



IOM International Organization for Migration
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

Participative Report

On the

Socialization Campaign

Of the Project

« Social Reintegration of Returnees from Libya into Communities of High Return »



Funded by:



Federal Foreign Office

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Foreword:

Since February 2011 over 150,000 Chadians returned from Libya to their communities of origin in Chad. After having left behind their assets, their livelihood, their friends and in many cases the only life they knew, they are faced with a multitude of challenges upon arriving in their home communities. Often they do not speak the local languages, they have difficulties in adapting to conditions in the communities and the local customs. For their relatives and friends it is equally difficult to accommodate the returnees, firstly, because they themselves are in a very vulnerable state, and secondly they often feel estranged to their returning family members.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) funded generously by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany has been supporting the returnees from the moment they decided to leave their homes in Libya. IOM offices in the region (including IOM offices in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Niger and Chad) support the return of the migrants to their country of origin. Upon arriving in the communities IOM has been providing different forms of reintegration assistance to facilitate the social and psychosocial reintegration of the returnees into their communities.

The following report depicts one such activity undertaken in the communities: a community-based theatre performance. This theatre performance brings all community members together and reinforces the messages of the reintegration process by a) reinforcing a positive community image, b) creating a social space for the community to interact and c) communicating the main messages of the project.

As this campaign is the first of its kind to be undertaken by IOM Chad and the first of its kind to be undertaken to this end in the communities of high return in Chad, the campaign has generated significant interest within the humanitarian community but also within the national authorities. To this end a report was designed which aims at providing the reader with an opportunity to experience the theatre without being present.

IOM Chad would like to take this opportunity to express our deep gratitude towards the Government of Germany represented in Chad by HE Helmut Kulitz for continuously supporting the returnees from Libya and the receiving communities. Thanks also goes to the dedicated IOM field teams and their teamleaders in Ndjamen, Moussoro, Mao and Faya for making this activity such a success.





Audience in different IOM partner communities

1. The Beginnings

The project conceptualization for any social reintegration process always relies on a strong outreach campaign to ensure that beneficiaries, community members and authorities are well informed of the process they are about to enter. Social reintegration processes, the reformulation of a community fabric, the addition of new community members to an existing community always necessitates both the arrivals and the receiving community to open up and approach one another – to build one new community consisting of the arrivals and the pre-existing host community. Therefore, the entirety of the process is very similar to a socialization process. As projects leave only a limited time for these processes, IOM Chad decided to use a methodology not frequently used in Chad: community-based theatre. Based on positive experiences with the creative approaches of a youth theatre group based in Ndjamen, in which returnees from Libya are also active, IOM decided to start working with the DOUMENTE theatre group. Actors and trainers spent time in the communities of high return in order to gain a better understanding of the situation of returnees and resident community alike in order to develop a theatre play which reflects the realities in the communities.

Jointly with the project management and the Ndjamen teamleader a scenario was created which takes the beneficiaries on a journey from Libya to the communities in Chad, depicts the curious, the sad and the amusing moments of a community trying to find itself, while upholding the principle that only together the community can overcome the various challenges they are facing. The heart scene of the theatre is a monologue of a returnee from Libya, who compares his life in the community to the life of a goat in the community. A goat, who in his eyes, has great added value to the community, is loved by everyone and welcome by everyone, whereas his life has lost much value since being unable to sent remittances from Libya, taking up too much of the space in the small family house, being unskilled to work on the community farm etc. A young woman from the community, who overhears his concerns, manages to offer a perspective on their common life in the community.

Having a life goat as the main actor in a theatre performance is not a new concept in IOM, it was pioneered in East-Timor, picked up Aceh, Indonesia and now made its' way to Chad. The methodology manages to

involve the community, who find themselves directly portrayed in the scenario and uses images which exist directly on the community “stage”.

2. The Theatre Performance

Narrator: Ladies and gentlemen, children and people young at heart, you just like me, observe these people sitting in the serenity of the café. These people, your husbands and fathers, your brothers and sisters, your mothers and wives, enjoy the tranquility of their lives, they go to school, they go to work, ... and then their lives change for ever from one day to another when the conflict starts. They are displaced from their homes and are at a loss at what to do. IOM, these people you can see here wearing the blue shirts displaying a family united, in collaboration with the Chadian authorities supports them to return to their home communities in Chad. Their support does not end with this. Observe with me, the journey these women and men undertook to return them to us...



