



REINTEGRATION OF MOROCCANS RETURNING FROM ABROAD

Summary of findings by members of the drafting committee



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SUMMARY

Between 2012 and 2014, around 900 people benefited from support schemes to help them reintegrate into Morocco, implemented by the support organisations that make up the SHARAKA project drafting committee¹. This figure may seem low in light of the few estimates of Moroccans returning to Morocco after living in Europe and particularly Italy and Spain (some estimates refer to 20,000 people per year in recent years).

These cases can, however, be used to establish useful recommendations aimed at various stakeholders to provide better support for Moroccans living abroad as they reintegrate and a dialogue between the support organisations in both places.

The support organisations advocate a strengthening of the partnership between civil society actors and Moroccan and European institutions, support in both places, greater complementarity in terms of the support provided, consideration of the personal, social and economic aspects of reintegration and specific responses to questions around schooling for children and the transfer of welfare entitlements. ■



1. IOM, OFII, CARDEV, CEFA, M&D, IntEnt.



I. CONTEXT

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The overarching objective of component 4 of the SHARAKA project is to build capacity within the Moroccan authorities, at both the national and local levels, to support the socioeconomic reintegration of returning migrants.

The expected results are:

1. An assessment of existing reintegration assistance schemes and proposals for improvements, notably in respect of emergency returns and profitable investments.
2. A consultation framework between national and international civil society and institutional stakeholders and the production of recommendations on the reintegration of Moroccans living abroad.
3. A web-based information platform about returning.
4. A support programme for civil society organisations (CSOs), including training and a framework for discussions, consultation and information.

The establishment of a drafting committee to produce recommendations on the reintegration strategy for Moroccans living abroad has resulted in :

1. An analysis of existing support schemes for returning citizens, based on assessments provided by key stakeholders in the field.
2. The creation of a multi-stakeholder consultation framework to produce recommendations on the reintegration of Moroccans living abroad.

The MCMREAM (Ministry for Moroccans Residing Abroad and Migration Affairs) and SHARAKA provide secretarial services to the committee.

The members of the drafting committee are the OFII, IntEnt Maroc, CEFA, CARDEV, Migrations & Développement, IOM and the Banque Populaire Foundation for business start-ups. The component is managed by the members of the C4 technical committee: the MCMREAM, Expertise France, DUE, the Belgian Embassy, GIZ and the OFII.

Six self-assessment reports have been submitted. These provide a qualitative and quantitative assessment of each scheme, areas for improvement and recommendations. The analysis section includes quantitative information, specific information about different audiences and the services available.

The recommendations section has been split into eight themes. Each theme will be covered in a specific workshop run by the drafting committee to produce a set of themed recommendations. ■



II. ANALYSIS OF REINTEGRATION ASSISTANCE SCHEMES: overview of support organisations

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2.1 OFII

The OFII is a public administrative body under the authority of the French Ministry of the Interior. Between 2012 and 2014, it assisted 216 people to return and ran 28 projects relating to support for economic reintegration.

The French assistance scheme for return and reintegration, managed by the OFII, includes:

- ▶ Administrative and practical support with preparations for travel to the return country
- ▶ Coverage of transport costs from the point of departure in France to arrival in the return country
- ▶ A fixed allocation of €500 per adult and €250 per child for nationals from non-EU countries
- ▶ Where applicable, financial support for implementing a reintegration project (up to a maximum of €7,000), which has been granted to 28 projects since 2012.

Between now and the end of 2015, the OFII scheme will offer three levels of assistance:

- ▶ Support for social reintegration for people who have been denied the right to asylum and their families (emergency financial or practical assistance; coverage of health care costs; school equipment, etc.)
- ▶ Support for reintegration through employment and/or training (assistance with securing a job in the return country through the OFII paying a proportion of their salary for a limited period; assistance with finding a job by putting them in touch with a local business or providing help with writing a CV)

The OFII emphasises the necessity of a range of assistance and services suitable for the diversity of Moroccans living abroad returning to Morocco, and therefore pooling reintegration support schemes common to several host countries.

