

---

**Assisted Voluntary Return and  
Reintegration  
External Evaluation**

**Report**

**Final**

**July 2013**

---

Contracting Authority

**Federal Office for Migration**

Quellenweg 6  
3003 Bern-Wabern

Authors

**KEK-CDC**

Daniel Kessler  
Dieter Zürcher  
Fiona Wigger

**B,S,S.**

Harald Meier  
Michael Morlok

# Table of Contents

---

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Zusammenfassung</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Résumé</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>Abbreviations</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1 Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR)	2
1.2 The Evaluation Approach	3
1.3 Methods	4
<b>2 Evaluation Findings</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 The Intervention Logic of AVRR	6
2.2 Profiles of Returnees	11
2.3 Return	16
2.4 Reintegration	20
2.5 Cooperation with Partner Countries	26
<b>3 Conclusions / Key Lessons</b>	<b>27</b>
3.1 General	27
3.2 Return	28
3.3 Reintegration	28
3.4 Cooperation with Partner Countries	29
<b>4 Recommendations</b>	<b>30</b>
4.1 Return	30
4.2 Reintegration	31
4.3 Cooperation with Partner Countries	32
<b>ANNEX 1 Terms of Reference for the Evaluation</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>ANNEX 2 List of Persons and Organisations Interviewed in Switzerland</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>ANNEX 3 Consulted Documents and Websites</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>ANNEX 4 Intervention Logic of Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>ANNEX 5 AVRR Participants' Profiles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>ANNEX 6 Inflow / Outflow Analysis</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>ANNEX 7 Curricula Vitae of the Evaluation Team</b>	<b>1</b>

## Executive Summary

**Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration** AVRR is one of the instruments of Switzerland's migration policy. It targets the voluntary and dutiful return as well as the reintegration of asylum seekers in their countries of origin. The instrument consists of several dimensions and its implementation is flexibly adapted to the needs identified in Switzerland and in the countries to which asylum seekers return.

### The Evaluation

The Federal Office for Migration (FOM) has mandated an evaluation in order to:

1. Determine the range and extent of outcomes of selected instruments of the Swiss return assistance for different target groups and countries of origin.
2. Make an overall independent assessment of the outcomes achieved against the objectives envisaged.
3. Identify key lessons and to propose practical recommendations for the optimisation and further development of return assistance, especially with regard to different target groups and different native countries.

Furthermore, AVRR was assessed in the light of Switzerland's cooperation with partner states in the field of migration. The evaluation combined quantitative and qualitative methods. 130 returnees were interviewed in the following countries: Georgia, Guinea, Iraq, and Nigeria (where country programmes are being realised) and Kosovo, Sri Lanka and Turkey (individual assistance). In addition, governmental and non-governmental stakeholders as well as representatives of international organisations were consulted both in Switzerland and abroad.

### Evaluation Findings

Without support for their return and reintegration, there would be fewer returns of asylum seekers from Switzerland to their countries of origin, and many returns would take place later.

#### AVRR's Intervention Logic

Return depends on both individual preparedness for return and imminent forced return. Financial contributions towards reintegration and the amount granted for returning are welcomed but not decisive in returnees' decision making, even though the financial support contributes to the success of reintegration.

The successful realisation of reintegration projects, and subsequently successful reintegration, depends on (i) the conceptual quality and feasibility of the projects; (ii) the volume of funding available and of additional support; (iii) the economic and other conditions; and (iv) the returnees' commitments and skills on-site.

#### Returnees' Profiles

The average voluntary returnee is male, younger than 30, and has received a negative answer to his asylum request. Most voluntary returnees' stay in Switzerland was relatively short (less than two years), and they did not work.

The profiles of returnees to the seven countries covered in the evaluation differ in two aspects: The majority of returnees returned home alone and the proportion of men is higher (86%) than average (73%).

#### Return

An average of 9% of the persons from the seven countries registered in the asylum process between 2005 and 2011 opted for AVRR (10% over all countries). Support for return increases the likelihood of voluntary return, especially when implemented together with instruments facilitating reintegration.

This overall assessment is based mainly on the following findings: Providing the target groups with information on AVRR early in the process contributes to the willingness to return. The excellent and pragmatic cooperation between the Swiss actors involved in AVRR (Federal authorities, cantons, International Organisation for Migration (IOM), NGOs) also contributes to voluntary return and to its smooth organisation. The motivation to return is the result of a number of factors, the most important one being the asylum seeker's individual and familial situation. The economic and security situation in the countries of origin also has an important effect on the willingness to return. The possibility of forced return has an additional effect on preparedness for "voluntary" return.

#### Reintegration

AVRR contributes to a successful social and economic (professional) reintegration in the countries of origin. The findings are as follows: Social integration is usually the dimension of reintegration that is easiest to achieve, although it may be a difficult psychological process.

Economic reintegration can be fostered by AVRR: Many projects had a positive impact on the economic wellbeing of the returnees. However, the support provided does not guarantee successful professional and economic reintegration. This is true despite the fact that Swiss AVRR provides flexible reintegration assistance that is adapted to individual returnees' specific conditions and needs and is more generous than those of other European countries. Most returnees still report hardship and that the financial support was hardly sufficient for sustainable professional reintegration. There is no difference in the success of reintegration between reintegration assistance provided in the framework of a country programme and of individual return assistance. Successful reintegration must be measured with a limited number of indicators. The effect of reintegration assistance over a limited period of time, generally not more than 12 months, is one of them: Reintegration can be sustainable, measured by the absence of a wish to migrate again, even if the reintegration project fails.

### Cooperation with Partner Countries

AVRR programmes can contribute to improved cooperation and broaden policy dialogue between Swiss authorities and authorities of the returnees' countries of origin. For political reasons, ratification of agreements is usually an arduous process. Where no agreement can be signed with a partner country, FOM operates flexibly.

## Conclusions / Key Lessons

### General

- AVRR contributes to the regulation of the number of asylum seekers in Switzerland.
- Voluntary return and respective assistance and reintegration assistance are currently uncontested elements of Switzerland's migration policy.
- Information and counselling are crucial.
- Pull effects of AVRR on residents in the seven countries included in the evaluation cannot be observed.
- AVRR has an important function in Swiss domestic politics and facilitates the preparedness of partner countries to accept return.

### Return

- The motivation to apply for AVRR is the result of a number of factors, the most important one being the asylum seeker's individual situation. Financial incentives are not decisive for returning.

- The imminence of forced return increases the chances for enrolment in AVRR.
- Return is realised effectively and efficiently.

### Reintegration

- The Swiss assistance is, in international comparison, among the most systematic and financially generous. It offers different instruments.

### Cooperation with Partner Countries

- Formalised migration partnerships can facilitate the cooperation with partner states, especially regarding forced return, but are not a precondition for the realisation of all types of return.

## Recommendations

### Return

- ⇒ The current practice of the preparation and realisation of return is to be largely maintained.
- ⇒ The time span between an individual's or a family's decision to return under AVRR and the actual return should be as short as possible.
- ⇒ The preparation or validation of a detailed reintegration project should be done mainly after return, with a view to achieve better feasibility.

### Reintegration

- ⇒ The different forms of reintegration assistance are to be continued.
- ⇒ Although the financial aspect of AVRR is not decisive for the motivation to return, it is to be maintained.
- ⇒ FOM should review the amounts of reintegration assistance according to country specific conditions and increase or decrease reintegration assistance where warranted.
- ⇒ Options for a more direct and visible linking of AVRR programmes to structural aid are to be examined.
- ⇒ FOM, with the support of SDC (Migration and Development) and other actors, should also consider the provision of reintegration support through a development perspective for the countries of return.

### Cooperation with Partner Countries

- ⇒ Efforts to establish migration agreements with countries showing no clear interest should be discontinued.
- ⇒ Switzerland is to continue to apply and to intensify its "whole of government" approach when negotiating migration agreements and when implementing them.

# Zusammenfassung

## Hilfe für freiwillige Rückkehr / Reintegration

Die Hilfe für freiwillige Rückkehr und Reintegration (AVRR – vom Englischen Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration) ist eines der Instrumente der schweizerischen Migrationspolitik. Es bezweckt die freiwillige und pflichtgemässe Rückkehr und die Reintegration von Asylsuchenden in ihre Herkunftsländer. Das Instrument weist verschiedene Dimensionen auf und seine Anwendung erfolgt flexibel – entsprechend dem Bedarf in der Schweiz und in den Ländern in welche Asylsuchende zurückkehren.

## Die Evaluation

Das Bundesamt für Migration (BFM) hat eine Evaluation in Auftrag gegeben, um

1. das Ausmass der Ergebnisse ausgewählter Instrumente der Schweizer Rückkehrhilfe für verschiedene Zielgruppen und Herkunftsländer zu bestimmen.
2. eine umfassende Bestimmung der Erreichung der geplanten Ziele vorzunehmen.
3. zentrale Lehren zu ziehen und praktische Empfehlungen für die Optimierung und die weitere Entwicklung von Rückkehrhilfe vorzuschlagen (speziell in Hinblick auf verschiedene Zielgruppen und verschiedene Herkunftsländer).

Ausserdem wurde AVRR in Hinblick auf die Zusammenarbeit der Schweiz mit Partnerstaaten im Bereich Migration beurteilt. Die Evaluation kombinierte quantitative und qualitative Methoden und interviewte 130 Rückkehrer in Georgien, Guinea, Irak und Nigeria (wo Länderprogramme realisiert werden) und Kosovo, Sri Lanka und Türkei (individuelle Rückkehrhilfe) sowie VertreterInnen von Behörden, internationalen Organisationen und Nichtregierungsorganisationen in der Schweiz und im Ausland.

## Evaluationsergebnisse

Ohne Unterstützung der Rückkehr und der Reintegration würden weniger Asylsuchende aus der Schweiz in ihre Herkunftsländer zurückkehren, und viele Rückkehren würden später erfolgen.

## Die Interventionslogik von AVRR

Rückkehr hängt sowohl von individueller Bereitschaft zur Rückkehr als auch von drohender Zwangsrückkehr ab. Finanzielle Beiträge für die Reintegration und die Höhe der Zahlung im Fall einer Rückkehr sind willkommen, für den Entscheid von Rückkehrenden aber nicht ausschlaggebend – aber die finanzielle Unterstützung trägt durchaus zur Reintegration bei.

Die erfolgreiche Realisierung von Projekten zur Reintegration und der Erfolg der Reintegration selbst hängen ab von (i) der Qualität und Machbarkeit der Projekte, (ii) dem Umfang der finan-

ziellen Unterstützung und von zusätzlichen Hilfestellungen, (iii) den ökonomischen und anderen Bedingungen vor Ort sowie (iv) dem Engagement und den Fähigkeiten der Rückkehrenden.

## Die Profile von Rückkehrenden

Der durchschnittliche freiwillige Rückkehrende (in alle Länder) ist männlich, jünger als dreissig Jahre alt und sein Asylgesuch wurde negativ beantwortet. Die meisten Rückkehrenden wohnten während vergleichsweise kurzer Zeit in der Schweiz (weniger als zwei Jahre), und sie haben hier nicht gearbeitet.

Die Profile der Rückkehrenden in die sieben im Rahmen der Evaluation untersuchten Länder unterscheiden sich hinsichtlich zweier Aspekte von der globalen Population der Rückkehrenden: Die meisten sind alleine zurückgekehrt und der Anteil von Männern ist höher (86%) als bei allen Rückkehrenden (73%).

## Rückkehr

Durchschnittlich 9% der zwischen 2005 und 2011 im Asylprozess registrierten Personen aus den sieben Ländern haben sich für AVRR entschieden (10% in allen Ländern). Rückkehrhilfe erhöht die Wahrscheinlichkeit freiwilliger Rückkehr – besonders wenn das Angebot zusammen mit Unterstützung der Reintegration eingesetzt wird.

Diese allgemeine Aussage basiert hauptsächlich auf den folgenden Evaluationsergebnissen: Der frühe Zugang der Zielgruppen zu Information über AVRR trägt zur freiwilliger Rückkehr bei. Die ausgezeichnete und pragmatische Zusammenarbeit zwischen den verschiedenen an AVRR beteiligten Schweizer Stellen (Bund, Kantone, International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Nichtregierungsorganisationen) trägt ebenfalls zur Freiwilligkeit der Rückkehr und zu ihrer effizienten Realisierung bei. Die Motivation für die Rückkehr ist das Ergebnis verschiedener Faktoren, der wichtigste ist die individuelle und familiäre Situation der Asylsuchenden. Die ökonomische und die Sicherheitslage in den Herkunftsländern haben ebenfalls einen wichtigen Einfluss auf die Bereitschaft zur Rückkehr. Die Möglichkeit einer Zwangsrückkehr trägt ihrerseits zur "freiwilligen" Rückkehr bei.

## Reintegration

AVRR trägt zur erfolgreichen sozialen und ökonomischen (professionellen) Reintegration in Herkunftsländern bei. Die folgenden Ergebnisse stützen diese Aussage: Soziale Integration ist in der Regel der am leichtesten zu realisierende Aspekt der Reintegration (obwohl er schwierige psychische Prozesse bedingen kann).

Ökonomische Reintegration kann von AVRR unterstützt werden: Viele Projekte haben eine positive Wirkung auf die wirtschaftliche Situation von Rückgekehrten. Aber die gewährte Hilfe kann die erfolgreiche professionelle und ökonomische Reintegration nicht garantieren. Und dies obwohl die Schweiz Reintegrationsunterstützung flexibel gewährt, an die individuellen Bedingungen und Bedürfnisse von Rückkehrenden angepasst, und obwohl sie umfassender ist als die anderer europäischer Länder. Die meisten Rückkehrenden berichten dass der finanzielle Beitrag für eine dauerhafte berufliche Reintegration nicht genügt. Es gibt keinen Unterschied im Erfolg der Reintegration zwischen Unterstützung die im Rahmen eines Landesprogramms gewährt wurde und individueller Hilfe. Erfolgreiche Reintegration ist an einer kleinen Zahl von Indikatoren gemessen werden. Die Wirkung von Reintegrationshilfe (während einer beschränkten Zeitspanne, üblicherweise nicht länger als 12 Monate) ist einer dieser Indikatoren. Reintegration (gemessen an der Absenz von neuerlichen Migrationswünschen) kann erfolgreich sein auch wenn das ursprüngliche Reintegrationsprojekt nicht erfolgreich war.

#### **Zusammenarbeit mit Partnerländern**

AVRR kann zur verbesserten Kooperation und zur Möglichkeit eines umfassenderen Politikdialogs zwischen den Behörden der Schweiz und der Herkunftsländern von Rückkehrenden beitragen. Aus politischen Gründen ist die Ratifizierung von Vereinbarungen in der Regel ein langwieriger Prozess. Wo keine formellen Vereinbarungen bestehen agiert das BFM flexibel.

### **Schlussfolgerungen / Key Lessons**

#### **Generelles**

- AVRR trägt zur Regulation der Zahl von Asylsuchenden in der Schweiz bei.
- Freiwillige Rückkehr (und Rückkehr- sowie Reintegrationshilfe) sind gegenwärtig unbestrittene Elemente der Schweizer Migrationspolitik.
- Information und Beratung sind entscheidend.
- Pull-Effekte der Schweizer AVRR auf die sieben im Rahmen der Evaluation untersuchten Länder lassen sich nicht feststellen.
- AVRR hat eine wichtige Funktion für die Schweizer Innenpolitik, und sie erleichtert Partnerländern die Akzeptanz von Rückkehr.

#### **Rückkehr**

- Die Motivation für die Teilnahme an AVRR resultiert aus verschiedenen Faktoren. Der wichtigste ist die individuelle Situation von Asylsuchenden. Finanzielle Anreize sind nicht für den Entschied zur Rückkehr.

- Eine anstehende Zwangsrückkehr erhöht die Wahrscheinlichkeit freiwilliger Rückkehr.
- Die Rückkehr wird effizient und effektiv durchgeführt.

#### **Reintegration**

- Im internationalen Vergleich gehört die Rückkehrhilfe und Unterstützung der Reintegration zu den umfassendsten (sie bietet verschiedene Instrumente an) und finanziell grosszügigsten.

#### **Zusammenarbeit mit Partnerländern**

- Formalisierte Migrationspartnerschaften können die Kooperation mit Partnerstaaten erleichtern, besonders bezüglich Rückschaffungen – aber sie sind keine Vorbedingung für die Realisierung aller Arten von Rückkehr.

### **Empfehlungen**

#### **Rückkehr**

- ⇒ Die gegenwärtige Praxis der Vorbereitung und der Durchführung von Rückkehr ist beizubehalten.
- ⇒ Die Dauer zwischen dem Entscheid von Individuen und Familien im Rahmen von AVRR zurückzukehren und der tatsächlichen Rückkehr sollte so kurz wie möglich sein.
- ⇒ Die Vorbereitung und Validierung eines detaillierten Reintegrationsprojekts sollte vermehrt nach der Rückkehr möglich sein – um so dessen Umsetzbarkeit zu verbessern.

#### **Reintegration**

- ⇒ Die verschiedenen Formen der Reintegrationshilfe sind weiterzuführen.
- ⇒ Obwohl die finanziellen Aspekte von AVRR die Entscheide für Rückkehr nicht entscheidend beeinflussen, sind sie beizubehalten.
- ⇒ Das BFM ist eingeladen, die Höhe der Beiträge für die Reintegrationshilfe gemäss landesspezifischen Bedingungen zu gestalten und sie zu erhöhen oder zu verringern, wo dies angezeigt ist.
- ⇒ Optionen für eine engere und offenkundigere Verbindung zwischen AVRR und Strukturhilfe sind zu prüfen.
- ⇒ Das BFM, mit der Unterstützung der DEZA (Migration und Entwicklung) und anderer Akteure sollte die Möglichkeit prüfen, Reintegrationshilfe in einer Entwicklungsperspektive für die Rückkehrländer zu gewähren.

#### **Zusammenarbeit mit Partnerländern**

- ⇒ Die Anstrengungen für Migrationsabkommen mit Ländern die kein klares entsprechendes Interesse haben sollten nicht weitergeführt werden.
- ⇒ Die Schweiz soll bei Verhandlungen für Migrationsabkommen und bei ihrer Umsetzung weiterhin einen „whole of government“ Ansatz verwenden und diesen intensivieren.

## Résumé

### Aide au retour volontaire et à la réintégration

L'aide au retour volontaire et à la réintégration (AVRR – de l'anglais Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration) est un des instruments de la politique migratoire suisse. Elle vise le retour volontaire et légal et la réintégration de requérants d'asile dans leurs pays d'origine. L'instrument comprend différents volets et son application se fait de manière flexible – en tenant compte des besoins tant en Suisse que dans les pays de retour.

### L'évaluation

L'Office fédéral des migrations (ODM) a mandaté une évaluation afin de

1. déterminer la portée et l'étendue des résultats obtenus par les instruments choisis de l'aide au retour suisse pour différents groupes cibles et pays d'origine ;
2. réaliser une évaluation globale de l'atteinte des objectifs planifiés ;
3. tirer des leçons et proposer des recommandations pour l'optimisation et le développement futur de l'aide au retour, au regard des différents groupes cibles et des différents pays d'origine surtout.

En outre, il s'agissait d'évaluer l'AVRR au regard de la coopération de la Suisse avec des pays partenaires dans le domaine de la migration. L'évaluation a combiné des méthodes quantitatives et qualitatives. 130 personnes retournées ont été interviewées en Géorgie, Guinée, Irak et au Nigeria (où des programmes pays sont réalisés) ainsi qu'au Kosovo, Sri Lanka et en Turquie (aide individuelle). En plus, des représentants de gouvernements, d'organisations internationales et d'ONG ont été consultés en Suisse et à l'étranger.

### Résultats de l'évaluation

Sans le soutien à leur retour et à leur réintégration, moins de requérants d'asile retourneraient de Suisse dans leurs pays d'origine, et beaucoup de ces retours se réaliseraient plus tard.

### La logique d'intervention d'AVRR

Le retour dépend de la volonté individuelle de retourner ainsi que de l'imminence d'un retour forcé. Les contributions financières à la réintégration et le montant payé en cas de retour sont bienvenus, mais ils ne sont pas cruciaux pour la décision des personnes qui retournent dans leurs pays d'origine. Le soutien financier contribue cependant à la réintégration.

Le succès de projets de réintégration et la réintégration en tant que telle dépendent de (i) la qualité et la faisabilité des projets, (ii) le volume du soutien financier et d'autres formes d'aide, (iii) la situation économique et d'autres condi-

tions sur place ainsi que (iv) de l'engagement et des capacités des personnes retournées.

### Les profils des personnes qui retournent

Les personnes retournant volontairement – en moyenne et pour tous les pays – sont de sexe masculin, ils ont moins de trente ans et leur demande d'asile a été rejetée. La plupart des retours volontaires concerne des personnes ayant vécu en Suisse peu de temps (moins de deux ans) et qui n'ont pas travaillé en Suisse.

Le profil des personnes retournant dans les sept pays couverts par l'évaluation diffère en deux aspects par rapport à la population totale des personnes retournées : la plupart d'entre eux retourne seul et la part d'hommes est plus grande (86%) que parmi la totalité des personnes retournant (73%).

### Retour

Concernant les sept pays, en moyenne 9% des personnes enregistrées dans le processus d'asile entre 2005 et 2011 ont opté pour un retour volontaire (AVRR). Ce chiffre est de 10% pour tous les pays cumulés. L'aide au retour augmente la probabilité d'un retour volontaire – spécialement si l'offre est proposée avec un soutien à la réintégration.

Ce constat général se base essentiellement sur les résultats d'évaluation suivants : l'accès rapide des groupes cibles à l'information concernant les possibilités d'AVRR contribue à la disposition des candidat-e-s de retourner volontairement dans leurs pays d'origine. La coopération excellente et pragmatique entre les différents acteurs suisses impliqués dans l'AVRR (Confédération, cantons, Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations (OIM), ONG) contribue également aux retours volontaires ainsi qu'à leur réalisation efficace. La motivation pour le retour repose sur différents facteurs, le plus important étant la situation individuelle et familiale du ou de la requérant-e d'asile. La situation économique et la sécurité dans les pays d'origine contribuent également de façon importante à la volonté de retourner. La possibilité d'un retour forcé est une motivation additionnelle pour les retours « volontaires ».

### Réintégration

Les prestations d'AVRR contribuent au succès de la réintégration sociale et économique (professionnelle) dans les pays d'origine. Les résultats d'évaluation sont les suivants :

L'intégration sociale est habituellement la dimension de la réintégration qui se fait avec le plus de facilité, même si elle peut constituer un processus psychique difficile.

