A comparative look on effective models for reintegration

By: Tim Howe
Senior Regional Protection Specialist
IOM- Panama Regional Office

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WHO WE ARE – International Organization for Migration (IOM)

UN Migration Agency (est. 1951, UN system 2016)

174 MS + 8 Obs | 171 countries

UN Migration Network – Coordinator & Secretariat

Formal mandate on **Return, Readmission & Reintegration (RRR)**

Global leader on safe, orderly & humane migration

RRR Policy guides IOM's work across **all return types**

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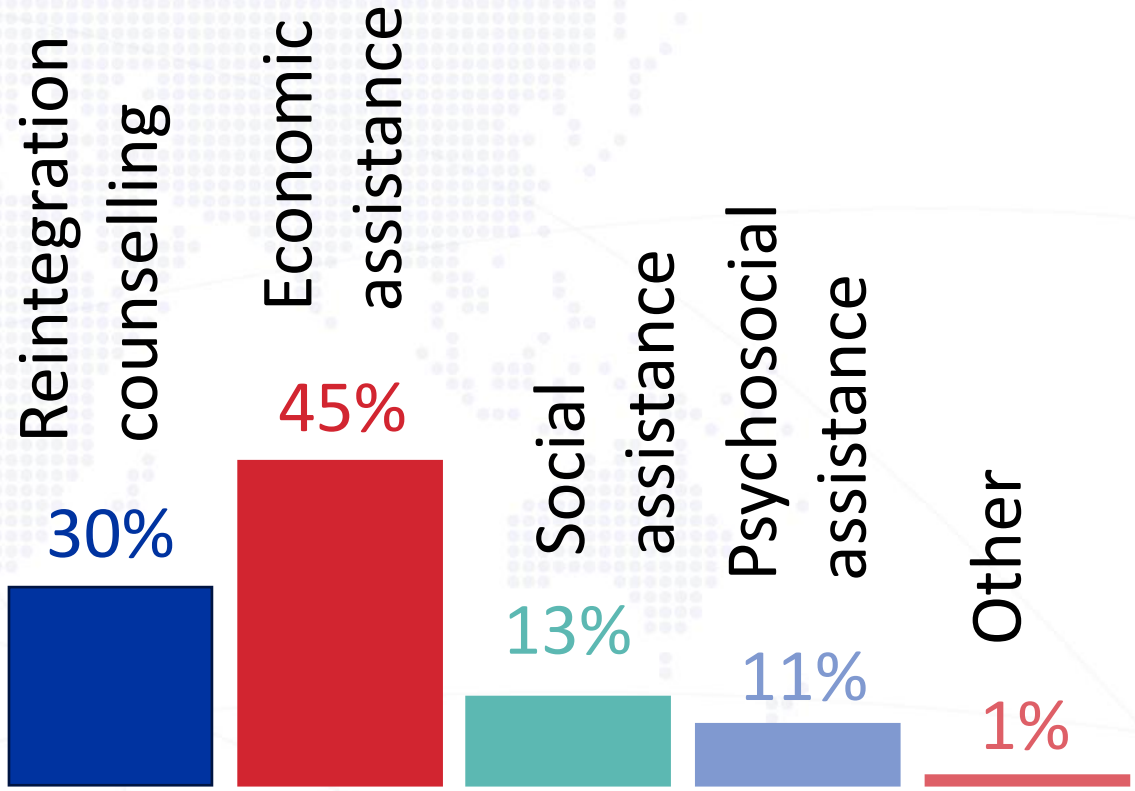
IOM RETURN AND REINTEGRATION KEY HIGHLIGHTS 2024

2024 AT A GLANCE

REINTEGRATION OVERVIEW

- **81,108** Migrants assisted
- **159,005** reintegration services delivered
- **86,593** returnees with reintegration support
- **120** IOM country offices

75 nat. & reg. reintegration initiatives



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Key migration trends in the Caribbean context

Changing Migration Governance Landscape

GCM created global commitments with Objective 21 focusing on safe and dignified return and reintegration.

