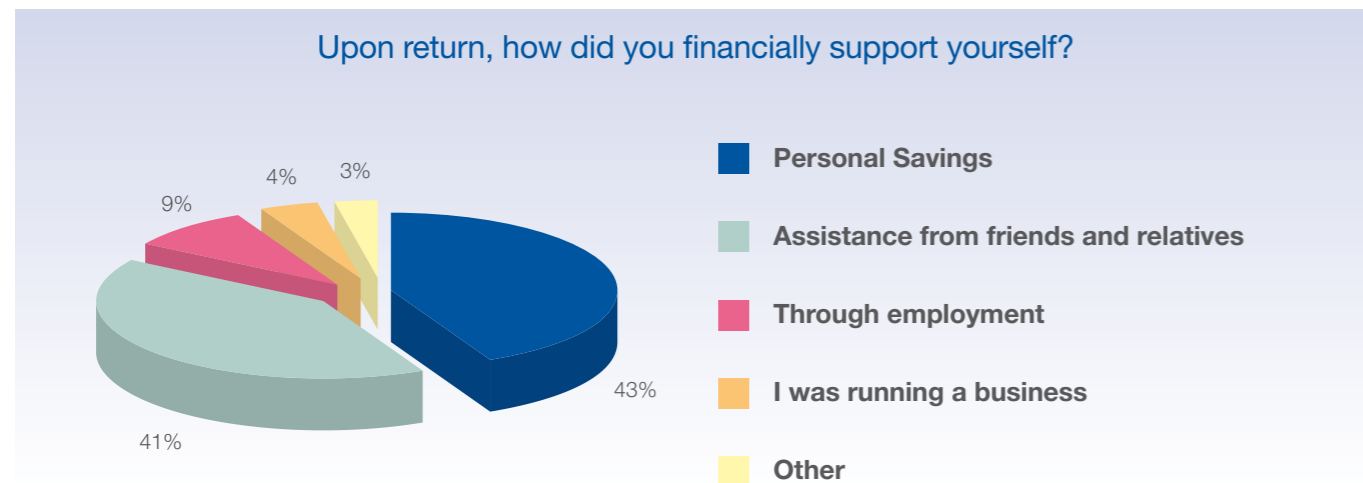


“ The reintegration assistance has been very important for us because it is our only income. With the income of the store we are able to re-invest the money in new products and cover all expenses. The most positive aspect of the programme is all the people who helped us during this time. My only advice to other returnees in the UK is to think carefully regarding the pros and cons of staying in or leaving the UK. ”

Returnee from Ecuador.

The impact of the reintegration assistance is felt to be most beneficial by those returnees who are going back to a strong family network or returning with savings of their own. In other words where returnees are not completely dependent on the assistance but it is available within the context of other resources.

The evaluation indicated that 43 % of applicants has access to personal savings and 41% were assisted by friends and family. The pressure and difficulties of finding accommodation, employment, supporting a family and relatives in the country of return, and meeting basic living costs are all real concern for returnees on arrival.

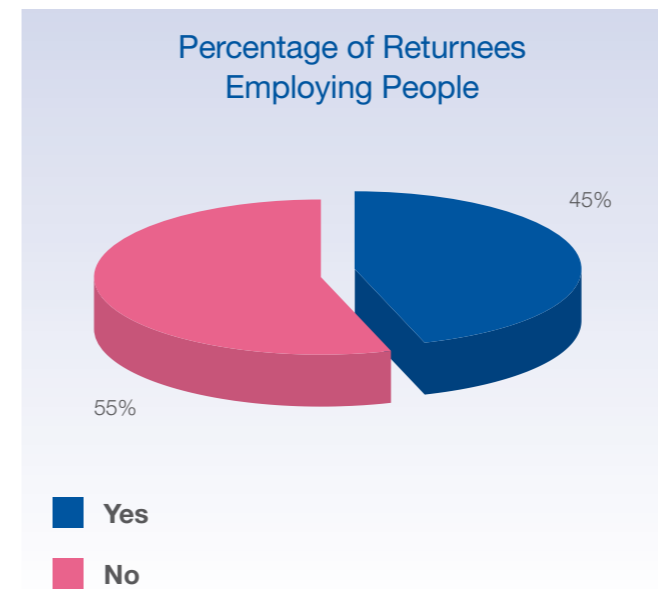


“ Re-starting my life would have been very difficult as I had sold all I had to go to the UK in search of a better life (‘green pastures’). The assistance allowed me to avoid the shame I would have faced from my family members. The officer in Nairobi explained everything to me and assisted me whenever I got stuck. I employed two people to make deliveries to kiosks and they earn an income.”

