



IOM and Migrant Assistance

Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR)

IOM AND ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION (AVRR)

AVRR is an indispensable part of a comprehensive approach to migration management aiming at orderly and humane return and reintegration of migrants who are unable or unwilling to remain in host countries and wish to return voluntarily to their countries of origin. The successful implementation of AVRR programmes requires the cooperation and participation of a broad range of actors, including the migrants, civil society and the governments in both host countries and countries of origin. The partnerships created by IOM and a diverse range of national and international stakeholders are essential to the effective implementation of AVRRs - from the pre-return to the reintegration stages.

For migrants who need to return home but lack the means to do so, IOM’s AVRR programmes are often the only solution to their immediate plight. Beneficiaries of IOM’s assistance include individuals whose application for asylum was rejected or withdrawn, stranded migrants, victims of trafficking, and other vulnerable groups, including unaccompanied migrant children, or those with health-related needs.

As a core activity of IOM, AVRR activities provide vital assistance to thousands of migrants returning home every year. Building on experience and a world-wide network of offices and partners, IOM’s AVRR programmes promote international dialogue and cooperation on migration management issues among host countries and countries of origin.

Reintegration Assistance

The provision of reintegration assistance to migrants in their countries of origin is an essential element to ensure sustainability of returns. IOM and partners in countries of origin provide migrants with socio-economic support to promote their self-sufficiency and contributions to their local communities. The sustainability of returns may, however, ultimately only be ensured in tandem with socio-economic development.

AVRR at a glance:

+1.2 million
migrants assisted
since 1979

+400,000
migrants assisted
over the last ten years

25,000 - 30,000
migrants assisted
per year on average



IOM International Organization for Migration



Srousht, 26 years old, from Sulaymaniyah, Iraq. Srousht left Iraq in 2007. Upon return, she used her in-kind support to buy livestock and also received a vocational training course in hairdressing. Her daughter received an allowance that Srousht decided to put in a bank account for future use. © IOM 2012

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AVRR Components

In host countries

- awareness-raising for AVRR;
- gathering of country-of-origin information;
- profiling of diasporas;
- outreach and information dissemination to migrant communities, including referral systems to public services;
- individualized counselling on return and reintegration assistance, including country-of-origin information;
- specialized assistance and referral services to vulnerable individuals;
- temporary accommodation;
- facilitating travel documentation;
- travel arrangements; and
- arrangement of escorts, if required.

In transit

- assistance with travel in transit; and
- assistance with escort in transit, if required.

In countries of origin

- assistance through immigration and customs on arrival at the airport;
- post-arrival reception arrangements, including information and referral to local partners if necessary;
- onward travel to the final destination;
- short- and/or medium-term reintegration assistance (depending on the respective AVRR project and resources made available by donors), including business set-ups, vocational training, formal education, medical assistance and other tailor-made assistance according to the returnees' special needs; and
- capacity-building activities with emphasis on:
 - linking return to local development;
 - access to services;
 - strengthening of local networks; and
 - improving local capacity to deliver reintegration assistance.

Key Policy Considerations

IOM is mandated by its Constitution to ensure orderly migration, inter alia, through voluntary return and reintegration assistance. In particular, IOM emphasizes that voluntariness remains a precondition for all its AVRR activities.

In line with its mandate, IOM's key policy considerations when developing and implementing AVRR projects encompass:

- safeguarding dignity and rights of migrants in operating returns, while seeking adherence to applicable international principles and standards;
- preserving the integrity of regular migration structures and asylum procedures;
- enhancing dialogue and cooperation between origin, transit and host countries involved in the return process and reinforcing the responsibility of countries of origin towards their returning nationals;
- addressing, to the extent possible, the root causes of irregular migration;
- advocating for the adoption of comprehensive approaches towards voluntary return, including post-return reintegration assistance; and
- working with national and international partners in both host country and country of origin, to promote international dialogue and implement capacity-building for AVRR initiatives.

Find out more

For more information about IOM's AVRR programmes and activities, please visit www.iom.int or contact us at MigrantAssistanceDivision@iom.int