Increasing Global Focus on Returns

Over 440,000 Haitian migrants forcibly returned since 2024, highlighting need for standardized procedures.

Need for Holistic Approaches

Growing recognition that sustainable reintegration requires addressing economic, social and psychosocial needs.

Alignment with SDGs and GCM

Policy ensures return and reintegration efforts contribute to broader development goals and commitments.

In the Caribbean: two key trends

Removals from the US

- Return numbers that may appear modest at regional level translate into a **significant impact** due to population size.
- **Stigma + weak support** undermine reintegration
- **Regional spillover** from rising removals

Removals to Haiti

- Returns
  - 2024: 200,000
  - 2025: 270,214
- + 1.4M IDPs (2025)

Further strain an already fragile humanitarian context.

Source: Situation Report No. 8, 31 December 2025

Return and Reintegration - key concepts

Return

The act or process of **going back or being taken back** to the point of departure.

Readmission

Act by a State accepting the re-entry of an individual.

Reintegration

A multidimensional process enabling individuals to **re-establish the economic, social and psychosocial relationships** needed to maintain life, livelihood and dignity and achieve inclusion in civic life.

Sustainable?

Return **is not an isolated event,** but part of a **broader migration governance process.**

Return as a Spectrum – Legal Concepts and Processes

Freedom of movement · Right to leave · Right to return · Principle of non-refoulement

Spontaneous Return

Voluntary Return

Assisted Voluntary Return

Voluntary Repatriation

Return under constrained choice

Expulsion

Removal

Forced Return

Deportation*

Voluntary

Forced

Legal / Admin. Decision

- Deportation Order
- Expulsion Order
- Removal Order

Implementation

- Removal
- Deportation*
- Expulsion

(different pathways, different needs)

Reintegration

Economic · Social · Psychosocial

Sustainable

Illegal

- Collective expulsion
- Mass expulsion
- Pushbacks

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Why the Spectrum Matters for Reintegration?

Different return pathways

different needs, risks and barriers

Reintegration must be based on:

- Individual circumstances
- Return conditions
- Socio-economic & psychosocial context

Understanding return diversity enables:

- Rights-based
- Development-oriented
- Tailored & realistic responses

How can IOM's experience and frameworks help governments manage this complexity in a structured way?

(From policy design to field implementation)

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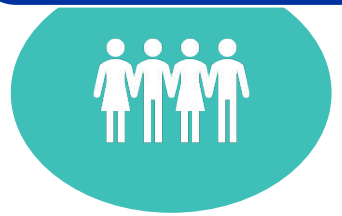
IOM's commitment

Putting migrants and their well-being first, while supporting governments in performing their duties and exercising their rights as governors of migration.



For Migrants

Protecting migrants rights and empowering migrants to exercise their agency.

Assisting more migrants across a more diverse range of circumstances and situations along the return spectrum.

For States

Serving as a **forum** for the exchange of views and experiences.

Providing **policy and technical support to governments to enhance their capacities.**

Contributing to **development** in CoO through sustainable reintegration.

IOM's Global Strategy 2024-2029

Identifies return and reintegration of migrants as an area in which IOM must support governments and stakeholders through:

- **capacity-development** and **service provision** anchored in **protection and human rights-oriented approaches**
- linking **reintegration** more closely to broader **development and stabilization** programming on the ground

IOM´s RRR Policy supports the implementation of, IOM's Strategic Vision.

Purpose of the RRR Policy

Ensure Safe and Dignified Return

Support Sustainable Reintegration

Act as an Honest Broker

Promote Accountability

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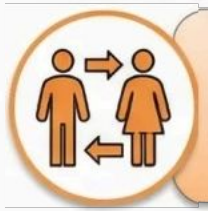
Strategic Objectives of IOM's work on return, readmission and reintegration

Rights-Based Approach: Protect dignity & rights



Gender-Responsive Programming: Different needs/responses

Do No Harm Principle: Avoid unintended harm

Migrant Agency & Confidentiality: migrants as active participants while protecting their personal data.