La réintégration économique peut être soutenue par des mesures d'AVRR : beaucoup de projets ont un effet positif sur la situation des personnes retournées. Mais l'aide fournie ne garantit pas le succès de la réintégration professionnelle et économique. Cela est vrai même si la Suisse fournit de l'aide à la réintégration de manière adaptée aux conditions et aux besoins spécifiques des personnes rentrées dans leur pays d'origine, et même si les montants sont plus importants que ceux mis à disposition par d'autres pays européens. La plupart des personnes rentrées dans leur pays d'origine affirment que le soutien financier obtenu ne suffit pas pour une réintégration professionnelle durable. Il n'y a pas de différence notable entre le succès de l'aide à la réintégration fournie dans le cadre des programmes spécifiques par pays et celle proposée dans le cadre de l'aide au retour individuelle. Le succès de la réintégration est à mesurer par un nombre limité d'indicateurs. L'effet de l'aide à la réintégration, sur un laps de temps limité, en général pas plus de 12 mois, en est un. La réintégration (comprise en tant qu'absence du désir de migrer à nouveau) peut être durable même si le projet de réintégration n'aboutit pas.

### **Coopération avec des pays partenaires**

Les prestations d'AVRR peuvent contribuer à une coopération améliorée et élargir le dialogue politique entre les autorités suisses et celles des pays d'origine des personnes qui retournent. Pour des raisons politiques, la ratification d'accords de migration prend habituellement un temps considérable. Dans les cas où des accords n'ont pas été signés, l'ODM travaille de manière flexible.

## **Conclusions / leçons majeures**

### **Général**

- L'aide au retour et à la réintégration contribue à la régulation du nombre de personnes requérant l'asile en Suisse.
- Le retour volontaire ainsi que l'aide au retour et à la réintégration sont actuellement des instruments de la politique suisse en matière de migration qui ne souffrent d'aucune contestation fondamentale.
- L'information et le conseil sont cruciaux.
- Un « pull-effect » en raison des prestations d'AVRR suisses sur les habitants des sept pays faisant partie de l'évaluation ne peut pas être identifié.
- L'AVRR a une fonction importante en matière de politique intérieure Suisse – et l'instrument facilite l'acceptation des retours aux pays partenaires.

### **Retour**

- La motivation pour un retour volontaire et profiter du soutien à la réintégration est le résultat

de différents facteurs. Les plus importants sont la situation individuelle et familiale des requérants d'asile. Les stimulants financiers ne sont pas décisifs pour le retour.

- Un retour forcé imminent augmente la probabilité d'un retour volontaire.
- Le retour est réalisé de manière efficace et effective.

### **Réintégration**

- Sur le plan international, l'aide au retour et à la réintégration suisse est parmi la plus systématique (proposant divers instruments) et la plus généreuse financièrement.

### **Coopération avec les pays partenaires**

- Des partenariats migratoires peuvent faciliter la coopération avec des pays partenaires, surtout concernant les retours forcés – mais ils ne sont pas une condition à la réalisation des différentes formes de retour.

## **Recommandations**

### **Retour**

- ⇒ La pratique actuelle de la préparation et de la réalisation des retours est à continuer.
- ⇒ Le laps de temps entre la décision d'individus et de familles de retourner dans le cadre de l'aide au retour lui-même doit être aussi court que possible.
- ⇒ La préparation détaillée et la validation d'un projet de réintégration devrait se faire d'avantage après le retour – afin d'améliorer sa réalisabilité.

### **Réintégration**

- ⇒ Les différentes formes de l'aide à la réintégration doivent être maintenues.
- ⇒ Même si les aspects financiers d'AVRR ne sont pas décisifs pour les décisions de retour, ils doivent être maintenus.
- ⇒ L'ODM est invité à définir la hauteur des montants pour l'aide au retour en considérant les conditions de vie dans les pays de retour, en les ajustant où il le faut.
- ⇒ Il importe de réfléchir à l'établissement de liens plus étroits entre les mesures d'AVRR et l'aide structurelle.
- ⇒ L'ODM, avec le soutien de la DDC (migration et développement) et d'autres acteurs, devrait considérer la possibilité de fournir de l'aide à la réintégration dans une perspective de développement des pays de retour.

### **Coopération avec des pays partenaires**

- ⇒ Les efforts pour des accords migratoires avec des pays qui ne montrent pas un intérêt clair, ne doivent pas être continués.
- ⇒ La Suisse doit continuer à appliquer et intensifier son approche « whole of government » dans les négociations pour des accords migratoires et dans leur mise en œuvre.

## Abbreviations

---

BFM	Bundesamt für Migration (FOM)
BFF	Bundesamt für Flüchtlinge (FOM's predecessor)
EC	European Commission
FDJP	Federal Department of Justice and Police
FDFA	Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
FOM	Federal Office for Migration
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
ISS	International Social Service
RCS	Return Counselling Services
RIF	Reintegration Information Fund
PiM	Prevention of Irregular Migration
RAS	Reintegration Assistance Switzerland
RCS	Return Counselling Services
REZ	Voluntary Return Assistance at the Reception Centres
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SIM	swissREPAT – IOM – Movements
ZEMIS	Zentrales Migrationsinformationssystem

# 1 Introduction

The present report assesses the Swiss Voluntary Return and Reintegration assistance 2005-2011, implemented by the Federal Office for Migration (FOM) together with the cantons, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and other federal offices. Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (both country specific programmes and individual assistance for returnees) is one of Switzerland's instruments for managing migration. The introductory chapter briefly recalls main aspects of return and reintegration assistance, and presents the evaluation's purpose and its methods.

## 1.1 Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR)

Swiss return assistance uses several **instruments**, each of them targeting specific groups of potential returnees and / or specific moments during the preparation of the return, the actual return, and the reintegration in the country of origin:

- return counselling services (RCS) in the cantons: provided by a cantonal body or an NGO;
- individual return and reintegration assistance: open to all eligible persons in the asylum process, independent of their nationality;
- country-specific return assistance programs: joint programmes with SDC and IOM for selected countries (these programmes offer more comprehensive services and larger sums for reintegration support than individual return and reintegration assistance);
- structural aid and prevention of irregular migration (PiM): e.g. projects supporting receiving communities;
- return counselling and return and reintegration assistance from reception centres (Rückkehrhilfe ab Empfangszentrum (REZ)).

These instruments are, together with further measures like Reintegration Information Fund (RIF), swissREPAT-IOM-Movements (SIM), Reintegration Assistance Switzerland (RAS), an integral part of migration partnerships between Switzerland and a few countries (e.g. Nigeria and Kosovo). This report focuses on individual and country-specific return and reintegration assistance. The following box describes their main features:

### Individual assistance

1. return counselling and preparations
2. all costs for return journey and if necessary social or medical escort during return journey or/and transit assistance or/and arrival assistance
3. a cash allowance of CHF 1,000 for adults and CHF 500 for minors, or CHF 500 for adults and CHF 250 for minors, if the stay lasted less than three months
4. individual medical return assistance: purchase of medicine or also payment for medical treatment received following return, and medical escort service
5. individual return assistance up to CHF 3,000 for a social or professional reintegration project (per case).

### Country programme assistance

1. same as 1.-5. above with a higher upper limit of financial aid (e.g. CHF 4,000 in the case of Georgia / Guinea and CHF 6,000 in the case of Nigeria).
2. In general, when arriving in their native country, returnees are assisted by a partner agency on location (returnee monitoring)
3. Structural aid is offered to the country of origin.

It should also be noted that FOM, and its partners in the cantons, and the IOM, are not the only **actors** in Switzerland who fund and organise return and reintegration support. For instance, the cantons of Geneva and Vaud have recently realised respective activities through IOM as a reaction to increasing numbers of immigrants from the Maghreb states (criteria for participation in this type of AVRR programmes were quite open, since even persons with a criminal record in Switzerland could enrol). At least one non-governmental organisation, ISS (International Social Service), also provides return and reintegration assistance. This programme is linked with state structures involved in AVRR activities: cantonal RCS provide information about this type of support and then send the applications to ISS.

Another dimension of AVRR instruments is their flexible **application in time**: AVRR is not static, its design and application evolves. FOM starts and operates country specific programmes, adapts the (financial) scope and the portfolio of support offered to returnees (medical care, training, psychosocial support, etc.) according to the needs identified in Switzerland and in the countries of return, and it redefines the measure's target groups if necessary (since 2011, a pilot project "Sub Sahara" enables asylum seekers who live in reception centres less than three months to register for reintegration assistance under the global RAS programme).

## 1.2 The Evaluation Approach

### Purpose of the Evaluation

The evaluation was to assess the effects of two of the five instruments mentioned above: the Country Specific Programmes for Georgia, Guinea, Iraq, and Nigeria; and the Individual Assisted Return and Reintegration to Kosovo, Sri Lanka, and Turkey. The primary focus was on effectiveness, impacts, and sustainability (see also Terms of Reference in Annex 1).

#### Evaluation's Objectives

1. Determine the range and extent of outcomes of selected instruments of the Swiss return assistance for different target groups and countries of origin.
2. Make an overall independent assessment of the outcomes achieved against the objectives envisaged.
3. Identify key lessons and to propose practical recommendations for the optimisation and further development of return assistance, especially with regard to different target groups and different native countries.

The present report does not provide specific answers for the seven countries, but has a generic character. The seven individual country studies, realised in the framework of the evaluation, contain country specific assessments of return, reintegration and inter-state cooperation.

### Main Evaluation Questions

The evaluation was to answer three main evaluation questions which, based on initial analyses, were specified by additional questions and adaptations (presented after the main questions) by FOM:

1. To what extent and how do Country Specific Return Assistance Programmes (for Georgia, Guinea, Iraq, and Nigeria) and the Individual Return Assistance Programme (for Kosovo, Turkey, and Sri Lanka) promote voluntary return to the selected countries of origin?

2. To what extent and how do Country Specific Return Assistance Programmes (for Georgia, Guinea, Iraq, and Nigeria) and the Individual Return Assistance Programme (for Kosovo, Turkey, and Sri Lanka) contribute to the process of social and professional integration of returnees and thus sustainable reintegration in the selected countries of origin?
3. To what extent and how do Country Specific Return Assistance Programmes and the Individual Return Assistance Programmes contribute to an improved cooperation of Swiss authorities and authorities of the countries of origin of the potential returnees?

In addition, and in line with the Terms of Reference, the following questions orientated the evaluation:

- What is the intervention logic of the Country Specific Return Assistance Programmes and Individual Return Assistance Programmes? Which implicit or explicitly formulated chain of outcomes do they anticipate?
- What was the profile of participants of the Country Specific Return Assistance Programmes and Individual Return Assistance Programme in the selected countries?
- Which short-term, medium-term and longer-term outcomes (i.e. impacts) were achieved? To what extent do they correspond to the anticipated outcomes?
- Were there any unintended outcomes, especially pull-effects?
- Which indicators are there that the outcomes achieved will be sustainable?
- Which factors triggered the relatively large number of returnees during the year 2010?

## 1.3 Methods

### Quantitative Methods

The **statistical analysis** of data provided by FOM, including ZEMIS data (*Zentrales Migrationsinformationssystem*), data shared by individual FOM collaborators regarding single countries, and the annual asylum statistics, permitted the evaluators to gain an overview on AVRR. Regarding the seven case study countries selected for this evaluation by FOM, the data allowed for establishing the returnees' socio-economic profiles (age, sex, etc.), and for comparing the number of AVRR participants with the entire population eligible for this type of support. The quantitative analysis also laid an important basis for the qualitative analysis of AVRR – by facilitating the preparation of more specific and informed questions and by providing a statistical background against which the results of the qualitative interests of the evaluation could be compared.

### Qualitative Methods

The **analysis of documents** (see Annex 3) was the first step in the evaluation process: FOM and IOM conceptual documents and reports, evaluation reports on Switzerland's and other countries' return and reintegration assistance, together with the results of Swiss AVRR statistical analysis, oriented the preparation of the country studies and the data collection in Switzerland. **Key resource persons interviewed** included representatives of Federal authorities (both at headquarters in Bern and the reception centres) and cantons (Return Counselling Services of twelve cantons), the implementing organisation IOM, and NGOs involved in the management of Voluntary Return (see Annex 2). In addition, contacts were established and interviews were conducted with potential returnees of the seven countries evaluated. Contacts were established during an IOM information event for Nigerian asylum seekers, by contacting migrants in different Swiss cities at phone card sales points and in shops selling African products, etc. and profiting from their networks to access informants.

**Table 1: Total numbers of AVRR Participants and Number of Interviews Conducted**

	Georgia	Guinea	Iraq	Kosovo	Nigeria	Sri Lanka	Turkey	Total
<b>AVRR participants 2005-2011</b>	643	123	957	854	564	216	437	3,794
<b>Interviews with returnees</b>	13	22	22	17	14	25	17	130

Between December 2012 and March 2013 the members of the evaluation team realised **field visits to the seven countries** evaluated: Georgia, Guinea, Iraq, Kosovo, Nigeria, Sri Lanka and Turkey. The main purpose of the field visits was the contact with returnees. Through interviews with persons who had returned from Switzerland with assistance, but also with persons who had not left their country of origin, motivations to migrate and return and experiences with reintegration were assessed. In order to review the cooperation between Switzerland and the respective countries, as well as the potential for further developing this cooperation, representatives from governments and civil society organisations involved in support to return and reintegration were also included. After the visits, **country studies** were elaborated that are part of the evaluation's outputs and out of which the present report draws its findings and recommendations.

### **AVRR as an Object of Evaluation**

AVRR is a recurrent object of evaluations and studies. IOM, the most prominent organisation worldwide in this domain, is also the leader in terms of realising assessments on voluntary return. The questions addressed in such evaluations (a few of them are included in Annex 3) usually concern the effectiveness of the instrument: does it work? The answer regularly is "yes, but ...". AVRR is a recognised instrument for managing the regular migration of asylum seekers despite the repeated finding that the data upon which studies and evaluations are based is usually weak. AVRR evaluations addressing this issue consistently describe how complex the decision-making of potential returnees is. Personal conditions and preferences, social pressure and expectations, financial considerations (although it is generally agreed that they are not decisive), pull-effects from the country of origin and push factors of the country of current residence all have an impact on making decisions, a process which can therefore not be altered by single and simple measures. Transparent and comprehensive information is generally the proposed way to deal with this matter. There is a similar consensus regarding reintegration support: the larger the portfolio of applicable measures is, the better the chances for successful reintegration are. Domestic politics reflected in AVRR are also analysed in the evaluation reports. Discussing migration always means discussing one's own society. Cost is another recurrent topic addressed in AVRR evaluations: funding AVRR programmes is (much) less expensive than providing services to asylum seekers remaining for a long time in the country where they are seeking asylum. Efficiency is explicitly not a topic addressed in the present report; however, financial issues (how much money should be spent to facilitate return and support reintegration?) will be discussed in the following pages.

## 2 Evaluation Findings

---

This chapter starts with a proposal for describing the intervention logic of both country specific programmes and individual return assistance (2.1) and the analysis of the returnees' profiles (2.2), both already containing evaluation findings. The evaluation results presented in the paragraphs following thereafter have been structured along the process of return (2.3) and reintegration (2.4) and then address the cooperation between Switzerland and partner countries in the field of migration (2.5).

### 2.1 The Intervention Logic of AVRR

In summarising the intervention logic, two points are worth mentioning. They highlight the possibilities for positively influencing the outcomes and the impact of AVRR:

1. Voluntary return depends on:
  - (i) individual preparedness for return, and
  - (ii) the availability of instruments for supporting return and reintegration, and then also an imminent forced return.

Financial contributions towards reintegration and the amount granted for returning are welcome, but they are not decisive for potential returnees' decision making (however, financial support is crucial for the success of reintegration). Therefore, interventions focusing on raising the potential returnees' awareness about their situation and perspectives will stimulate interest in returning.

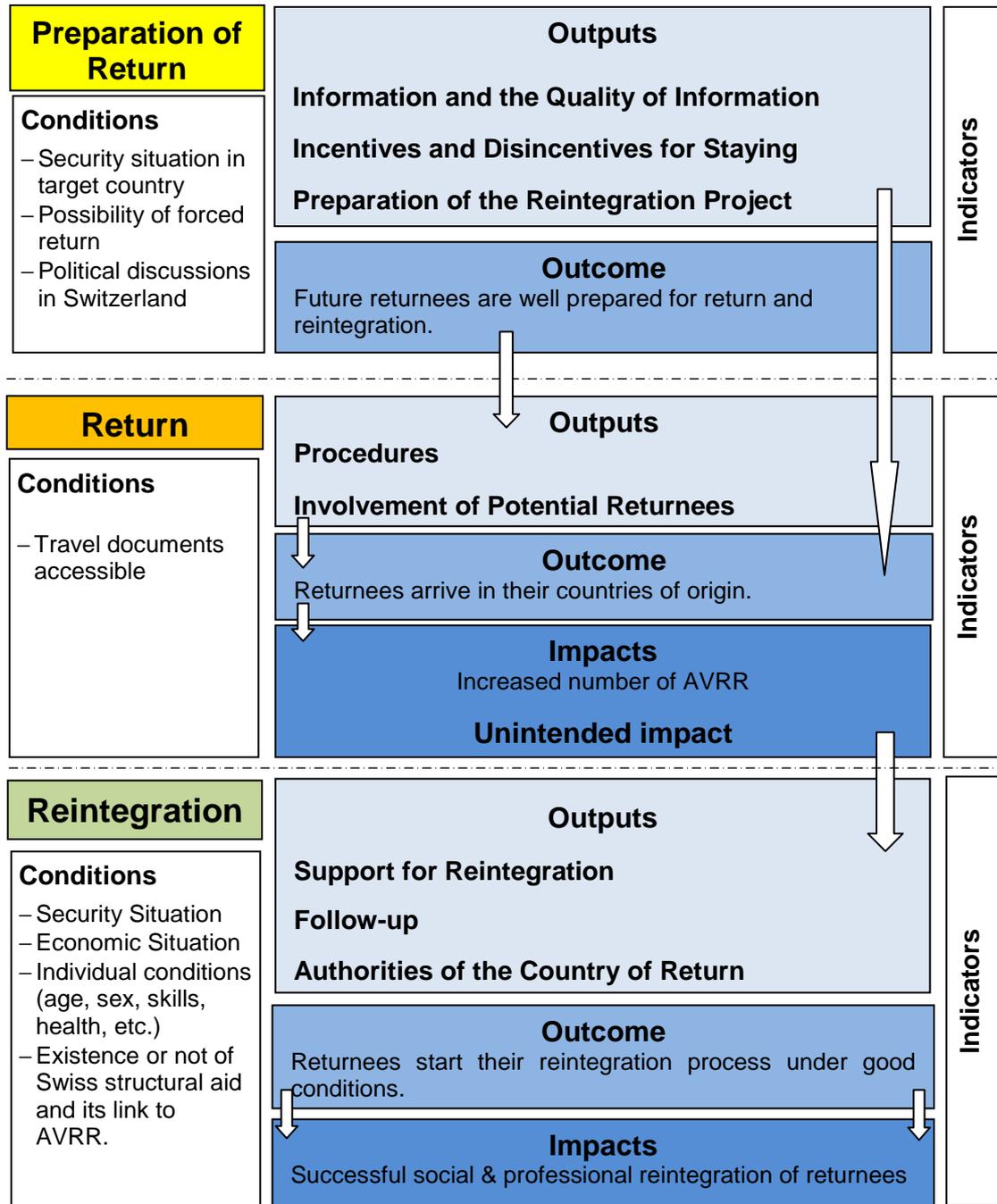
2. The successful realisation of reintegration projects (and, subsequently, successful reintegration) depends on:
  - (i) the conceptual quality and feasibility of the reintegration project;
  - (ii) the volume of funding available and of additional support;
  - (iii) the economic (and other) conditions; and
  - (iv) the returnees' commitment and skills.

IOM and FOM, who both manage the reintegration support, do not have a substantial influence on the context into which returnees reintegrate, e.g. by inviting partner governments to create more conducive conditions for returnees' reintegration. FOM defines the financial resources made available for reintegration and decides on other forms of support (such as health care), and it can contribute to the returnees' ability to successfully implement his or her reintegration project (e.g. by providing training). IOM, in direct contact with governments of partner countries, discusses reintegration conditions with competent authorities. For instance, IOM Nigeria has organised workshops to start a dialogue with the Nigerian government on how to better integrate returnees' issues in national policies (e.g. making social housing accessible to returnees).

The graph below presents a simplified "chain of results" – from the preparation of return in Switzerland to the integration of the returnees in their countries of origin. It lists the outputs and outcomes of the three major stages of the process (preparation, return, and reintegration) as well as the impacts of return and integration. The graph also suggests conditions relevant for AVRR and indicators capable of assessing the quality of outcomes and impacts. The proposed intervention logic is based on literature, and on

the experience of FOM, IOM, return counsellors and other stakeholders and on the insights gained by the evaluators when editing the seven country studies. A more detailed “chain of results” is appended in Annex 4.

**Figure 1: Intervention Logic of Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration**



The above visualisation of the results chain only marginally distinguishes between **country specific programmes** and **individual return and reintegration assistance** for voluntary return. This reflects the assessment that – regarding their basic logic of intervention and respective results chains – the two AVRR types are similar. They differ only regarding the scope of the support provided for the persons enrolled in one of the two types of programmes. Presently running country programmes offer slightly more

substantial support and should therefore be expected to produce better results especially in terms of reintegrating individual returnees.

Furthermore, the visualisation of Swiss AVRR's intervention logic only minimally addresses the effects on the **Swiss public and policy making**. However, it must be remembered that AVRR was a response to the public perception of migration during the Yugoslav wars in the mid-1990s and to subsequent pressure for promoting return. The AVRR intervention logic therefore implicitly intends to have an effect not only on asylum seekers and on Switzerland's cooperation with other states in the field of migration, but also on Switzerland itself. Regarding public opinion, including political parties, this impact resulted in the state's reaction to growing numbers of asylum seekers, especially from countries with little prospect of obtaining asylum, and that it does so in a way that respects human rights standards and dignity.

The following paragraphs explain the information contained in the diagrams above:

### **Preparation of Return**

#### **Outputs**

Information and Quality of Information: Comprehensive and transparent information, also from returnees, the RIF project (Return Information Fund), through video messages or via the "You Project" site, for example, including the possibility of forced return, should be provided as quickly as possible after the target persons' arrival in Switzerland.

Incentives: Potential returnees should develop a positive (but realistic) personal perspective in the country of return. Financial incentives are not decisive in the asylum seekers' decision-making process, but the quality of return counselling is crucial for the future returnees' confidence in the procedures s/he is entering, the promises made to her/him regarding financial and other assistance s/he is entitled to, and also for the quality of the reintegration's start.

Disincentives for Staying in Switzerland: Showing the absence of a perspective in Switzerland can contribute considerably to the individual returnee's preparedness to enrol in AVRR.

Preparation for the Reintegration Project: The project design (at least its basic outlines) focuses the future returnees' interests on their new context and already sets off the reintegration process.

