

# Experiences on Return



“Building a Return Network in Latin-America  
for a Comprehensive, Effective and Sustainable  
Return Program Including Reintegration”

RN Latam project

**ACCCEM**  
[www.accem.es](http://www.accem.es)



Freedom, security and justice



All images courtesy of Accem

This report has been elaborated by Accem as leading agency with the collaboration of the partners organization of the RN Latam project: Consiglio Italiano per i Rifugiati (CIR), Soletterre, Strategie di Pace, Opere Riunite Buon Pastore, Migrantes y Refugiados en Argentina (MyRAR), Espacios de Mujer (CEM), Fondo Ecuatoriano Populorum Progressio (FEPP).

The report elaboration has been financed by the DG Justice Liberty and Security under a project implemented through the European Return Fund, JLS/2007/MMSiA/Return/021; and co-financed by the Spanish Ministry of Labour and Immigration.

# index

1. introduction .....	5
2. RN Latam Project summary.....	7
3. concept clarification .....	11
3.1 Return: why?.....	11
3.2 Return: a definition .....	12
3.3 Reintegration and the RN Latam Project .....	14
4. methodological approach .....	17
4.1 Working with returnees: a common approach .....	17
Main points .....	17
Elaboration and definition of the “Reintegration personalized route”.....	29
Collaboration for reintegration.....	30
Definition of the integration and reintegration measures included in the project	31
4.2 Implementation of the reintegration measures.....	32
5. work done in each country .....	35
5.1 Argentina.....	35
5.2 Colombia.....	39
5.3 Ecuador.....	44
6. project particularities .....	49
6.1 Complexity of return term .....	49
6.2 Role of the leading agencies (LA).....	54
6.3 Creation of a network in Latin America .....	55
6.4 Country approach .....	56
7. networking seminar .....	59
8. overall assessment.....	63



# 1. introduction

This is a final report that tries to highlight and make accessible certain outcomes and Experiences resulting from a European Return Report called “the RN Latam project”- “Building a Return Network in Latin-America for a Comprehensive, Effective and Sustainable Return Program Including Reintegration” in order to facilitate the dissemination of its results and make an active contribution aimed at European policy makers, practitioners, potential returnees, active migratory networks and all the relevant stakeholders both in the countries of return and in the Member States.

An effective return policy took a position at the top of the UE migration policy in order to achieve a comprehensive common migration policy. Taking into account the key role of the return management policy within the external relation of the EU Common policy plus the current stage of the evolving harmonization process, training, capacity building and networking were elements located in a prominent position. The project was trying to profit from experiences gained in the course of two Return Community Actions projects in 2005 and 2006. From the previous experiences it was concluded lack of an awareness raising and training of all the stakeholders involved therefore the project was promoted in order to increase the knowledge and capability to put forward a sustainable return process in the countries of origin of the return population.



On the assumption to foster sustainability and effective return of illegal residents on the common interest of the Member States as well as the countries of return to avoid secondary movements. This project responded to the need of giving answers to the development of co-operation between Member States as well as co-operation with countries of return. To ensure that the European States will undertake the returns of third national illegally residing within the EU, in a spirit of solidarity and in compliance with their human rights obligations under international law as a pre-requisite to achieve a sustainable return of migrants who will bring back accumulated amount of financial, social and human capital into the developing countries. Thus assistance and development should go hand by hand, avoiding the idea of merely promoting assistance to the third country and enhancing an integrating return scheme.

At the face of all the mentioned above we detected that there was a clear need of a new EU return project that will give an answer to the need of re-integration for the returnees once they do arrive at their countries of origin as well as needs of capacity building for organizations on their countries of origin, in order to be able to provide the necessary services from the reception at the arrival, reintegration in the local community, provide the advisable training options in the country of origin as well as facilitating the access to the information required.

## 2. RN Latam Project summary

### Project leader:

ACCEM – Spain, [www.accem.es](http://www.accem.es)

### Project partners:

Consiglio Italiano per i Rifugiati (CIR) – Italy, [www.cir-onlus.org](http://www.cir-onlus.org)

Soletterre, Strategie di Pace – Italy, [www.soletterre.org](http://www.soletterre.org)

Opere Riunite Buon Pastore – Italy, [www.buonpastore.org](http://www.buonpastore.org)

Migrantes y Refugiados en Argentina (MyRAR) – Argentina, <http://myrar.org.ar/>

Corporación Espacios de Mujer (CEM) – Colombia, <http://www.espaciosdemujer.org>

Fondo Ecuatoriano Populorum Progressio (FEPP) – Ecuador, <http://www.fepp.org.ec/>

Project financed by the European Fund for Return. JLS/2007/MMSiA/Return/021

Duration: 12 months

Starting date: 1st September 2008

### Objectives of the project

The objective of the project is to establish an assistance umbrella network regarding return and reintegration, concerning three Latin-American countries (Argentina, Colombia and Ecuador), involving project partners in Europe and leading agencies in Latin-America.

The aim of the network shall be to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of return as a whole, and create a return assistance process ruled by the principle of protecting human dignity. As a part of this, a Case Chain Management Procedure shall be created, starting in the host country and

continued in the country of return, until the returnee is sustainably settled.

In the course of the project, the needs of returnees shall be addressed regarding social and legal return advice, orientation and information on country of origin, employment training, furthermore, social, educational and economic reintegration. Special attention shall be paid to vulnerable groups, such as minors, disabled persons and women.

The project is also aimed at the capacity building of the project partners and the leading agencies in the countries of return. All actions will be carried out through coordinated actions of all the stakeholders involved in the return process, taking advantage of their own existing capacities in order to ensure the impact and sustainability of the project.

## Project beneficiaries

Argentinean, Colombian or Ecuador nationals who do not or no longer fulfil the conditions for entry and/or stay in a European Union Member State, subject to a final return decision and/or removal order, stating or declaring the illegality of stay of a third country national, and who have been imposed an obligation of return; and within 6 months maximum after their return.

NGOs working in the social services in the country of origin.

## Activities description

### ■ Activities addressing returnees directly:

- Legal, social and psychological counselling and mediation upon arrival to the country of return.
- Returnees will receive information and initial orientation once the migratory procedure has been concluded.
- Assignment of allowances: identification of allowances for accommodation, food, urgent

health care and other basic needs.

- Temporary assistance will be provided to returnees, taking into account their personal needs, such as help regarding basic needs, family contacts, internal transport, psychological orientation and rehabilitation in specialized centres, medical assistance, medicine and adequate treatment.
  - Organizing employment training sessions.
  - Personalized information and help will be provided to returnees, taking into account their professional skills, qualifications, and their working experiences in the European host country, in order to enhance their chances to succeed in the labour market of their country of origin.
  - Conducting seminars on the role of returnees in their country of origin.
  - Seminars will be organized for returnees in order to make them concerned about the role they can play in the socio-economic development of their country of origin, taking into account the experience they have gained in the European host country, such as work experience, professional qualification and many other habits.
  - Compiling case files concerning returnees per person.
  - The leading agencies in the countries of return will be in charge of compiling personalized files on returnees, the help provided to them by the assistance umbrella network, and the achievements reached concerning the social, educational and economic reintegration of the returnee.
- Activities concerning the cooperation of project partners and leading agencies in the countries of origin:
- Conducting Capacity Building trainings in the countries of return with the project partners and leading agencies, submitting existing programs, service methods and tools related to the process of return to the leading agencies.

- Implementing the Employment Training Sessions by the leading agencies for returnees with the support of the project partners.
  - Conducting a Regional Networking Seminar at the end of the project in order to share the experiences during the project implementation.
- Dissemination, publishing, reporting to the European Commission:
- Publication of the project experience through a Project Final Report produced by the project partners and the leading agencies.
  - Production of two project reports for the European Commission, containing the activities of the project and financial information.



# 3. concept clarification

## 3.1 Return: why?

Migrants chose to return to their country of origin for several and complex reasons. The reasons can be linked to their past and to homesickness, or be connected to a present that did not respect the expectations constitutive of their migration process. There are cases where migrants face hardships in the host country, other cases where even though migrants reached a satisfactory social position, they are ready to return to his country. The return can also easily be the wish to return home after several years spent in a foreign country as one of the options always available for a person in his personal migration process.

Trying to analyse this issue, different empirical studies have reached similar conclusions on the reasons of refugees and migrants returning to their country of origin. Many divide the reasons for return into three categories:

- familial-personal reasons,
- economic-occupational reasons,
- social-patriotic reasons.

These different classes of reasons can also be analysed through the so-called 'Push- Pull Factors' theory. 'Pull Factors' are the elements that attract the potential returnee away from the receiving country and back towards their country of origin. Some of these 'Pull Factors' can include family ties, homesickness and social-patriotic reasons. Tied with these are 'Push Factors' elements which pressure the potential returnee out of the receiving country. Such factors include insufficient monetary funds, insecure residential and legal status, discrimination, integration difficulties and inability to get adjusted to the living conditions in the receiving country. Studies repeatedly demonstrate that the "Pull Factors" play a larger role in the decision to return voluntarily. Moreover, they show that there is generally no single key motive for the decision to return. Instead, the decision is normally influenced by a number of different factors, which may vary in importance for the potential returnee over the time.

## 3.2 Return: a definition

Not only why people return can deeply differ, but also how has different perspectives. Because of that relevant institutions on the issue try to point out clarifying terms and concepts around it. For example, ECRE - European Council on Refugees and Exiles, the relevant European network of NGOs working for the defence of the asylum seekers has elaborated the following definitions of return<sup>1</sup>:

- Voluntary return/repatriation: the return of persons with a legal basis for remaining in the host state who have made an informed choice and have freely consented to repatriate.
- Mandatory return: refers to persons who no longer have a legal basis for remaining in the territory of the host state and who are therefore required by law to leave the country. It also applies to individuals who have consented to leave, or have been induced to leave by means of incentives or threats of sanctions.
- Forced return: the return of those who have not given their consent and therefore may be subject to sanctions or the use of force in order to effect their removal.