IOM staff explaining procedures to returnees on the back of a truck. Foto C. Murphy 2011

SCENE 1: Life in Libya



IOM community mobilizer introducing the socialization campaign

The scene takes place in a cafe, quiet lounge music is playing which is barely distinguishable from the sounds of laughter and discussion in the café. A group of Chadian migrants meets regularly at this café, just like this today:

Moussa: ay, you guys....

Abdallah: ay, we guys, what?

Moussa: Ah, I am talking about our way of life here in Libya



Abdallah: The years are passing and remember how we were when we first arrived here? So much has happened. We are becoming more and more accustomed to our live here.

Youssef: Yes, I guess you are right in some way, but I think deep down our origins remain true.

Abdallah: True, all I want to say is that despite it all, the distance to our families, the home sickness that we all know and the hardship we experience, we do have a pretty good life here, no? I mean, our children can go to school, we have good work, we can send money home to our families. I don't think it can get much better than this.

Mahamat: You might be right. But this current security situation is worrying me a little bit. There are even rumors of people leaving the country because of some fighting.

Abdallah: Nonsense.

Moussa: Oh, don't worry, this will all blow over quickly and all will return back to normal.



Background:

This first scene is inspired by the stories of the first arrivals from Libya between February and July 2012, which saw the arrival of over 55,000 people in 6 months. Many of these returnees, particularly those based in the south of the country and not in the towns along the coast, recounted their stories by hearing rumours about widespread fighting at the coast, but believing this would not affect them. Only with time people began to prepare for a potential departure, which then often had to happen rather suddenly.

IOM Chad registered arrivals of up to eleven trucks per day with more than 1200 people arriving in June 2012 during the height of the crisis.



Theatre Scene: Arrival at the IOM Transit Centre

SCENE 2: Transport to Chad

The security situation deteriorates and our friends find themselves in an IOM transit centre. We can hear the big transporter trucks roaring in the distance. IOM staff and local authorities are busy verifying luggage loaded on trucks in the background, prior to inviting the group of migrants for embarkation.

Mahamat: Moussa, you see now? My worries were justified. We really had a good thing going for us and now from on second to the next we are literally sitting in the dust.

Moussa: Seriously, I didn't even have a chance to return home and fetch my things, I had so many items



ready to bring to my family in Chad and now I had to leave it all behind.

Youssef: Can you believe that it was only a few days ago that we were sitting in our favorite café, laughing and sharing stories?

Abdallah: I can't believe this is happening, after all this time, I am returning home to my family empty handed. I worked so hard here in Libya, and now...

Fatime: But our families will await us, they will welcome us home. They too know what it means to survive a conflict and to lose everything in a conflict. But I am worried about the road ahead. Let's pray that God will protect us on the journey.

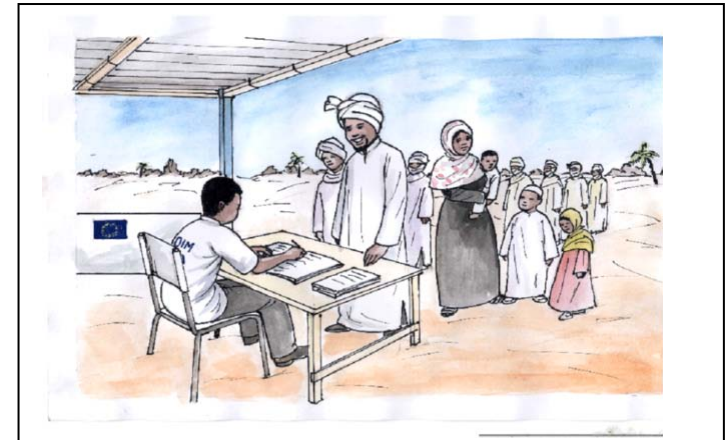
SCENE 3: Arrival in the home communities

The arrival in the IOM Transit Centers in Chad is one of mixed emotions. After days of crossing through the desert, the returnees are tired and dusty and overwhelmed by the sounds, smells and the bustle of the capital Ndjamená. After climbing down from the trucks, returnees are greeted enthusiastically by their home communities, who awaited their arrival. Crying, shouting and pushing to reach their loved ones first welcomes the arriving Chadians back to their communities. While IOM staff members are orienting returnees towards the services of the centre, family members and returnees reunite...

Mariam (a woman from the local community): Mahamat, my brother, is this really you? You arrived finally. And you are safe and sound.