Returnee from Kenya.

Impact on communities

The assistance provided also had a direct impact on the host communities as a whole. Unemployment is one of the main problems for many in countries of return. The results show that 45% of returnees assisted with business ventures do employ staff and as a result have an impact on employment opportunities at the local level.



Of those who employ local staff, 74% employed between 1-3 employees in enterprises ranging from farming, grocery shops and bars, to the fishing industry.

In addition to creating new employment opportunities, businesses can also contribute towards developing the local infrastructure. Returnees often start business ventures such as pharmacies providing medical services in areas previously lacking such facilities. Alternatively, by setting up a taxi or minibus service, they provide transportation links which never previously existed. A grocery shop where no such facility existed before can also clearly be beneficial to a local community.

“ Funding I received helped me to set up a professional and stable business. The assistance could be improved by obtaining professional advice on different issues.”

Returnee from Azerbaijan.

Sustainability and re-settlement

“ IOM was very helpful because I do not know what I would have done to survive with my daughter. The assistance was a great thing to me. It is good to help returnees who have nothing with which to re-start their lives once they are back home.”

Returnee from Kenya.

Country factors

The sustainability of return depends on an effective reintegration process but while IOM’s assistance is part of the process it is only one element. There are many other factors influencing and contributing to a full resettlement back into the country of origin. In other words, an effective and long term resettlement is closely linked to conditions in the country of origin such as economic and political stability, security, employment and living costs. It does not therefore depend solely on IOM’s assistance.

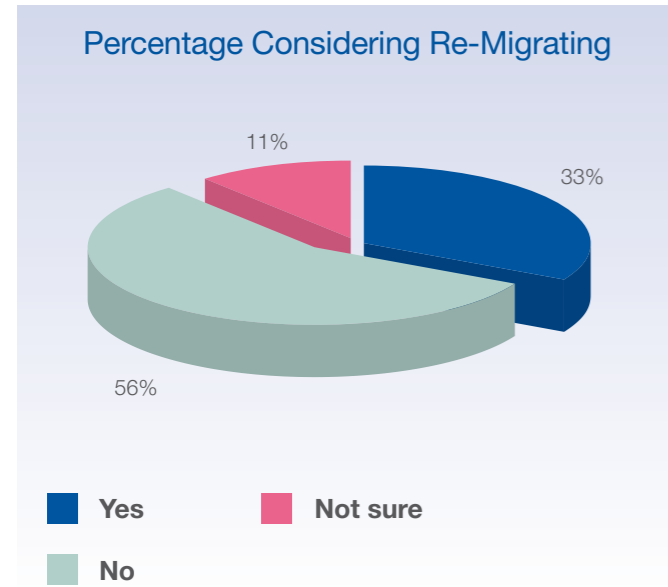
For IOM it is difficult to measure sustainability as there is no common accepted definition of the concept or an agreed set of indicators to measure its impact. However, there are some positive indicators which can be monitored.

In order to measure the sustainability of the programme two key issues/factors were taken into account:

- Durability over a period of return and continued presence (ie: has the returnee re-migrated?).
- Status of the returnee/assistance: Are the businesses still operational? Are the applicants employed? Have the training courses contributed to finding employment?

Durability of return

56% of those returnees who were interviewed stated that they plan to remain in their home country.



“The assistance was as they said in London. The fund also funded the school for my children. I would only re-migrate if there is war again.”