On other hand, in this regard, UNHCR's statement is enlightening. UNHCR strongly suggests assessing in advance the situation in the country of origin, in order to evaluate if a return can happen under conditions of "safety and dignity". It states that the principle of "voluntariness" must be viewed in relation to both the conditions in the country of origin (calling for an informed decision) and the situation in the country of asylum (permitting a free choice). "Voluntariness" is more than an issue of principle. (...). The requirement of voluntariness constitutes a pragmatic and sensible approach towards finding a truly durable solution.

The issue of 'voluntariness' as implying an absence of any physical, psychological, or material pressure is, however, often clouded by the fact that for many refugees a decision to return is dictated by a combination of pressures due to political factors, security problems or material needs.<sup>2</sup>.

The voluntary return can be facilitated through Assistance Programmes attending migrants during this delicate process. The Assisted Voluntary Return is the possibility to return including a logistical

<sup>1</sup> From <http://www.ecre.org/topics/return>

<sup>2</sup> UNHCR, Handbook Voluntary Repatriation: International Protection, Geneva 1996, pg 10

and financial support. Normally this solution is offered to migrants not longer willing or able to stay in the country of reception and wishing to go back to their country of origin. The assistance is provided in order to support migrants to return in a dignified, sustainable and safe way.

The concept of return that RN Latam Project promotes is deeply linked with these ideas of voluntariness and assistance. The Assisted Voluntary Return is by far the preferred option, both for the Member State and for the returnee. Clearly it is the most dignified and respectful of human dignity way to return, but also less expensive and more sustainable than Forced Return. For instance according to the Association of National Municipalities (ANCI) in Italy, Forced Return costs are on average four times higher than those foreseen for Assisted Voluntary Return<sup>3</sup>. From the point of view of the returnee the comparison between voluntary/mandatory and forced return revealed an important aspect. A study conducted on Kosovo returnees from Germany show that most of the time there is often not much difference regarding the kind of assistance returnees received considering that voluntarily returned persons were, generally speaking, in a better mental condition. Months after deportation forcefully returned families were often still in some state of shock and were unable to manage essential parts of their everyday life in Kosovo. It therefore appears that allowing returnees even a short period of time to get prepared to return and consent to voluntary/mandatory return gives them the chance to elaborate the return decision and to arrive with at least some motivation to start a new life in the country of origin.<sup>4</sup>

Usually the Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programmes articulate in 3 phases:

1. Before the departure – provision of reliable information to the migrants, counselling, support for the practical organisation and preparation to the travel;
  2. During the travel – payment of the ticket, booking, logistical support and assistance;
  3. After the arrival – reception assistance and support aimed to facilitate the reintegration.
- In order to guarantee the sustainability of the process, return programmes should always foresee reintegration measures. A successful reintegration in the country of origin is a key factor in ensuring the sustainability of return<sup>5</sup>.

---

<sup>3</sup>From European Migration Network, Return Migration, May 2007

<sup>4</sup> From Danish Refugees Council, Recommendations for the Return and Reintegration of Rejected Asylum Seekers, May 2008, pg 58

<sup>5</sup> Executive Committee Conclusions - N° 40 (1985) - paragraph (k); Executive Committee Conclusions - N° 74 (1994)

### 3.3 Reintegration and the RN Latam Project

The reintegration is the key element for a sustainable and respectful return process. Reintegration includes a strong contact with the social context and the ability for the person who return after years to interface with the new cultural, economical, political and social environment. This goal is not easy to reach. In fact, on one hand return can have a positive value for many migrants but on the other hand it can produce difficulties and traumas. It can imply an “inverse cultural shock” depending from the distance between personal expectations linked to the idea of home that the returnee has elaborated during his migration experience and the real impact with the reality. A person who had lived a long period of voluntary or forced migration often develops an idealised image of the Country of Origin, strictly connected with the past, but deeply different from the actual reality. This idealisation can be extreme particularly for people who left the Country when they were still young, so that they easily associate the idea of the Country of Origin to the idea of youth. Changes occurred in the Country of Origin, but at the same time changes can also concern the values and the personality of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. These changes can arise from the natural growing process of each person or from the migration experience. Facing a different cultural and social context can bring to a reevaluation of the cultural values of the Country of Origin. This process can bring to a rediscovery of the culture of origin, in a positive sense, or leading to a separation from them and make someone aware that he/she doesn't belong to this culture anymore. This process of identity redefinition can bring to opposite outcomes and it demonstrates how difficult is to achieve mental balance and psychosocial wellbeing<sup>6</sup>.

The reintegration in the country of origin is therefore a complex process that implies the activation of many individual resources in the returnee: psychophysical, personal and professional resources. To support this process, the RN Latam Project has promoted a multidisciplinary and integrated approach. First of all by establishing an assistance umbrella network regarding reintegration of returnees, concerning three Latin-American countries (Argentina, Colombia and Ecuador). This umbrella network involves project partners in Europe and leading agencies in Latin-America. The aim is to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of return as a whole, and create a return assistance process ruled by the principle of protecting human dignity. During the project a set of activities addressed to the migrant have been implemented. The activities begin with a first reception that answers to the basic needs of the migrant, in terms of security and subsistence, and continues with activities aimed at promoting the reintegration of the migrant in the country of origin. These ac-

---

<sup>6</sup> See OIM, Rimpatrio volontario. Indicazioni pratiche per gli operatori dell' accoglienza.

tivities are implemented through a psychosocial assistance that contributes to prevent the secondary trauma caused by the inadequate host conditions and points at facilitating the reintegration process in the country of origin (education, health, housing, territory and labour counselling).

The main idea of the project had been the support to the reintegration process provided directly through the involvement of organisations in the Country of Return. These organisations are able to provide qualified services to migrants and are capable to develop a network to follow the reintegration process in different aspects. The choice to involve organisations of the civil society in the Country of Origin is connected with the idea that the mediation process with the new economical, cultural and social environment is one of the most ambitious and important aspect in the return and reintegration process of migrants. This goal is reachable only through a deep knowledge of the new context and a qualified social assistance.



## 2. methodological approach

### 4.1 Working with returnees: a common approach

One of the objectives of RN Latam project was to propose a common working methodology addressed to all the organizations working in the network. In order to reach this goal we have defined guidelines to establish a common work approach and to define the typologies of services that have to be guaranteed to final clients.

The reintegration in the country of origin is a complex process that implies the activation of many individual resources in the returnee: psychophysical, personal and professional resources. To support this process, RN Latam project promoted a multidisciplinary and integrated approach in order to provide a set of different services to the migrants. This holistic approach promotes interventions in different fields and supports the returnee in the reconstruction of its own socio-professional identity in the country of origin

The activities began with a first reception that showed and answers to the basic needs of the migrant, in terms of security and subsistence, and continue with activities aimed at promoting the reintegration of the migrant in the country of origin. These activities were implemented through a psychosocial assistance that contributes to prevent the secondary trauma created by the inadequate host conditions and points at facilitating the reintegration process in the country of origin (education, health, housing, territory and labour counselling).

#### ■ Main points

##### A. The first contact with the leader agencies or a network organization

The migrant could establish contact with the leader agency or with the other network organizations

in different ways:

- Contact/Referral through foreign NGOs or international organizations: the returnees were identified before the departure and their arrival is communicated to the organizations that, in the countries of origin, guarantee a specific back support for their reintegration. In this case, it was advisable to send a short report where the characteristics of the migratory past in the host country were outlined, as well as the return motivations and, eventually, the guidelines of the reintegration route.
- Autonomously: upon arrival at the return country, the returnee addressed the agency personally, thanks to the communication and information provided in the host and return country.
- Contact through the relatives: they knew the assistance and reintegration programme and request a structured intervention. In this case, they had to provide coordinates of the specific case (where the returnee is, the legal situation, etc.). If the returnee was still in the host country he could create/strengthen a return route structured through the contacts obtained in the European countries.
- Other channels: the governmental and border authorities, the national organizations and the public bodies referred the individual case.

The first contact with the case allowed the collection of main data about the subjective and objective situation, the identification – if necessary— of an emergency intervention and the establishment of the level of urgency in each case.

## B. Case reception, identification and acceptance: opening of the individual file

It was the first structured contact between the migrant and the organisation that would lead the reintegration process. It was important that, from the first day, a relationship that allowed the migrant to feel understood and supported was developed. The operator had to receive the migrant professionally and create an emphatic relationship that facilitated the intervention application.

To establish a transparent relationship, it was basic to present the intervention characteristics that can be developed, highlighting the project resources, limits and priorities. So a relationship where the support tools were evident and where there were no false expectations created could be established.

When the requirements and resources at the project's disposal matched the characteristics and needs from the migrant, the case would be accepted and the file would be opened.

The first reception was needed on the one hand to establish the first relationship with the migrant, and on the other hand to highlight the returnee's critical conditions and priority needs.

In the first meeting it is important to evaluate the returnee's conditions opposite to his/her security, subsistence and health. If the migrant has serious problems, answers have to be prepared and resources and first humanitarian aid activated.

### C. First humanitarian aid

The first task of the operator that establishes contact with the migrant was to make sure that the basic survival conditions were guaranteed. The investigation lead then to the analysis of the primary needs (see the following points) and if these were not covered by the returnee's resources, immediate solutions compatible with his/her individual needs had to be found.

The areas to be constantly monitored were: accommodation, food and means of subsistence.

It was obvious that the life conditions influence not only the returnee's integration route, but also the psychophysical status. The first step to take in the support route to reintegration was to ensure that the accommodation and practical context where the returnee will stay was adequate. In case that the returnee found uncomfortable conditions, resolving interventions were implemented, also thanks to the use of reintegration measures.

With the most vulnerable cases (for example trafficking victims) where returnees had highly insecurity conditions, as a solution they could be admitted in reception centres until the psychosocial condition of the returnee was stabilized. Once this first step was guaranteed, the returnee had to be

supported until he was completely autonomous.

The returnees must be supported, beyond the reception in emergency accommodation, to find solutions of sustainable and permanent accommodation: reconstitution/ownership of properties, access to civil building programmes, access to the free estate market, etc.

RN Latam Reintegration measures: Allowances could be distributed concerning emergency accommodation or house condition stabilization, funds for first necessity goods (from food to house utensils).