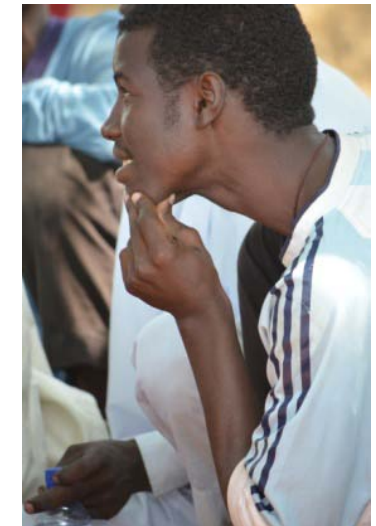
Mahamat: Thank God, how are you my sister, and the rest of the family? Everyone is doing great?

Mariam: I heard in the news that there was a convoy arriving today and came here to see if I could find you, if you managed to get out of Libya. We were so worried about you. Thank God you are back with us.



Background:

IOM Chad set up a network of transit centres and way stations throughout Chad to support the arrival of the returnees. Many of the returnees arriving by road from the South of Libya undertook journeys of up to 12 days before arriving in the IOM transit centres, where they received medical attention, food and non-food items as well as onward transportation when needed.



Audience in Ridina community





Theatre: Scenes of welcome

Abakar (from the community searched for his daughter Halime and her children): Halimé, my daughter. I cannot believe you arrived with your children, after all the stories we heard and after we couldn't reach you on your phone anymore, we assumed the worst. Oh, what a joyous day, to have you back with us.

Halime: Papa, yes it was horrible, there was so much suffering in Libya, I will never forget it, and then this long and arduous journey. But thank God we managed to get here in one piece to stand before you once more. I missed you so, Papa.

Abakar: Come children, let's not stay here any longer, your mother and your grandmother are waiting for you. Please, let me take you home.

The returnees leave the centre one on one. Abakar, Halime and her children return to their community, where they find the rest of their family.

Achta (mother of Halime): You do not know how welcome you are here my daughter. Please forget the horror of the war, please come back to me and please stay with me. Nothing will be lacking, everything will be good now that you are here with me.

Halimé: Oh mother, I missed you so much. I was so afraid these last couple of days. Thank you so much for taking us into your house. Please, do not go out of your way for us, I will help in any way I can. I am just so grateful that we are here. That we are alive and with you once more.

Achta: But you are never a burden to us. You helped us so much over these last years even though you were so far away. Now come my children, I will show you the house. After all, your children have never been here,



Enjoying the theatre: Amsinene Community



let me show you your new home.

The next morning the children and Halime meet outside the house.

Enfant I: Mom, I didn't sleep all night because of the mosquitoes. This life here is very different.

Enfant II: Yes, mom, it is very different. Did you see the toilets? How am I supposed to use them? I do not think I can get used to this.

Halima: Please, children. Be patient. This is life here in Chad, please let us try to get along and to appreciate the support we are receiving.

Inside Abakar listens to the conversation and turns to his wife.

Abakar: Achta, don't you think the children of Halime are behaving a little strangely?

Achta: well, they do, but we have to be patient. They are not used to our ways. Where they were born everything is different. Please remain patient with them, they just lost everything they know. They will adapt quick enough. Why don't you go and talk to them and you will see that things will soon improve.



captivated audience in Ndjamena



SCENE 4: Becoming part of the community



Theatre Scenes picturing Mahamat, returnee from Libya, facing the daily challenges in his



Mahamat, a returnee from Libya, is also struggling to adapt to the new environment and to the many challenges he is facing.

Mahamat: I can't do this anymore. This life is too hard for me: a life in dependence, a life full of mosquitoes, a life where I seem to not be able to get anything right, this indifference... Don't they understand that I am trying my best?

Mahamat, alone, wanders around the community and sees one of the community goats attached by a rope to one of the water pumps. He approaches the goat, pets her and begins to talk to her. The goat looks at him indifferently and continues to chew on a carton. Fatime, a young woman from the community, chances upon the scene which unfolds.

Mahamat: Aren't you pretty, you little goat? Your fur is shiny and you seem very well fed. You show all signs of a good life. Really, my goat, you are a lucky one. You are well entertained by this simple life, you are well fed ... Everyone in this community loves you. You can go wherever you want and everyone will accommodate you. Your life has an added value for this community. You are accepted as part of the community wherever you are. But me, I am severely lacking this welcome. Isn't it true that you always find a place to sleep? A place you call home? If only my life were little more like yours....

Oh good God! Which life burdens you have given me! What can I do to change my life with the little that I have?

Fatimé (who cannot continue to stand by and listen): I have never known a human person, who seriously contemplates swapping places, swapping lives with an animal. We have all the strength in ourselves, we cannot just fold our hands



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and watch our lives unfold. You have to take matters into your own hands. You are young. You don't know what life holds in store for you. What kind of person do you want to be? You have to get up and face the difficulties.