#### **Outcome**

Participants have a positive attitude towards their return and the first months in their country of origin and are, within realistic limits, well prepared for a successful realisation of their reintegration process.

#### **Conditions**

The security situation in the receiving country must be conducive to return. Information about the possibility of forced return may help potential returnees to make a decision. The discussions in Switzerland – about return and return assistance, about the situation in the countries of return – may also influence the preparation of return (e.g. by contributing to asylum seekers becoming tired of the respective process).

#### **Indicators**

The success of return can be measured most effectively if FOM defines AVRR target values per country and for periods of more than one year. Target values are to be

realistic and ambitious at the same time. For example: 10% of the asylum seekers from country X shall return under AVRR between 2013 and 2015 (annual targets do not appear to be realistic, because fluctuations may occur according to the security situation in the country of return). The whole process must obviously respect international conventions regarding human rights and migration.

## **Return**

### **Outputs**

Procedures: Ideally, the time span between the decision to return and the actual return is as short as possible. Remaining in Switzerland after the decision is not beneficial for the quality of return and reintegration. This also means that reintegration projects are not necessarily fully defined before leaving Switzerland.

Involvement of Returnees: Future returnees should actively participate in the last steps before returning. This includes going to their embassies or consulates to obtain travel documents, purchasing items they want to bring home, informing their families and friends in their country of origin about their coming home, etc.

### **Outcome**

AVRR participants arrive in their countries of origin and, at the airport, receive return money and additional first support if required (transportation, possibly also accommodation for their first night).

### **Impact**

The successful organisation of return, and the adequate information to potential returnees in Switzerland, may result in increased numbers of asylum seekers voluntarily returning to countries of origin. Also, if the return is well organised and authorities of the receiving country are aware of it, cooperation between them and Swiss authorities may improve, even in view of forced return.

Although there seems to be a general consensus on the utility of AVRR (see paragraph 2.3 below), voluntary return may be criticised by observers of Switzerland's migration policy if it is not clearly distinguished from forced return. Such an unintended result needs to be prevented by FOM and IOM – the latter can only be involved in voluntary returns – through appropriate communication measures.

### **Conditions**

AVRR participants can only return to their countries of origin if embassies or consulates provide the documents required for their journey.

### **Indicators**

Procedures must comply with Human Rights standards. Also, the time elapsed between the asylum seeker's formal decision to return and the actual return must be monitored. The period should not exceed the duration of a few months, but still allow for a proper preparation for return, including drafting a rough plan of the reintegration project.

## **Reintegration**

### **Outputs**

Reintegration Support: The foreseen components of reintegration assistance (in line with the specificities of country programmes and individual return assistance) are provided to returnees.

Follow-up: The services provided to returnees include the follow-up by IOM, which not only consists of monitoring, but also of counselling if required.

Country of Return Authorities: The involvement of authorities, possibly even at a local level, is welcome if offered and effective. Evidence from the seven countries visited shows that such support is usually neither provided nor required.

### **Outcome**

Persons returning to their country of origin under AVRR enjoy comparably good conditions for their reintegration. They have something to do and a perspective for their future; their first months back home are not the critical ones regarding their economic situation.

### **Impact**

Ideally, AVRR results in full social and professional (economic) reintegration of the returnees. Realistically, returnees have a job or are self-employed. In rare cases, their reintegration project was so successful that it provided jobs to others as well. In either case, the outcome is positive if returnees do not consider irregular migration again. Through their testimonials about return and reintegration, successful returnees can contribute to other asylum seekers' preparedness to enrol in AVRR in Switzerland.

### **Conditions**

Successful reintegration depends on the return country's security situation, on the economic conditions (for the professional reintegration), on the returnees' individual conditions (health, family situation, etc.). If returnees have access to Swiss structural aid (e.g. micro-credits), reintegration might be additionally supported.

### **Indicators**

The number of successfully realised reintegration projects and the social and economic situation of returnees overall are the most important indicators for assessing the quality of reintegration: If returnees have a job or are self-employed nine or twelve months after their return (not even necessarily with the initial income-generating project), their reintegration is successful. Even if the attribution of successful reintegration to FOM funded project is not complete, it can be assumed that their initial reintegration activities permitted returnees to develop new ideas, get to know the context even better, and thus to integrate also thanks to the initial efforts. An additional indicator may be the number of AVRR returnees who come back to Switzerland or the Schengen / Dublin space (re-migration rate): the lower the number, the more successful AVRR is.

## 2.2 Profiles of Returnees

### The Data

FOM provided the evaluators with lists of participants in the Country Specific Return Assistance Programmes for Georgia, Guinea, Iraq and Nigeria. The lists contained both actual participants and persons who in the end did not receive assistance (“no-shows”, etc.). The analysis, however, only covers the actual participants. The evaluators further received lists with the returnees under Individual Return Assistance (2005 to 2011), including cases with “Zusatzhilfe”, “REZ” and “Dublin” assistance – only REZ and Dublin cases from sub Saharan countries can receive individual reintegration assistance since mid 2011. In addition, the evaluators had access to a database covering all entries in FOM’s ZEMIS (*Zentrales Migrationsinformationssystem*) database for persons who entered Switzerland after 1997.<sup>1</sup> Many of the cases were covered in both datasets (ZEMIS and AVRR lists), and the return assistance lists could be complemented with returnees’ background information. This additional information was used to analyse the returnees’ profiles.

As data was used from a period when AVRR participation was not covered in FOM’s ZEMIS database, certain challenges had to be overcome: a) the file number (N-number) on AVRR lists does not uniquely identify individuals but is a household number. Through matching (using gender and age), many individuals from the two databases (ZEMIS and AVRR) could be paired up<sup>2</sup>; b) there were some double entries on the lists; these duplicates were eliminated; and finally, c) the lists the evaluators used for the analysis did not cover all AVRR participants. A dual approach was therefore used: when referring to absolute participants’ numbers, the numbers FOM published in its yearly AVRR statistics were used.<sup>3</sup> When referring to other figures (such as persons registered, number of persons having left Switzerland, as well as proportional figures for gender, age and refugee status) the data from the combined dataset (ZEMIS and AVRR lists) were used.

In addition to the analyses below, Annex 6 to the evaluation presents an analysis of the inflow and outflows of migrants from / to six of the countries included in the evaluation.

### Profiles

The following two charts summarize the returnees’ profiles. The first one shows the profile for all returnees worldwide, the second one for the seven countries covered by the evaluation. Country-specific profiles are shown in Annex 4.

---

<sup>1</sup> This access was provided by the project “Erwerbsquote FL / VA” that KEK and B,S,S. are currently implementing for FOM.

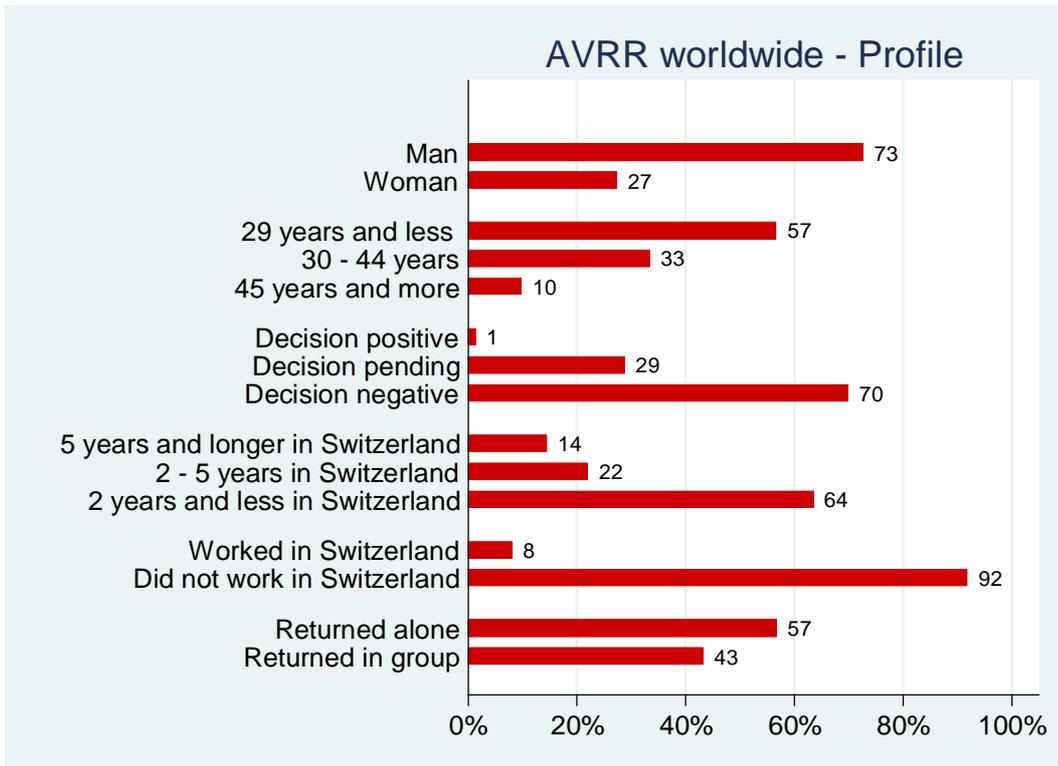
<sup>2</sup> Out of 9,842 returnees with a valid file number and a registered departure, 5,310 returnees could be matched both to the ZEMIS and the AVRR lists (with the file number, age and gender), and a further 3,256 individuals were part of a household which left altogether. Finally, 541 persons were part of a household for which there were more entries in the AVRR list than in ZEMIS (due, inter alia, to the fact that our copy of the ZEMIS database only covers the time between 1997 and 2011). 977 persons were part of a household in which not every member left (there were more entries in ZEMIS than in the AVRR lists). In the analysis, the latter group was treated as follows: To prevent bias due to the list place of individuals, all non-matched individuals were randomly assigned a number and selected according to this number. While this prevented a systematic bias, statistical deviations from the true numbers were still possible (particularly in smaller groups).

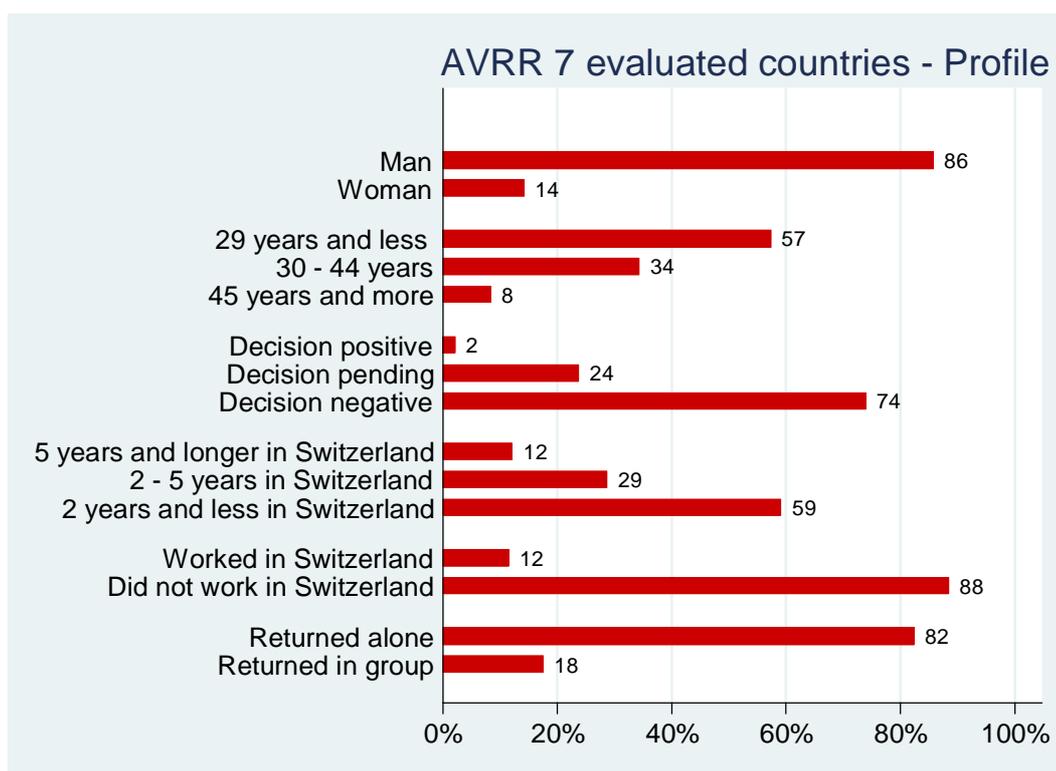
<sup>3</sup> BFM: Statistik Rückkehrhilfe nach Nationen 2004 – 2012. Download: [www.bfm.admin.ch/content/dam/data/migration/rueckkehr/rueckkehrfoerderung/rueko/statistik/2004-2012-stat-nation-d.pdf](http://www.bfm.admin.ch/content/dam/data/migration/rueckkehr/rueckkehrfoerderung/rueko/statistik/2004-2012-stat-nation-d.pdf)

As the tables above show, the average returnee was male, young and was denied asylum. The profile also shows that most returnees' stay in Switzerland was relatively short (i.e. less than two years) and they did not have a job. The number of persons who returned alone and the number of persons who returned in a group (i.e. as a family) is of similar size on the global level.

The profiles of the seven countries covered by the evaluation differ in two aspects: the majority of returnees returned home alone, and the proportion of men is higher. Other than that, the profiles shown in the charts are similar.

**Figure 2: Profile of Swiss AVRR participants**





### Likelihood of Participation

Overall, 12,409 persons returned with AVRR assistance between 2005 and 2011. This corresponds to a 10 % participation rate of all the persons registered in the asylum process during those years (thus the overall population eligible for such assistance). A second indicator for the likelihood of participation is the number of returnees entering the AVRR programme compared to all those leaving Switzerland. At an average of 23 %, this proportion is much higher. Still, both figures show that AVRR participation is the exception rather than the rule; the vast majority of those leaving the country do so without accessing AVRR assistance.

**Table 2: Total Numbers of Participants in Relation to Persons Registered / Leaving**

	Georgia	Guinea	Iraq	Kosovo	Nigeria	Sri Lanka	Turkey	Total 7	Total
<b>AVRR participants</b>	643	123	957	854	564	216	437	3'794	12'409
<b>Registered in asylum process 2005-2011</b>	3'003	1'860	8'376	3'783	7'565	7'869	7'772	40'228	126'706
<b>Participants in % of registered</b>	21%	7%	11%	23%	7%	3%	6%	9%	10%
<b>Left Switzerland 2005-2011</b>	2'843	1'560	2'806	1'789	6'840	1'474	1'524	18'836	54'410
<b>Participants in % of persons leaving</b>	23%	8%	34%	48%	8%	15%	29%	20%	23%

Note: "Total 7" represents the total of the seven mentioned countries. "Total" includes all participants regardless of their country of origin. "Registered 2005 – 2011" includes all persons who were registered in ZEMIS' asylum component between 2005 and 2011. "Left Switzerland" includes uncontrolled and controlled exits. This figure (and the number of people having left Switzerland) only includes those having entered Switzerland after 1997.

The participation differs greatly between countries, both in terms of absolute and relative numbers. Out of the seven countries covered by the evaluation, the highest numbers stem from Iraq, Kosovo and Georgia. Those three countries did not only have the highest absolute numbers, but also the highest proportions when comparing the number of participants to the number of persons registered in the asylum process. The same countries are on top of the list if the number of participants is compared to the number of persons having left Switzerland. In all seven countries, the majority of persons left Switzerland without assistance (although in Kosovo, AVRR participants make up practically half of all people having left).

### Participants: Women and Men

One third of all persons registered in the asylum process are women. This proportion varies significantly among the seven countries (5 % for Guinea, 47% for Sri Lanka). The number of women in the AVRR programmes is smaller still, i.e. the likelihood of participation (as indicated by the figure “participants in % of registered”) is lower for women than for men. The difference is particularly striking in Guinea, where men are five times more likely to participate than women, and Iraq, where men are three times more likely to participate.

**Table 3: Participants in Regards to Gender (M = Men, W = Women)**

		Georgia	Guinea	Iraq	Nigeria	Kosovo	Sri Lanka	Turkey	Total 7	Total
AVRR participants	M	90%	99%	88%	97%	77%	62%	73%	86%	73%
	W	10%	1%	12%	3%	23%	38%	27%	14%	27%
Registered 2005-2011	M	90%	95%	75%	93%	57%	53%	62%	72%	67%
	W	10%	5%	25%	7%	43%	47%	38%	28%	33%
Participants in % of registered	M	21%	7%	6%	7%	13%	3%	5%	8%	8%
	W	20%	1%	2%	3%	5%	2%	3%	3%	7%

*Note: The evaluators did not have information on the gender of all the participants. The figures “participants in % of registrations” were adjusted on the assumption that the gender distribution in cases where gender data was missing was the same as in the cases where gender data was available.*

### Participants: Age

**Table 4: Participants in Regards to Age (Age when Leaving Switzerland (programme participants)) or Age in 2011 (Population Registered between 2005 and 2011))**

		Georgia	Guinea	Iraq	Nigeria	Kosovo	Sri Lanka	Turkey	Total 7	Total
AVRR participants	< 30	50%	77%	58%	70%	74%	24%	42%	57%	57%
	30-49	42%	21%	35%	28%	23%	35%	47%	34%	33%
	50 +	7%	3%	7%	2%	3%	41%	11%	8%	10%
Registered 2005-2011	< 30	39%	81%	51%	70%	58%	36%	40%	51%	53%
	30-49	56%	18%	44%	29%	34%	55%	53%	44%	42%
	50 +	5%	0%	5%	0%	8%	9%	7%	5%	5%
Participants in % of registered	< 30	26%	6%	6%	7%	12%	2%	4%	7%	8%
	30-49	16%	7%	4%	7%	7%	1%	3%	5%	6%
	50 +	33%	43%	7%	45%	4%	11%	6%	10%	15%

*Note: The evaluators did not have information on the age of all the participants. The figures "participants in % of registered" were adjusted on the assumption that the age distribution in cases with missing age data was the same as the age distribution with cases with available age data. The age for persons registered reflects the age at the time of registration; for AVRR participants, it is the age when leaving Switzerland.*

More than half of the overall population of potential AVRR participants are under the age of 30. They also represent about half of the actual participants, so their participation rate is in line with the overall percentage. While the middle age group shows a below average participation rate, the one of the returnees above the age of 50 is much higher: the oldest age group is the one most likely to take up the offer and to return home.

### **Participants: Refugee Status**

Only 1% of persons who have benefited from AVRR had been granted asylum (or temporary admission). AVRR provides very little incentive for these persons to return home. More than two thirds of AVRR participants were denied asylum, the last third was still waiting for an answer (request pending). This is reflected in the likelihood of participation: the rate is practically zero for persons who received asylum. It is much higher for those who received a negative reply.

**Table 5: Participants in Regards to Refugee Status (positive, negative, pending)**

		Georgia	Guinea	Iraq	Nigeria	Kosovo	Sri Lanka	Turkey	Total 7	Total
<b>AVRR participant s</b>	<b>Pos.</b>	0%	0%	7%	0%	1%	7%	3%	2%	1%
	<b>Neg.</b>	38%	10%	23%	9%	26%	29%	23%	24%	29%
	<b>Pend</b>	62%	90%	70%	91%	74%	64%	73%	74%	70%
<b>Registered 2005-2011</b>	<b>Pos.</b>	2%	9%	45%	5%	32%	47%	69%	36%	37%
	<b>Neg.</b>	15%	9%	12%	4%	13%	15%	9%	11%	13%
	<b>Pend</b>	82%	82%	43%	91%	55%	39%	21%	53%	50%
<b>Participant s in % of registered</b>	<b>Pos.</b>	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	<b>Neg.</b>	50%	7%	10%	15%	20%	5%	9%	14%	17%
	<b>Pend</b>	16%	7%	8%	7%	13%	4%	13%	9%	11%

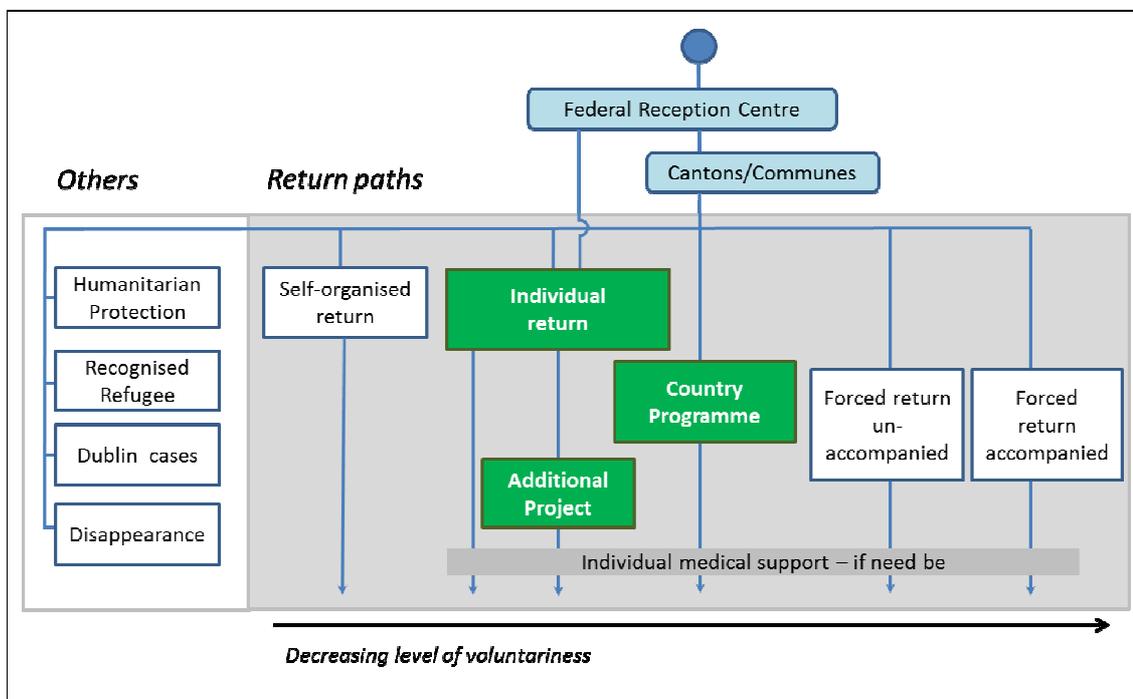
*Note: The evaluators did not have information on the refugee status of all participants. The figures "participants in % of registered" were adjusted on the assumption that the refugee status distribution in cases with missing refugee status data was the same as in cases where refugee status was available.*

The data also shows that while the rate of those who had not yet received an answer is lower than for those with a negative reply, it is still relatively high (11 %). The majority of asylum seekers did not enter the programme while their request was being processed; one third decided to do so and left for their home country.

## 2.3 Return

Voluntary return is only one of several possibilities for asylum seekers to return to their countries of origin. At the same time, voluntary return can only be assessed if those other forms of return are also taken into consideration: for example, voluntary return is facilitated by the possibility of forced return.