### Medical services

The psychophysical health was an essential element for the possible reintegration of the returnee. For this reason, it was of basic importance to allow returnees to access the medical services present in the territory.

The interventions in the sanitary field had to be implemented (if they were absent in the services distributed by the organizations belonging to the project) in collaboration with specialized subjects that would be included in the RN Latam network. It was necessary that these subjects took part of the public network to enable the access to medical services and the returnee's reintegration to the public welfare, in order to favour health rights. Moreover, the possibility of using public sanitary services would lower the intervention costs and would free financial resources for other interventions with a medical specialized character or for the acquisition of medicaments.

RN Latam Reintegration measures: It was possible to allot contributions that would cover the medical assistance, laboratory exams or diagnosis, medicines acquisition, and medical specialized check-ups expenses.

### Administrative and legal support

In case that the returnee returns without documents to the country of origin, counselling and support had to be provided for the duplication or first expedition of all the necessary documents: identity card, passport, health card, residence permit, identity card (for minors), election card.

It was very important that returnees obtain all the necessary documents in order to enjoy all the rights and social services activated in the territory.

RN Latam Reintegration measures: allowances could be distributed for the obtention of documents produced in the country of origin.

### Personal security

As we had already underlined, returnees were not an homogeneous category. They were people that return to their countries of origin for different reasons and sharing different legal status.

In case that the returnees had been refugees or seekers of subsidiary international protection, the continuous monitoring of the security condition in the reintegration process was necessary. We had seen that security and dignity were two essential conditions for the return of people under international protection. However, the risk factors could not always be completely evaluated and controlled at the moment in which (abroad) the decision of returning to the country of origin was taken. For this reason, it was very important to monitor, when the returnee arrives at the country of origin, that the returnee did not run any risk concerning the personal security and that the persecution reasons that obliged him to migrate were not present.

Afterwards, it had to be studied whether in the areas where the returnee would reintegrate have these risk situations or not. In case that the complete security in specific areas could not be guaranteed, the operator would be engaged to search for alternative localities where the movement of the returnee could be foreseen.

Trafficking victims: if there were any situations where there were risks for the life and integrity of the returnee, the pertinent measures would be implemented for the location and implementation of preventive measures: transfer to other city, report, location in a refuge.

RN Latam Reintegration measures: If the movement was necessary for security reasons, funds for internal mobility could be used.

In parallel with this, advances were made in the diagnosis of difficulties, needs and expectations that, apart from allowing an emotional discharge to the victim, permit the professional workgroup to define parameters in order to continue with the intervention.

#### D. Psychosocial support and reintegration process: analysis of the needs and local resources

At this stage a series of meetings, psychological and social counselling were provided in order to define the returnee's diagnosis in different aspects: monitoring of the basic needs, physical, psychological, familiar status and working capacity.

The psychosocial support was the basis of reintegration, because through this the returnee could recognize its strengths, individual interests and analyze the opportunities that the context offers. The result was the physical, psychological, familiar, financial and social recovery.

The psychosocial counselling started from the analysis of the returnee's problems and needs in terms of psychophysical and social health. Its aim was to promote short, medium and long term interventions in base at the personal resources and the social context. The psychological support was carried out commonly and complemented with interventions aimed at promoting the social and labour reintegration of the returnee. The timing in which the interventions were proposed depends on the vulnerability and personal resources of the returnee. It was obvious that the reintegration process could only be constructed when the practice emergency or emotional phase, wherever it was present, had been overcome.

#### Analysis of the psychological aspects and psychological support

The returnees could confront complicated emotional situations when they faced again the reality of the country of origin. We had already underlined which psychological processes could be activated for the return, especially in vulnerable categories like forced migrants; but every migrant had to face a readjustment process when they return. This process could be much more complex the longest the migration period had been and the more isolated they lived from the reality. The returnee could have a firm idealized image of reality with the time, and this could cause problems when establishing

contact with the new context.

Readjustment modified with the time not only the object, but also the social context of the country of origin and the subject of that process. In fact, the returnee in the migration period had lived a natural process of change, often enriched with complex experiences. The person, changed in relation to the image that had left the country of origin, must find its place in a society where there have been economic, political, social and cultural changes. The difficulty to overcome this process depended on the way and duration of the migratory experience. It could be an easy procedure as well as deeply painful.

For these reasons, with every returnee there must be a process of psychosocial counselling where the specific moments of emotional and psychological breakdown could be analyzed, foreseen and reelaborated. Meetings with a psychologist must be planned, where the emotional and psychological state of the returnee could be defined and give priority to the persons who belong to vulnerable categories like refugees or trafficking victims.

Refugees: the return could be a complex and painful process for refugees. Elements that could complicate the reintegration process were: to be subjected to persecution on the country of origin, suffer from violence and be obliged to flee from your own country to search for protection in another country, to terminate every relationship with the state.

Trafficking victims: they went through an emotionally painful situation since their rights had been violated; then they had to confront a new material and physical reality that implies a new effort to adapt themselves to a new situation. Moreover, spaces were created for the victim to articulate their fears and anxieties and so they would be more aware of this situation and when lowering the emotional charge they will focus their efforts in planning different alternatives to overcome the difficulties and give birth to the social reintegration phase.

In case that in the organization workgroup there was no person to undertake this work, they could turn to associations or specialized services that would collaborate with the Latam network.

RN Latam Reintegration measures: the possibility to distribute allowances for the psychological counselling and rehabilitation routes in sensitive cases was foreseen.

## Social support

The social operator, together with the psychological counselling, guides the returnee in the reintegration route by analyzing the social context, family network and employment of the returnee.

The operator had to recognize together with the returnee the specific needs, personal resources concerning social, economic and cultural context where the returnee would have to reintegrate, together with the proposals that would be set in the reintegration route.

We want to underline that there were no established reintegration routes: there were areas to be monitored and that needed counselling and support. The problems that would arise and the solutions had to be elaborated together with the returnee.

### Reconstruction of the familiar and social network

The migratory experience and the human and economic capital obtained with it cannot explain unequivocally the success of the reintegration initiatives promoted by returnees. The returnee finds himself/herself living in a social and relational context on which success depends. In fact, we can talk about a “social capital” at the returnee’s disposal that prefers the economic and social resources supplied by the family and personal relationships network that influence deeply on their reintegration.

For this reason it was fundamental that the operator supports with practical means the reconstruction of the returnee’s social network with the family or with important emotional-relational references.

RN Latam Reintegration measures: the possibility of distributing allowances for the reconstruction of personal contacts and internal movement was foreseen.

## The local context

For the returnee the readjustment to the social reality where its migratory process began was essential. Without understanding completely the new economic, social, political and cultural context, the reintegration process could neither be chosen nor be implemented.

A serious part of the psychosocial support route had to be devoted to territory counselling. With this concept we understand the analytic presentation of resources, limits and objective characteris-

tics of the social context of reference. Starting from the social and civil rights, to continue with the resources and territory services, the operator had to provide the necessary information to the returnee in order to enjoy autonomously every possibility, going from the information about the macro context that socio-political and economic changes occurred in the migratory route introduce, to the information about the micro context that the social and cultural joints of the community of reference describe. It was important that the counselling did not end in an explanation, but that included practical information that made the rights effective and the services available.

Main part of the reintegration process was the readjustment to a new social context. For this reason we believe it was important to define resources and characteristics to take into account during the counselling about the territory activity. Not only social services from the local reference were of priority importance to access the benefits of the public social assistance, but also those realities or expressions of the civil society that could promote the construction of the links between the returnee and the local community as organized associative structures like: Sport associations; Cultural associations; Free-time associations, Associations for women, children, parents, elderly; Social centres, etc.

At the same time we thought of the usefulness of promoting activities that allowed the direct contact and the comparison with reality, for example a tour on the city where the returnee would live, organized and participated in the public events open to returnees and civil society.

The expansion of the work network to these realities went together with the holistic approach promoted by the project. It was considered a labour approach where the returnee was taken into account and supported in order to favour a reintegration compatible with the personal expectations and with the reference context.

### The readjustment to the country of origin: the possible support from returnees

Taking into account the specific fragilities and the psychosocial problems that characterize the return process, the comparison between the returnees that just arrived to their own country and those who are already reintegrated would be useful. Seeing reality through the instructions and advices from those who have lived similar processes, in fact, could be the best way to interpret the new context and to explore the own potential.

The comparison would underline the weak and strong points proceeding the migratory process, allowing people to foresee difficulties and specify barriers that otherwise could not be interpreted.

That is why group meetings can be organized, in the presence of “old returnees” lead by the social operator or psychologist, where the common problems were analyzed and the creation of interpersonal links was promoted. The returnees could be “ambassadors” and witnesses of the reintegration processes successfully achieved.

### Competences and skills reconstruction and labour insertion

The central step on the reintegration process was the labour insertion. Work was a tool of social insertion that permits the returnee to be financially sustained, to strengthen a positive image of the self and to maintain contact with the socioeconomic context of the country of origin. In the process that lead to the definition of the reintegration route it was vital the reconstruction of the returnee's competences in the field of labour counselling.

The labour counselling was the process in which the returnee, supported by qualified operators, undertakes to define a professional objective adequate to personal resources and the social context of reference. In this process methodologies and tools were used to favour the exploration of the resources available and the identification of links that could cause an obstacle to success. Resources

and links referred to objective and subjective situations of the returnee. These resources were competences and skills that the returnee acquired in formal and informal contexts. Equally relevant were the subjective resources, the so called transverse or social competences that were born in the know how to be but that influence as well the professional profile and the possibility of labour insertion<sup>7</sup>. In the definition of professional objective, the socioeconomic context where the returnee had to develop the route played an important role.

The labour counselling phase was central and propaedeutic to the definition of educational or professional process to be specified in the reintegration route.

If in the organization work team there was no person that could undertake this task they could delegate to other associations or specialized services (labour counselling centres) that later on could be inserted in the Latam network.

Definition of the educational or professional route: contact with the services for the public and private sector employment

The labour insertion route definition was strongly influenced by the resources and characteristics of the social context of reference, the distinctive features of the labour market and the services available. Therefore, to favour the insertion was very important to undertake strong territorial animation activities to create and consolidate contacts with all the realities that are in charge of the field.

