Established in 1951, IOM is the leading intergovernmental organization in the field of migration and works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners. IOM works to help ensure the orderly and humane management of migration, to promote international cooperation on migration issues, to assist in the search for practical solutions to migration problems and to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, including refugees and internally displaced people.

Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) is a core activity of IOM and is part of a comprehensive approach to migration management. The aim is to assist with the 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. IOM has over 30 years of experience in providing AVRR services to vulnerable migrants and has assisted over 1.2 million individuals.

AVRR in Ghana
IOM facilitates the voluntary return and reintegration of both Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian migrants. Assistance includes pre-departure and post-arrival information and counselling, flight arrangements, airport assistance and reintegration assistance to establish a small business or engage in further education and training.

Ghanaian migrants return from Belgium, Libya, and the United Kingdom. However, returns have also taken place from the Canada, Czech Republic, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Latvia, Morocco, Malta, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, among others. Since 2006, IOM Ghana has provided reintegration support to 2,247 returning Ghanaian nationals and has assisted in the voluntary return of over 560 stranded migrants in West Africa to their countries of origin.

Following the Libyan crisis of 2011, over 18,000 Ghanaians were evacuated back to Ghana suddenly and unexpectedly. The majority arrived after the start of the conflict (March-April 2011) with returns recorded over a period of a year. IOM assisted with the reintegration of returnees through the provision of business skills training, start-up grants, registration with the National Health Insurance Scheme and psycho social counselling.

There are Four Stages within the return and reintegration process:
1. **Pre-departure support within host countries**  
   This includes counselling, information and advice, country-specific updates and referrals.

2. **Return**  
   Services may include: travel document, flights, airport assistance on arrival, local transportation via public transportation or internal flights for those who live outside of Accra.

3. **Reintegration**  
   Reintegration assistance is provided to help individuals returning to their country of origin to re-establish themselves and this assistance ranges from a limited reinstallation allowance at the micro-level to a variety of socio-economic assistance measures provided directly to the returnees or to the communities of return in the countries of origin at the macro level. Examples of assistance include: post-arrival counselling, small-business establishment, vocational training or further education, business plans, vendor liaison, temporary accommodation, and medical support.

4. **Monitoring**  
   Monitoring of returnees is conducted throughout the return and reintegration process.

### Assisting Ghanaian Migrants Returning From Libya

Over 18,000 Ghanaian migrants were evacuated from Libya during the country’s crisis in 2011. The majority were single men in their twenties who were previously earning an income and sending remittances home. With funding from the Government of Japan, IOM provided reintegration assistance to these Ghanaian migrants.

Following the opening of a sub-office in Tamale in June 2012, the project activities focused on the economic reintegration of beneficiaries, and the registration of almost 4,000 former migrants and their dependents to the National Health Insurance System (NHIS). IOM, in coordination with PENTAX Management Consulting Services Ltd., provided training in group formation and management as well as in expanding business development skills. In addition, beneficiaries received basic start-up kits (tools) to implement their individual income-generating activities.

Registration of returnees and their families into the NHIS was another important component of the project. The NHIS registration was also paired with the identification and referral to Ghana Health Service (GHS) of any Ghanaian migrants showing signs of psychological stress, trauma or depression related to their experiences in Libya or the challenges faced upon their return.

Mental health treatment and psycho-social support were available for affected returnees in the Northern region, in cooperation with GHS and civil society organisations. Reintegration assistance was provided in close cooperation with Ghanaian governmental agencies.

### Stranded Sri Lankan Migrants in West Africa

Increasing numbers of destitute and stranded irregular migrants are found in West African countries, lured by agents in their countries of origin by promises of greener pastures in Western countries. Many of these individuals once stranded are left in inhumane conditions, exposed to disease, hunger and restricted mobility.

IOM initiated the West Africa AVRR project in December 2011 to provide pre-return, transit, arrival and reintegration assistance for Sri Lankan migrants. Additionally, government officials from West Africa and Sri Lanka have been provided with capacity building training on irregular migration and migrant protection issues. As of December 2013, IOM has assisted 578 Sri Lankans to safely return home.