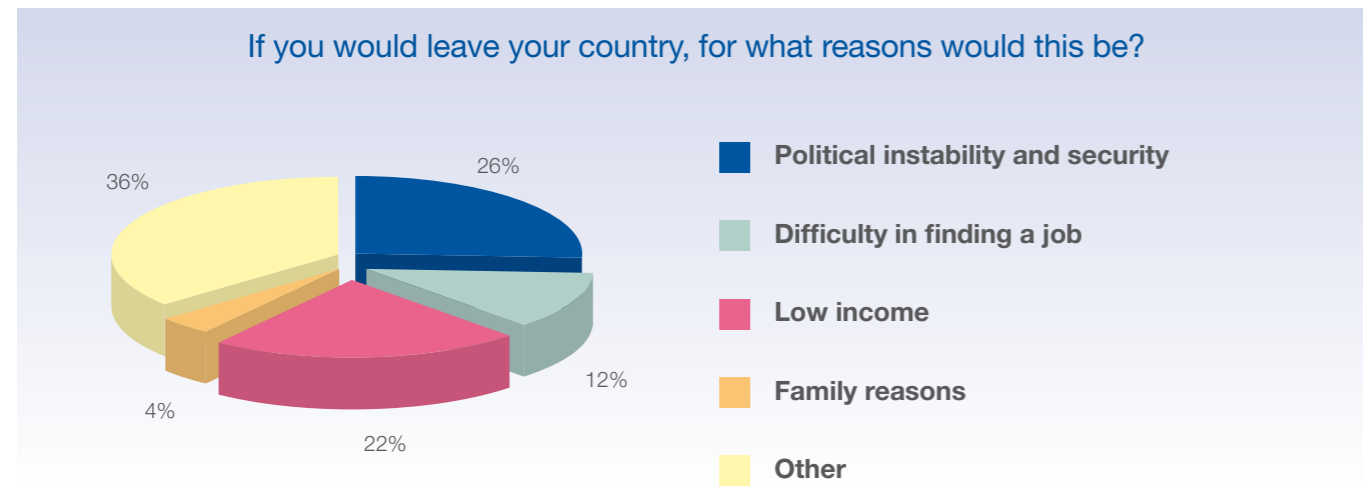
Returnee from Angola.

“The assistance is important and without it it would not be the same. I am happy with the assistance but some days there is less business due to the market but this is life.”

Returnee from Angola.

Out of the 33 % who answered ‘yes’ to re-migrating the main reasons were:

- political instability and security-26%
- low income- 22%.



The above varies from country to country and no assumptions can be made on the countries of return. For example, 163 cases interviewed in Afghanistan, a country where many returnees might be expected to re-migrate, only two said that they would consider leaving, but in Sri Lanka 30% of returnees said that they would re-migrate even in cases where businesses were expanding.

Status of Returnee/Assistance

As we have already pointed out, 77% of businesses are still operational and generating an income which is a positive sign related to sustainability.

Regarding employment, of those who secured employment 72% responded that they were employed thanks to the skills gained from the training and educational courses funded by the programme. Of those who remained unemployed, 40% were not sure if the skills gained will help them find a job but 33% responded that the training/education done will still help them secure a job in the future. A total of 85% who found job placements remained employed and 53% of those remained employed in the same company. Even in those cases that remained unemployed a total of 81% responded that the experience and skills gained would help them secure a future job. The employment market is uncertain but the returnees consider the skills and experience gained with IOM’s programme as valuable for the future, and can be regarded as a positive indicator for a sustainable return.

“At the time the training assistance was really important. It would be great if reintegration activity could include training and employment for returnees.”

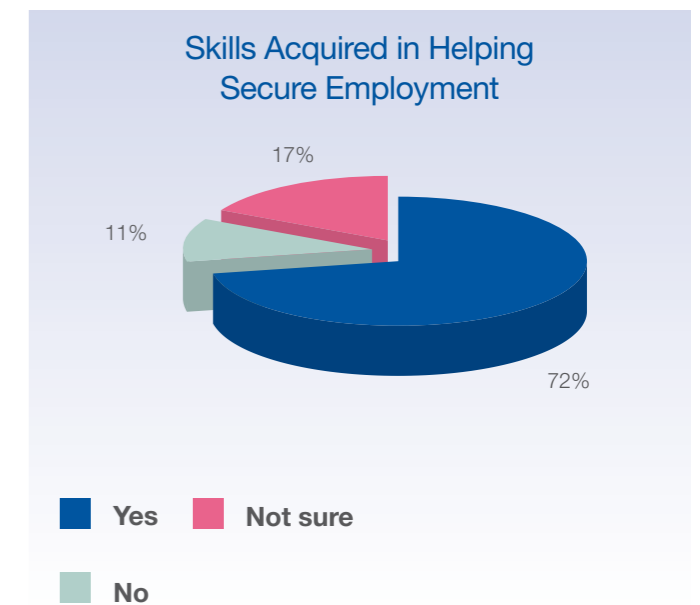
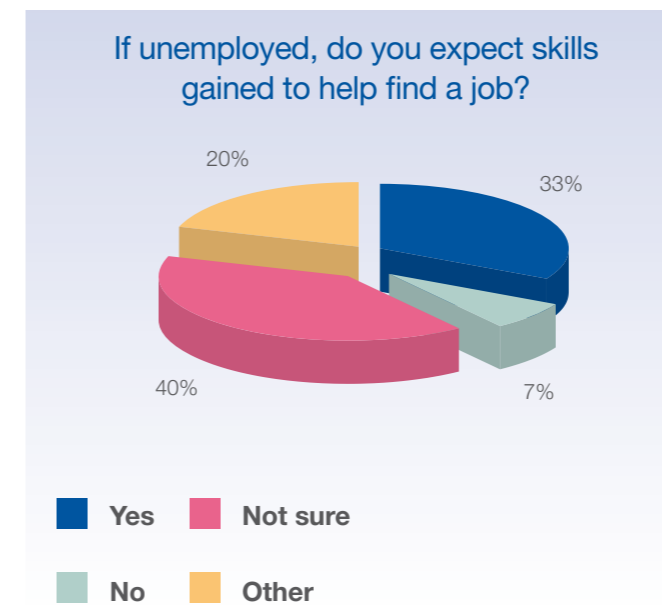
Returnee from Georgia.

“I like the help of IOM and it could be improved by making films / DVDs of returnees in Angola to show Angolans in the UK who may be doing nothing.”

Returnee from Angola.

“IOM gave me a start off in a business and I am grateful. IOM is doing a good job however, please offer other options in your programmes like job placement or internship.”

Returnee from Angola.



Success Initiatives	Challenges
Building of cooperatives between return networks. Provision of training in countries of return has begun, but further needs to be explored.	Lack of business training skills. The need to have more frequent follow up on activities implemented. Lack of funding support. Obtaining official documentation. High cost of living in some cases.

Loan System in Countries of Return

Many returnees have raised throughout this evaluation that the assistance that is provided in terms of starting up an income generating activity is very useful. However, the difficulty that some have faced in ensuring that businesses which are running can be supported with further funding for expansion and increasing stock, thus generating more revenue. Noting this issue, a loan system set up to support returnees is something that the Reintegration Fund should investigate further.

This challenge is reflected by a returnee to Kosovo:

“Not enough assistance was available from IOM and as a result, I found it difficult as I could not establish my business with that amount of money”.

Cooperatives with Returnees

In countries such as Sri Lanka, returnees felt that it would be a good idea for IOM to facilitate the start up of cooperatives amongst the returnees willing to set up a business within the reintegration programme. This would not only help and support all the returnees starting up their business, but also indirectly the local community. IOM could act as a catalyst to enable such cooperatives to start up where possible. These types of activities have been implemented before by IOM under labour migration programmes between Spain and Latin America.

Through the active participation of its voluntary returnees and their respective communities, IOM strives to support both with the formation of suitable small and medium businesses and self employment opportunities.

An example of this is The Nucleus Entrepreneurs Foundation (NEF) which runs Sri Lanka's standard SME development programme. The concept of NEF is an opportunity for returnees from many parts of the country, particularly from the east and north, to network and share experiences on enterprise development. In February 2007, a programme was established by NEF to involve returnees in the Nucleus Network, which operates entrepreneur working groups. Subsequently, IOM with the support of NEF officials carried out field visits in three districts and held one-to-one and group interviews with the returnees who were already supported with various reintegration options.