We pointed out the opportunity to take part of the network with the labour counselling centres to define the professional profile of the returnee but, apart from the collaboration in the counselling phase, it was important to promote the contact and direct collaboration with the realities that could give practical answers in terms of professional training and labour insertion: training centres, services for public and private employments, potential employers, micro credit advisors.

## Training centres

The professional training could be necessary when the returnees had a level of competences that did

---

<sup>7</sup> Cfr. Antonella Barile, *L'orientamento lavorativo, Da assistiti a risorse: un modello di approccio al lavoro sociale*, Consiglio Italiano per i Rifugiati.

not allow them to be competitive in the labour field. It could be appropriate to promote integrated routes that offer situational training, tests and training in order to achieve different goals at the same time: new skills learning, competences and past experiences assessment, adequacy to the professional context of the country of origin.

One of the most efficient modalities of professional training in terms of labour insertion was the training on the job, that was to say, the training that took place with the direct insertion in a labour context. It could result very useful to propose periods of training practices: ask the employers (through the training, labour counselling and insertion centres or directly) to insert for a short time (from 3 months depending on the function) the returnee to an intern of the productive activity. Opposite to the engagement to train the returnee professionally, the employer had the double advantage to benefit from the returnee's help without any expenses and, at the same time, to experience the labour capacities for a future labour insertion. It was important to select activities that guarantee the returnee a real professional training and at the same time the possibility to a future labour insertion. If the enterprises were not willing to take into consideration the practice period, an economic grant could be proposed for them to engage in the training. A good practice was to foresee a job list for the returnees so that the training process can obtain an economic autonomy.

### Services for the public and private employment

Services that undertake labour preselection and selection (temporary agencies or public services) were useful references for the returnees labour insertion.

### Potential employers

For the returnees labour insertion it could result fundamental the creation of a direct contact network with potential employers. Two strategies could be pursued: to form a base of references or to search for specific employers.

In the first case, it was useful to choose a sector of the labour market that could guarantee an extended professional insertion (differentiating, if necessary, between men and women) for returnees. The advantage of this strategy was the possibility to produce in the short time labour insertion vacancies

for the returnees. These vacancies, however, could be far away from their professional profile. For this reason, they could be used as a resource for a longer project that foresees a first phase where the returnee could reach an immediate economic autonomy, while at the same time we were working to build (under a medium term perspective) the basis for an adequate reintegration route to the competences and expectations of the returnee.

In the second case, contact was established with employers directly to insert the individual candidate in an individual labour field with a specific professional profile.

### Microcredit advisors

By capitalizing economic resources, knowledge and ideas acquired in the host countries, returnees could undertake their own economic enterprise. In this sense it was essential to lead them to microcredit advisors that help them define an economic plan and that conduct them to public funds or possible income projects, if there were any. For the good result of the enterprise, it was central the definition of a project that analyzes the characteristics of the employer, defined the demand to which the enterprise wants to be addressed, analyzed the reference market, defined the capital necessary to undertake the enterprise (investment plan), selected the sources of finance (coverage resources), evaluated the profit and assets of the enterprise in its first years. It was important to underline that the autonomous work must never be conceived as a final selection that was taken when every other work options had failed.

We want to underline that the existence and efficiency of the illustrated services and of the possible resources were linked indispensably to the reference socioeconomic context. These strategies must be interpreted, therefore, exclusively as suggestions and possible reflections, and be adapted to real demands and local possibilities for the past experiences and knowledge of the organization.

### ■ Elaboration and definition of the “Reintegration personalized route”

We saw the subjective and objective elements that play a role in the reintegration process: housing, physical and mental health, documents, security, professional training and labour insertion,

social context of reference. And we had as well seen how the psychosocial counselling process tries to find answers and propose efficient interventions on the basis of the needs and returnees resources analysis comparing it to the potentiality of the social context of reference.

The Reintegration personalized route was the final result of the psychosocial counselling process, where the interventions addressed to facilitate the returnee's reintegration process were defined:

When the objectives at short, medium and long term were set. The collaboration pact with the returnee was established. And the Times, modalities and resources for the implementation of the project were expressed. Remissions and activities to undertake together with the other subjects of the network were indicated, pointing out the tasks and engagements of the different subjects and defining the intervention timeline.

This instrument served for defining together with the returnee the reintegration route. The areas to strengthen were expressed, as well as the types of intervention and activities that will be necessary to reach the specified aims. The support that the association could offer was expressed, in terms of direct and indirect resources, as well as the engagement from the returnee.

## ■ Collaboration for reintegration

The reintegration route was a task that engages both the organization and the returnee to cooperate together to reach the objectives set, each one with their own competences and possibilities.

The pact with the returnee (Collaboration for reintegration) served to express roles and responsibilities and defines the resources used by the association and the returnee's engagement. The returnee undertook, therefore, to use the economic resources consciously and to follow the established activities in the Collaboration for Reintegration.

## ■ Definition of the integration and reintegration measures included in the project

By integration measures we understood every instrument and service that must and could be activated by returnees in order to favour the integration process.

In the RN Latam project an economic coverage for the distribution of specific services was foreseen.

The services were:

- Housing: allowances for housing in emergency situations and by promotion of stable solutions could be distributed;
- Essential goods: allowances for buying essential goods like food or clothing could be distributed;
- Health: allowances for healthcare, purchase of medicines and necessary treatments could be distributed;
- Psychological support: allowances to cover the costs of human resources that were in charge of psychological counselling and support and the costs of rehabilitation processes in specialized centres could be distributed;
- Internal transport: allowances for the transfer and mobility in the country of origin could be distributed;
- Contact with relatives: allowances to maintain contact with the relatives (for example, telephone expenses) could be distributed;
- Documents: allowances for the distribution or duplication of the documents issued by public authorities of the country of origin could be distributed.

These were the services and tools available in the Latam project, to favour the associations that work in the countries of origin and that support directly the final beneficiaries.

However, we saw that the complexity of the reintegration process required an holistic intervention

that promoted interventions in the different fields and that supported the returnee in the reconstruction of its own socio-professional identity in the country of origin.

For this reason, we believed it was fundamental to activate reintegration measures, services, resources and tools already existing in the territory and from which other RN Latam returnees could as well benefit.

In this category, activities and services that favour the reconstruction of the returnee's competences and the following socio-labour insertion were included:

- Educational system: for the sociocultural integration it was of vital importance the insertion of minors alone or part of the family nucleus in the national educational system. If minors had difficulties to speak or write the language, it was essential to send them to language classes and put them in contact with pair groups in order to favour social reintegration.
- Labour support measures: this category included every specific resource in order to achieve the professional reintegration of the returnee.
- Labour counselling: to reconstruct the professional profile of the returnee it might be necessary to address the labour counselling centres.
- Professional training: if necessary, returnees could enrol professional training courses promoted by public or private professional training centres or supplied directly by the organization. Together with the training in the classroom, other modalities of professional training on the job or distance learning (e-learning) could be promoted.
- Labour insertion: there were different services and processes that lead to the labour insertion of the returnees:
  - Labour counselling services (public or private)
  - Direct contact with employers (by promotion of a direct insertion)
  - Practice promotion
  - Services for the creation of enterprises
- Social integration: remission to organizations, participation in social events, group meetings with returnees at long term as privileged witnesses.

## 4.2 Implementation of the reintegration measures

Taking the variety of activities into consideration, it was of vital importance to develop a network of actors that can help this process with their own specific competences and resources. Occasionally an organization could count on qualified employees to guarantee every service and reintegration measures foreseen in the RN Latam project.

A good practice was to turn to the public services, if they existed. This allows the achievement of two objectives:

1. To promote the enjoyment of rights and services socially recognized and
2. To lower the services expenses (basic need in the RN Latam project for every reintegration measure that did not foresee economic coverages).

The extension and specificity of the actors that could participate in the project depend on the activity, services and mission that the lead agency and other organizations usually implemented.

For the activities specifically financed by the project (medical assistance, psychological counselling and rehabilitation in specialized centres) it was essential that in case of absence of specific professionals in the organization, a contact and collaboration with specific services was established: medical centre, psychological support and mental treatment centres, rehabilitation centres for vulnerable cases.

These interventions could be subcontracted: the human resources and services expenses could be directly addressed from the leader agency to the body, association or professional that implemented the service.

If there were services or activities that could not be directly financed by the RN Latam project, but that result a priority in the reintegration process of the returnee, the resources already present in the territory must be used: specific projects, contributions and services activated in the field of social services by the local administration and/or pertinent region; aid to employment services; professional training courses activated by public or private entities (with public financing); initiatives and activities implemented by the organizations present in the territory.

The contact network was activated taking into account two parameters: the reference territory and

the individual case.

The extension of the resources and services depends directly on the tipology of the territory where the integration project took place. The constant territorial cartography task had a special role in the Latam project, since it allow the leader agency and other organizations to know the reference territory and the services offered by other entities. Only once the existing services were known, these could be contacted and the collaborations could be established.

Each returnee could present particular problems. It was of vital importance to readapt, integrate and consolidate the collaboration relationships with all the subjects that could give specific answers. For this reason, it was necessary to maintain contact with basic services (for example, social services, labour counselling centres, training centres, etc.); on the other hand, the demands of every returnee could and must be used as an opportunity to create and/or strengthen contacts with different realities.



# 5. work done in each country

## 5.1 Argentina

### A. RN Latam Network in Argentina

MyRAR foundation accompanies from 2002 to refugees and migrant in its integration process in the local community through socio-economic activities and development of incomes through capacity building actions, technical assistance, social economy trade fairs, microcredits, Orientation and Services for Employment. Within the strategies of projects' implementation for integration, it is promoted the network with different public and private organizations to collaborate in several ways in the habitual activities.

The incorporation of MyRAR to the project made the RN Latam returnees were included within this logic. This means that it was agreed the inclusion of returnees in the network of organizations with which MyRAR was already implementing its projects. The RN Latam project was also focused on the search and incorporation of specific organizations that served primarily as a "bridge" to address project's publicity to its users.