Sustainability &Partnerships Linked to development and planning through multi-stakeholder collaboration.

From Return to Sustainable Reintegration

Key Operational Tools

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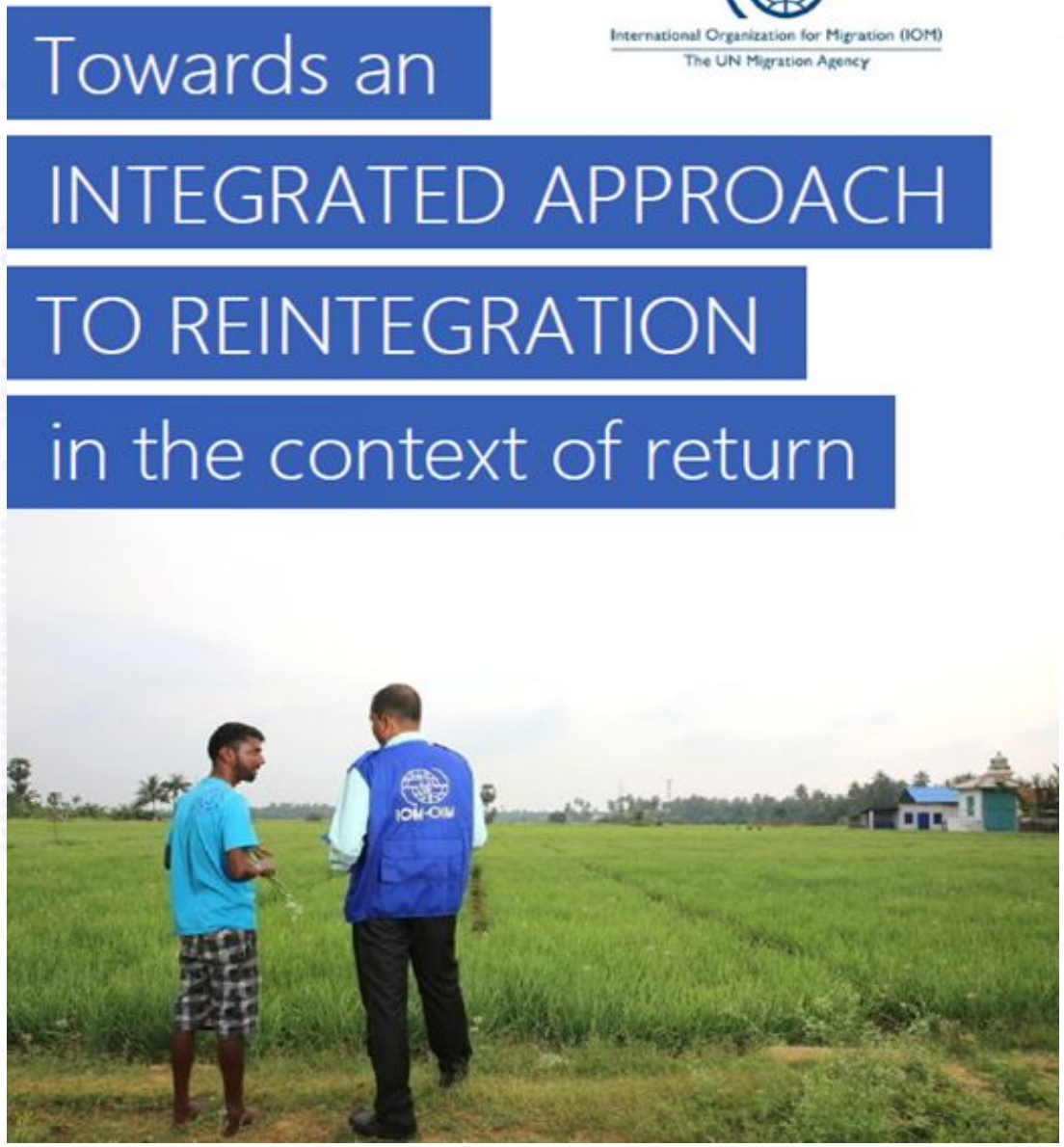
IOM's definition of sustainable reintegration (2017)