2.2 IOM

IOM has been running the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration programme in Morocco since 2007. Over the last three years, from 2012 to 2014, 374 people received support, most of them migrants whose papers were not in order. IOM is seeing a trend towards an increasingly female audience, as well as the return of families in vulnerable situations. People are returning from countries such as Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Greece. Work to support them concerns both places, in conjunction with associations for Moroccans living abroad and IOM delegations in the host countries.

The IOM range of services includes:

- ▶ Support for income-generating activities
- ▶ Vocational training
- ▶ Coverage of immediate needs for vulnerable migrants
- ▶ Medical assistance

The average level of assistance per project is €1,500.

IOM focuses on advocacy at the national level, better cooperation between the support organisations and with local authorities, a more collaborative and complementary approach to schemes, and better monitoring and evaluation of projects.

2.3 CARDEV

The Carrefour de développement (CARDEV) association is an organisation formed under Moroccan law, which ran the ERSO WEST III project for Moroccans living in Belgium, Spain and the Netherlands from 2011 to 2013.

Its European partners — including *ACCEM, Caritas Belgique and MAATWERK* — welcomed migrants who wanted to go back to Morocco and helped plan their return. A socioeconomic assistance office under CARDEV's responsibility was opened in Fkih Ben Salah.

The project supported 183 people (2011–2013):

- ▶ Support for vocational training for 81 migrants,
- ▶ Assistance with creating micro projects and income-generating activities for 60 migrants,
- ▶ Social assistance (legal, health, children's schooling, administrative support, etc.) for 43 migrants.

The migrants concerned are aged 30 to 40 and educated to primary level; they are returning to live with their families. Most are returning from Italy (60%) and Spain (30%).

From an institutional and organisational point of view, CARDEV advocates the implementation of a National Programme involving various ministerial departments, municipalities and local authorities, and a harmonisation of European programmes (notably in terms of financial contribution). CARDEV also stresses the need to produce a practical guide or booklet containing reliable, up-to-date information for Moroccans living abroad.



2.4 CEFA

CEFA is an Italian NGO that supports assisted voluntary repatriation funded by the Italian Ministry of the Interior with support from the European Union (European Return Fund 2008–2013). CEFA has been involved in three projects: REMIDA I (September 2011–June 2013), REMIDA II (September 2012–June 2014) and ERMES (February 2014–June 2015).

It has supported around 100 people (2012–2014) by working in both countries:

- ▶ In Italy: information, awareness-raising, support for project set-up, contact with the team in Morocco and allocation of an emergency allowance
- ▶ In Morocco: identification of partners, contact with people in the field and the support organisation.

The average amount of financial assistance per beneficiary is €2,000.

The average cost of support in both countries and financial assistance for the ERMES project is calculated as €5,000 per beneficiary.

The profile of migrants supported by CEFA is identical to that of CARDEV and other actors: average age 39, 11 years spent in Italy, married with children and family in Morocco.

CEFA has noted an increase in the period of residence and a worsening of general living conditions in Italy, namely the number of people who are homeless and forced to lodge with family members or friends.

CEFA stresses the fundamental role played by the private sector, the relationship with family and friends, networking and the place of return.

Work in both countries, with a significant level of support prior to departure and the possibility of contacting the Morocco team in advance, is reassuring for migrants.

Although CEFA has signed agreements with several institutional partners in Morocco, neither they nor opportunities to share experiences with other actors have come to fruition.

CEFA also emphasises certain gaps in reintegration support schemes and the ordinary law concerning schooling for children under the age of majority and the transferability of welfare entitlements.

2.5 IntEnt Maroc

IntEnt Maroc is a Moroccan association created in 2008 by IntEnt, a Dutch foundation.

It supports migrants and other entrepreneurs mainly based in France, as part of an agreement with the OFII but also through the TEAM and REMIDA projects.

Since 2012, IntEnt Maroc has supported 53 people with projects who have opted to return to Morocco (51 from France and two from Italy), supporting 36 of them with implementing their business projects.

Sixty percent of the beneficiaries entered France illegally, with most of them staying for two to five years and working in the building sector.

Support from IntEnt Maroc includes:

- ▶ Making the project idea a tangible reality
- ▶ Coaching during the feasibility study phase
- ▶ Coaching during project start-up and implementation
- ▶ Assistance once the business is up and running

IntEnt Maroc specialises in supporting business start-ups and deplores the lack of psychological, social and family support and assistance with integrating into the labour market.

2.6 MIGRATIONS & DÉVELOPPEMENT

Migrations & Développement (M&D) is a French-Moroccan association created in the 1980s by Moroccan migrants who had emigrated to France from the Souss Massa Drâa (SMD) region and people from other backgrounds who supported migrants.

For almost 30 years, the association has been running initiatives in Morocco to support rural development, along with integration and international solidarity initiatives in France.



M&D is a member of the drafting committee as a representative of Moroccans living abroad and because of its local and regional experience.

M&D's actions focus on the development of the diasporas' home regions and are not centred specifically on people returning. Its involvement in returns comes through its actions on territorial development with members of the diaspora who originally came from these territories.

A categorisation of Moroccans living abroad concerned by the possibility of returning should emphasise the importance of three main groups:

- ▶ retirees (with more or less marked back-and-forth movements),
- ▶ Moroccans living abroad returning to Morocco because of an acute social crisis, such as those in Spain and Italy (although M&D has no direct links with this category of returning migrants),
- ▶ young people (aged around 30) who have gained a qualification in France, with or without children, but who are facing difficulties finding their feet there (in terms of work or housing) and who have dual nationality.

M&D ran a campaign to transfer rights acquired by returning migrants in their country of origin to Morocco. Following a survey of a total of 163 retirees (or beneficiaries) in 32

douars and 21 souks/rural communities in SMD, contacts were established with the region's provincial department of the CNSS (Taroudannt) and pension funds in France (Caisse des Mines, Mutualité sociale agricole des Bouches-du-Rhône/Alpes maritimes).

The lessons learned from the campaign were:

- ▶ local authorities (mainly communes) are the most likely to follow up cases of this kind
- ▶ retired Moroccans living abroad should not simply be viewed as vulnerable. They can also provide knowledge, skills, opportunities and networks.

M&D advocates a greater role for consulates, associations of Moroccans living abroad and their places of origin in Morocco with regard to reintegration and support for those returning. Social networks and platforms for Moroccans living abroad can also play an important role in disseminating information. Finally, school and schooling for children are still a major concern for Moroccans living abroad who are considering their return. ■



III. AREAS OF RECOMMENDATION

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1. Categorisation of Moroccans living abroad in terms of reintegration and specific support

Service offering appropriate to each group of Moroccans living abroad.

3. Link with institutions

Improve the coherence of mechanisms at the national level, the link with systems under ordinary law and the dialogue with European networks.

5. Local authorities and the local level: pensions

Possible partnerships with local authorities and implementation conditions (e.g. training elected representatives on handling pensions).

7. Stages of support

From preparing for return in the host country to settling in Morocco: the ideal route to reintegration.

2. Role of the private sphere (family and network)

How and at which stage of reintegration to involve the family and network.

4. Dissemination of information and new technologies

Appropriate materials (guides, booklets, leaflets) and media (social networks, associations of Moroccans living abroad and consulates).

6. The role of associations of Moroccans living abroad

Advocacy, information for Moroccans living abroad, support in host countries, the specific role of associations of Moroccans living abroad.

8. Schooling for children

Work with the Ministry of Education to identify ways of supporting the children of Moroccans living abroad.



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LE MINISTRE CHARGÉ DES MAROCAINS RÉSIDANT
À L'ÉTRANGER ET DES AFFAIRES DE LA MIGRATION



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