Within the institutions already working with MyRAR it can be referred those organizations that integrate the Opened Bureau's for Microcredits. The Bureau is formed with 10 NGOs that promote activities mainly for social development. These organizations are located in various areas of the Province of Buenos Aires, having a territorial scope that allows the access to potential users outside of the Federal Capital. The same structure is established with the "Fundación Migrantes y Refugiados sin Fronteras", located in the city of Rosario and with MyRAR develops joint activities for refugees. The project was also spread with other NGOs like "Fundación Riachuelo" and "Sipam", which work in different areas related, among others, with housing, professional capacity building and education.

Other organizations which were contacted are those who work with family's relatives who emigrated

from Argentina, for example, associations of parents whose sons and daughters had emigrated from 2003 due to the 2002 economic crisis. Among them we can mention the “Asociación Muy Cerca de la Distancia” and “Asociación Lazos”.

According to the users demand outside of Buenos Aires, such as users from Cordoba and Mendoza, others institutions were incorporated to have direct contact with the users so it could be possible to design the integration process and / or make effective the assistance.

The diffusion of the project among the governmental and State bodies was performed and addressed to those bodies that had relation with emigrants or returnees: the Ministry of Interior and its “Programa Provincia 25”-“Province 25 Programme”; the Ministry of Science and Technology and its “Programa Raices”-“Roots Programme”; and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Foreign Office. It was also addressed to the Ministry of Social Development of the Nation, since the returnees might require assistance related to welfare programs.

One of the first actions developed was a mapping of institutions that might be linked with Argentine returnees or people in a return process. At the same time general and practical information was prepared so MyRAR’s technical team might begin to work on project implementation.

With this scope it was contacted a specialist in return subject who had conducted a research related with the Argentinean’s accumulation of assets across Europe, to have an advice on the public and private organizations that could be in contact with them.

The State’s “Programa Provincia 25”-“Province 25 Programme” (Ministry of Interior) was from the beginning defined to reach through the project to the Argentines who had already returned and also to those who were still outside Argentina. This governmental program have a database where the dissemination of project started and its strategic lines. These actions also enabled other NGOs that were in contact and/or working with Argentines living in Spain could meet via e-mail with MyRAR.

## B. Work Packages

- a) Dissemination: once the project’s subject dissemination was launched, it was designed a tool to have a more detailed and rapid approach to potential users, which allowed an indivi-

dual assessment to the problems of every possible case. For this reason, it was implemented an application form that users completed via e-mail and from which it could be detected if there was any need, and if the time requirements of return were appropriate, which means for example, that the returnee had returned between October 2008 and July 31, 2009.

b) Interviews: from the interviews format that Accem NGO had sent to the partners, it was developed a specific design for the interviews to suit the characteristics of Argentina. This allow to implement a semi structured interview format to obtain evidences about the problems that users faced and be able to orientate and promote the support during the reintegration process in the local community.

When the first criteria are met: date of entry into the country, and the basic data registration form is sent, potential returnees were invited to an interview with multiple objectives: to determine whether the person met the profile of the project, to identify and assess the needs of each particular case, and if it is appropriate, to design the integration strategy to be implemented.

c) Implementation: The process to make the support project's aid effective was slow. On one hand because it was based on the logic of each user, who suited its time limitations to its own needs. At the same time it wasn't easy for the users to understand the logic of the social aid program, which only serves to alleviate a shortage need.

### C. Return Cases

Most of the people contacted by MyRAR showed in the first instance the need to obtain resources for getting tickets back to their country although this need was not envisaged within the project services.

In some cases the family was divided, as one family member returned first to fit out the place for other members arrival therefore the project's parameters for assistance provided to the users were adapted to users needs.

Health care was one of the areas of highest demand, a situation related to the saturation of the pu-

blic system, which has many times no coverage of medication costs. In some cases additional costs were added as transport expenses from the place of origin to the province of Buenos Aires where medical care required was provided. Housing was another of the items required.

While most of the users live in Capital Federal or Gran Buenos Aires, the project has been extended according to the demand of returnees who have settled in various provinces such as Cordoba, Mendoza, Neuquen and Santa Fe, using contacts and networks of professionals in each specific case.

In some cases the need to work was detected, so certain people were sent to workshops dealing with job search, usually conducted by MyRAR , while others had enough skills to begin working self-employed. In this way, some aid was directed towards the purchase of tools so returnees begin an income generating activity.

Most users were between 30 and 45 years old, part of the economically active population and could be grouped based on some common characteristics:

- They were mostly returning from Spain and not from Italy even though the project were disseminated among NGOs and residents in Italy.
- They were economic migrants who left Argentina as a result of the 2002 crisis. They were returning to Argentina for the same reason: economic crisis mostly from Spain.
- They were returning on their own means without receiving financial assistance to do so and no being deported. They paid their own flight tickets.
- During the time spent in Europe they worked both in the formal and informal sectors, and they were unemployed at least 8 months prior to their return.
- Most of the returnees who entered the program have a full secondary education or incom-  
pleted post-secondary education. The works done in the country of origin were of low profile and for short periods.

It is important to note differences between migrants and returnees since the users of this program are out of the traditional logic that has been addressed by different Argentine governments. They tended to repatriate “talented people”, that is skilled resources to join the labour market .

The target families usually have minor children. In some cases women are head of the family with dependent children, with the difficulty because of the lack of public nursery schools and the fact that the Argentina school period year takes place during a different time.

While the identified needs were diverse in all cases the returnees did not have sufficient economic resources to cover their needs, that is they reintegrated into the social networks that already had enabling them to recover some of its social capital but with little possibility of getting financial means. Examples of this are: difficulty in getting a house or accessing to health treatment.

Returnees expressed that the help they receive through the project does not cover a significant percentage of their needs, taking into consideration the cost of living in Argentina.

## 5.2 Colombia

### A. RN Latam network in Colombia

The project set up in Colombia an assistance network for the voluntary return and reintegration of Colombian citizens, conformed by 6 organizations that have geographical coverage at national level.

Corporación Espacios de Mujer, based in Medellin, was chosen as the leading agency of the Network after the first visit to Colombia by the representants of Accem -project coordinator- and those of the Italian partner organization CIR, which locate the agents that could execute the project activities, monitor its sustainability and deal with the development of the different phases of the initiative, based in a process of assistance to the return, regulated under the principle of human dignity.

The principles that guided the election of the organizations that would form the network were:

1. - National presence: Colombian citizens that return to their countries are native from all the national territory and an assistance network should be able to guarantee the monitoring and accompaniment of the person, regardless their destiny.
2. - Scopes of action: the responsible organizations of attending Colombian returnees should

have expertise in issues related to migration, business management, local development, gender and Human Rights.

3. - The organizations should have realised, previously to the present project, activities of information, training, integral assistance and empowerment.

The six Colombian organizations that currently form the Network are:

1. Corporación Espacios de Mujer: Leading agency of the Network, NGO legally based in Medellin. It provides assistance to women in vulnerable situation and specifically in contexts of prostitution and human trafficking, through the Promotion of Human Rights and Prevention of the exercise of prostitution, sexual commercial exploitation and Trafficking of human beings. Corporación Espacios de Mujer implements an integral assistance route for victims of human trafficking. <http://www.espaciosdemujer.org/portal/index.php>

2. Caritas Arquidiocesana Medellin Pastoral Social: This organism of the Archdiocese of Medellin that performs its work thanks to the work of a team of priests, religious women and secular members that realise the activities according to different social problems existing in Medellin and its metropolitan area. The activities are performed together with the different archdioceses through intervention processes denominated programmes and pastorals. <http://www.pastoral-social.org/portal/news.php>

3. Fundación Concreto: Non- profit organization legally based in Medellin that through social transformation processes based in the quality, participation and responsibility, addresses its activities to the construction of better citizens. <http://www.fundacionconcreto.org/>

4. Fundación Esperanza: This non-profit organization based in Bogota addresses its activities to the defence and promotion of the rights of persons in vulnerable situation in migratory and human mobility contexts, specifically of victims of human trafficking, smuggling of migrants, forced displacement and exploitation of minors. <http://www.fundacionesperanza.org.co/joomla/>

5. Fundación de Atención al Migrante- FAMIG: This non-profit organization based in Bogota contributes to integral training and promotion of persons, and groups of human mobility, especially of displaced people by reasons of violence and to the mend of social fabric,

providing accommodation, humanitarian aid, psychosocial support and technical, labour and business training. <http://www.arquibogota.org.co/?idcategoria=9097>

6. Secretariado Nacional de Pastoral Social (SNPS)/Caritas Colombiana: this organism dependant of the Episcopal Conference of Colombia and entrusted to Episcopalian Commission of the Social and charitable pastoral, works with groups affected by migratory processes, in order to promote their fundamental rights and facilitate their integration in the new communities of life and faith, respecting their cultural values.

In the meetings celebrated both in Medellin and Bogota among the representants designated by each organization, the Network formalised their commitment through the signature of a Letter of Understanding in February 2009.

Formally constituted, the Network was introduced to several entities both public institutions and non governmental organizations acting at local and national level, emphasizing the diversity of the member organizations and the multiplicity of the interventions and activities that could be performed to provide an integral assistance to the returnee. The Network started to disseminate its aims: assist Colombian citizens returned from the EU and provide alternatives to their necessities.

Based on the Training Manual elaborated in collaboration with the European partners of the projects, has born the Attention route to the returnees that takes into consideration the necessities detected during the project implementation and provides with a common methodology of intervention.

## B. Work packages

The activities performed could be summarized as follows:

### Reintegration Measures for the returnees

- Legal, social, psychological and mediation support when arriving to Colombia
- Assignment of support aids: accommodation, nourishment, urgent health assistance and other basic necessities
- Organization of "Professional training sessions"
- Creation of a file for each of the return cases

### Conferences and Seminars

A seminar in the city of Pereira and other seminars and meetings under the heading “Strengthening of capacities” in Colombia with the project partners and the local organizations to present programmes, protocols and instruments existing about the process of return and exchange their experiences and outcomes.