'Reintegration can be considered sustainable when returnees have reached levels of **economic self-sufficiency, social stability within their communities**, and **psychosocial well-being** that allow them to cope with (re)migration drivers. Having achieved sustainable reintegration, returnees are able to make **further migration decisions a matter of choice, rather than necessity**'.



An Integrated Approach to Reintegration

Achieving sustainable reintegration requires a holistic and a need-based approach.

One that takes into consideration the various factors impacting on reintegration, including economic, social, and psychosocial dimensions, across individual, community, and structural levels.

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Ensure reintegration assistance takes into account specific needs of individual migrants, especially considering situations of vulnerability.

- Preparation
- Flexibility
- Follow-up

COMMUNITY LEVEL

Foster inclusion of communities to which migrants return in reintegration planning and strengthen their resilience.

- Social networks
- Joint initiatives
- Partnerships

STRUCTURAL LEVEL

Align reintegration programming with national and local development policies.

- Capacity-building
- Local ownership
- Essential services

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IOM's Integrated Approach to Reintegration

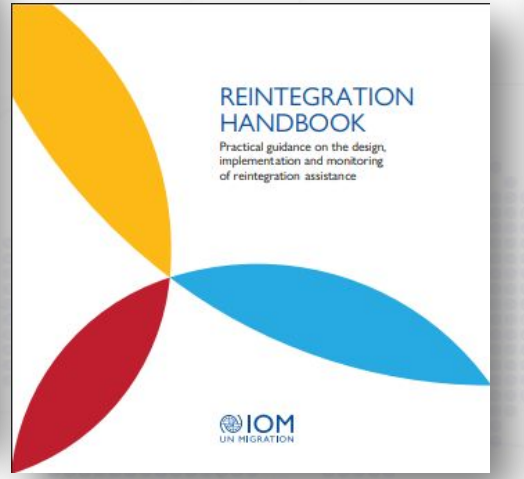
This integrated approach encompasses three key dimensions and three intervention levels to ensure sustainable reintegration.

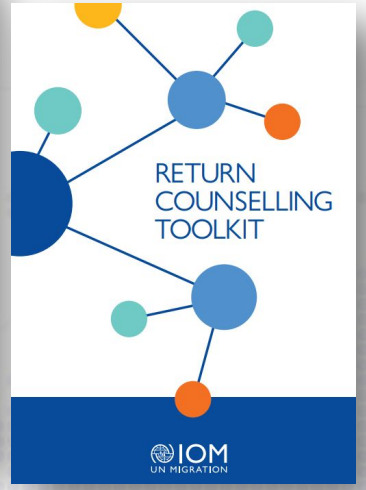
THREE DIMENSIONS OF REINTEGRATION

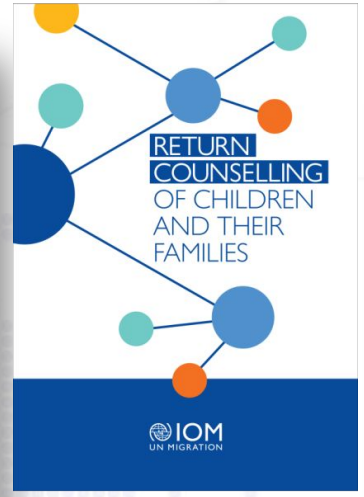
ECONOMIC	SOCIAL	PSYCHOSOCIAL
Livelihoods, jobs, skills, self-sufficiency	Family, networks, community	Mental health & well-being