**Figure 3: Overview on Process Paths of Asylum Seekers in Switzerland**



The diagram above shows different paths of asylum seekers according to the current Swiss regulations. Return is obviously not the sole form of exiting the asylum process. Besides being granted asylum or receiving humanitarian protection, asylum seekers can also continue their journey on their own to another country (they might even return to their country of origin without assistance), or they can continue living in Switzerland without any type of status, i.e. illegally, as *sans papiers*. The evaluation focused on the return paths highlighted in green: individual and country programme related AVRR cases. As shown in the returnees' profiles, the respective numbers are relatively small compared to the other return paths.

AVRR increases the likelihood of voluntary return – especially when implemented together with other instruments

Without the AVRR instrument, fewer asylum seekers would return to their home countries, and if they did, in many cases the conditions under which they returned would be critical. The following paragraphs will produce evidence for this overall assessment. At the same time, it must be said that the numbers of asylum seekers returning under AVRR are relatively small compared with the entire population eligible for return and reintegration assistance.

### Preparation of Return

#### Information

Information on AVRR reaches the target groups and contributes to the preparedness of eligible persons to return.

This is due, *inter alia*, to the well prepared, competent and experienced staff providing return counselling services in the cantons and the reception centres. It is also due to the way information is passed on to potential returnees, which makes it possible to build trustful relations with them. This seems to be easier for counsellors who do not represent government administration: IOM and Swiss NGOs are in the privileged position that they provide counselling, but do not make (negative) decisions, increasing the receptivity of the information provided.

Access to target groups is also ensured by providing information through different channels: Wherever asylum seekers come into contact with authorities managing migration, they will find flyers and posters recalling the possibility of assisted voluntary return. The reception centres regularly organise meetings for their asylum seekers and inform them about AVRR, both orally and with written materials. Sometimes such meetings are held for asylum seekers from a specific country, with fellow countrymen (from the IOM and/or members of the diaspora) informing them about assisted return. During meetings, videos may be shown in which returnees talk about their return and reintegration project, thus reinforcing the plausibility of the proposed support for return and reintegration. Experience has shown that returnees do not always trust these promises for support, because they do not believe the state institutions in their countries of origin are reliable. Important information channels are the migrants' networks. Information about AVRR usually travels fast among asylum seekers; when meeting return counsellors, potential returnees are usually already aware about the possibility of assisted return. There are only few examples indicating that information does not reach all members of the target group. This is confirmed by the fact that return counselling services do not have to actively promote their offer; they can build on the information circulating among their target population and on the effects of previous information campaigns (such as a flyers and letters from the FOM sent along with a negative reply). Potential returnees go to see counsellors, or are referred to them by others, including municipal social services or the police. This shows that AVRR is well known beyond the organisations directly dealing with it. It can be assumed awareness about AVRR among additional stakeholders can result in more referrals and increased numbers of enrolment.

#### **AVRR experience of other donors: the Nigerian example**

The Swiss AVRR country programme in Nigeria receives high appreciation from other donors, and is seen as a good model. A specific example is that of the UK. In 2010 UK AVRR programme was handed over to a new implementer after a tender. Subsequently, governance problems almost stalled the programme and a new institutional set-up had to be chosen. Due to the substantial number of forced returns from the UK, it is now setting up two new programmes. First, a programme for forced and voluntary returnees shall provide accommodation, counseling and training (soft and vocational skills) and can include some financial assistance. This is conceived as three weeks of "soft landing" back in their home country and to improve employability of the participants. Second, a four-weeks entrepreneurship programme is planned with an intake of 20 persons. To sum up, it appears as if alternative organisational arrangements for the reintegration management and counseling are not easy to find and have only relatively low absorption capacity in terms of numbers of returnees.

## **Stakeholders**

The cooperation between the different Swiss actors involved in AVRR is excellent.

Not only do stakeholders provide adequate, comprehensive and transparent information, they also cooperate well. FOM (both the headquarters and the reception centres), cantonal return counselling services (or organisations mandated by cantons to provide such services), and the IOM all cooperate based on mutual trust, a long experience of working together, and on a clear division of tasks. Some cantonal return counselling services report that FOM's reorganisation resulted in a lack of clarity regarding contact people concerning specific questions. But the interaction between the cantons and the Confederation regarding AVRR currently does not face any type of obstacles.

The IOM, mandated by FOM with the organisation of return, is also involved in return counselling. For instance, the IOM staff is present in the reception centres, where they provide return counselling and organise voluntary returns. FOM and IOM representatives alike point out that it can be important that information is not passed on by persons representing the authorities: for some potential returnees, especially during their first weeks in Switzerland, people outside of the authorities may appear more trustworthy. The separation of tasks – decision making and information – is also reflected in the return itself: FOM makes decisions on the asylum requests or on granting assistance for return and reintegration, the return and the assistance is then organised by the IOM, an intergovernmental organisation. Following at least partly the same logic, some cantons have mandated NGOs to do the return counselling: Red Cross societies (in the Ticino and Geneva as well as in Glarus and Uri), Caritas (in parts of central Switzerland), or a specialised organisation (in the canton of Berne) inform potential returnees about AVRR conditions and procedures.

### **Situation in the Countries of Origin**

The situation in potential returnees' countries of origin has an effect on the number of returns, particularly when security is insufficient.

Periods of intense civil war in Sri Lanka, episodes of political repression and violence in Guinea, persecution of minorities in Turkey (especially before the period evaluated), negatively influenced the preparedness of asylum seekers (and of refugees) to participate in AVRR. The prospect of peace in Sri Lanka, and later the end of the civil war, on the other hand, had a positive effect on the willingness of Tamils in Switzerland to return and contributed to the development of a dynamic among potential returnees that led to an increasing number of returnees. A similar effect can be expected from positive economic developments (Kurdistan and its booming economy, and, to a lesser extent, Sri Lanka and Turkey), although the link is much less direct: macroeconomic improvement does not benefit everyone, and asylum seekers in Switzerland are, in the overwhelming majority, persons who would not necessarily have access to growing markets and new economic resources in their countries of origin.

However, the development in the country of origin is one thing; the potential returnees' individual situation is another. Not all asylum seekers will want to return to their countries of origin, even if the situation there is evolving positively. Their individual aspirations and their continued orientation towards Europe, sometimes the fear of returning as unsuccessful migrants, or simply the expectation of continued persecution or problems with the judicial system in the country of origin may prevent potential returnees from leaving Switzerland under AVRR, even when conditions for returning have improved.

## The Potential Returnees

The motivation for returning is the result of a number of factors, the most important being the asylum seeker's individual and familial situation.

The most important factors that make a potential returnee decide to voluntarily return to his or her home country are the following: the situation of their families in the country of origin (parents with ailing health, the death of a relative, the insistent request of a spouse that they return) and being tired of their situation in Switzerland (the living conditions, sending money to relatives is difficult or impossible, the low chances of a definite stay in Switzerland). Most returnees have to leave Switzerland because their asylum request was denied. The reasons for enrolling in AVRR, furthermore, is linked to the desire of having at least gained something from the migration experience, to have something to show at home, and to make reintegration somewhat easier.

Swiss migration management can not intervene with regards to the first of these factors, the family's situation in the country of origin or deeply rooted homesickness. Here, decisions to return are made without facilitation by return counsellors or other actors migrants come into contact during their asylum process. The Swiss asylum system can affect the asylum seekers' situation in Switzerland, and it does so, often with the intention to render a prolonged stay unattractive: the support for their livelihood is reduced; quality of housing provided is inferior. Some returnees interviewed in the seven evaluated countries reported that the living conditions in Switzerland had led them to decide to return.

Other factors also shape the decision to enrol in AVRR. The most relevant ones are the menace of forced return and the personal situation of potential returnees, i.e. their link to the country of origin and their situation in Switzerland. If it is the individual situation which is instrumental for a potential returnee's decision to return, then making the decision is not a solitary act. Family members "back home" or in other European countries, friends in Switzerland or in Europe are often consulted, matters are discussed, thus comforting the returnee s/he is not making the wrong decision. Yet, it is still his or her individual situation which is the main factor for deciding. The consultation with family and friends is a means to not make decision alone, to get support from one's own social networks.

Financial incentives play a role for the decision to return, but they are not decisive.

Financial incentives for return and reintegration are attractive for those who return, and they may facilitate deciding to enrol in AVRR, but, based on the insights gained from the interviews with returnees, it is fair to say financial incentives never are the principal reason for returning. Nevertheless, even though the money given to returnees for their return and reintegration does not convince them to return, it plays an important role: without financial incentives, Switzerland would have to realise many more forced returns, and more uncontrolled exits from the asylum process would occur. And, very important, the quality of return and, even more so, of reintegration would suffer (see also paragraph 2.4 on reintegration).

The possibility of forced return has an effect on preparedness for return.

It has repeatedly been stated by many authors as well as interview partners in Switzerland and in the countries of return that "voluntary return" is very often not truly voluntary. The present evaluation clearly confirms this. The possibility of forcing an asylum seeker to return to his or her country of origin has an effect on them. But it is

important to note that the threat of forced return does not result, for instance, in all asylum seekers deciding to enrol in AVRR. There are several reasons why the possibility of forced return does not strongly increase voluntary returns. One of them is that forced return is not possible to all countries and in all individual cases: some countries do not accept any forced returns, and some do not accept the forced return of every single person the Swiss authorities would like to make return. In such cases, an asylum seeker may decide to stay in Switzerland. He or she may prefer this solution, although possibly uncomfortable, to assisted return.

**Voluntary returnees participate in the preparatory work required to realise return.**

Once the decision to return is made, the participation in the preparation of their return consists mainly in obtaining travel documents from their embassies or consulates, possibly in informing family and friends in the country of origin, by buying or collecting things they want to bring home as gifts or souvenirs, and by designing the project for their reintegration to be funded by FOM. The future returnees' participation in preparing their return not only reduces the workload of other actors (FOM, IOM, return counselling services); it also, and most importantly, sets their minds on return and reintegration.

The receiving countries, with the notable exceptions of Algeria (the country is not keen on receiving returnees) and Armenia (the status as an Armenian national is said to be checked thoroughly, which usually takes several months), usually provide *laissez-passeurs* or other travel documents. Nevertheless, if a person who shows up for travel documents is not willing to return, embassies are reluctant and Swiss authorities need to be involved, which in turn slows down the return process.

## Realisation of Return

**Return is organised swiftly and in dignity.**

Once the date of return is set and tickets are purchased, the return is usually carried out as planned. Many returnees go to the airport on their own, possibly accompanied by friends; they very rarely request to be accompanied by the IOM or other staff, and even less often authorities or IOM think that returnees should be brought to the airport. Only a very small minority of persons who have decided to return do not do so. Upon arrival in the country of origin, returnees are welcomed by the IOM where the organisation is mandated to assist returnees, they receive the return money (if not already received in Switzerland), accommodation for their first night is provided if needed and transportation to the place they want to start their reintegration.

## 2.4 Reintegration

The support of reintegration reflects Switzerland's interest and will not just reduce the number of migrants, but contribute to the returnees' good start in their country of origin and provide them with a perspective for their social and professional reintegration process.

**AVRR contributes to successful social and economic (professional) reintegration in the countries of origin.**

Without the AVRR instrument, the arrival back home would be much more arduous. Reintegration support most importantly helps the returnees not being perceived by their families and friends as returning completely empty-handed. It contributes towards their

living costs during the first months in their country of origin, to start an economic activity by self-employment or to be hired by an employer and earn a salary.

The following paragraphs will produce evidence for the above assessment. It is important to remember here that the basis for the following mainly consists of the insights gained by the evaluators during their visits to the seven countries evaluated. The 130 returnees interviewed were selected randomly; their preparedness to talk to the evaluators may reflect their relatively successful integration (persons whose reintegration was unsuccessful, unless they seized the opportunity to complain about their condition, may prefer not to talk about it). It is conceivable that talking to different returnees might have led the evaluators to different assessments. Interviews with a different sample of returnees might have changed the tone of the following chapters.

## **Social Reintegration**

Social integration is usually the dimension of reintegration easiest to achieve.

There are stories of returnees who do not want to be in touch with their families, because these might have preferred the asylum seekers to remain in Europe and contributing to their livelihood. In other cases, a specific individual condition (e.g. a disease, a history of problematic relations with family members, friends, a political party or the police) may hinder social integration and make the process psychologically difficult for the individual returnee. But usually reintegration in the family is guaranteed. In all of the seven countries evaluated, societies strongly build on familial ties; kinship networks are the most important dimension of social life, and they are so large that returnees will always find a position within their family, even if their time abroad is not considered successful or useful. Furthermore, social reintegration does not exclusively take place through the family; it is also realised through neighbours and friends. It evolves as returnees become active members of a more or less formal group (doing sports activities or realising other common interests). Finally, it can happen through the realisation of an income generating AVRR project where clients are met daily, or through contacts with colleagues at the job provided as reintegration assistance.

## **Economic Reintegration**

Economic reintegration can be fostered by AVRR, but the support provided does not guarantee successful professional and economic reintegration.

Returnees often return into economic contexts that had motivated their migration in the first place and that have not changed for the better in the meantime. The chances for a successful and sustainable implementation of an income-generating project or for profiting from a job that evolves into stable employment are diminished by unfavourable economic conditions.

The support provided by Switzerland is usually not the unique factor conditioning economic reintegration. Individual skills and commitment are not always sufficient and the possibilities and capacities to access additional re-sources (including loans required for running a small enterprise, mobilising local networks and other social resources, possibly also the continued contact with family or friends abroad) are not always given, but often beneficial and sometimes necessary for the successful realisation of reintegration projects.

While Swiss support for reintegration is regularly considered to be best practice, there are examples of specific types of support not provided by Swiss reintegration assistance. The Magnet Project in Northern Iraq, funded by four EU countries and realised by IOM, is a coordinated measure promoting economic reintegration (see box) based on a systematic approach. It links returnees with the private sector and thus attempts to impact directly on the labour market.

### **Magnet – a European Programme for Job Placement in Iraq (Kurdistan)**

MAGNET is an IOM pilot project funded by Austria, Belgium, France and the Netherlands designed to provide Iraqi returnees with information on existing and potential job opportunities as well as liaison with employers in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. This initiative aims at supporting returnees' long-term socioeconomic reintegration by improving its attractiveness and sustainability in their country of origin.

The overall objective of MAGNET is to contribute to the establishment of a common approach for the reintegration of rejected asylum seekers returning to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq from the participating countries. The project will also contribute to increase the number of Assisted Voluntary Return applications to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq by reinforcing the job placement mechanisms already operating in most Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programmes for that region.

Source: [www.magnet-project.eu](http://www.magnet-project.eu)

## **Types of Reintegration Assistance**

Swiss AVRR provides flexible reintegration assistance that is adapted to the individual returnee's specific conditions and needs.

Funding an income-generating project, including training for operating a small business, job placement (helping find a job, paying returnees' salaries) and the funding of specific needs (housing, health care), education for returnees under individual reintegration assistance are the basic services provided by AVRR. The decision about which of these types of support will benefit individual returnees is made flexibly, together with the returnees and after an assessment of their needs, skills and capacities. Income generating projects can, in some cases, become long-term solutions, providing a livelihood for the returnees and their family, possibly even creating new jobs. The other two types are more limited in their potential for sustainability from the start.

Medical support can be granted to returnees with special needs (any chronic or temporary illness or substance abuse requiring medication). However, such support is limited in time and regarding money and returnees may end up without access to the health services they need.

Switzerland provides structural aid to some of the countries returnees go back to. It is a means to lead authorities to engage in a migration dialogue (the additional funds are an attractive incentive), it may minimise the negative effects of reintegration assistance by providing support to segments of the population that did not migrate and who may consider it unjust that returnees receive support for their livelihood when they themselves do not receive such support. Furthermore, it may contribute to the country's development and thus to the improved livelihoods of its population. Structural aid also targets the prevention of irregular migration.

The different types of reintegration support Switzerland provides ideally support each other. However, the links between them are weak. Structural aid, for example, may not contribute to enhancing the effects of AVRR in the strict sense if not systematically

linked to reintegration assistance, and if the link is not visible also for the population in regions with many returnees receiving reintegration support. In some cases, returnees even criticise the fact that they do not have access to structural aid offered in the form of microcredits. In such cases, it is the returnees who feel unfairly treated.

The difference between reintegration assistance provided in the framework of a country programme and of individual return assistance appears to have no impact on the success of individual reintegration.

A country programme allows for more financial resources and provides additional forms of support. These are very welcome, of course, but they are not decisive for the successful reintegration. This assessment is challenged, however, by the observation of the IOM staff and by an evaluation concerning Kosovo (RIINVEST, 2009).

Not all returnees use training offers supporting the realisation of income generating projects.

In several countries, returnees are offered the possibility to improve their skills and know-how in view of successful self-employment or entrepreneurship (business training). Not all returnees profit from this offer because they think they do not require such training, because the place where the training is given is too far from where they live and attending it would be too complicated, or because they are shy, thinking participation would reveal their respective deficits, or even their illiteracy. The IOM stresses the importance of a training offer as do other international recommendations for reintegration support. Individual reintegration assistance can also provide education and vocational training, but these options are rarely used.

The probability of success of different types of assistance does not depend exclusively on the country context, but on the returnees' individual skills and commitment.

Income generating projects, job placements, covering living costs are all valuable forms of support. No final statement can be made about how big or small they should be in different contexts. The quality of the design and the implementation of the individual reintegration project will be decisive for its success. Also, whether an employer in country A is more inclined than an employer in country B to prolong a contract and to pay an employee's salary beyond the duration of Swiss support does not primarily depend on the specificities of these contexts. It depends very much on their own financial possibilities and on their satisfaction with the employed returnee. On the other hand, it can be said that job placement is more easily realised in the context of booming economic activities where the labour market is more dynamic and more jobs are offered. It should also be mentioned that hardly any returnees opt for education / training projects.

## Measuring the Success of Reintegration

Integration is a complex process comprised of social, economic, cultural and personal dimensions, usually understood as individuals' and groups' access to respective resources and the ability to mobilise capital. If reintegration of individual returnees is measured against such a comprehensive understanding of integration, measurements become impracticable, or they only show results after in-depth studies. The successful reintegration (and its support) can be assessed more efficiently for the purpose of AVRR activities:

Measuring an individual returnee's reintegration success should focus on a limited number of practicable indicators.

Of course, any indicator needs to consider the individual's situation: poor economic integration (living below the national poverty line) does not necessarily mean that integration has failed (a person may be very well integrated into a group that is altogether marginalised); a full social life may not guarantee that a person will not migrate again, for economic or for other reasons. Indicators include but are not limited to the following:

- (i) Is the individual returnee permanently present in the country where she/he returned to (or: does the individual returnee's life happen in the country where she/he returned to)?
- (ii) Does the individual returnee have a job or a professional activity (possibly the reintegration project she/he started with AVRR support) which allows him/her to establish and raise and / or support a family or a task (childcare) which provides him or her with a positively assessed social status?
- (iii) Is the individual returnee socially active? Does he or she meet friends and family? Does she or he participate in social activities?
- (iv) Does the individual returnee live above or below the national poverty line?
- (v) Does the individual returnee plan to engage in irregular migration again?

Finally, but very importantly, returnees themselves can be asked to assess the quality of their integration.

- (vi) Does the individual returnee consider himself or herself well integrated?

Such self-assessment should be made available in an efficient and simple form, possibly with a short questionnaire that can also be used for a phone interview.

Regarding the returnees interviewed in the seven countries, the above indicators mostly allow for providing positive appreciations: They are obviously present in the country of origin (with the exception of two persons from Guinea), they are economically and socially active, they are not among the poorest of the poor (some are even comparably well off), the vast majority of them does not plan to migrate again – at least not under irregular conditions. This positive appreciation does of course not prevent the returnees to aspire to further improve their situation and to formulate complaints – economic ones generally, the self-assessments of their social integration is usually very positive.

## The Sustainability of Reintegration Assistance and its Indicators

The sustainability of reintegration support is limited if only the initial reintegration projects and their continuity in time are considered.

Most of the returnees visited are not active in their initial Swiss supported reintegration project anymore. At the same time, the sustainability of support is a delicate issue: AVRR alone cannot ensure a successful reintegration of returnees, and even less so in a long-term perspective. Many factors influence integration; AVRR is one of them. Returnees are not and should not be persons who will be assisted over time; the people around them who did not migrate will not be either. They should rather become actors in the local economy, as entrepreneurs, self-employed people, farmers, employees, etc., based on their own capacities and initiatives.

Regarding the durability of outcome, the following statements can be made:

**Short term outcome:** The most important short term outcome of Swiss reintegration support is the relatively privileged situation in which returnees can start their reintegration process, compared with returnees from most other countries. This is due to the both to the financial return assistance and the financial and other support to reintegration. Regarding its short term outcome, Swiss AVRR support can therefore be

assessed very positively and as fully in line with the foreseen outcome, i.e. a swift integration. The integration process can start with concrete tasks for the returnee.

**Medium term outcome:** Even if an income generating project is not durable, its realisation is important for the returnee to start his or her reintegration. Without such a project the person might be less motivated to become active. There are reintegration projects that are successfully pursued more than a year, and sometimes even much longer. Such very positive medium term outcomes are due to the good quality of the reintegration project, the social support received by the returnee, the conducive local economic situation and, finally, by his own commitment and skills.

**Long term outcome:** The durability of the effects of reintegration support is obviously the most difficult to assess. The most obvious proof for a long term positive outcome are examples of durably successful economic activities, especially those that created jobs for others, realised by some returnees interviewed for this evaluation. And when the initial reintegration project was terminated, but prepared a returnee for other, more successful economic activities, an indirect long term outcome of the initial AVRR support provided can at least be assumed.

## Effects of AVRR on and Perception of AVRR by non-migrant Populations

Return of migrants does not result in less interest for migration in their countries of origin.

Many of the returnees interviewed stated that they would not attempt to go to Europe anymore without papers that permitted them to live there, including Switzerland. But these experiences hardly enter public awareness. As more than one interviewee put it: "One successful migration story outweighs a hundred stories of migrants failing to achieve what they hope for, or even worse." The perception of migration is not shaped primarily by the experiences and accounts of returnees. Especially young men from the seven countries evaluated are inclined to leave their country anyway, and some of them will probably take the next opportunity to do so. The idea of having a steady job in a wealthy country and of being able to send their family some money is still enough motivation for trying to leave the country of origin.

AVRR does not have a pull effect on the non-migrant population.

No pull effect of the Swiss AVRR on the resident populations of the seven countries evaluated can be found. The perspective of future reintegration support is not a reason for anyone to leave their country. The push effects resulting from the economic or the security situation, in addition to stories of successful integration of migrants in Europe, are the motors for emigration. And even within Europe, pull effects of Swiss AVRR appear to be negligible. The returnees interviewed who had lived in other European countries do not say they came to Switzerland because Swiss AVRR was more attractive than that of the country of their temporary residence. People involved in migration management suggested, however that migrants from Maghreb states do come to Switzerland from neighbouring states in view of AVRR.

## The Volume of Financial Reintegration Assistance

Returnees having received financial support for their reintegration in the framework of Swiss AVRR say the payment of larger amounts would increase the chances for successful realisation of an integration project.

Discussions about the appropriate volume of financial support for reintegration are old. All stakeholders are aware of the different dimensions that should be considered: from a Swiss perspective, different amounts paid to returnees to different countries may create envy and unrest among the whole population eligible for assisted return and integration. A person from country A may not acknowledge that the living costs in country B are higher and therefore may not understand why the returnee to country B should receive a larger sum for his or her reintegration project. And within one country, different returnees from Switzerland may also receive varying amounts of financial support for their reintegration – depending under which “label” (country programme, individual assistance, REZ) they return. The explanations provided by FOM and the IOM, although plausible, may not be convincing. And Swiss bodies will also fix the appropriate amounts differently over time. Back in their countries of origin, returnees comparing the amounts received from the various European states may not understand these differences, and the IOM office in the country of origin are confronted with questions it cannot answer to the returnee’s satisfaction. There have been consultations among European countries in view of harmonising the financial resources invested in the reintegration of individual returnees. The probability of successfully solving the issue is small, however, if only for the reason that the financial capacities and the political will differ between countries.

The volume of financial reintegration assistance should realistically allow for realising a reintegration project with a fair chance of success. Opinions regarding respective benchmarks in different countries vary. And even within one country, different projects might need different starting capitals (e.g. depending on the region). It is therefore not realistic to think that discussions about the appropriate financial volume for reintegration assistance can be ended consensually.

Still, the difference of amounts paid for voluntary return at reception centres (REZ) and the AVRR offered in the cantons (RAS) does not seem to follow any logic. The quicker someone leaves Switzerland, the less he or she gets for his or her reintegration – a fact known to some members of the target group.

## 2.5 Cooperation with Partner Countries

AVRR can contribute to improved cooperation and broadened policy dialogue between Swiss authorities and authorities of the returnees’ countries of origin – but it doesn’t do so systematically.

Whenever migration agreements were prepared and / or signed, Switzerland had been the driving force for them. Countries where migrants return to may be interested in having an agreement to show their attractiveness and reliability as partners on the international stage, and they may see an interest in receiving structural aid as well, but they are not always quick in fulfilling their commitments. The provision of return and reintegration assistance is not a condition for having migration partnerships or agreement in the field of migration – but they are obviously a welcome argument when preparing agreements and partnerships.

Where no agreement is signed with a partner country and where no migration partnership exists, FOM finds ways to operate flexibly.

Forced returns are always negotiated on a case by case basis, and returns under AVRR can be realised without information to or the involvement or even the formal consent of the receiving country.

## 3 Conclusions / Key Lessons

---

Based on the assessments presented in Chapter 2 and on the country studies realised in the scope of the evaluation, the following general statements can be made regarding the evaluation topics.

### 3.1 General

AVRR activities contribute to regulating the number of asylum seekers in Switzerland.

Without support for their return and reintegration, there would be fewer returns of asylum seekers from Switzerland to their countries of origin, and many returns would take place later. This statement concerns not so much those returnees who returned on their own accord, and for personal or familial reasons, but rather persons whose request for asylum was denied or who were threatened by forced return and who did not want to live in Switzerland illegally or leave the country with an equally uncertain perspective.

Voluntary return (and respective assistance, as well as reintegration assistance) are currently consensual elements of Swiss migration policies.

This has not always been the case. Today, fundamental criticism of AVRR is rarely heard. This is due to, *inter alia*, improved communication about AVRR, especially by those implementing the activities, and increased public awareness about the difference between forced and voluntary return. Last but not least, FOM's reasoning on the cost-efficiency of a voluntary return compared with a prolonged stay, second-stage processing and an eventual forced return is convincing.

Information and counselling are crucial.

Raising awareness about the perspectives lying in return and reintegration before departure is a *sine qua non* for a successful implementation of return support. Information and counselling should address all the aspects of returning (legal, economic, social, health, etc.), and should be tailored to the individual situations of potential returnees. Once in their country of origin, returnees need regular counselling (by the IOM) for realising their reintegration project. Clearly, it is quite challenging for counsellors in Switzerland to give advice on business projects to be realised in a context they do not know in detail. The continued support by the IOM or through a training course in the country of return may therefore be very valuable for further defining and adapting the project.

Pull effects cannot be observed for migrants coming to Switzerland directly from their countries of origin.

No migrant leaves his or her country to come to Switzerland because of AVRR. The costs for the usually clandestine journey to Western Europe are higher than what any voluntary returnee would receive for a voluntary return. There may be single cases of migrants already in Europe who are aware of AVRR and apply for asylum here, but there appear to be only few of these cases.

The support of return and reintegration has an important function regarding Swiss domestic politics.

Since the Yugoslav wars of the mid-1990s, AVRR is an instrument used by Swiss migration management. Migration and migration policy are continuously, intensely and often controversially discussed by politicians, academics, and the general public. They are topics in their own right, but they also allow for statements (or implications) about concepts for Swiss society and the “suitable” role non-Swiss nationals should play here, for taking positions on issues that are not necessarily related to the composite character of the country’s society, but rather to social cohesion in general. The topic of migration also allows for expressing political opinions about Switzerland’s role in Europe, including its relation with the European Union, and its position in the world. Statements about migration quite often do not mean migration issues, but address other issues, including the cohesion of Swiss society, social justice, environment, etc. Official strategies designed to deal with migration are obviously a strong link between foreign and domestic Swiss policy and politics, also influencing Switzerland’s relations with other countries. The design and perception of AVRR is always, at least partly, influenced by this multi-layered context.

AVRR facilitates the preparedness of partner countries to accept return.

Thanks to AVRR, the countries receiving returnees are not in a position to accept forced return without service in return. The structural aid and the contributions to the reintegration of individual returnees contribute to the country of return’s economy.

## 3.2 Return

The motivation for applying for AVRR is the result of a number of factors, the most important one being the asylum seeker’s individual situation. Financial incentives are not decisive for returning.

Potential returnees are most often conditioned by social obligations in the country of origin, homesickness, being tired of their situation in Switzerland, the imminence of forced return, and a positive evolution of the security situation in their country of origin.

Return is realised effectively and efficiently.

The preparation and realisation of return is the result of the cooperation of experienced and competent actors of AVRR and of the participation of those returning. A well working system for managing voluntary return is in place, involving actors of cantonal and Federal authorities as well as IOM and NGOs.

## 3.3 Reintegration

Swiss AVRR is, in international comparison, among the most systematic and generous programmes.

The volume of financial aid for reintegration, the possibility of accessing additional forms of support (entrepreneurship training, for instance) puts Swiss AVRR in a top position. Its design has set standards and is sometimes copied by other European countries.

Thanks to the financial return assistance and to income generating projects mainly, reintegration processes of returnees from Switzerland have a good start.

When supported by additional measures – especially training for operating the business they engage in – the income generating projects can be valuable means for importantly contributing to the returnees’ livelihoods.

Swiss AVRR programmes comply to large extent with the recommendations of an EC mandated experts' report

The report recommends to link pre-departure reintegration measures with short-term and long-term reintegration measures in the countries of return (see box on next page).

Switzerland's AVRR allows for starting reintegration processes in the country of origin even before the return, and therefore belongs to the leading group of countries on the global level offering such assistance. This obviously does not prevent the finalisation of

**Recommendations for linking pre-departure reintegration measures with reintegration measures in the countries of return**

1. Providing return and reintegration counselling that is comprehensive in scope, up-to-date, provided by qualified practitioners and extended to the family or close circle of the returnee ...
2. Providing tailored in-kind assistance that is decided in consultation with the returnees.
3. Raising awareness about available reintegration assistance.
4. Providing vocational or other training before ... or after arrival. Training needs are to be tailored and focussed on the development of business skills.
5. Systematic monitoring of returnees ...

Source: Matrix (2012)

reintegration projects after return. Swiss AVRR also complies with the expert reports' recommendations regarding the monitoring of returnees

### 3.4 Cooperation with Partner Countries

Formalised migration partnerships can facilitate the cooperation with partner states, especially regarding forced return, but they are not a condition for realising any type of return.

Switzerland realises support for voluntary return and forced return flexibly. Although forced return may be tedious and slow, because the receiving country's consent is always required, ways can be found to send asylum seekers back. A country who does not want to receive forced returnees will in any case not engage in a migration partnership.

## 4 Recommendations

---

The following recommendations build on the recommendations formulated in the seven country studies realised in the framework of the AVRRE evaluation. This does not mean that all recommendations below equally apply to all groups of returnees and to all countries they return to. Any recommendation concerning reintegration and the cooperation between countries that is to be considered for future implementation needs to be adapted to specific country contexts.

### 4.1 Return

⇒ The current practice of the preparation and realisation of return should be largely maintained. Adaptations (e.g. harmonisation of support to different categories of returnees) are to be realised based on the stakeholders' experiences.

Informing the target population about AVRRE through different channels, the separation of tasks of different actors (authorities and the IOM, for instance), the involvement of returnees, the payment of return support, return counselling and return and reintegration assistance from reception centres (*Rückkehrhilfe ab Empfangszentrum* (REZ)) are good practice that allow for well organised returns.

The adaptation potential lies in the harmonisation of return and reintegration support for different categories of returnees (country programme, individual assistance, REZ) to a specific country. This especially applies to asylum seekers who return to their countries of origin quickly, since they cost Switzerland less and their chances for a quick reintegration can be considered higher.

⇒ All potential returnees should be informed as early as possible about return and reintegration assistance in a way that allows them to trust the offer made.

Future information activities about AVRRE should therefore be at least as intensive as they have been. Early awareness about assistance may result in early decisions to return. Also, returnees receiving respective information only after they have made their decision should be avoided. The credibility of the information provided is just as important. FOM's and IOM's current practice to include fellow nationals – returnees, IOM staff, others – in passing on information should be continued.

⇒ The time span between a person's or a family's decision to return under AVRRE and the actual return should be as short as possible.

To improve the quality of the reintegration process, the momentum created by the future returnee's decision should be used and built on. A quick return should be considered a priority, even if the income generating reintegration project can only be outlined and not planned in detail while the returnee is still in Switzerland. This entails the following:

⇒ FOM (and IOM) should allow for post-return preparation (or validation) of a detailed reintegration project.

The quality of a reintegration project is likely to increase when designed after the return: the context can be assessed more appropriately (prices for goods and services are known better, a more accurate market analysis can be done, and even more promising options might be considered. It is important, though, that working on the reintegration

project starts as soon as possible – or else there is a risk that it will not materialise. The IOM (or other organisations responsible for the support) requires resources to support the preparation of projects in the country of return, including visits of returnees before the monitoring of the reintegration projects' implementation starts.

## 4.2 Reintegration

⇒ The different forms of reintegration assistance should be continued.

The possibility of flexibly supporting different reintegration needs and potentials is an important asset of Swiss AVRR. Funding income generating projects, job placements, covering living costs with additional medical and other support and the follow-up of returnees are all important means to foster reintegration. They should be applied according to the returnees' needs and the potential of the respective national contexts. Increasing promotion of vocational training as a means for returnees' reintegration has considerable potential.

⇒ Although the financial aspect of AVRR is not decisive for the motivation to return, it should be maintained.

The finding that financial incentives were not decisive for actual returns should not lead to their abolition. Promoting a return without reintegration assistance would result in much more critical reintegration processes. Without the task of implementing a reintegration project, the security of employment, or of having living costs covered for a few months, returnees might consider leaving their countries of origin again very soon after arriving. Also, Switzerland's perception by the countries of return and those European countries also providing return and reintegration assistance would suffer from terminating AVRR. The absence of the possibility to support return and reintegration would have indirect effects on the other instruments FOM uses for managing migration. Among those effects are the reduced acceptance of forced returns by partner countries, increased costs of persons remaining in Switzerland for a longer period, an increase in numbers of persons who continue to live in Switzerland without a recognised status and also of persons who, possibly under very difficult conditions, leave Switzerland for other countries.

⇒ FOM should review the amounts of reintegration assistance according to country specifics and increase or decrease reintegration assistance where warranted. Adaptations are also to differentiate between country programmes and individual assistance.

The sums allocated to voluntary returnees could be assessed together with local experts and in the light of the local living costs, the purchasing power, the costs for setting-up and operating a business and then be adapted if necessary. This could be most quickly realised in countries where a country programme is already being realised. Evaluators are aware that the sometimes considerable differences within a country of living costs and of economic conditions should also be considered, although differing support amounts would evidently lead to dissatisfaction among returnees from the same country.

⇒ Options for a more direct and visible linking of AVRR to structural aid should be examined.

In countries where reintegration is promoted and infrastructure is supported, the possibilities of linking the two measures geographically (which is already quite often the case, although there is room for increased congruency in regions with many returns and

regions with infrastructure support interventions), and thematically (providing access to services provided for the non-migrant population, e.g. micro-credits), might allow for increased effectiveness of AVRR. FOM country programmes should make the link between returnees and micro-credit schemes, for example.

⇒ FOM, with the support of SDC (Migration and Development) and other actors, should consider providing reintegration support also under the perspective of development in the countries of return.

AVRR should be more specifically understood and designed as a contribution to the partner countries' development. Returnees could be supported in establishing networks among themselves; the follow-up of returnees could consist in more explicitly targeting local development issues. Especially returnees who lived in Switzerland for several years may have acquired knowledge and know-how that could be useful for the development of their country. Individual reintegration projects should be looked at from a programme perspective and be linked in order to show positive effects on the country's social and economic development. It is also advisable to consider, together with local organisations, the realisation of projects specifically appreciating know-how acquired by returnees during their time spent abroad. The systematic introduction of the possibility for supporting returnees' reintegration through the provision of vocational training in the countries where they return to should also be considered.

### 4.3 Cooperation with Partner Countries

⇒ The efforts for establishing migration dialogues with countries not showing a clear interest should not be increased.

The chances for successful negotiations are small when the partner country does not signal clear interest, and it is likely that implementation of the agreement would be handicapped by faltering cooperation. Efforts for preparing migration partnerships or even an agreement on forced return often require long negotiations and patience. If Switzerland thinks there is a small probability of reaching an agreement, and returns are still possible, then no additional initiative should be taken to formalise a migration partnership. Still, AVRR could be interesting for Switzerland's partner countries, and migration partnerships are potentially interesting platforms for additional actors, including the private sector.

⇒ Switzerland is to continue to apply and intensify its "whole of government" approach (allowing Switzerland to speak with one voice thanks to the coordination and common definition of objectives between different Swiss Federal Offices and Departments) when negotiating migration agreements (or other agreements relevant for migration issues) and when implementing them.

In order to make Switzerland a reliable partner for a country with regards to a migration agreement, different Swiss actors such as FOM, embassies, FDFA's Divisions and SDC (Humanitarian Aid and Development Cooperation), should be harmonised on common strategies regarding migration and speak to partners in the respective countries with one voice. Migration partnerships are a possible platform for such an approach.

# ANNEX 1 Terms of Reference for the Evaluation

## 1 BACKGROUND

Return and reintegration assistance is aimed at facilitating the voluntary return of migrants to their country of origin and their reintegration. Assistance is devised for all persons living under the Swiss asylum system (asylum seekers, temporary admitted persons, refugees,...) and certain other categories of migrants (such as victims of human trafficking and cabaret dancers). Return assistance is provided to encourage assisted voluntary return.

It seeks to achieve several objectives:

- To increase the number of asylum seekers returning voluntarily to their native country
- To improve the social and professional reintegration of returnees in their native country upon return
- To reduce the likelihood of returnees to re-migrate irregularly to Switzerland
- To improve the cooperation between the public authorities in Switzerland and the native countries

To this end, return assistance provides for the following instruments:

- return counselling services in the cantons
- individual return and reintegration assistance
- country-specific return assistance programs
- structural aid and prevention of irregular migration (PiM)
- return counselling and return and reintegration assistance from reception centres

Return assistance is governed by the Asylum Act (specifically Article 93) and by the Asylum Decree 2 on Financial Issues (specifically chapter 6). The Federal Office for Migration (FOM) is competent for the implementation in Switzerland.

### Return Counselling Services

Return Counselling Services (RCS) is a network of partners which are competent for return assistance at the cantonal level. Depending on the canton, these may be an administrative agency, such as a cantonal migration department, or a nongovernmental organization, such as the Red Cross or Caritas. Return counselling typically includes information and counselling to potential returnees and other institutions or cantonal services involved. Funding and activities of the RCS are ruled by the directive 4.1 on return counselling.

The RCS are supposed to serve asylum seekers as a point of contact. Discussing problems and plans for the future directly with those concerned, the RCS both assist in preparing the return of migrants to their native countries and define the assistance necessary (*case management*). The International Organization for Migration (IOM) helps establish pre-departure country-specific information, such as the costs for housing or the availability of medication. Accompanied return may be provided to vulnerable people willing to return to their native country. The RCS in charge submits requests for assistance to the FOM for approval, implementation, and coordination on location.

### Individual Return and Reintegration Assistance (Individuelle Rückkehrhilfe (IH))

Individual return assistance is a service meant for all persons living in Switzerland under the Asylum system, regardless of their nationality, who have applied for asylum. The assistance granted and the way in which it is allocated are governed by directive 4.2 on individual return assistance. People willing to return to their native country benefit from the following services and benefits:

- return counselling and preparations
- all costs for return journey and if necessary social or medical escort during return journey or/and transit assistance or/and arrival assistance
- a cash allowance of 1,000 Swiss francs for adults and 500 Swiss francs for minors, or 500 Swiss francs for adults and 250 Swiss francs for minors, if the stay lasted less than three months
- individual return assistance up to 3,000 Swiss francs for a social or professional reintegration project

- individual medical return assistance: purchase of medicine or also payment for medical treatment received following return, and medical escort service

A travel allowance of 100 Swiss francs per adult is granted for covering travel expenses. This allowance can be increased up to 500 Swiss francs for a single person, and up to 1,000 Swiss francs per family.

The IOM offices and the Swiss diplomatic missions are regularly involved in assisting returnees on location, paying out return money, doing project follow-up supervision or assessing social and medical settings, among other things.

### **Return assistance from reception centers (Rückkehrhilfe ab Empfangszentren (REZ))**

Return assistance from reception centers (REZ) gives all persons living under the Swiss Asylum system in one of the five reception centers an early opportunity of informing themselves on the possibilities of returning voluntarily with assistance. Immigrants willing to return will benefit from limited return assistance, consisting of counselling and a lump sum of 500 Swiss francs, plus 100 Swiss francs travel allowance. For vulnerable persons there is also the possibility to implement a project (up to 3000 Swiss francs).

### **Country-specific return assistance programs (Länderprogramme)**

The FOM, together with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the IOM, implement country-specific return assistance programs. These programs are specifically designed to fit the needs of the returnees, while taking into account the political and economical situation in their native country. In some cases these country-specific return assistance programs are part of readmission agreements between Switzerland and the native countries.

The *Committee for International Cooperation in the Field of Migration (IMZ-A)* coordinates the implementation of return assistance programs. For return assistance program to be considered necessary, various criteria must be considered, such as the number of asylum applications, the political situation in the country of origin, the current situation regarding the enforcement of removal orders, and the willingness of the authorities in the native countries to cooperate with readmission.

Depending on the program proposed, the contents of assistance granted to individuals may vary. As a rule, however, substantive financial aid and a project for social and professional reintegration are part of the support package. In general, when arriving in their native country, returnees are assisted by a partner agency on location (returnee monitoring).

Presently country-specific return assistance programs are being implemented in four countries: Georgia, Guinea, Iraq and Nigeria.

### **Structural Aid and Prevention of Irregular Migration (PiM)**

In addition to the assistance granted to individual returnees through return assistance, structural aid projects are funded in certain countries of origin. These projects are steered by the IMZ-A and implemented by the SDC and other actors. The aim is that they target the receiving communities. Mostly they are in the area of improving infrastructural settings in the countries of origin and/or preventing irregular migration. They may include the reconstruction of schools and medical facilities, or educational support and job development. These projects are intended to have a medium to long-term effect.

Structural aid projects play an important role in the migration dialogue.

Under Article 93, Section 2 of the Asylum Act, the programmes abroad may also help prevent irregular migration to Switzerland by, for example, establishing return assistance programmes for stranded migrants in transit countries, or by conducting information and awareness campaigns in the countries of origin. Unlike the structural aid projects, these projects have a short-term effect.

## **2 EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

The planned evaluation shall provide the decision-makers in the Federal Office for Migration (FOM) as well as other stakeholders involved in Return and Reintegration Assistance with sufficient information to:

- a. determine the range and extent of outcomes of selected instruments of the Swiss return assistance for different target groups and countries of origin;
- b. make an overall independent assessment of the outcomes achieved against the objectives envisaged;
- c. identify key lessons and to propose practical recommendations for the optimisation and further development of Return Assistance especially with regard to different target groups and different native countries.

### 3 SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

Overall, the evaluation will cover the period between 2005 and 2010. Country Specific Return Assistance Programs that started after 2005, such as Georgia, should be covered from the beginning.

With regard to instruments the evaluation will cover:

- The Country Specific Return Assistance Programs for Georgia, Guinea, Irak and Nigeria;
- Individual Return Assistance for Kosovo, Turkey and Sri Lanka.

### 4 USE OF EVALUATION RESULTS

Main user of the evaluation results will be the partners of the *Committee for International Cooperation in the Field of Migration (IMZ-A)*, who will use the evaluation results for the conceptualisation of Return Assistance also with regard to setting priorities for future activities. Programme implementers will use the results for the optimisation of ongoing and future programs.

Further potential users of the evaluation results are members of the Swiss Federal Council and cantonal authorities, other institutions/organisations active in the field of Return Assistance as well as institutions/ organisations which are active in the countries of origin and cooperate with the FOM.

### 5 ISSUES TO BE STUDIED/ EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation will have the character of an impact evaluation and focus on effectiveness, impacts and sustainability (i.e. the likely continuation of achieved results).

In line with the objectives of Return Assistance the evaluation will focus on answering three central evaluation questions:

1. **To what extent and how do country specific return assistance programs and Individual Return Assistance program promote voluntary return to the selected countries of origin?**
2. **To what extent and how do country specific return assistance programs and Individual Return Assistance program contribute to the process of social and professional reintegration of returnees and thus sustainable reintegration in the selected countries of origin?**
3. **To what extent and how do country specific return assistance programs and Individual Return Assistance Program contribute to an improved cooperation of Swiss authorities and authorities of the countries of origin?**

In addition, the following sub-questions should be addressed:

- What is the intervention logic of the Country Specific Return Assistance Programs and Individual Return Assistance Program? Which (implicit or explicitly formulated) chain of outcomes do they anticipate?
- What was the profile of participants of the Country Specific Return Assistance Programs and Individual Return Assistance Program in the selected countries?
- Which short-term, medium-term and longer-term outcomes (i.e. impacts) were achieved? To what extent do they correspond to the anticipated outcomes?

- Were there any unintended outcomes, especially pull-effects?
- Which indicators are there that the outcomes achieved will be sustainable?

For all questions contextual differences, as regards beneficiary characteristics, countries of origin and socioeconomic settings should be considered as well as differences between the two instruments. Following award of the contract, the Contractor will be asked to work with the FOM and the steering committee to finalise the set of questions.

## 6 EVALUATION APPROACH

The planned evaluation will be an impact evaluation, i.e. it will seek to determine the outcomes/ effects of Return and Reintegration Assistance. They should be judged more from the angle of the beneficiaries' perceptions of benefits received than from the managers' perspective of results achieved. Consequently, data collection should focus on outsiders (beneficiaries and other affected groups beyond beneficiaries) as much as insiders (managers, partners, field level operators). The proposal in response to these terms of reference, as well as further documents delivered by the evaluation team, should clearly state the proportion of insiders and outsiders among interviews and surveys.

The most common approach to assess the impacts of a programme/ project is Counterfactual Impact Evaluation (CIE) that seeks to find a credible approximation to what would have occurred in the absence of the intervention, and to compare it with what actually happened. However, the FOM is aware of the fact that data available do not allow a credible way to approximate a counterfactual. Thus tenderers/evaluators are invited to propose alternative approaches, most notably theory-based approaches. Possible approaches would for example be "Realistic evaluation" developed by Parson/ Tilley or "Contribution analysis" developed by Mayne.

As the countries are very different, it is important to have clear indicators that provide comparable data that can be transferred from one country to another.

### 6.1 Methods of data collection and analysis

The methods used for data collection and analysis will depend on the evaluation approach chosen and will thus not be prescribed. It is, however, expected from tenderers to propose a "Mixed methods" design, i.e. a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches that allows for a triangulation of results. In the proposal tenderers should outline, why specific methods have been selected and also comment briefly on their advantages and limitations in the context of the planned evaluation.

## 7 METHODOLOGY

### 7.1 Management and steering of the Evaluation

The evaluation is managed by the Section Third Countries and Countries of origin of the Directorate for Migration Policy of the FOM with the assistance of a Steering group consisting of members of the FOM, SDC, PD IV, GS, IOM, under the coordination of Mrs. Délia Baumgartner who oversees the evaluation on behalf of the FOM. The Steering group member's main functions are:

- To aggregate and summarise the views of the FOM and to act as an interface between the evaluation team and the services, thereby supplementing bilateral contacts.
- To ensure that the evaluation team has access to and has consulted all relevant information sources and documents related to the project/programme.
- To validate the Evaluation Questions.
- To discuss and comment on notes and reports delivered by the evaluation team. Comments by individual group members are compiled into a single document by the evaluation manager and subsequently transmitted to the evaluation team.
- To assist in feedback of the findings, conclusions, lessons and recommendations from the evaluation.

## 7.2 The evaluation process

The evaluation approach should be developed and implemented as presented below.

Once the evaluation team has been contractually engaged, the evaluation process will be carried out through three phases: a Desk Phase, a Field Phase and a Synthesis Phase, as described below:

### 7.2.1 Desk Phase – Inception

The key tasks of the Desk phase are:

- Attending a kick-off meeting (between the contractor and the FOM and the steering committee) in order to decide on the precise table of contents of the inception report and have a first discussion on evaluation questions, information needs, additional field work and methodology.
- Reviewing all available information (e.g. analytical reports by the return department of the FOM) and identifying all additional sources of information (e.g. information generated by monitoring systems of the organisations implementing Return Assistance). At this stage also relevant research reports on the reintegration of returnees should be collected to map out the causal chain (intervention logic) of the two instruments.
- Prepare questionnaire and present interview schedule and questionnaire to steering committee
- Conducting interviews with main stakeholders (FOM and IOM) to obtain additional information to reconstruct the intervention logic of the Individual Return Assistance and the country specific return assistance programs.
- Preparing the draft intervention logic of the two instruments in the form of logic models based on the information collected. The diagrams should clearly depict the linkages between activities, outputs, short-, medium- and long-term outcomes and should also include possible unintended outcomes. Throughout the evaluation these models should be up-dated based on the data/ information gathered.
- On the basis of the above, reviewing the evaluation questions, methodology and work plan to be followed in relation to additional field and research work. Special emphasis should be put on sampling questions as well as on ways to contact returnees.
- Drafting an inception report to present the intervention logic, revised methodology (including tools to be applied in the Field phase) and work plan, following the improvements made in relation to the initial proposal and submitting it to the FOM six weeks after contract signature.
- Attending a meeting with the FOM and the steering committee in order to finalise the methodology and work plan and formally validate the Inception Report

### 7.2.2 Field phase

The Field Phase should start upon approval of the Inception report by the evaluation manager. The main tasks of the field phase are:

- Submitting a detailed work plan with an indicative list of people to be interviewed, surveys to be undertaken, dates of visit, itinerary, and name of team members in charge. This plan has to be applied in a way that is flexible enough to accommodate for any last-minute difficulties in the field. If any significant deviation from the agreed work plan or schedule is perceived as creating a risk for the quality of the evaluation, these should be immediately discussed with the evaluation manager.
- Ensuring adequate contact and consultation with, and involvement of, the different stakeholders; working closely with the relevant government authorities and agencies during their entire assignment; using the most reliable and appropriate sources of information and harmonising data from different sources to allow ready interpretation.
- Summarising the field works at the end of the field phase, discuss the reliability and coverage of data collection, and present the preliminary findings in a meeting with the Steering Group after 25 weeks after contract signature.

### 7.2.3 Synthesis phase

This phase is mainly devoted to the preparation of the draft final report. The evaluation team's key tasks are:

- The assessments are objective and balanced, affirmations accurate and verifiable, and recommendations realistic.
- When drafting the report, it will acknowledge clearly where changes in the desired direction are known to be already taking place, in order to avoid misleading readers and causing unnecessary irritation or offence.

If the evaluation manager considers the draft report of sufficient quality, she will circulate it for comments to the Steering group members, and convene a meeting in the presence of the evaluation team.

On the basis of comments expressed by the Steering group members, and collected by the evaluation manager, the evaluation team has to amend and revise the draft report. Comments requesting methodological quality improvements should be taken into account, except where there is a demonstrated impossibility, in which case full justification should be provided by the evaluation team. Comments on the substance of the report may be either accepted or rejected. In the latter instance, the evaluation team is to justify and explain the reasons in writing.

## 8 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The text of the report should be illustrated, as appropriate, with maps, graphs

and tables: The evaluation team will submit the following reports in English:

1. Inception report of maximum 20 pages (main text, excluding annexes) to be produced after 6 weeks after contract signature. In the report the consultant shall describe the first finding of the study, the intervention logic of the two instruments, a revised methodology and work plan including the foreseen degree of difficulties in collecting data, other encountered and/or foreseen difficulties in addition to his programme of work and staff mobilization. The inception report will be shared with the steering committee (incl IOM) for inputs.
2. Draft final report (of maximum 50 pages) using the structure set out in Annex II and taking due account of comments received from the Steering group members. Besides answering the evaluation questions, with a focus on the three central evaluation questions, the draft final report should also contain conclusions and recommendations. It must include an executive summary of maximum 5 pages in English (with translations in German and French). The report should be presented within 3 weeks from the receipt of the Steering group's comments.
3. Final report with the same specifications as mentioned under 2 above, incorporating any comments received from the concerned parties on the draft report, to be presented within 2 weeks of the receipt of these comments.

Distribution of all three reports in electronic version.

## ANNEX 2 List of Persons and Organisations Interviewed in Switzerland

The following persons and organisations were interviewed in the evaluation process. In addition, interviews were held with potential returnees interviewed in Reception Centres and in informal contacts in different Swiss cities.

### Federal Administration

#### FDJP

##### **FOM**

Olga Andrés  
Magalie Benoit  
Ursina Bernhard  
Jérôme Crausaz  
Roland Flükiger  
Céline Haenni  
Eric Kaser  
Karl Lorenz  
Thomas Lory

Annette Matur  
Jarmila Mazel  
Marlise Minder  
Michael Morf  
Fabio Pisanello  
Karin Scholer  
Roger Zurflüh  
Urs von Arb  
Ariane Wüthrich  
Yves Zermatten

#### FDFA

##### **Divisions**

Odile Rittener-Ruf

##### **SDC**

Stefanie Allemann  
Anne Moulin  
Markus Reisle

### Return Counselling Services in the Cantons

#### **Aargau**

Erica Garcia, Fachstelle Integration und Beratung, Rückkehrberatungsstelle

#### **Basel-Stadt:**

Nikolai Pchelin, Sozialhilfe / Rückkehrberatung, Migrationszentrum

#### **Bern**

Rachel Schipper, Kirchliche Kontaktstelle für Flüchtlingsfragen

#### **Genf**

Jacques de Preux, Croix Rouge

#### **Glarus**

Nawzad Kareem, SRK, Kreuzrückkehrberatungsstelle Glarus

#### **Graubünden**

Barbara Nauli, Asyl und Massnahmenvollzug, Rückkehrberatung  
Patrick Platz, Asyl und Massnahmenvollzug, Rückkehrberatung

#### **St. Gallen**

Stefan Imbimbo, Rückkehrberatung

#### **Ticino**

Mirka Studer, Croce Rossa Svizzera, Sezione del Luganese, SCP

**Valais**

Christiane Terrettaz, Conseils en vue du retour

**Vaud**

Thierry Charbonney, Bureau cantonal d'aide au retour

**Zürich**

Gabriela Diodà, Sozialamt, Abteilung Asylkoordination, Rückkehrberatung

**Return Counselling and Return and Reintegration Assistance from Reception Centres**

**IOM Office Bern**

Eve Amez-Droz  
Florian Brändli  
Claire Potaux  
Sylvie Heuschmann  
Sonja Kyburz  
Annika Lenz  
Katharina Schnöring

**Reception Centres**

Susanne Lehnherr, BFM, Altstätten  
Karin Litchfield, IOM, Basel  
Nourredine NN, IOM, Vallorbe  
Mira Nikolic, BFM, Chiasso  
Ulrike Dobretsberger, IOM, Kreuzlingen  
Olivier Porchet, BFM, Vallorbe  
Judith Seitz, IOM, Altstätten  
Jean Quartarolo, IOM, Vallorbe  
Gabriel Steffen, BFM, Basel  
Michael Ammann, BFM, Kreuzlingen  
Christian Staub, BFM, Basel

**Swiss and International NGOs dealing with or observing AVRR Programmes**

Hugo Köppel, SRK  
Peter Marty, Caritas  
Rolf Widmer, ISS

## ANNEX 3 Consulted Documents and Websites

In addition to country specific literature and websites quoted in the seven country study, but not mentioned here again, the following documents and websites were consulted for compiling the present report.

### Documents

- Richard Black, Michael Collyer, Will Somerville (2011): Pay-to-go schemes and other noncoercive return programs: Is scale possible?
- Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty (2009): Assisted Voluntary Return: An Opportunity for Development?
- Eidgenössische Finanzkontrolle (2006): Bundesamt für Migration. Bereich Rückkehrförderung
- EJPD (Finanzinspektorat) (2010): Bericht des Finanzinspektorats über die Prüfung von Beitragszahlungen im Bereich der Rückkehrhilfe sowie im Bereich der schweizerischen Flüchtlingshilfe beim Bundesamt für Migration (BFM)
- EJPD (BFM), EDA (DEZA), ILR (2004): Review der bisherigen Rückkehrhilfeprogramme der ILR. Teil II. Systematische Datensammlung Rückkehrhilfeprogramme 1996-2003.
- EJPD (2011): Bericht über Beschleunigungsmassnahmen im Asylbereich.
- European Migration Network (EMN) (2009): Programmes and strategies in France fostering assisted voluntary return and reintegration in third countries.
- Hit Foundation (2010): European cooperation on the sustainable return and reintegration of asylum seekers.
- Home Office (2004): Understanding Voluntary Return. Sussex Center for Migration Research.
- Home Office (2010): The Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme (VARRP) 2006: A process and impact assessment.
- Rolf Kappel et al. (2006): Durable returns to a durable state? An opinion poll on the situation of returnees in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- Eric Kaser; Saskia Schenker (2008): Rückkehrhilfe der Schweiz: Bilanz und Perspektiven. In: Schweizerisches Jahrbuch für Entwicklungspolitik, Band 27, Nr. 2.
- Matrix insight (2012), European Commission. Directorate-General Home Affairs : Comparative Study on Best Practices to Interlink Pre-Departure Reintegration Measures Carried out in Member States with Short- and Long-Term Reintegration Measures in the Countries of Return.
- OSCE (2012): An Assessment of the Voluntary Return Process in Kosovo. SRK (Caroline Krauss) (2010): Machbarkeitsstudie. Förderung der wirtschaftlichen Reintegration von Rückkehrenden aus der Schweiz im Herkunftsland
- RIINVEST (2009): Employment Assistance Service (EAS) for Returnees from Switzerland and their Receiving Communities in Kosovo. Programme. External evaluation,
- Ruben Ruerd, Marieke Van Houte and Tine Davids (2009): What determines the embeddedness of forced return migrants? Rethinking the role of pre and post-return assistance. International Migration Review 43, no. 4: 308-37.

Jan Schneider und Axel Kreienbrink (2010) ; Return Assistance in Germany. Programmes and Strategies fostering Assisted Return to and Reintegration in Third Countries. German National EMN Contact Point and Research Section of the Federal Home Office.

## Websites

[www.bfm.admin.ch](http://www.bfm.admin.ch)

[www.iom.int](http://www.iom.int)

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/migration-asylum-borders/return-fund/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/migration-asylum-borders/return-fund/index_en.htm)

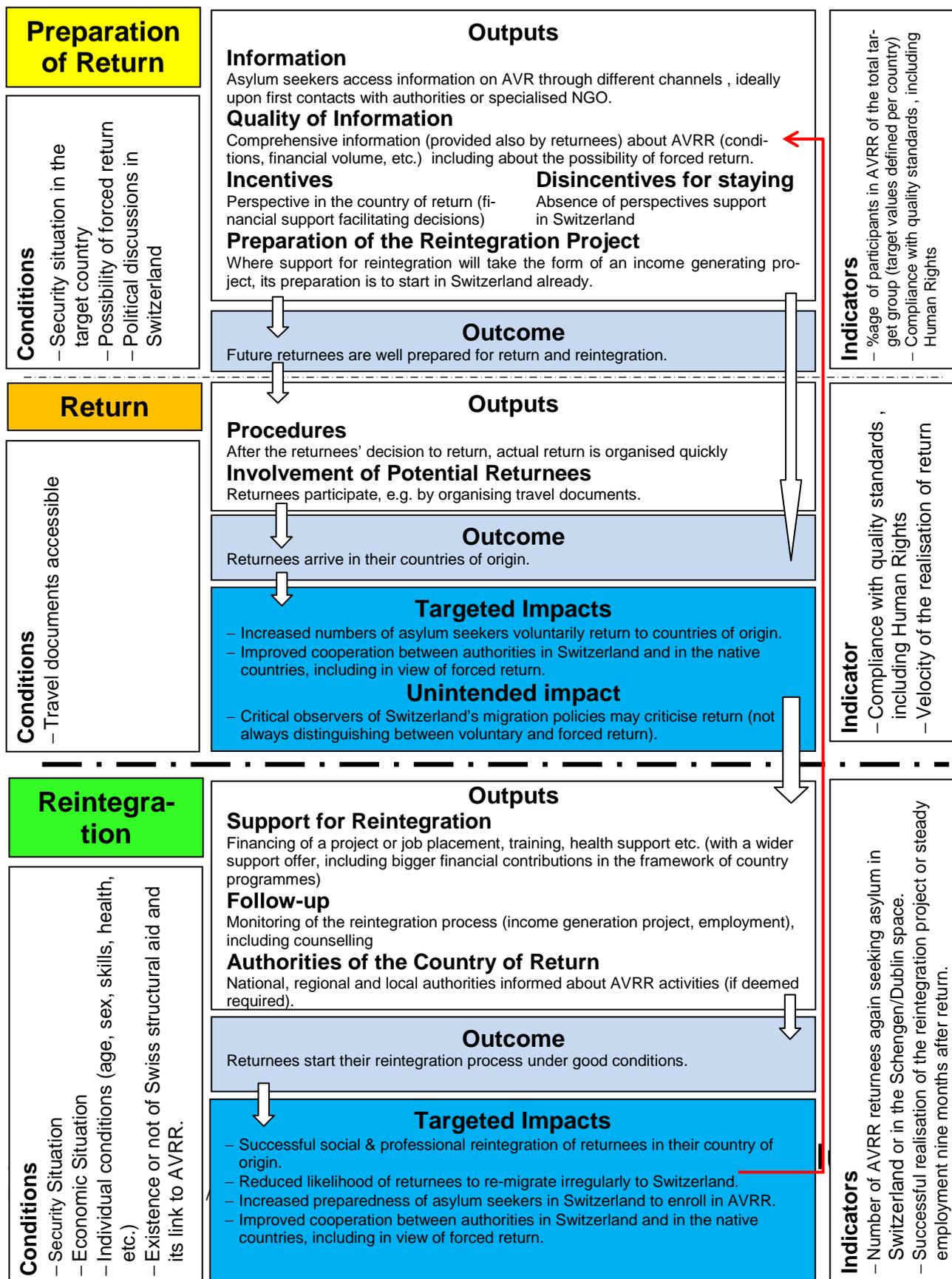
[www.magnet-project.eu](http://www.magnet-project.eu)

[www.reintegrationproject.ch](http://www.reintegrationproject.ch)

[www.ssiss.ch/fr/aide-reintegration](http://www.ssiss.ch/fr/aide-reintegration)

[webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110220105210/rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/rdsolr5004.pdf](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110220105210/rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/rdsolr5004.pdf)

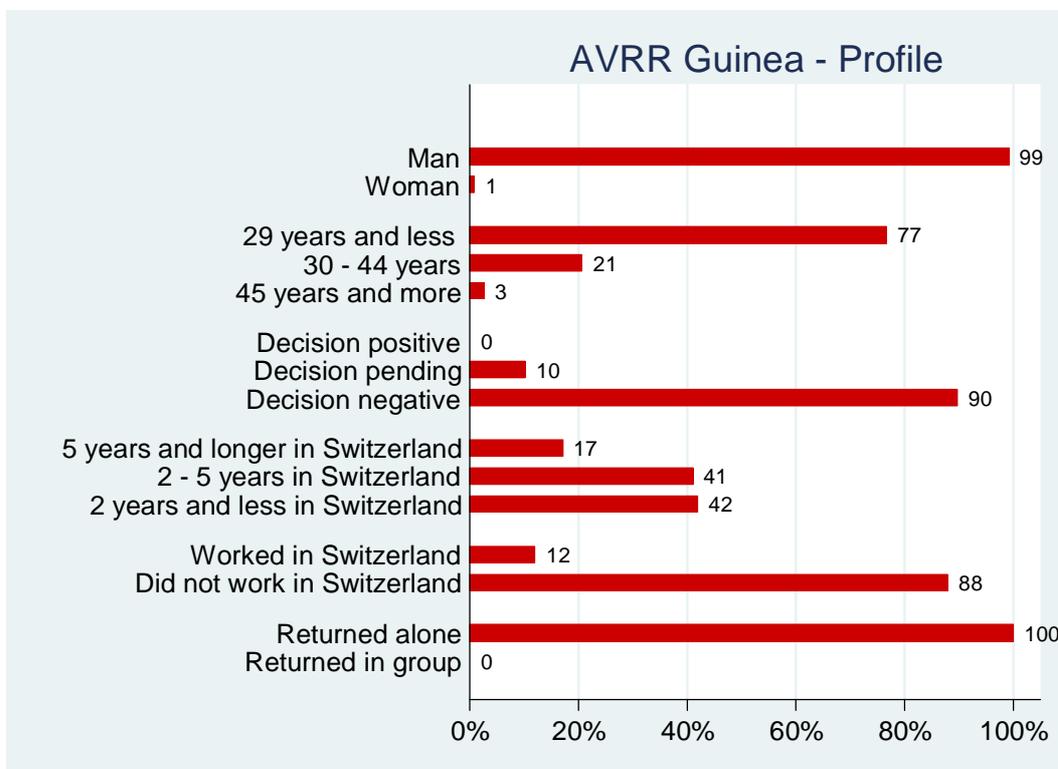
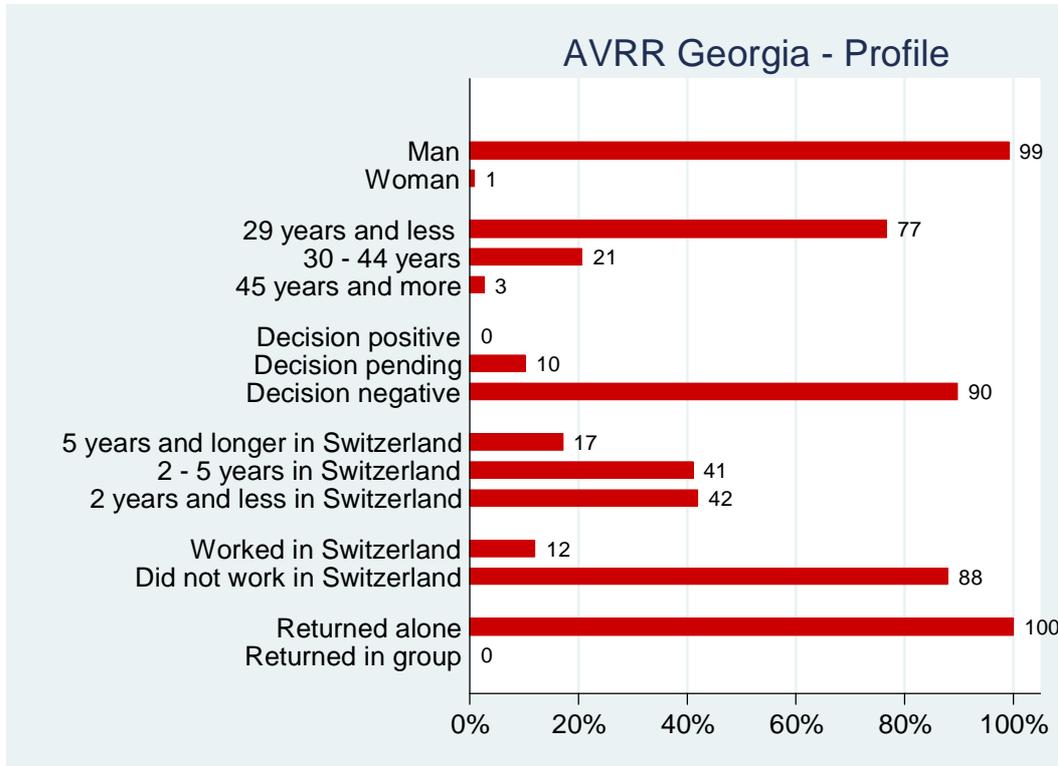
[www.youproject.ch](http://www.youproject.ch)

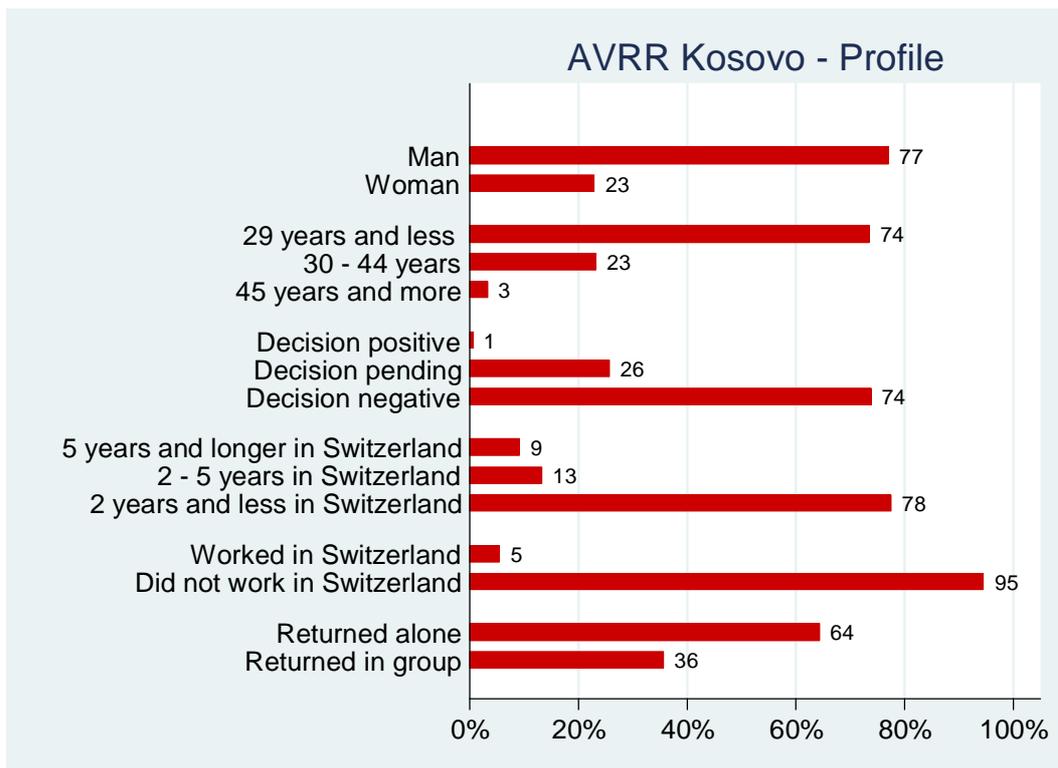
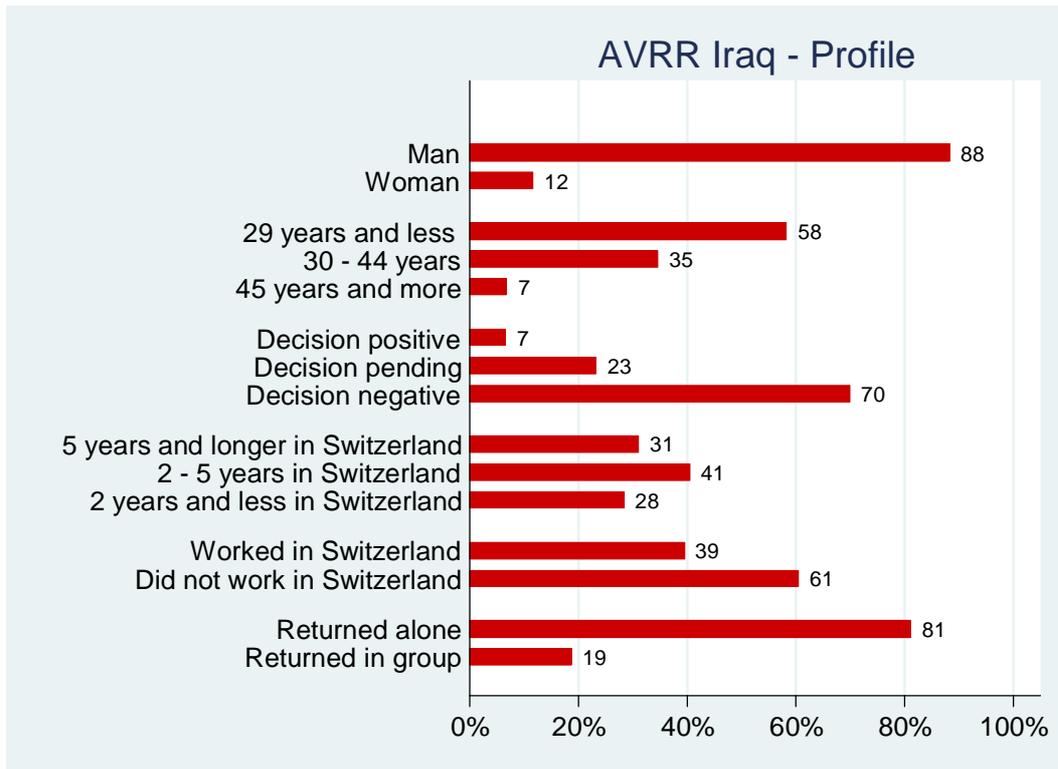


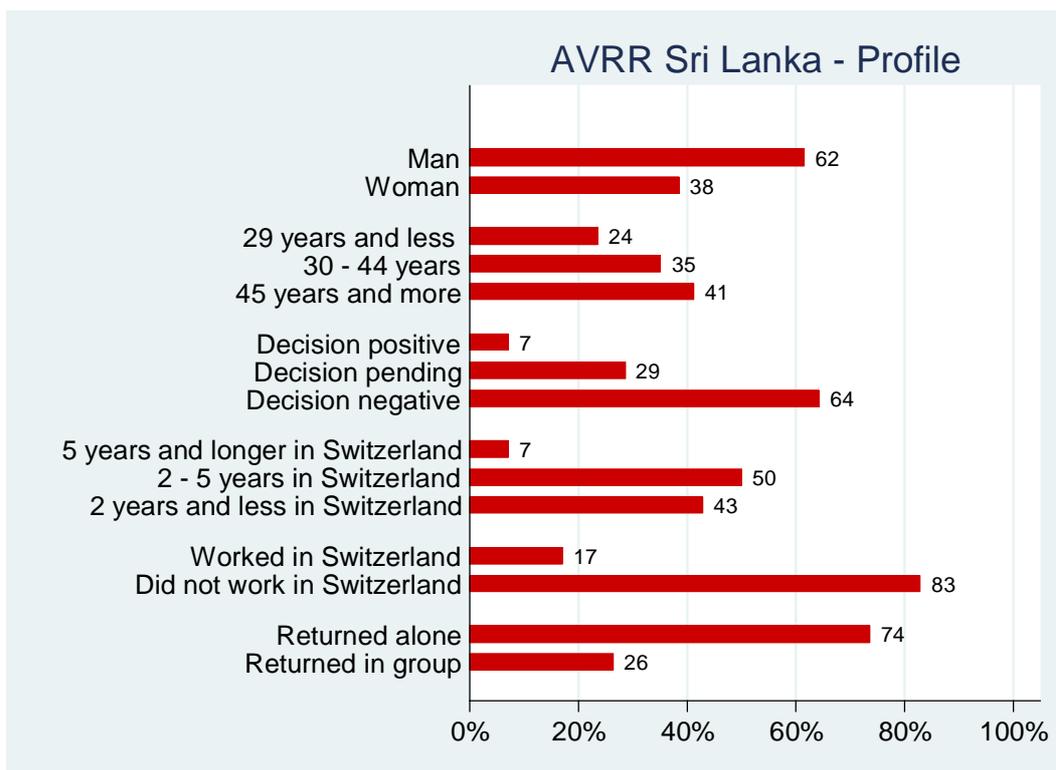
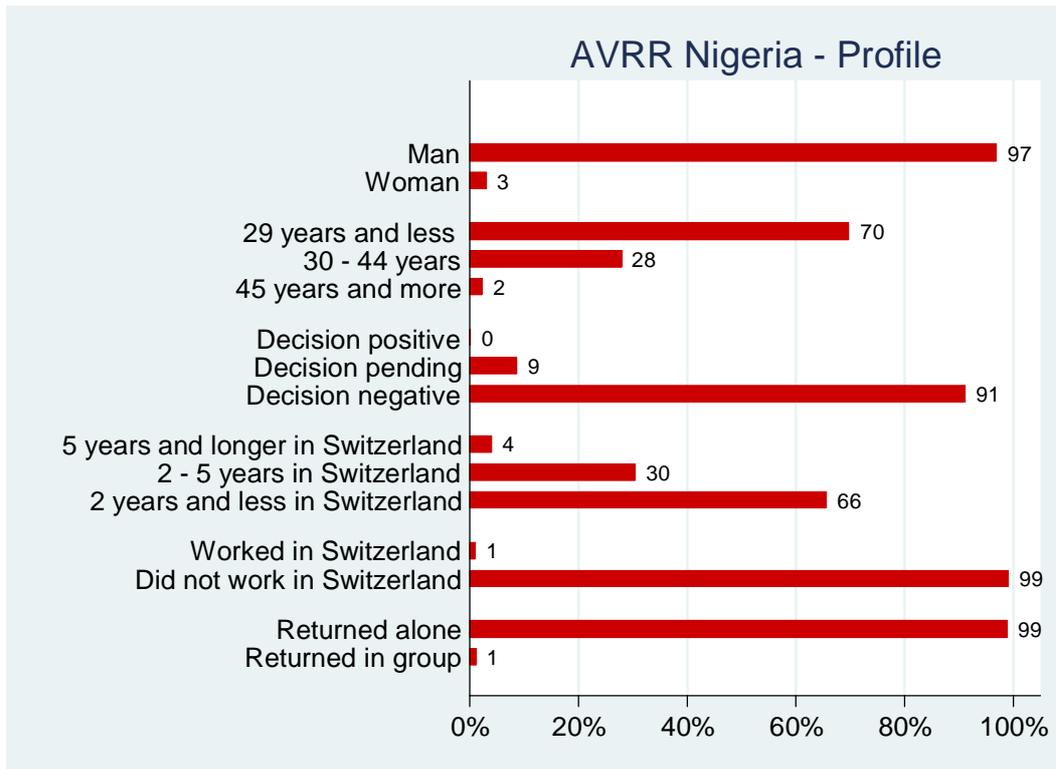
# Return and Reintegration

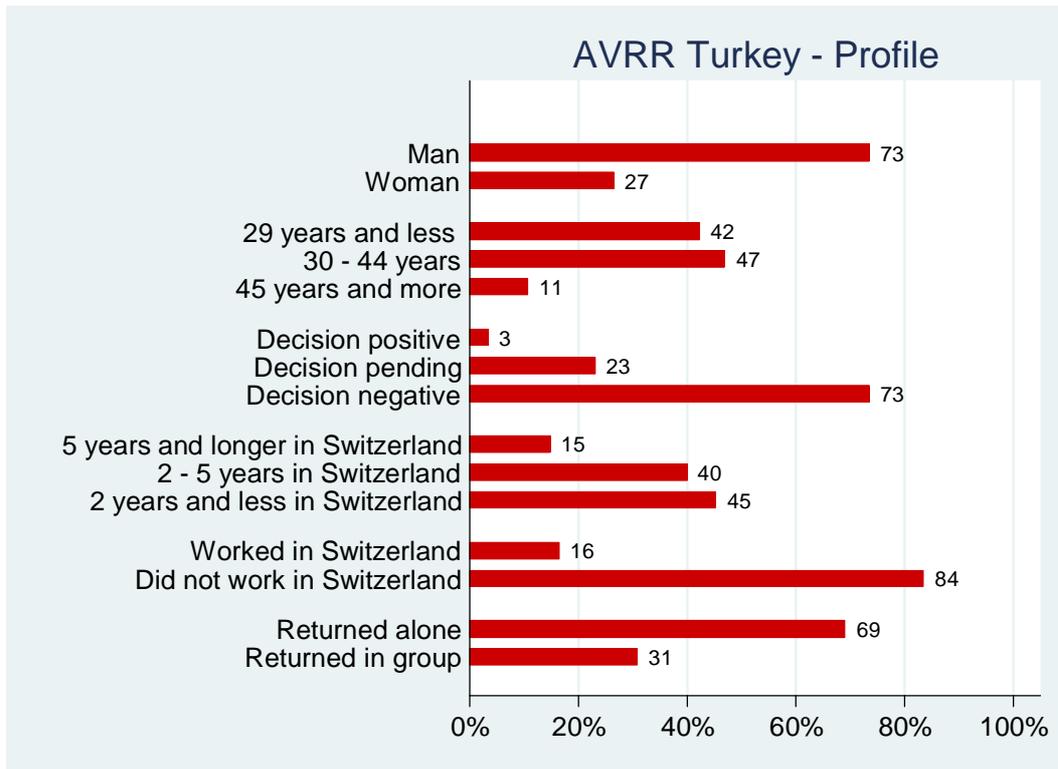


# ANNEX 5 AVRR Participants' Profiles









## ANNEX 6 Inflow / Outflow Analysis

An analysis of migration data has been carried out, the result of which is summarised in the following graphs, namely for six out of the seven countries that that are subject of this evaluation (Kosovo was excluded as it gained independence within the period of observation; this resulted in the truncation of the respective data series). The graphs depict both inflows to and from Switzerland, as well as its neighbouring countries (Austria, France, Germany and Italy). Due to missing data not all of the neighbouring countries or years could be observed in each of the graphs. The data stem from OECD and Eurostat respectively and cover all migration flows (not just the one of asylum seekers).<sup>4</sup> Where the two data sources differ, the average of the two was used.

As part of the statistical study it was planned to conduct a macro-level analysis with aggregated data on refugee and asylum-seekers movements. The idea was to perform a before-and-after analysis by comparing the situation after the AVRR programs were introduced with the situation beforehand. With this comparison it was planned to estimate the impact of the policy changes on both the outflow of immigrants as well as the inflow (i.e. pull-effects). In order to account for other changes in the migration flows, the before-and-after analysis for Switzerland would have been supplemented with a similar analysis covering total outflow from resp. total inflow to Switzerland (accounting for “migration policy changes in Switzerland”). Furthermore, in- and outflow from relevant countries of origin to Europe as a whole (accounting for “changes in the countries of origin”) and in- and outflows to Europe as a whole (accounting for “changes in other inflow countries”) would have supplemented the analysis.

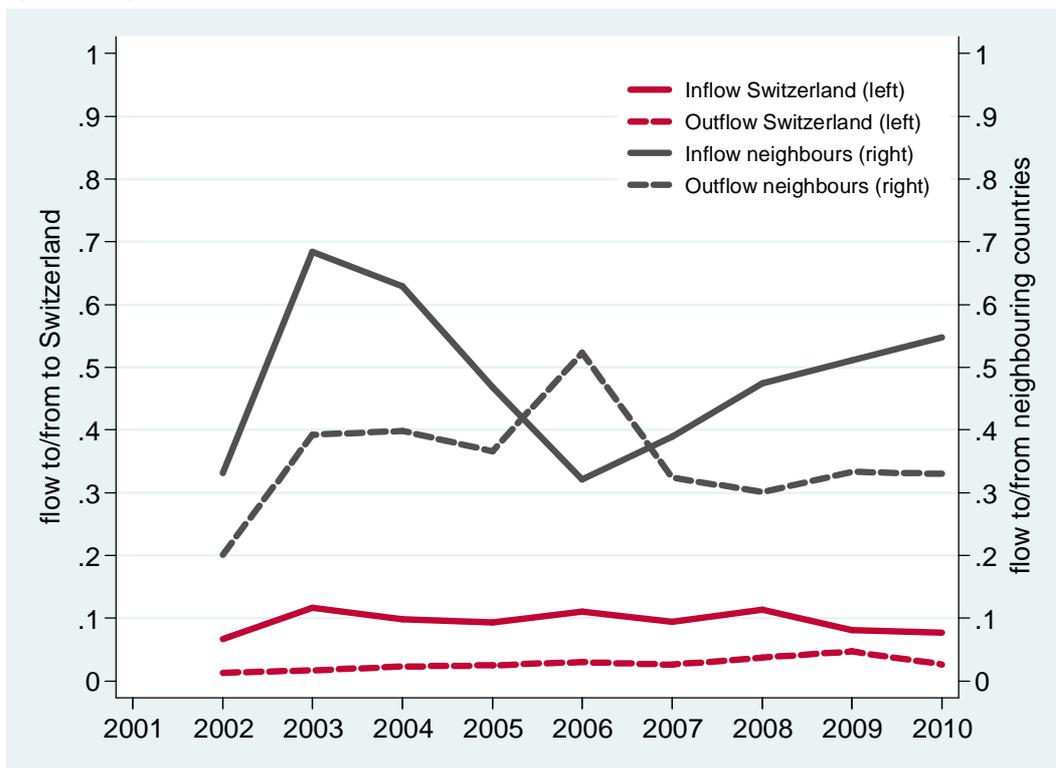
However, this analysis could not be performed as expected. The main challenge turned out to be the absence of a clear-cut division between the situation before and after the program (during the period of observation<sup>5</sup>): While country programs have been phased in and out, there was always the possibility to use individual AVRR. The fluctuation in the participation could not be used to identify the impact of the program either: the number of AVRR participants is not an exogenous variable; instead, it is influenced by the volume of inflow and outflow.

---

<sup>4</sup> The two datasets can be accessed on the following webpages:  
<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/population/data/database> and  
<http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DatasetCode=MIG>

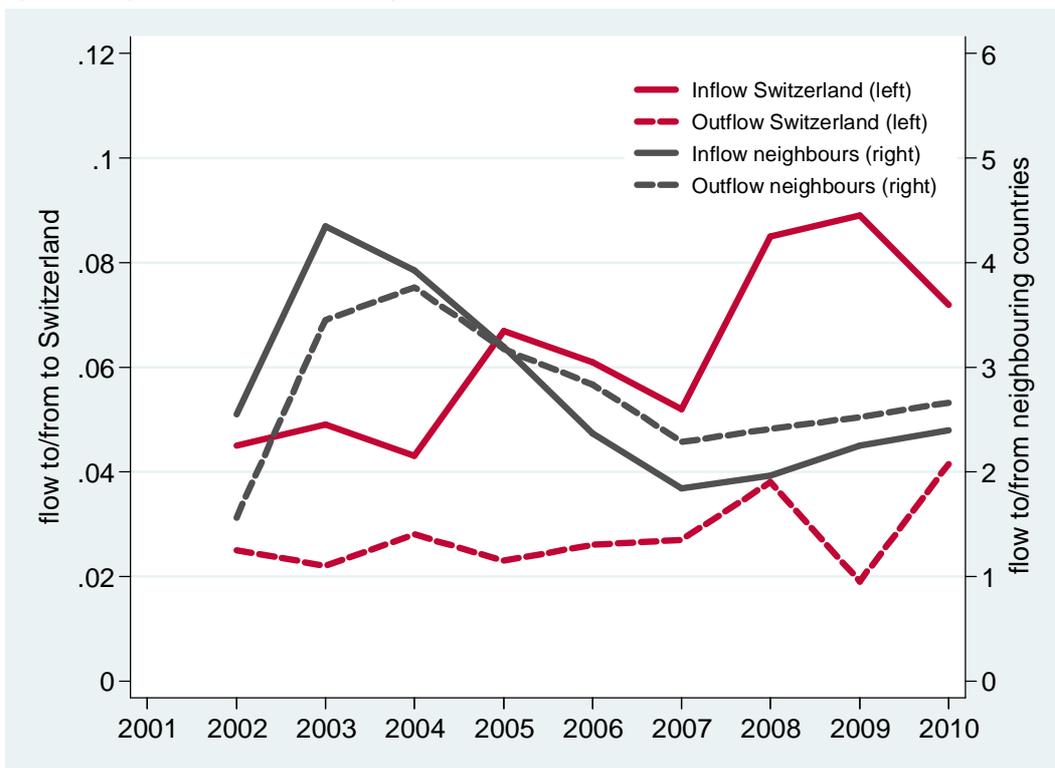
<sup>5</sup> Before the period of observation, on the other hand, the two dataset (from Eurostat and OECD) are incomplete.

Figure 1: Migration from and to Guinea (in thousands)



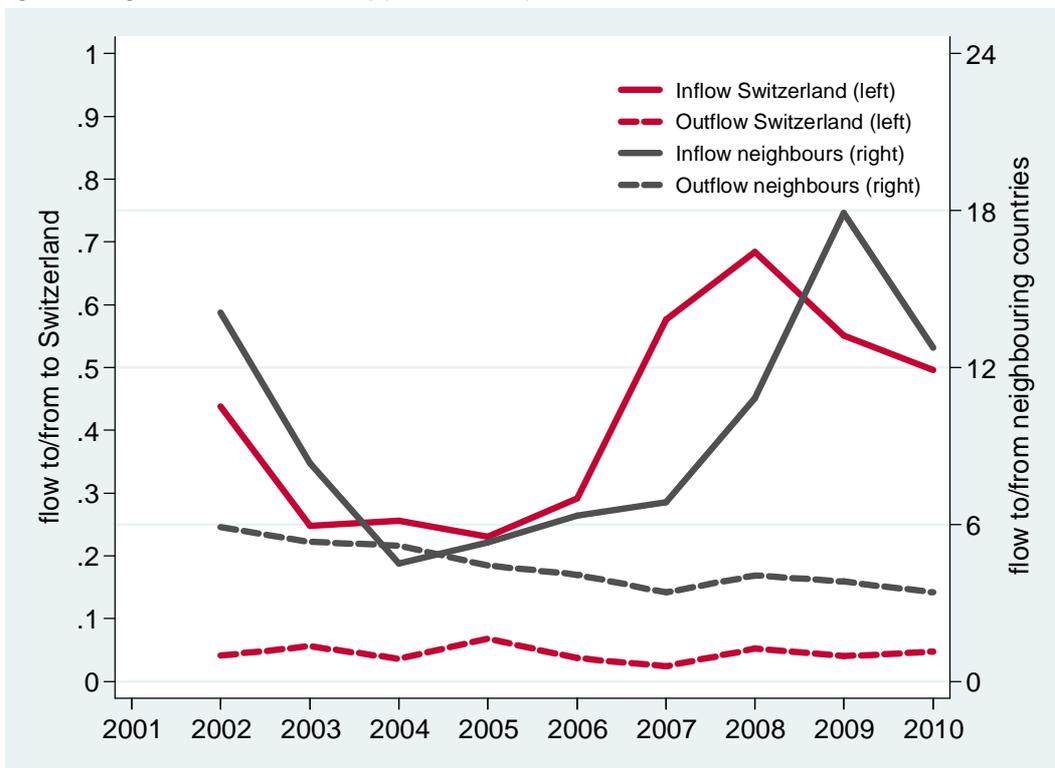
Source: Eurostat / OECD. Note: Neighbours = Austria, Germany (without France, Italy)

Figure 2: Migration from and to Georgia (in thousands)



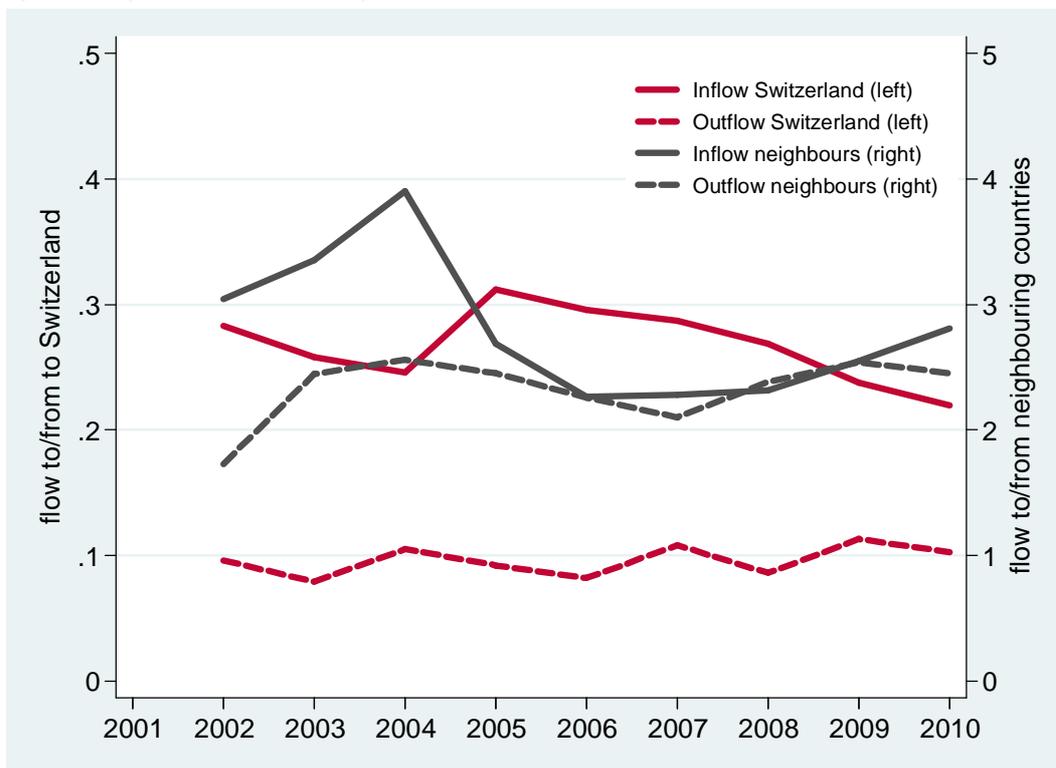
Source: Eurostat / OECD. Note: Neighbours = Austria, Germany (without France, Italy)

Figure 3: Migration from and to Iraq (in thousands)



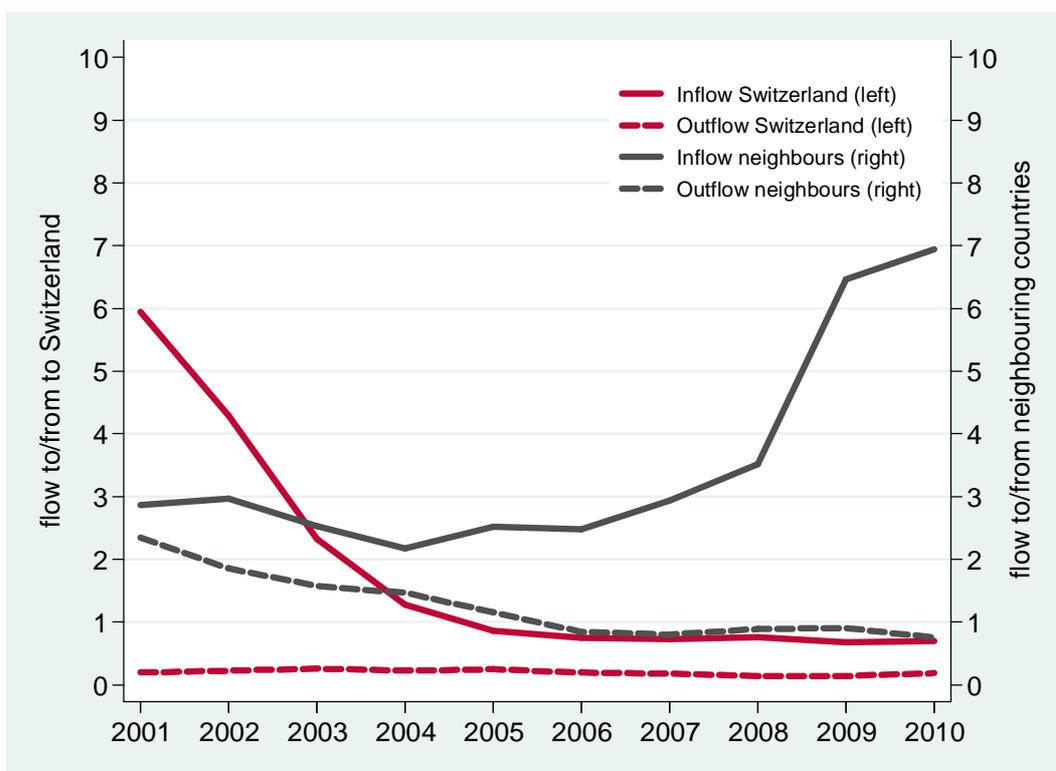
Source: Eurostat / OECD. Note: Neighbours = Austria, Germany, Italy (without France)

Figure 4: Migration from and to Nigeria (in thousands)



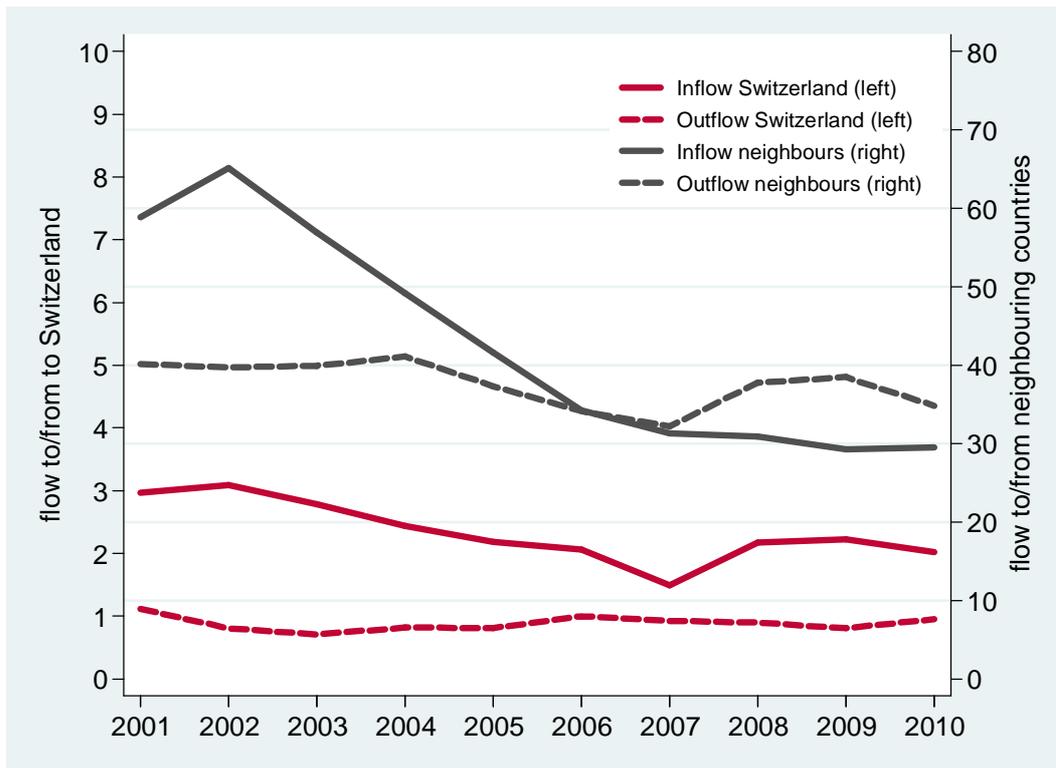
Source: Eurostat / OECD. Note: Neighbours = Austria, Germany (without France, Italy)

Figure 5: Migration from and to Sri Lanka (in thousands)



Source: Eurostat / OECD. Note: Neighbours = Austria, Germany (without France, Italy)

Figure 6: Migration from and to Turkey (in thousands)



Source: Eurostat / OECD. Note: Neighbours = Austria, Germany, Italy (without France)

# ANNEX 7 Curricula Vitae of the Evaluation Team

## Daniel Kessler

### Personal

---

Present Position: Senior Consultant at KEK-CDC  
 Education: Dr.phil. (Anthropology)  
 Date of birth: February 21, 1956  
 Languages: German, French, English, Spanish

### Working Experience abroad

---

Eastern Central and Eastern Europe, CIS (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyz Rep., Russia, Ukraine, Moldova), Palestine, Haiti, Southern Africa (RSA, Mozambique, Tanzania), Western Africa (Liberia), Pakistan.

### Key Qualifications

---

- Organisational Development
- Concept Development
- Evaluation and Monitoring (in international cooperation and in Switzerland)
- Backstopping for projects and programmes

### Recent Mandates

---

- 2010 and 2011: Evaluation of the projet de citoyenneté realised by the Canton of Neuchâtel for the promotion of participation of the migrant population in public debates and decision-making.
- 2010-2011: Evaluation of the project “ma ville, ma voix, ma vie” of the Municipality of Lausanne for the promotion of migrants’ participation in public life and political decision-taking.
- 2009-2010: Facilitation of the planning process and participation in the drafting of an SDC Strategy on Migration and Development.
- 2008-09: Evaluation of the “dispositif d’intégration” of the Municipality of Lausanne.
- 2000-2006: Evaluation of the Programme against racism in Switzerland realised by the Federal Service against racism (Service de lute contre le racisme).
- 2008: Evaluation of the Swiss Federal Office of Public Health’s HIV-Aids Campaign 2003-2008.
- 2003: Review of the Swiss Cooperation with Kosovo, 2003-2004; acting as the lead evaluator of a team of 4 evaluators. The mandate also concerned the evaluation of structural aid for returnees.
- 2001: Inventory of training offers for the migrant population in the Swiss Canton of Bern; establishment of a conceptual basis for the Department of Education’s future interventions of in the area.
- 2010: Evaluation of Terre des Hommes Switzerland’s country programmes in Columbia and Tanzania, with special consideration for the role of the decentralised programme offices and their working relations to TdH Headquarters.

### Major Professional Experience

---

since 1993	Partner of KEK-CDC: Organisational Consultancy, Project Management; Evaluation and Monitoring; Concepts; Moderation of Workshops. Recent consultancies include:
1994-97	Swiss National Science Foundation: Anthropological study on decision-making and motivation of a rural Swiss population in the field of health services.
1990-93	Canton of Grisons: Anthropological study on tourism in the upper Engadine (international links of a local economy, utilisation of natural resources, migration, technical and organisational change).
1988-91	Swiss National Science Foundation: Study on economic crisis and political conflict in the Swiss Jura with special regards to cultural identity, autonomist movements, technological change and its influence on the social structure.
1983-88	Berne Historical Museum (Dept. of Anthropology): Curator, in charge of realising exhibits, including an exhibit on the Maldives and their fragile ecosystems, co-writing catalogues.

## Dieter Zürcher

### Personal

---

Present Position: Executive Director of KEK-CDC Consultants  
 Education: Lic.phil. II, Geography, University of Zurich  
 Date of birth: March 23, 1958  
 Languages: German, English, French, Spanish

### Working Experience Abroad

---

Albania, Armenia, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Dominican Republic, Georgia, Germany, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Kosovo, Nepal, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, South Africa, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Vietnam

### Key Qualifications

---

- Team leader of evaluations and impact assessments of complex projects and programmes of bilateral development agencies as well as NGOs
- Management coaching of projects and programmes
- Participatory conceptualisation of development cooperation projects and programmes with logical framework and result-based management concepts
- Project and programme management in an interdisciplinary environment and quality management in development cooperation
- Institutional and capacity assessments of implementing organisations and change management
- Design and implementation of applied research projects and training modules
- Moderation of groups and organisational development processes

### Recent Mandates

---

- 2008 - 17: Management support to “Projects Approval and Implementation Monitoring in the Domain of Regional Development in the New EU Member States”, SDC
- 2009 - 15: Management support to the programme “living together in rural areas” as part of the integration promotion programme, Federal Commission for Migration Questions, EKM
- 2011 - 14: Head of the Swiss Intermediate Body to implement the “Reform Fund linked to Civil Society Participation” and the “Partnership and Expert Fund” in Romania, SDC (total investment of ca. 20 million CHF)
- 2011 - 14: Institutional and Capacity Assessment for the ADA/SDC financed Regional Development Programme (RDP) in Northern Albania, Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation
- 2010 - 13: Coaching of the Decentralisation and Local Development Programme in Albania during its transition from national to local project management, Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation
- 2012 - 13: Ex-post evaluation of the Science Education Quality Improvement Programme financed by GIZ and KFW in Indonesia (1996-2008), GIZ
- 2012: Team member of the South African - German development cooperation evaluation 2004-2011, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Berlin
- 2011 - 12: Cross-sectional evaluation of the international climate and energy policy 2008-2011 of the Heinrich Böll Foundation (incl. 2 case studies: South Asia and Central-Eastern Europe)
- 2011: Elaboration of an evaluation concept for Swiss Cooperation Strategies with priority countries and regional programmes, SDC
- 2011: Evaluation of the Swiss competence centre for peace building (KOFF-swisspeace), Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs

### Major Professional Experience

---

Since 2010	Executive Director of KEK-CDC Consultants, Zurich
Since 2007	Consultant and Partner of KEK-CDC Consultants, Zurich
2003 - 2007	Lecturer at NADEL/ETH Zurich (Master of Advanced Studies in Development and Cooperation)
1999 - 2002	Resident Coordinator of Helvetas in Thimphu, Bhutan.
1996 - 1998	Desk Officer for Bhutan at Helvetas headquarters, Zurich.
1984 - 1995	Consultant and backstopper at INFRAS AG (Consulting group for economic and environmental policies), Zurich..

## Fiona Wigger

### Personal

---

Present Position: Scientific Collaborator, KEK-CDC Associate  
 Education: M. A. in media and communication science, business studies and sociology, University of Fribourg  
 Date of birth: December 14, 1980  
 Languages: German, English, French, Spanish, Italian

### Working Experience abroad

---

Cuba, Indonesia, Kosovo

### Key Qualifications

---

- Project Management Skills, including Capacity Works (GIZ Project Management Tool)
- Very good knowledge of monitoring and evaluation methodologies
- Qualitative and quantitative methods for designing and conducting surveys & interviews
- Moderation of groups

### Recent Mandates

---

- 2013: Mid-term Evaluation of Swiss Cooperation Programme with Cuba, SDC
- 2012: Quality Assessment Annual Reports 2012, SDC
- 2011: Country Programme Evaluation Concept, SDC
- 2011: Evaluation of KOFF, Center for Peacebuilding
- 2010: Survey of Regional Research Partnership Programme in the Western Balkans, SDC
- 2010 - 11: Development of a drug policy, City of Biel-Bienne
- 2011 - 2012: Support in the development process of the Cantonal Integration Programme and implementation, Cantons of Zurich, Thurgau, Aargau
- 2011: Elaboration and implementation of trainings in Prevention of Corruption, Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst EED
- 2007 - 2010: Evaluation KFH-DC Program, External evaluation of the steering board and the portfolio of research partnerships of Universities of Applied Sciences with developing countries, Konferenz der Fachhochschulen
- 2009: Evaluation of the Humanitarian System, Austrian Development Agency ADA
- 2008 - 2011: Coordination of the formation for intercultural translation, Bundesamt für Gesundheit BAG
- 2008: Planning of livelihood activities of Caritas in Singkil, Indonesia, Caritas Switzerland
- 2008: Evaluation and impact analysis of the Swiss federal campaign "LOVE LIFE STOP AIDS", Bundesamt für Gesundheit BAG
- 2007: Impact analysis of professional integration programmes of Social Services in the City of Berne

### Major Professional Experience

---

Since 2007 Scientific Collaborator, KEK-CDC  
 2006 - 2007 Research assistant at University of Fribourg (CH), management of a media research project focusing on the representation of migrants in television (role of integration)  
 2006 Marketing Assistant at TheNet-Internet Services, promotion of wireless internet  
 2000 – 2001 Volunteer in a livelihood project with Fundación Santa Maria del Fiat SMF in Manglaralto, Ecuador

## Harald Meier

### Personal

---

Present Position: Senior Consultant  
 Education: Master of Laws (Mag. iur.), University of Vienna  
 Diploma in International Relations, Johns Hopkins University  
 Date of birth: December 5, 1972  
 Languages: German, English, French, B/C/S

### Working Experience Abroad

---

Albania, Armenia, Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Jordan, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Vietnam.

### Key Qualifications

---

- Experience in implementing large scale international donor funded technical assistance projects
- Logical framework approach and knowledge of monitoring and evaluation methodologies
- Experience in return and migration issues and in legal advice to refugees and asylum seekers

### Recent Mandates

---

- 2013: Study on the regulatory cost of customs procedures, SCA
- 2012: Study on the regulatory cost of work permits, FOM
- 2012: Study on the regulatory costs of vocational education and training in Switzerland, SERI
- 2012: Evaluation of the Social Inclusion Programme in Serbia, SDC
- 2011: External Review Alternated Education and Vocational Training Project in Albania, SDC
- 2011 External Review of the Joint Programme (JP) on the inclusion of marginalised children into education in Serbia and in Montenegro, SDC
- 2011: External Review of the OSCE/ODIHR Rule of Law Programme, ODIHR
- 2011: External Evaluation of the Youth Employment Project in Bosnia-Herzegovina, SDC
- 2010: External Evaluation of the Third Frame Agreement on Central Bank Support, SDC
- 2010: Strategic Guidelines to address Health Inequalities in Switzerland, FOPH

### Project Management / Backstopping Assignments

---

- 2005-2007: Support to the Public Administration Reform Coordinator in Bosnia-Herzegovina
- 2006-2007: Support to Justice in Kosovo
- 2005-2007: Support to Tax Administration in Georgia

### Major Professional Experience

---

2010 – ongoing	B,S,S. Economic Consultants, Basel, Senior Consultant
2004 – 2010	human dynamics, Vienna, Senior Business Development and Project Manager
2003 – 2004	OSCE, Zagreb, Legal Advisor
2002 – 2003	Higher Regional Court Vienna, Wien, Court Clerk
2000 – 2002	OSCE, Sarajevo, Human Rights Officer and Head of Field Office Zenica
1996 – 2000	Various internships (UNCHR, IHF-HR, Kunz Schima Wallentin Lawyers, RDB, Austrian Commercial Chamber in Amman, market research, IFES research)

### Other

---

Member of the Swiss Evaluation Society (SEVAL)

## Michael Morlok

### Personal

---

Present Position: Senior Consultant  
 Education: Dr. oec. publ., University of Zurich and University of Bordeaux  
 Date of birth: July 9, 1977  
 Languages: German, English, French

### Working Experience Abroad

---

Albania, Australia, Austria, Georgia, Germany, Liechtenstein, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Tunisia, Turkey.

### Key Qualifications

---

- Very good knowledge of evaluation techniques as well as statistical methods
- Experience in managing complex projects in the public sector, including research projects in the field of labour market, social protection and economic development
- Experience in providing advisory services to public and non-profit sector clients

### Recent Mandates

---

- 2011 – ongoing: Study on the labour market integration of refugees and temporary admitted persons, Federal Office for Migration
- 2011 – ongoing: Evaluation of Active Labour Market Programs, State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO
- 2011 – 2012: Impact evaluation of the science and innovation centre in Fribourg, Canton of Fribourg
- 2011 – 2012: Assessment of support services to SME and start-up firms, Canton of Fribourg
- 2011: Scoping mission and feasibility study for the creation of employment opportunities in the water sector for young graduates in Tunisia, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
- 2011: Evaluation of the labour market project “quick & smart”, Office for Labour St. Gallen
- 2011: Study on recruiting employees in Non-EU / EFTA countries, industry body
- 2011: International comparison of labour market monitoring tools, Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology
- 2007 – 2009: Evaluation of Active Labour Market Programs, Office for Economy and Labour of the canton of Zurich
- 2007 – 2008: Situation of low skilled labour in the Lake Constance area (Austria, Germany, Liechtenstein and Switzerland). Analysis and measures, 12 participating cantons and Interreg
- 2006 – 2007: Long term unemployment. Analysis and measures, 12 participating cantons
- 2006 – 2007: Regional comparison of unemployment data, Public Employment Service Liechtenstein
- 2004 – 2005: Analysis of labour market trends in the hospitality industry, 13 participating cantons
- 2003 – 2004: Youth unemployment. Analysis and measures, 10 participating cantons
- 2003: Analysis of labour market trends in the financial industry, 10 participating cantons

### Major Professional Experience

---

2011 – ongoing	B,S,S. Economic Consultants, Basel, Senior Consultant
2010	Research Plus, Singapore, Research Manager
2009	Active Foundation, Perth (Australia), Project Manager
2007 – 2009	Service for Economy and Labour Market, Zurich, Co-manager of the project “ALMP evaluation”
2003 – 2008	Labour Market Observatory, Zurich, Scientific Collaborator, then Head of Observatory
2005 – 2008	Bio Vision, Zürich, Project Coordinator
2002 – 2004	Federal Financial Control Commission, Bern, Intern, then Project Assistant

### Other

---

Statistic software: Stata, SPSS, Eviews  
 Member of the Swiss Evaluation Society (SEVAL)

### Recent Publications

---

Rafael Lalive, Michael Morlok and Josef Zweimüller (2011): Applying for jobs: Does ALMP participation help?, University of Zurich, Department of Economics Working Paper No. 19, [www.econ.uzh.ch/static/wp/econwp019.pdf](http://www.econ.uzh.ch/static/wp/econwp019.pdf)