## C. Return Cases

Colombian citizens, considered in this project, returned from the EU sent by:

- Social organizations
- Family
- Returnees already beneficiaries from this project

Some NGOs, standing out SINTRASEDOM (National Union of Domestic Workers), sensitive to the issue during the project presentation in the country, were indirectly involved in its implementation to assist the network in case detection. Specifically, thanks to a wide national coverage, several domestic workers returning from the EU were beneficiaries of the project and enjoyed its services.

In some cases, their own families pushed the returnees to contact the Support Network for getting economic aid and psychosocial support, especially when the returnee expressed difficult readjustment to the Colombian context. Living in another country for some time, months or years, used to other rhythms, habits and lifestyle, made them to forget about their previous life in Colombia, creating a clash between what they had left and what they have found again:

- When in other countries, the employment situation was somewhat resolved in the immediate future, regardless of the market. Now, back in Colombia, they fear of not finding a job appropriate to their “profile” and not earning the same as in the country they come from.
- Because of having traveled abroad, families and friends give them a status of lucky and privileged people. Upon their return they were torn between keeping their status or being afraid of being blackmailed, kidnapped for bringing money, or they feel violated in their self-esteem for uncover their economic situation due to the social consideration of being considered as a unsuccessful.

- All of these situations make more complicated other personal situations in returnees such as couple crisis, depression, grief, alcoholism – drug dependence.

Finally, some of the returnees beneficiaries from the project sent to the leading agencies other cases of people returning from the EU.

In general, during project implementation could be noted that certain situations have acted as a barrier:

- Returnees have fear of being unable to re-enter the EU, since in many cases, national governments promote “voluntary return” laws addressed to legal immigrants so they go back to their countries of origin, under the commitment of not re-enter the EU for a number of years.
- Lack of involvement and cooperation from the Colombian public authorities relating to the immigration issue (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, DAS, etc.), arguing that in Colombia you can not even talk about “return phenomenon” from the EU.

## 5.3 Ecuador

### A. RN Latam Network in Ecuador

The Fondo Ecuatoriano Populorum Progressio – FEPP - <http://www.fepp.org.ec/> works with returnees and in particular on the theme of co-development providing services directly or through their network of local associations. They are deep-rooted in the local territory and with the work with returnees especially from what concerns the economical support: training – also e-learning-, counselling, microfinance, fair trade commerce, construction and ITC.

The consortium consider important the fact of involving the public authorities to work on the possible synergies between the national/local programs and the RN Latam project.

Due to the difficult to find migrants returning from European Union (the majority of the returnees are usually people deported from USA), FEPP had to keep in touch also with the SENAMI Offices in

Europe, in particular in Italy, as well as with Italian organizations which could help them to find and to recruit the migrants returning to Ecuador. It's also very important to mention that FEPP is also member of the "Plan Migración, Comunicación y Desarrollo"- "Plan Migratio, Communication and Development", supported by the Government. The possible synergies with other national programmes, as the national return plan in Ecuador "Bienvenido a casa".- "Wellcome home" as well as the collaboration with other organisations in Ecuador was considered the strength and added value of FEPP.

Objective: Transform the ecuatoriana migration in a positive element for the cultural exchange and codevelopment in Ecuador and Spain. Putting together all the experiences of each institution partner, with the objective of no repeating the same actions, but complement them. Starting: october 2001. Participant in Spain: Spanish Caritas, Network with Voice and Sol Mon Foundation Participant in Ecuador: ALER, CEPAS, CORAPE, FEPP, ILDIS, SJRM.

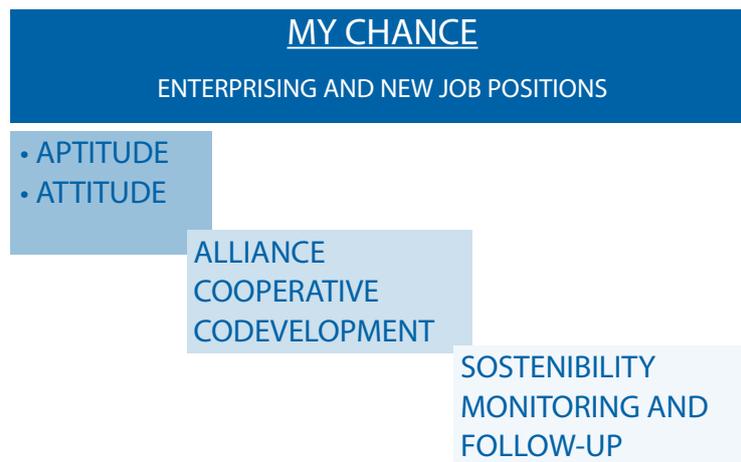
At the same time the Ministry for Social and Economic Inclusion does implement a wide program of assistance and support for the community, with programmes of support and strengthening of the initiatives organized by the family migrants. They are as well members of the return network through a compromise for a coordinated work including future return migrants on their projects.

## B. Work packages

In Ecuador the Return phenomenon is deeply rooted in the society; so much so that the Government has a Plan for return from the European Union and the United States. However, this situation does not mean that the returnee's reintegration is easy, as they have to face the complicated economical situation of the country. Valentina – Ecuador. In Ecuador there is a Government Plan for Return from EU and USA. They offer emergency help for returnees and refugees (some of them coming from Colombia), both forced and voluntary return cases.

The performance of the project in this country was ruled by an structure based on a complementary and coordinated principles directed linked with a social labor insertion and integration.

## PROPOSAL OF TRAINING AND LABOR INSERTION



### C. Return Cases

The identification of the cases took place from different sources as the Cucayo Fund (SENAMI), the migration department, volunteers and/or transfers from other organizations and migrants associations. Afterwards the case was taken into an assesment through an interview to the possible beneficiary where the needs and the level of vulnerability was defined through personal data, financial situation, labor needs, studies and knowledge.

The working route could be syntetized as follows with the list of services available depending on the users profile.



## ENTERPRISES

### COVERAGE

Head Quarter in Quito and 15 Offices at a national and international level.

#### OFFICES IN ECUADOR:

Loja, Cuenca, Guaranda, Riobamba, Latacunga, Portoviejo, Esmeraldas, Ibarra, Coca, Quito, Lago Agrio, Galápagos

#### OFFICES OUTSIDE:

Turín (Settimo Torinese) - Italy  
 Barcelona - Spain (in process)  
 Milan - Italy (in process)

### SERVICES

AREA OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING, SEMI PRESENCE AND LABOR INSERTION

- Business Administration
- Agricultural
- Agroindustries
- Crafts
- Buildings

AREA OF DISTANCE TRAINING

- Local Development Management
- Solidarity Economy

AREA OF UPDATING AND TECHNICAL IMPROVEMENT

- Training of Trainers
- Sipas
- Popular Finances

AREA OF CONSULTING AND PROJECTS

- ServiBusiness Educative Credit
- Methodological and Andragogya Consulting
- Projects Management





# 6. project particularities

## 6.1 Complexity of return term

### A. Definition of Return and project implications

The definition of Return always implies the process of going back to the country of origin or habitual residence. However, due to the different ways of return execution, there are different definitions and implications of the return process as was mentioned before for example in relation to ECRE or to UNCHR.

Governments have the right to return people who do not fulfil the requirements to remain in the host country. Nevertheless, that people should only be returned following a fair and human rights respectful process.

Where return is not possible for any reason, or where it would imply an inhuman treatment, people should be granted a legal status to remain in the country of residence. States should prioritise voluntary repatriation and ensure that all returns are carried out in a safe, dignified and sustainable manner.

For certain public authorities other type of migration flows are considered more commonly known within their society; whereas the Return movements are still appreciated as a new phenomenon that is becoming more or at least as relevant compared to other realities like internal displaced or refugees.

Therefore, it could be stated that working with Return usually may have certain political and social implications that need to be seriously considered and discussed among the project partners (European and Latin American), and/or any other stakeholders involved on the project from the beginning.

## B. EU Return policies

Despite similarities of experience between states, it should be underlined that although there are a number of EU instruments related to return, there is still no harmonized EU approach to either involuntary or voluntary return.

Although return policy in principle also covers the return of persons legally residing in the EU but willing to return to their country of origin, the EU legal instruments concentrates mainly on the return of persons residing illegally in the EU: the return of illegal migrants in fact is a cornerstone of EU return migration policy.

In principle, third-country nationals without a legal status enabling them to stay, either on a permanent or a temporary basis, and for whom a Member State has no legal obligation to tolerate the residence, must leave the European Union (EU). To every extent possible, priority should be given to voluntary return for obvious humane reasons, but also due to costs, efficiency and sustainability. However, in cases where voluntary return fails, the forced return of illegal residents becomes a necessity.<sup>8</sup>

The main EU legal and financial instruments related to return: a brief presentation<sup>9</sup>

### The Green Paper on a Community Return Policy on Illegal Residents

The starting point for the discussion on EU return concepts and proposals is the Green Paper on a Community Return Policy on Illegal Residents. Adopted on 10 April 2002, it explored various issues related to the return of third-country nationals.

The Green Paper focuses in particular on the future co-operation among Member States on return of illegal residents and the development of the readmission policy together with third countries.

Moreover the Green Paper underlines that, in order to ensure sustainable returns , the EU should

---

<sup>8</sup> From [http://ec.europa.eu/justice\\_home/fsj/immigration/illegal/fsj\\_immigration\\_illegal\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/fsj/immigration/illegal/fsj_immigration_illegal_en.htm)

<sup>9</sup> For this section see Prof. Dr. Kay Hailbronner, REFUGEE STATUS IN EU MEMBER STATES AND RETURN POLICIES, European Parliament, July 2005.

consider adequate forms of support in the respective countries of origin and, in the long run, address the root causes of migration.

The Green Paper was the first official document comprehensively addressing the issue of return and repatriation policies on the EU level. It aimed at comprehensively mapping the field of return.

### Communication on a Community Return Policy on Illegal Residents

In October 2002 the Commission presented the Communication on a Community Return Policy on Illegal Residents<sup>10</sup>.

Its purpose is to put forward an outline for a Return Action Programme taking into account, inter alia, the contributions and discussions in response to the Green Paper. The Communication focuses on the concrete measures deriving from the general policy on the return of illegal residents, valid for all regions or countries of origin or transit. The communication states that returns of illegal residents, however, must be respectful to international human rights and obligations.