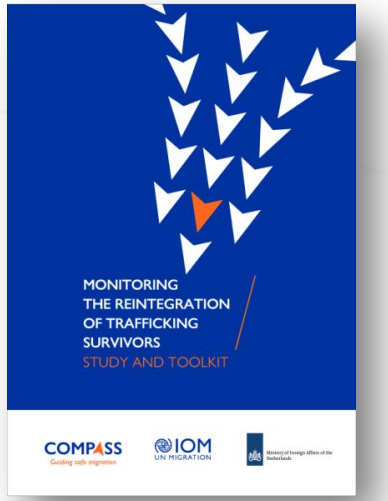
THREE LEVELS OF INTERVENTION

Individual	Community	Structural
Tailored case management	Local capacity & social cohesion	Policies, systems & services

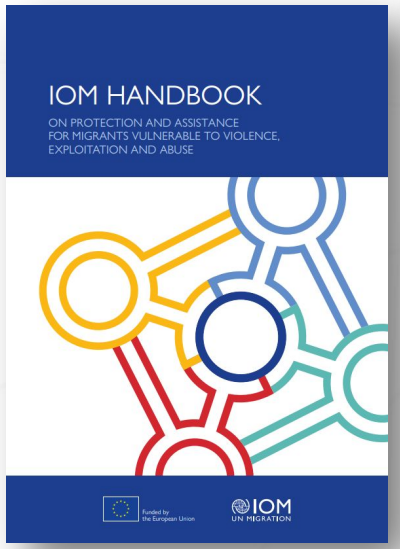


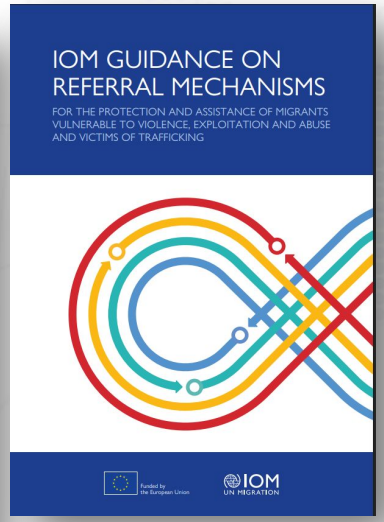


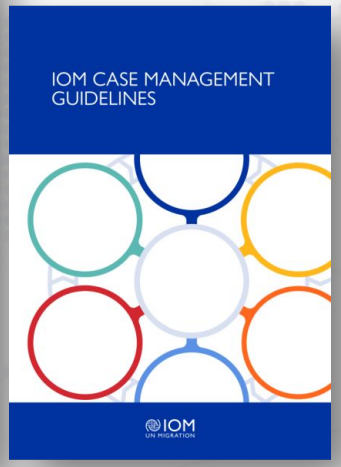


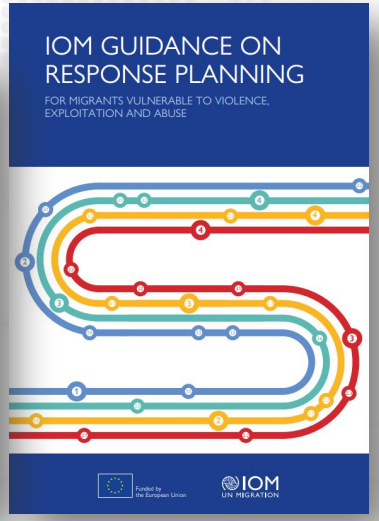


Operational Tools for Reintegration









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Learning what works: Monitoring & Evaluation strengthens reintegration m

MONITORING
AND
EVALUATION
IN RETURN & REINTEGRATION

Effective reintegration is not “one model” — it is a cycle of measuring, learning and adapting.

Reintegration outcomes depend on individual needs, community support and structural systems — so models must work across all three.

- **Individual level:** tailored assistance that accounts for specific needs/vulnerabilities + **preparation, flexibility, follow-up**.
- **Community level:** inclusion of communities through **social networks, joint initiatives partnerships** (reduces stigma, rebuilds belonging).
- **Structural level:** align reintegration programming with development policies; strengthen **capacity-building, local ownership, essential services**.