Objectives of the collaboration between NEF and IOM are:

- To identify and support returnees who have established enterprises and engaged in employment to upgrade their businesses and improve their careers respectively whilst at the same time becoming increasingly integrated into the community through the formation of business cells or individually.

“ Everything so far, so good! At least the programme helped me re-start my life once again. My only recommendation is to increase the money given as assistance. ”

Returnee from Kosovo.

Provide training on skills management in countries of return

Long term planning

A small proportion of businesses did not succeed due to the fact that returnees did not have the appropriate skills to run a business, or failed to undertake thorough research into the business activity they wished to do. With this in mind, returnees raised the issue of whether training on business management skills could be provided in countries of return so that they could be better prepared before embarking on business enterprises. This has been noted by the project, and in countries such as Nigeria, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Angola, IOM UK has been running workshops in partnership with Interims for Development, a UK-based company providing a range of human resources, training, employment and capacity building services in the UK and Africa. This has proved to be very successful, although such services had limited availability, and further initiatives with the same agenda should be explored in other countries so that more returnees can benefit.

Monitoring and evaluation

Further monitoring and evaluation exercises were requested by the returnees. These exercises proved successful for those who participated, with returnees stating that they felt there was an opportunity to raise any difficulties that had arisen during their reintegration process, and whether remedial actions could have been undertaken.

Further improvement of information in countries of return

Some returnees mentioned that they would have liked to know more about the situation in their country before departing from the UK. Although most of them were in contact with their families, relatives and friends in their home country, many respondents felt that the lack of knowledge hindered their chances of successfully reintegrating. Therefore, increasing the quality of information given to potential returnees on the countries of return pre-departure, is of great importance.

The development of one page summaries with very specific information on the available reintegration assistance in the return country would be a good first step. The use of the database developed by IOM UK should also be used by partners in the UK and IOM missions worldwide, so as to assist returnees with their queries regarding the various reintegration assistance options open to them.

“ The assistance helped me start something on return. Returning is very difficult as we have no support, no income and the country has changed. Housing is very expensive and family and friend's support is very important. The recommendations I have are to increase the assistance as £1000 is not enough although it is very important to start. At least it is something and I am very grateful to IOM. I also think workshops are very helpful. I attended one on how to set up a business and IOM could organize more of these. ”

Returnee from Angola.

The self evaluation exercise, the first in its kind under the VARRP programme proved to be a very successful exercise although numerous challenges did present themselves during the process namely remaining in contact with returnees after several years of having returned home. The results, comprehensive in nature have been presented throughout this report and one important conclusion that can be drawn is that the monitoring and evaluating returnees requires strong mechanisms put forth prior to the implementation of the project, and clear guidelines need to be drawn for those conducting the exercise in order to deliver accurate and constructive data.

Since its implementation in 2002, the Reintegration Fund has shown not only quantitatively but also qualitatively that reintegration assistance contributes to sustainable return. Projects that have been funded over the last 5 years are still generating an income for the individual/families, but importantly have also had a positive effect on the receiving community, thus reducing the risk of alienation. Indeed, not only should reintegration assistance be directed to help the migrant's reinsertion into the society but it is also important to place the assistance in a wider context that includes the community being affected by the return process.

“ IOM Pretoria gave excellent moral support and was always available when needed. I think IOM provides an excellent programme to returnees and I would like to thank all colleagues that assisted with our family case. I had previous experience of running a restaurant and a bakery. IOM also helped my daughters with Training. She received IT training and is now an IT Lecturer. ”

Returnee from South Africa.

Acknowledgements

IOM UK would like to thank all IOM missions that have actively participated in this evaluation exercise. IOM UK gratefully acknowledges all the work that was invested in organising the interviews with returnees, local NGOs and government bodies.

IOM UK works daily with the IOM missions involved in assisting returnees by providing reintegration assistance and without their help it would not have been able to undertake this evaluation exercise.

DELIVERY OF REINTEGRATION ASSISTANCE WORLD WIDE 2002-2007