In this Communication, the Commission set out the working premises on and the framework within which to progress towards a Community return policy.

### The Return Action Programme

The second part of the Communication defined a Return Action Programme and set out in detail its elements.

The Return Action Programme covers both forced and voluntary return of third country nationals as well as the central stages of return, including preparation and follow-up.

The Return Action Programmes states the main priorities given in the field of european return policy containing short, medium and long-term measures aimed at increasing the efficiency of return policies and practices. In this document member States decided to give priority to «operational co-

---

<sup>10</sup>From <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2002:0564:FIN:EN:DOC>

operation», while leaving the setting up of European common standards on return to a subsequent phase.

The Return Action Programme provides for the Union to develop integrated return programmes aimed at ensuring effective and sustainable return of third-country nationals to their countries of origin. Integrated return programmes should cover all stages of the return procedure: the phase before departure, return itself, reception and reintegration in the destination country.

The Return Action Programme introduces country specific programmes to ensure effective and timely return. These programmes should only be adopted, when there is a clear need (ie Afghanistan return programme).

Summing up, the Return Action Programme laid emphasis on the need for immediate enhanced operational co-operation of Member States' enforcement authorities, but called also for the creation of common minimum standards and country specific programmes as well as an intensification of co-operation with third countries on return.

## Hague Programme

The Hague Programme, endorsed by the European Council in November 2004, foresaw the creation of a Common European Asylum System for the EU.

A «common return policy of irregular migrants» has been conceived as an essential ingredient of this common immigration policy in the EU agenda. In fact, the European Council called for «the establishment of an effective removal and repatriation policy based on common standards for persons to be returned in a human manner and with full respect of their human rights and dignity».

The necessity for common return procedures has been reaffirmed by the European Commission's Communication implementing the Hague Programme as one of the key strategic priorities.

The European Council, therefore, calls for the establishment of an effective removal and repatriation policy based on common standards for persons to be returned in a humane manner and with full respect for human rights and dignity. It is considered as essential to start discussions on minimum standards for return procedures including minimum standards to support effective

national removal efforts. A coherent approach between return policy and all other aspects of the external relations of the Community with third states is considered as necessary as well as devoting special emphasis on the problem of nationals of returning such third country nationals who are not in the possession of passports or other identity documents.

While creating a framework for legal access to the European Union, the EU institutions also adopted a directive on procedures for returning illegally resident third-country nationals, first presented in 2005 and approved by the European Parliament on 18 June 2008.

Directive on common standards and procedures for the return of irregularly staying third country nationals

The Directive on common standards and procedures for the return of irregularly staying third country nationals was endorsed by the European Parliament in June 2008 and officially adopted by the Council on 9 December 2008. As all EU Directive, once in force, EU Member States will have to incorporate it into national law within two years.

The Directive foresees the imposition of entry bans which will prohibit deported asylum seekers from coming to the EU for up to 5 years, without taking into account possible changes in the circumstances of their countries of origin which may force them to leave again.

Furthermore, under the Directive Member States will be allowed to detain people for the purpose of repatriation who have committed no crime, including unaccompanied children and families, for a period of up to 18 months.

The EU is also pursuing Readmission Agreements with several third countries as a way to facilitate the return of people who have entered states' territories irregularly or who have overstayed. It should be underlined that this Directive has been deeply criticized by the main NGOs and International organisation.

For further comments see:

ECRE <http://www.ecre.org/files/ECRE%20press%20release%20Returns%20Dir.pdf>

## 6.2 Role of the leading agencies (LA)

To assure as much as possible the project success, some points need to be considered as essential: the reality of the country and the environment where the project is going to be implemented. The RN Latam project is giving an answer to this situation by giving an essential role to the organisations in the countries of origin: the Leading Agencies (LA).

The leading agencies were conceived in the project as a principal actor. They were in charge of the direct project implementation, after a capacity building period and with the continuous support of the European counterparts. Due to this, having trustful the leading agency was an important pillar to achieve the project success, as they manage with the services and monetary allowances given to the returnees.

Specifically, the leading agencies were involved in the following activities:

### The design of the Training Materials (TM)

The training materials were the project first output. On one hand, they inform on EU return policies, programmes and financial opportunities. On the other hand, they propose a common approach to develop a coherent working model to be applied during the implementation of the project activities.

The priority was to provide a practical guide showing a common social approach and homogeneity on the services to be furnished to the returnees. For this reason, through the training materials have been designed practical instruments to be used during the project implementation:

- the semi structured interview: a social interview guide to be used by all the the leading agencies in the identification of potential returnees
- the reintegration pact: an agreement signed between the returnee and the leading agencies to formalise their integration in the project

- the reintegration route: a register about the reintegration measures being applied in each case

The TM have given to the leading agencies common working tools irrespectively of their expertise or geographical situation. Therefore, they are assuring a common assistance to the returnees in all countries.

#### Returnees identification and follow-up

It has been the leading agencies main activity being adapted to the particularities of the country and the characteristics of each organisation (see point 5.4).

The the leading agencies have been the ones to identify potential returnee cases, to consider their suitability to the project and afterwards to implement, follow-up and evaluate the results of the reintegration measures applied.

#### The organisation and participation in Returnees Meetings and Seminars

- monitoring the reinsertion measures applied
- delivering a common professional and vocational training for the returnees
- giving the returnees the possibility of sharing their experiences

## 6.3 Creation of a network in Latin America

Networking has shown to be an undoubtedly way of promoting ideas, working models, facing obstacles and transferring practices. Considering that this approach is widely consolidated in a European context, and has been promoted by the European Union on different areas because of being proved very practical, the creation of a network of organisations in Latin America working on return has been the core principle of all activities and ideas developed within the project.

The concept of a Network in Latin America has been very well received by all organisations contacted. The degree of action and independence of every leading agency has been the first step taken in order to accomplish any activity or action. The final objective is that projects, working methodologies and improvement suggestions will come from the organisations in Latin America itself.

Initial steps and formal structures towards national return networks have been developed by the leading agency in each country with the aim of being an independent network focused on the interest raised in Latin America and with a Latin American perspective where all type of interested stakeholders on return could be part of from different countries in Latin America.

Developing a network will upgrade the knowledge to be able to cope with future sustainable and effective return cases that it's been proven a clear necessity. Both the regional cooperative nature of the project and the partnership continuity will guarantee the sustainability of the return process as well as the quality of the network and increase considerably the number of beneficiaries that could benefit from every measure defined on that direction. And at the same time, it'll reinforce the links between all the organisations and become a channel for ideas, suggestions or proposals coming from several actors in Latin America and will build a bridge to facilitate social, economic and political relations between Europa and the Latin American region.

## 6.4 Country approach

Together with the idea of a global network, each leading agency has adapted to project to its country reality, involving other organisations and institutions which are already their collaborators on migration themes and with a different model of locating potential beneficiaries:

In Argentina the project receives a strong support from the public authority with the involvement of "Provincia 25" dependant on the Ministry of Interior and regional authorities.

"Provincia 25" is a program created by the Argentinean Ministry of Interior to assist the Argentineans residents abroad. Their main actions fields are:

- to assure their electoral rights

- to create communities of Argentines abroad to promote their integration
- to facilitate the administrative procedures with the Ministry of Interior
- to assist Argentines abroad with the use of their social rights

Because of the RN Latam nature, "Provincia 25" were interested in participating as they would be offering a service for the potential Argentinean returnees.

In Colombia an important consideration was expressed by the representative of the Colombia Cancellation (Ministry) stressing the opportunity around the promotion of the Colombian return network within the RN Latam Network to become an important term of reference for all the official institutions involved in the Return process. The RN Latam project has been considered as a way of guarantee and consolidate a good starting point to foresee an homogeneous National plan on return from the Colombian Government.

In Ecuador, the partner organization-FEPP involved not only organizations working with migrants and refugees but especially public institutions like for instance SENAMI which have a transnational focus. It does have a program "Bienvenido a casa" through which continuous contacts are maintain with public authorities in the countries which migration from Ecuador is very strong, like Spain and Italy and start to assist migrants in the country of destinations to guarantee a support to migrants who are going back to their country of origin.



# 7. networking seminar

As originally conceived in the project proposal submitted to the European Union, Accem with the collaboration of the European partners and local leading agencies from Colombia, Ecuador and Argentina, organizes a two days long conference in the city of Buenos Aires (Argentina) on the 1st and 2nd of July 2009 under the title of “The Return and the Migratory Movements” that was able to get together more than 40 persons and discuss over return with a Latinamerican perspective.

This seminar was an exceptional opportunity to make an early project evaluation with all the stakeholders involved; and also to invite public authorities with the aim of reproducing the experience in the future through the continuity and reinforcement of the Latinoamerican Network and establish the basis for a second project stage.

The Seminar was a Latinoamerican discussion forum on Return with an overwhelming acceptance by all the stakeholders attending due to the large number of countries represented: Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, El Salvador, Spain, Belgium, Italy and The Netherlands as well as the wide range of profiles of the representatives attending. All the leading agencies had the opportunity to share their knowledge on the matter, not only between the project partners, but also with other organisations also working on return in the region and in Europe.

The seminar reached basically three main objectives:

- Strengthening the Latin American networks between local leading agencies of the three countries involved in the project and opening new opportunities of contacts with special guests invited from Bolivia and El Salvador.
- Gathering and sharing information about the actions carried out in Europe and Latin America during previous months of the project, with particular attention to key points, difficulties and feed backs from returnees involved in the reintegration individual plans.
- Planning further actions to conclude the projects and gathering expectations and ideas about possible actions in a second part of the project.

All representatives of organizations have been actively participating in the actions shared their experiences, stressing that a repatriation and reintegration route should be followed and monitored for a longer period, more than one year and for returnees entering the country after more than six months as well as being able to support with more means to a higher number of beneficiaries.

The two days seminar were a unique opportunity to reinforce the network, already established by the project, giving the participants chances to build trust and a common method of evaluating and following cases.

The possible and wished prosecution of the work realised in RN Latam "Building a return network in latin America for a comprehensive , effective and sustainable return program including reintegration" was discussed and all concerns, proposals, evaluations tools and new ideas coming up during these months of common actions have been shared in details.