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Learning what works: Monitoring & Evaluation strengthens reintegration models

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Good practices and experiences

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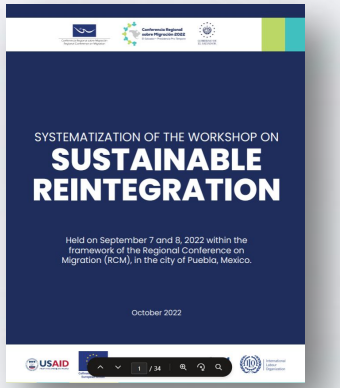
Best Practices: Northern Central America

Structural level

Strengthening Sustainable Reintegration through Regional Dialogue and Peer Learning



Workshop on Sustainable Reintegration (2022, RCM)

UN Network on Migration Peer Learning Exchange on RR (2023)

Best Practices: Northern Central America

Structural level

National return and reintegration policy frameworks

Guatemala

- **“Plan Retorno al Hogar”**

Honduras

- **Plan Nacional de Reintegración**

El Salvador

- **Plan Nacional de Reintegración para Personas Retornadas**

Mexico

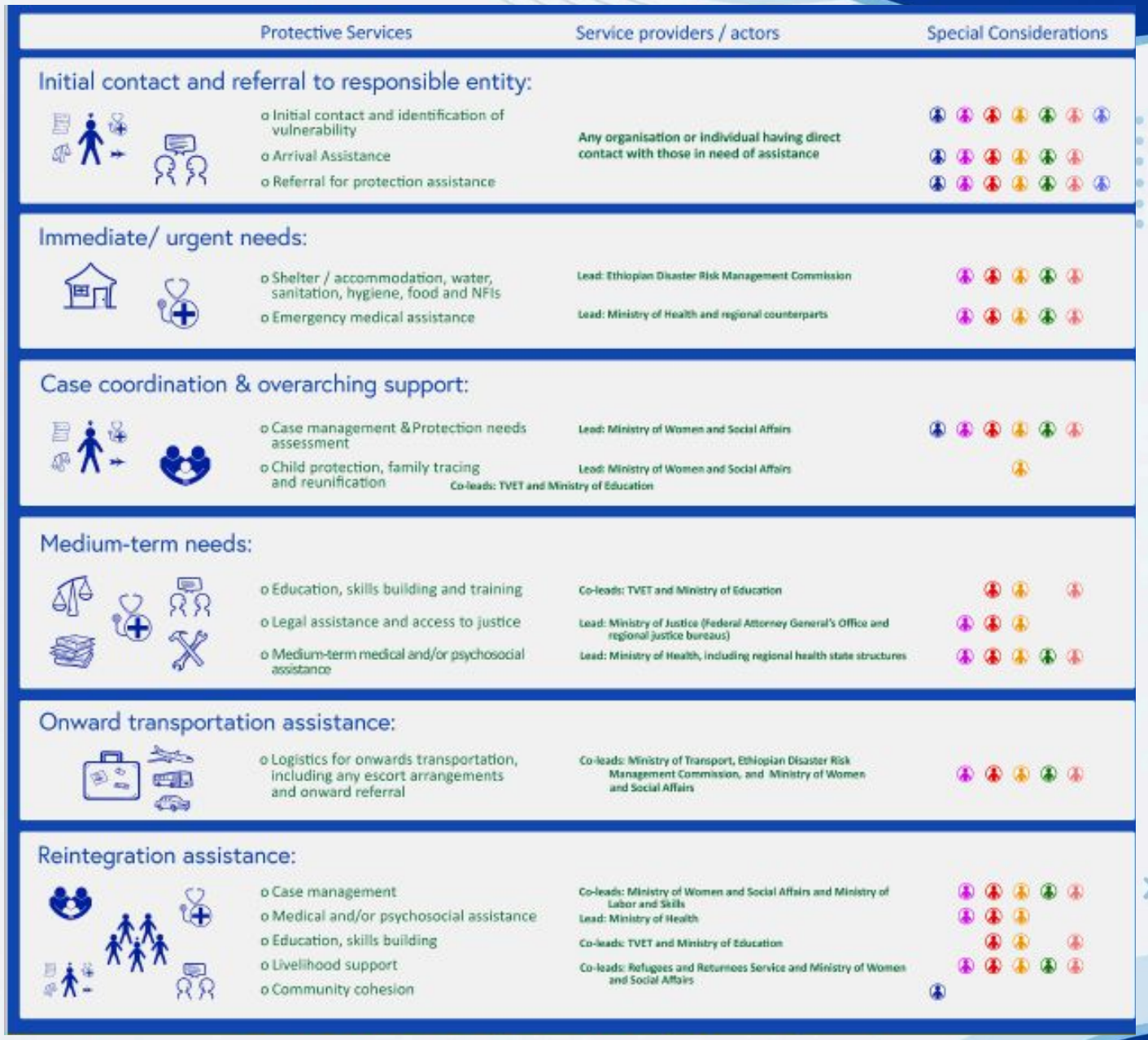
- **“México te abraza”**

Structural level Design of NRM in Ethiopia

- Provides generalized guidance, noting that pathways and assistance needs may vary from case to case.

Flow charts:

- Returnees to Ethiopia,
- Internal vulnerable migrants within Ethiopia and
- non-national vulnerable migrants identified in Ethiopia



Best Practices: Northern Central America

Community level

PEPITA Project (Guatemala)

Community-based psychosocial reintegration through arts and play

Theatre & play-based MHPSS for unaccompa-ni ed returned children and families

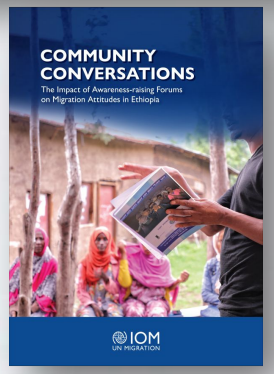
1,773 UAC + 718 family members reached through 24 structured sessions in child-friendly shelters

Early, community-le vel psychosocial support reduces distress, stigma & vulnerability

Best Practices: Ethiopia

Community level

Let's Talk: Community Conversation in Ethiopia



Best Practices: Northern Central America

Individual level

Christopher (El Salvador): Runs a crêpe and coffee business → turning ideas into viable businesses

How individual success connects to systems

Structural level + **Community level**

Gender lens

Jobs & Markets

- Employability
- Business acceleration
- Private-sector partnerships

Local development

- Territorial development
- Structural reintegration support

Economic infrastructure

- Financial inclusion
- Supply-chain integration
- Digital readiness

Best Practices: Northern Central America

Integrated Responses on Migration from Central America

At a glance (2020-2024)

Reintegration component: Guatemala. Honduras and El Salvador

85,100+ **returned migrants** supported with reintegration services

8 **National Reintegration Plans** created or strengthened

19 **coordination networks & working groups** established or reinforced

7,900+ **government, municipal & civil-society staff** trained

Evidence of impact (IRM Sustainable Reintegration Survey)

82% of IRM participants reached sustainable reintegration

+11% improvement in reintegration outcomes after **six months of programme support**

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Key Takeaways

Rights-based approach is essential

Ensuring migrant safety, dignity and rights protection must remain central to all RRR programming

Integrated responses across dimensions

Sustainable reintegration requires addressing economic, social and psychosocial needs simultaneously

Evidence-based decision making

Using systematic case management, data tools and monitoring leads to more effective programming

Partnerships drive accountability

Collaboration between governments, organizations and communities is crucial for long-term success

Government leadership anchors sustainability

Clear institutional leadership and a designated lead agency ensure coordination, accountability and continuity across the RRR process.

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Thank You

Thank you for your attention.

Tim Howe

Senior Regional Thematic Specialist,
IOM Regional Office Panama

Contact Information:
thowe@iom.int

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