Mahamat (almost crying): I know. Oh! I know. I have never known myself like this. I never thought I would ever have to face these kinds of difficulties.

Fatime: But this is life, sometimes it's easy, sometimes it's not. This is what makes us human. Don't lose faith, be courageous. We are all together in this. You have so many experiences which we need here in our community. This is difficult for all of us. But we are so happy to have you back here and if we make an effort, we can overcome these difficulties. We are at home here in Chad. Here, we can manage, you will see.

Mahamat: It is important for me to hear such reassuring words. I sometimes wonder, whether I really belong here, I am shying away from taking responsibility, because it is so difficult here and I feel that I cannot contribute. But you are making a good point. It is my responsibility to get up and find myself a place here under the Chadian sun. I truly thank you for helping me find some perspective. You are right. I am home. I am safe. I am back with all of you and together we can face this.



Theatre Scenes showing an IOM community meeting

SCENE 5: The Social Reintegration Project

A group of IOM community mobilizers arrives in the community and invites returnees and community members to come together.

The narrator: Ladies and Gentlemen. As you know more than 150,000 Chadians returned from Libya between 2011-2012 with the help of IOM. IOM, with the funding of the Federal Government of Germany, also supports the reintegration of the returnees in their communities. Today we are meeting here with you to identify how we can best work together. So today we would like to discuss how IOM and your community can work together to support the reintegration of the returnees from Libya and support the community at the same time.

IOM Community Mobilizer: Thank you all for coming here today. We would like to discuss with you today, how we can best work together to support the community in assisting the reintegration of the many returnees from Libya.

Representative of the Community: Thank you IOM for continuing to support us. However, maybe we don't understand well what you mean by "reintegration". Can you maybe explain it a little bit better?

IOM Community Mobilizer: Absolutely and thank you for this question. As you know, many returnees lived in Libya for a very long time. They became accustomed to the way of life in Libya, which in many ways is very different from our way of life here in Chad.

Community Member: Yes, but now they are back here, so they are just returning to the way of life they knew before.

IOM Community Mobilizer: That is true, but so much time has passed that many things have developed. And this is what IOM hopes to consolidate: the acceptance of how lives changed over time. That returnees and the communities have experienced many different things while they were separated and that now we are back together. Being back together means that we all have to adapt to a new life reality.

Community Member: Aha, and how do you think you can support us in this way?

IOM Community Mobilizer: Well, we will work with you to improve the socio-economic infrastructure of your community, to learn, how we can work together as a community to achieve something positive for the community. Over the next year, we will implement one community infrastructure project together and thereby spend a lot of time working hand in hand. I am sure that many of us will be surprised by the many talents we have in this community and with these we will build our community.

Community Member: And how does this work exactly?

IOM Community Mobilizer: If everyone participates in the community meeting that we will have here in the next couple of weeks, we will chose one project implementation team here in the community. We will work closely with them and support them in facilitating the project here in the community. You will all have a chance to provide your ideas to the community project and participate in setting it up.

A real-life IOM community meeting:



Background:

With the support of the Government of Germany, IOM is implementing community stabilization projects in 50 communities in four regions of Chad. Communities are enabled to chose one socio-economic reintegration project per community. Projects range from vocational training, to water support, to rehabilitation of schools, medical centres, to establishment of libraries and recreational spaces like football fiels, playgrounds and community centres.



Narrator: Not to say, in the end all is good, but really, in the end everything will be good. This community will grow stronger with the arrival of the returnees from Libya and the reunited families. Experiences are only valuable if you can share them with others and so we hope that here in this community, we will achieve something great...

3. Voices of the Beneficiaries

Farcha: (les membres du PIT): «Nous avons apprécié la mise en scène et la communauté est ravie.»

Amsinene: (les membres de la communauté et du PIT): «Nous avons trouvé votre arrivée formidable et agréable. Nous avons également été agréablement surpris par votre chef de mission et par l’Ambassadeur d’Allemagne. Nous sommes impatients que notre projet voit le jour.»

Hille Houdjadj: (les membres du PIT): «Nous avons aimé votre arrivée et votre initiative, et nous attendons maintenant la réalisation de notre projet. »

Zafaye Ouest: (les autorités): «Nous avons apprécié votre venue et nous sommes très content de votre arrivé massive.»



Theatre group and IOM staff thanking the community

Thank you for sharing this experience with us!



August 2011: IOM staff celebrating departure of flights from Faya. C. Murphy 2011



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