During the realization of all miles stones of the project and of the seminar the original ideas that stayed behind the conception of the RN Latam project became stronger, all interventions stressed the needs of a punctual intervention in informing and assisting all individuals and families that are taking the decision or are forced to go back to their country of origin.

Particular interests has stirred up the speech of Mr Carlos Gimeno Verdejo, representative of the EU Office in Argentina, that explored the official position of the European Unión over the Migratory Policies with special attention to Return. It´s very much worth mentioning as well the interventions and views shared by Sylvie de Terschueren, Coordinator of the programme of voluntary return and reintegration of Belgium NGO-CIRE, belgian NGO with a long experience in Return and in Ecuador specially and to provide with an example of a strong social actor on the issue close to lobby, advocacy as well as practices on return. Aditionally there was a lot of attention other experiences carried out in Bolivia and presented by a bolivian NGO -UNITAS that it´s a national network itself and the outcomes of a related project in El Salvador close connected more with the reality link to the United State but all of they examples of national NGOs with a role on networking activities as well as on the management of return.

## List of attendees

Name and Surname	Organization	E-mail
Graciela Inés Mugione	Independant	gramug@gmail.com
Juan C. Fanefo	Independant	jFanefo@gmail.com
Suyay Mira	Independant	Suy_esperanza@hotmail.com
Juan Carlos Amarilla	Abogado	Jcamerica2002@yahoo.com.ar
Gracia Alcaide	Accem	administracion.gac@accem.es
Julia Fernández Quintanilla	Accem	jfq@accem.es
Pedro Puente	Accem	ppf@accem.es
Reyes Castillo	Accem	internacional@accem.es
Anna Cucchini	Buon Pastore	anna@buonpastore.org
Lucia Donnaggio	Buon Pastore	lucia.donnaggio@buonpastore.org
Marina Garbeglio	Buon Pastore	sede@buonpastore.org
Noemi Galleani	Buon Pastore	sede@buonpastore.org
Annelieke Carlier	Caritas Internacional Bélgica	a.carlier@caritasint.be
Juan Camilo Lopez	Caritas Medellín	camilolopezb@une.net.co
Maria Giovanna Fidone	CIR	fidone@cir-onlus.org
Valeria Carlini	CIR	carlini@cir-onlus.org
Sylvie de Terschueren	CIRE Bélgica	sdeterschueren@cire.irisnet.be
Anahí Viladrich	City University of New York	aviladrich@hunter.cuny.edu
Lina Peña	Conferencia Episcopal Colombia	linatavera@cec.org.co
Marieke van der Vliet	Cordaid	m.vdvliet@maatwerkbijterugkeer.nl
Betty Pedraza	Corporación Espacios de Mujer	espaciosdemujer@une.net.co
Bianca Fidone	Corporación Espacios de Mujer	espaciosdemujer@une.net.co
Carlos Gimeno Verdejo	Delegación U.E. en Buenos Aires	graciela.alvarez@ec.europa.eu
Luciana Litterio	Dirección Nacional Migraciones	Llitterio@migraciones.org.ar
Nubia Pedraza	Famig Colombia	nubia.pedraza@gmail.com
Danilo Calvache	FEPP	efequito@fepp.org.ec
Rocio Buitrón	FEPP	rbuitron@fepp.org.ec
Dana Boizesi	Forga	educacion@forga.org.ar
Gustavo Gioseffi	Forga – Argentina	dir@forga.org.ar
Sandra Mejia	Fundación Concreto	smejia@fundacionconcreto.org
Verónica Barrionuevo	Fundación Delviso	verobarrionuevo@fundaciondelviso.org.ar

Name and Surname	Organization	E-mail
Lina Victoria Parra	Fundación Esperanza	lparra@fundacionesperanza.org.co
Gisela Tuchszer	HIAS	Dgtuch@gmail.com
Gilma Pérez	IDHUCA El Salvador	migrantesidhuca@gmail.com
Oswaldo Verrastro	Ministerio del Interior Argentina	overrastro@ministerior.gov.ar
Alberto Victor González	MyRAR	Avgonzalezss@yahoo.com.ar
Elisa Selemin	MyRAR	eselemin@yahoo.com.ar
Leandro Javier Zaccari	MyRAR	secretaria@migrantesrosario.com.ar
Roberto Peralta	MyRAR	rperalta@consejo.org.ar
Sergio Bertini	MyRAR	bertinisergio@myrar.org.ar
Juliette Lizeray	OIM	Juliette.lizeray@gmail.com
Aline Pires	OIM/UBA	apires@iom.int
Valentina Valfré	Soleterre	valentina.valfre@soleterre.org
Valeria Gemello	Soleterre	valeria.gemello@soleterre.org
Hernando Espada	Unitas	proyectos@redunitas.org
Rene Antezana	Unitas	coordinacionpoderlocal@redunitas.org
Ana Calvo Bueno	Universidad Buenos Aires (UBA)	anacalvobueno@yahoo.es
Ana Gutierrez	Universidad Buenos Aires (UBA)	anagtz@hotmail.com
Celeste Castiglione	Universidad Buenos Aires (UBA)	gramug@gmail.com
Luis Bogado Poisson	Universidad Buenos Aires (UBA)	lbogado@arnet.com.ar
Maria Jesús Paceca	Universidad Buenos Aires (UBA)	mpaceca@gmail.com
Mariana Moreira Alves	Universidad Buenos Aires (UBA)	mari_moal@yahoo.com.ar
María Beatriz Maza	Universidad de Catamarca	beatrizmaza@yahoo.com.ar
Raúl Mura	Universidad de Catamarca	raulmura@arnet.com.ar
Blas Toledo	UNLP	blastoledo@hotmail.com

## 8. overall assessment

In view of the increasing numbers of migrants returned from Europe and that the fact that exists very limited training and capacity for the return process in the countries of origin initiatives and projects of this sort have been proven to be very much necessary.

Out of the project implementation as well as from the organisations contacted we could concluded on the need of a project dealing with the Return phenomenon but with the framework and means to be able to analyse and include the experiences, knowledge and analysis needs from the partners in the countries of origin of the beneficiaries, in this case from Latin American.

All the leading agencies and the european partners consider essential and a strong added value for the results obtained the fact of being all active project partner and not only implementation organisations, that means that their opinions and contributions were considered at the same level as the ones coming from the European partners

The project short duration did became a concerning issue for all the stakeholders involved. We should stated that in order to establish a proper and efficient work dynamic, objectives and results accomplishment longer periods of implementation should be developed to be able to guarantee a real impact and sustainability of the project.

Otherwise all stakeholders involved have managed to up-listed the skills of potential local partners and sufficient material have been collected in order to facilitate a better identification and selection criteria. In spite of different approaches to the realization of reintegration paths all local leading agencies showed a great deal of experience in the field and to be a high skilled professional workers. Through the training material local partners know and were more aware of the regulations, practices and contents of the European programmes related in one way or the other to Return as well as the common and existing vehicles for the transfer of knowledge and capabilities in the area of return management with regard to the development of co-operation among EU Member States and also to the development of co-operation between these and the countries of return.

But a very relevant and common conclusion from all partners involved was link to two main issues within the project. On one hand the special difficulty and some times quasi impossibility to obtain information about official registrations and data concerning voluntary and/or forced returnees and/or illegally staying nationals in the EU who may be returning to their countries of origin from every European and Latin American country involved in the project. And on the other hand the difficulties and misunderstandings faced because of the complexity and confusion on the definition, interpretation and application of the Return term. On top of that it should be noted the lack of knowledge of other similar and/or complementary actions undertaken by similar organisations in Latin America.

Then when analysing a possible continuity, follow-up and sustainability of the project there is a common agreement that it's advisable to partially enlarge the countries targeted to as it could be the case of Bolivia because of the close relevance of the internal migration flows on the region as towards Europe, but the most important point would be to reinforce the current countries network by involving actively the public authorities as active stakeholders and to continue looking for a global approach, structural and within the community with the socio-labor insertion as the core element. The project itself should become a point of reference and a tool for the definition of new solutions to be promoted, disseminate and transfer into the national and international policy measures and to be incorporated into lobbys actions and campaigns. These actions should be based on the gathering and dissemination of the good practices on the region and with that point of reference to reinforce the role to be played by the social and non-governmental organizations on all related discussions and legal and social developments.

Furthermore and considering other european experiencies on return issues a possible II phase of the project should be reinforced by the inclusion of the results and experiences concluded within other related european return projects as the cooperation on the research and transfer of information on the county of origin of the returnes (CRI Project)<sup>11</sup>; the awareness, and entering into contact with already existing networks where long experience organizations in the issue are members (ERSO Project)<sup>12</sup>; and the dissemination and use promotion of informatic plataforms as [www.ecoi.net](http://www.ecoi.net).

Therefore considering all previously expressed a final, relevant and long standing result will be the creation of an effective and sustainable referral network of partners that may foster future projects

---

<sup>11</sup> CRI Project - "Return Information Project and Vulnerable Groups" - "Proyecto de Información de Retorno y Grupos Vulnerables" [http://www.accem.es/pdf\\_retorno/folleto\\_informativo\\_cri.pdf](http://www.accem.es/pdf_retorno/folleto_informativo_cri.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> ERSO II Project - European Reintegration Support Organisations-Network, Phase II. Establishment of an Instrument for Coordinated Sustainable Voluntary Return. [http://www.accem.es/pdf\\_retorno/folleto\\_informativo\\_erso.pdf](http://www.accem.es/pdf_retorno/folleto_informativo_erso.pdf)

in this geographical area. The initial network was settled as a tool to identify the main obstacles of the process, analysis of new solutions and to gather information on the structures and supporting systems within the countries of origin. Favourable and flanking measures for strengthening the local partner regarding contents, functioning, tasks, management have been establish. The establishment of a platform for the exchange of information and best practices among all the stakeholders has been created and is on very lively evolution from now on.





Project Partners:



Financing:



Edition and Coordination:



The action has received funding from the Community. The sole responsibility of the content of this document lies with the author and the Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein