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INTRODUCTION

I. Program overview

The Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) program for Nigeria was introduced in 2005 to support Nigerian asylum-seekers residing in Switzerland under the Swiss asylum system wishing to return home. This program is financed by the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) and implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). It is currently in its 10th phase and authorised to run until the end of 2015. The AVRR program is embedded in a wider migration dialogue between Nigeria and Switzerland and considered as part of the migration partnership.

The AVRR program provides a range of services, including return counselling, the provision of all information related to the return (as part of the Return Information Fund project), initial financial support, medical assistance (on case-by-case basis) and the organisation of the return journey (incl. transit and reception assistance, onward transportation to the final destination). It further aims at reintegration assistance through funding for individual professional projects (setting up an income-generating microbusiness) and housing assistance. Returnees receive a cash grant of USD 1,000 (equivalent in Naira) on arrival in Nigeria and an in-kind amount of USD 6,000 (equivalent in Naira) for the reintegration project.

All program participants must legally register their professional activity. Also, in the interests of project sustainability, the AVRR program has been offering returnees’ participation in a business training course on the management of a small enterprise since 2008.

Finally, a structured monitoring visit is carried out in order to verify the implementation and the success of the returnees’ reintegration projects. The form filled out on that occasion is the basis of the actual monitoring report.

The reintegration grant is bound to a chosen professional activity determined in a signed agreement and is paid in two to four instalments directly to the supplier or as reimbursement based on respective payment proofs. The payment of the last instalment is done after the monitoring visit and the submission of the business registration.

Between 2005 and July 2013, only Nigerian asylum seekers staying at least three months in Switzerland (residing in the Cantons) were eligible for AVRR program participation. Based on revised admission rules adopted by Swiss authorities as of August 2013, only those persons residing in Swiss administrative reception and procedure centres are entitled. Nigerians domiciled in the cantons can no longer return as project participants, but with a lower assistance within the separate IOM implemented project called Reintegration Assistance from Switzerland (R.A.S.)

Hence, the conditions for the participation in the AVRR program are currently as follow (cumulative conditions):

1. All Nigerian asylum seekers who do not have a residence title in a Schengen state;
2. All Nigerian asylum seekers who do not fall into the responsibility of another Dublin state according to the Dublin Regulation (“Dublin cases”);
3. All Nigerian asylum seekers who return directly from the reception center within three months after arrival in Switzerland;
4. All Nigerian asylum seekers who did not commit a legal offence in Switzerland.

In February 2014, SEM opened participation also to Nigerian asylum seekers staying in the “Testbetrieb Altstetten ZH” as this centre is also considered “reception and procedure centre”.

1 The project Reintegration Assistance from Switzerland is a global AVRR project with the same amounts, namely CHF 1,000 cash grant on departure and CHF 3,000 in-kind amount for reintegration project, irrespective of the country of return. The support in this framework is not as close as within the specific AVRR program to Nigeria.
Since the program was launched, i.e. between January 2005 and December 2014, a cumulative number of 915 persons returned to Nigeria within the AVRR program and a total of 830 reintegration projects have been developed. Most beneficiaries were aged around 30 years. Only 38 women (4%) returned.

2. Method and approach

2.1. Background

In 2007, the AVRR program for Nigeria devised its first monitoring survey on the model of the AVRR program for Western Balkans. After a three-month pilot phase, IOM made monitoring an integral part of its reintegration assistance activities for all program participants in Nigeria.

The aim of standardised monitoring was to evaluate the reintegration process of all program beneficiaries about six months after return. In 2009, also 12-month-monitoring visits were organized with a separate monitoring questionnaire. Nevertheless, in the same year the number of program participants rose to an unexpectedly high level, which would have increased the costs foreseen in the budget. Therefore, SEM and IOM agreed in September 2009 that only selected returnees should be visited and limited the target group to the Lagos area. IOM Nigeria could decide on further monitoring visits, if needed, within the budget of the program. The 12-months monitoring was abandoned based on the same reasons.

A first monitoring report compiled in 2011 reflected the results gathered from the questionnaires collected between the end of 2007 and early 2011.

Since 2011, the structured monitoring (visit to every program participant approx. 6 months after return) is again an integral part of the AVRR program.

The present monitoring report provides an overview of the feedback forms collected from Nigerian program participants who were visited between March 2011 and December 2014. It includes a brief presentation of the respondents’ profile, a descriptive analysis of the information gathered on program beneficiaries’ return and reintegration experience, as well as a conclusion and recommendations section.

2.2. Procedure

IOM Nigeria visited program participants in their place of work (own micro-businesses) on the occasion of field visits approximately six months after their return to Nigeria. The monitoring interviews were conducted before the disbursement of the last instalment of the reintegration assistance and are consequently considered as a precondition for it.

The goal of the monitoring visits by IOM staff is to document the status of the reintegration process and to assess the efficiency and sustainability of reintegration measures. For this reason, during the visits photos were taken to record the progress of the business projects that had received the funding and returnees were asked to complete a monitoring questionnaire.

The present monitoring form was developed and adopted in 2011 and counts 44 questions in all, some of which are closed-ended, others open-ended and allows respondents to add comments. They are grouped into the following categories:

A. General information and services (questions 1-10)
B. Overall personal situation (questions 11-15)
C. Type(s) of reintegration assistance (questions 16-43)
   C1. Business
   C2. Housing reintegration
   C3. Job placement
C4. Medical assistance
A last open question offers the possibility to express suggestions and recommendations.

In order to allow comparisons with monitoring data collected in the context of other IOM Bern AVRR programs, the monitoring questionnaire for the AVRR program for Nigeria has been adapted from the one devised for the R.A.S. program in 2011. Only slight modifications were introduced to account for the specific program context, e.g. questions regarding the business registration and the business training.

It is important to note that not all questions were answered by all beneficiaries and that multiple responses were possible for some of the questions (multiple response questions are marked with an asterisk * in the text). The total number of valid replies received may therefore vary from one question to another.

To date, IOM Bern collected the completed forms and used the statistics program SPSS Statistics to manage and analyse the data.

2.3. Limitations of standardised monitoring
From a methodological point of view, the following aspects are worth mentioning:

- **Monitoring approach:** The present report focuses on a monitoring approach (description of the collected data). However, subsequent explanatory analysis may be possible based on the collected results and some explicatory elements are included in the recommendation section of the report.

- **Bias of interviewer:** Monitoring interviews were conducted by IOM staff familiar with both the reintegration assistance program and the local context in Nigeria. However, the transcription of program beneficiaries’ answers to the monitoring questionnaire is subject to a certain amount of interpretation. Moreover, the fact that sometimes the same member of IOM staff who assisted the program participant also carried out the monitoring visit highlights an inherent problem with the procedure, in that the collected data may have a social desirability bias.

- **Measures of success:** In the absence of a clear-cut definition of a successful reintegration in the country of origin, the present report cannot advance any statistics in terms of successful or failed reintegration experiences. However, indicators such as a program participant’s satisfaction with his or her current situation, the status of a reintegration project or similar may serve as proxy indicators to address this issue.

- **Representativeness of the collected data:** Evidently, the results presented in this report do not account for beneficiaries for whom no monitoring could be conducted. Moreover, it is important to note that not all the beneficiaries who invested their grant in a housing project or received medical assistance filled in the respective section in the monitoring form. Therefore, the data presented here reflect only the situation of the interviewed returnees at the time of the visit and not of the whole number of participants to the AVRR program. Additionally, those who had failed reintegration experiences were more likely to have dropped out of monitoring hence the data presented fails to capture this important group.
This section provides an overview of the number of scheduled and effectively conducted monitoring visits and interviews, their timing as well as of beneficiaries’ profiles and places of return.

I. Overview of monitoring visits

1.1. Number of monitoring visits scheduled and conducted

This report details the results gathered from 333 questionnaires that were collected until December 2014 for cases departed between 2011 and 2013 (one questionnaire per couple/family). The total departed cases were 473; the number of monitoring visits was 336, which means 71% of the returnees were visited by IOM staff. Two persons did not fill in the form, because they were monitored during the duty travel of SEM and IOM Bern project officers. In addition, one questionnaire was not considered as it was filled out by the wife of a deceased beneficiary who took over the husband’s activities.

In 137 cases, the monitoring visit did not take place; among these, 93 returnees (19.7% of the total departed cases) could no longer be contacted or were not available when the monitoring visit was planned, 21 persons (4.4%) never contacted IOM to claim their reintegration assistance, 17 (3.6%) were not available for the scheduled monitoring with IOM colleagues or were uncooperative. In five cases (1.1%) the monitoring could not be organised in 2014 and had to be postponed to early 2015 for different reasons. For one person living in Kano the planned monitoring in 2011 was not possible for security reasons. Indeed, IOM safety regulations have meant that its personnel was not authorised to travel to several districts of Nigeria in recent years. For this same reason, a monitoring interview in 2014 was conducted in the IOM office in Abuja, because the returnee had settled in Kano. IOM staff still has movement restrictions to the region.

In general, monitoring visits outside the major cities Lagos or Abuja require IOM personnel to travel to remote areas, which occasion additional costs. Consequently, these field trips are grouped together according to location in order to maximise the number of visits that IOM staff can carry out per trip. If this is not possible, there is the option of completing the survey either by telephone or...
when attending the IOM offices to receive the last instalment of their project funding. However, for the data presented in this report, almost all interviews could be conducted face-to-face and at the business site. Only three interviews were done in IOM office premise (one because the person was doing his business between Lagos and the Republic of Benin, one because the beneficiary was based in a remote area, and one is the above mentioned case in Kano).

For a total of 42 persons (12.5% of all monitored cases), more than one monitoring visit were done. Most of the times, this was in order to verify the business situation after a long absence of the returnee. For this monitoring report, the form closest to six months after return (approximate time for monitoring) was selected.

1.2. Timing of monitoring visits

On average, program participants were interviewed nine months after their return. One third of the persons (111 out of 333) could be visited at 10 to 33 months after return. These timing differences are primarily due to the fact that all monitoring visits outside of Lagos were grouped together. Secondly, the scheduling of the visit depended on the reachability of the beneficiary at that given point in time; some of them were not reachable for a long time and later readdressed IOM with a letter explaining the long absence; only then their business could be monitored. Finally, the change of the chosen professional activity and the approval of the new project plan could also delay the monitoring.

2. Profile of monitored program participants

Of the 333 returnees interviewed, 94.5% (316 persons) were men; the other beneficiaries were four single women, four women with child/children and two couples/families.

2.1. Time spent outside of Nigeria

124 of the consulted beneficiaries (37.2%) indicated that they have been abroad for less than one year. 165 (49.5%) have lived between one and three years outside of Nigeria. A lower number of beneficiaries (25 or 7.5%) spent between three and five years abroad and 19 beneficiaries (5.7%) spent more than five years away from their country (between 8 and 21 years).

The time spent abroad does not correspond to the time spent in Switzerland. A small number of 60 returnees (18%) was in Switzerland for less than six months\(^2\). 122 (36.6%) stayed for seven to 12 months and 100 returnees (30%) for 13 to 24 months. Only 25 beneficiaries (7.5%) were in the country from 25 to 36 months and 22 beneficiaries (6.6%) for more than three years. Four beneficiaries did not answer the question.

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\(^{2}\) If returns in 2014 and 2015 were considered, the mentioned group of persons who stayed for less than six months would become more numerous. Indeed, since the conditions for the participation to the program changed in August 2013, Nigerian asylum seekers are only eligible when they decide to return from the reception centres; which means that they have been in Switzerland for less than three months.
2.2. Place of return

Program participants who completed the monitoring questionnaire mainly settled in Lagos (143 beneficiaries out of 333 or 42.9%). All other returnees decided to reside in cities as Onitsha (25 or 7.5%), Aba (24 or 7.2%), Benin City (23 or 6.9%), Abuja (21 or 6.3%), Owerri (19 or 5.7%), Enugu (13 or 3.9%) and Port Harcourt (10 or 3%).

Figure 4 and Map 1 display the main states of return revealing that besides Lagos, a large group is settling in the South-east of the country. Among “other” the remaining 23 beneficiaries (6.9%) are grouped who returned to other states, with less than four beneficiaries settling in the same state.
Figure 4 Main states of return

Total number of beneficiaries: 333

Map 1 Main states of return
During the course of the monitoring interview, program participants answered questions regarding the process of their return, their satisfaction with the services received both in Switzerland and in Nigeria, the implementation and status of their reintegration project as well as on their current situation. The following section highlights the results obtained from the data collected in the 333 monitoring questionnaires.

I. Return process and services obtained

1. Information on the AVRR program

The majority of beneficiaries heard about the program from return counsellors (254 mentions out of 336 answers*). Smaller numbers of participants were informed about this possibility either from their friends, community member or families (22 mentions), in the reception and procedure centre (32 mentions), or by email/flyer (22 mentions). Three beneficiaries heard it from speaking to another agency, two indicated specifically the SEM and one could not remember the circumstances of the information at the time of the monitoring visit.

![Figure 5 Information on the AVRR program](chart.png)

Total number of beneficiaries who answered this question: 333
Total number of replies received (multiple responses possible): 336

1.2. Satisfaction with return counselling in Switzerland

Regarding the preparation of their return to Nigeria, 318 program participants (95.5%) confirmed that the procedures relating to the payment of the reintegration assistance were clearly explained to them prior to leaving Switzerland. On the opposite side, 15 persons (4.5%) complained about the information received. The principal reasons for beneficiaries’ dissatisfaction are that they did not understand that the payments would be in instalments (5 mentions) and that the process took longer than they expected (7 mentions). Four beneficiaries thought that they could get cash instead of in-kind assistance.

Almost all returnees (325 or 97.6%) stated that they had received adequate information from their return counsellors. Six respondents (1.8%) who considered the return counselling insufficient complained about the information provided (e.g. payments, reintegration process etc.) not being clear enough in their opinion. Two beneficiaries did not reply to this particular question.
1.3. Use of financial reintegration assistance

In the monitoring questionnaire, participants were asked to indicate how they used the initial financial assistance (paid in cash after arrival). The majority, namely 247 returnees (out of 364 answers*), covered daily supplies upon arrival with it – confirming the main purpose of this grant. At the same time, many beneficiaries (109) mentioned that they used the money (or part of it) to complete the other granted assistance (reintegration project). In particular, 60 persons invested the cash in their business project; 17 in housing, one in medical care and one used it as cash for care/shelter. Finally, six returnees invested the financial starting assistance (e.g. in a bank account) and two persons did not indicate how they spent it.

![Figure 6 Use of financial reintegration assistance](image)

1.4. Timeframe in contacting IOM and receiving the first payment

The majority of beneficiaries (223 or 67%) took less than one month before contacting IOM. 99 returnees (29.7%) took one to three months. Only few (9 or 2.7%) contacted IOM more than three months after their return to Nigeria. Two did not answer the question.

For the long delay in contacting IOM, beneficiaries gave personal reasons such as child birth, illness, and travel to the village, etc. Only three returnees mentioned that they had difficulties in contacting IOM through the number provided or communication issues due to office relocation in 2013.

The timespan between the first contact and the first payment is determined by the duration of the first steps towards business set-up. Most of the returnees (220 or 66.1%) received the first payment between one and three months after their first contact with IOM office. 74 persons (22.2%) were able to receive it in less than one month. On the other side, 35 persons (10.5%) received the first instalment more than three months after return. Finally, four returnees did not indicate when the first payment was done.

---

*After the first contact with IOM and the submission of a valid ID, returnees receive counselling and are assisted in the preparation of a business plan for their chosen reintegration activity. Then, they have to identify a business location (e.g. shop, market stall, land property), search for service providers for the items/equipment needed, and submit the invoices to the IOM office for identification of the most appropriate vendor. Finally, when the vendor is identified, the required material is bought with the first instalment.
The indicated reasons for the 35 projects with delayed start vary widely with two main reasons recurring: 10 beneficiaries named problems in contacting IOM (office relocation, waiting period to get an appointment); 11 people found it difficult to provide the required documents to IOM or to find a supplier. Five beneficiaries postponed the business implementation for personal reasons (e.g. because of sickness). Three beneficiaries changed their business, three did not know why and three did not indicate any reason.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 7 Timeframe in contacting IOM</th>
<th>Figure 8 Timeframe in receiving the first instalment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than one month</td>
<td>Less than one month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One to three months</td>
<td>One to three months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than three months</td>
<td>More than three months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number of beneficiaries: 333

### 1.5. Difficulties encountered with the delivery of the project assistance

During the monitoring visit, the majority of beneficiaries (294 or 88.3%) stated that they did not meet any problems in the delivery of the project assistance. On the opposite side, 39 beneficiaries (11.7%) indicated that they had some difficulties: the main problem encountered was to obtain the required documents (mentioned 16 times out of 46 replies*). Other beneficiaries indicated that they had problems with the supplier (eight mentions), in finding the needed items (one mention) or with the delivery of goods/products (two mentions). Four returnees specified local bureaucracy and three said that they waited for approval by Swiss counterparts (SEM). Two returnees named security problems and one local corruption (supplier). Finally, eleven beneficiaries mentioned various other reasons.

### 1.6. Satisfaction with IOM assistance in Nigeria

Overall, a clear majority of program beneficiaries were happy with the assistance received from the local IOM offices in Nigeria: 58.9% or 196 beneficiaries were very satisfied and 34.8% or 116 beneficiaries were satisfied. A small number of persons (11 or 3.3%) were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the services received while only nine respondents (2.7%) stated not being satisfied at all. These persons were mainly unhappy about the standard IOM procedures related to the payment of the reintegration assistance that took too much time in their eyes. One beneficiary did not answer this question.
At the time of the monitoring visit, beneficiaries who returned in 2013\(^4\) were the most dissatisfied or neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with IOM assistance (13 out of 20; 65%) and the most dissatisfied with their current situation (26 out of 49; 53.1%). They also encountered more problems in the delivery of the assistance (21 out of 39; 53.8%). This can be explained with the very high number of returnees in 2013 that caused some delays in the delivery of the reintegration assistance as well as the coincidence of the IOM office relocation in the same year as an additional obstacle. However, compared to the total number of interviewed 2013-returnees (135), only a small number of persons indicated dissatisfaction in the framework of the monitoring.

\[\text{Figure 9} \] Satisfaction with IOM assistance in Nigeria

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|}
\hline
 & Total number of beneficiaries: 333 \\
\hline
 & Very satisfied \\
\hline
 & Satisfied \\
\hline
 & Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied \\
\hline
 & Dissatisfied \\
\hline
 & Missing \\
\hline
11 & 3.3\% \\
9 & 2.7\% \\
1 & 0.3\% \\
116 & 34.8\% \\
196 & 58.9\% \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

1.7. Usefulness of the reintegration assistance

Most of the returnees (245 returnees or 73.6\%) considered the reintegration assistance as very helpful and 81 (24.3\%) as helpful. Only three beneficiaries found it neither helpful nor unhelpful, another three considered it unhelpful and one very unhelpful. Unfortunately, these few persons did not give an explanation of their statements; only two of them referred to the payment process and difficulties in the implementation of their chosen business project.

2. Personal situation

2.1. Satisfaction with current situation

When asked whether they were satisfied with their current situation, 280 (84.1\%) out of 333 visited program participants said that this was the case. Four persons did not respond and the remaining 49 beneficiaries (14.7\%) were dissatisfied with their current situation. They mainly brought up financial difficulties as a reason (24 mentions out of 63 replies\(^*\)). 11 beneficiaries indicated health problems, eight mentioned personal problems and six referred to their insufficient housing situation. Other less frequently stated answers included overall disappointment about return (five mentions) and about the general situation in Nigeria (four mentions) or various, unspecified concerns (five mentions).

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\(^4\) Out of all persons interviewed, 135 (41\%) returned in 2013.
2.2. Difficulties upon return

While 20 beneficiaries (6%) considered that they have not faced any particular difficulty regarding their reintegration and 32 (9.6%) did not answer the question, 281 beneficiaries (84.4%) indicated that they experienced some problems upon their arrival in Nigeria.

The most often mentioned difficulties were political instability and security in Nigeria (109 mentions out of 318 replies*), financial problems and low income (104 mentions), family reasons (48 mentions) and health reasons (34 mentions). Only four beneficiaries mentioned difficulties in finding a profitable job/employment. 19 beneficiaries mentioned other problems, e.g. the delay in the business implementation and the difficulty in finding required documents, business change, housing problems etc.
2.3. Future plans

At the time of the monitoring visit, the majority of the interviewed persons (318 or 95.5%) were still living at the same place of return. Two persons (0.6%) had moved to another village in the same region, 11 (3.3%) settled in another region of Nigeria and two did not respond to the question.

Beneficiaries were also asked where they considered their future centre of life to be. The great majority (299 or 89.8%) declared that they would like to remain in their current place of residence. A small group expressed a different opinion: two beneficiaries wanted to move to another village in the same region and 20 to another region of Nigeria, while nine were planning to go abroad, mainly because of the following reasons: security situation in the country, better opportunities of education, labour market or for business. Three beneficiaries did not give an answer.

When asked about their future plans, most beneficiaries cited that they planned to continue expanding their current reintegration project (mentioned 325 times out of 443 replies*) and/or opening a new business (92 mentions). Other plans included doing further education (8 mentions), finding employment (4 mentions), moving to a new accommodation (4 mentions), moving to

---

**Figure 12** Difficulties upon return

- Other: 19
- Difficulty in finding a job/unemployment: 34
- Health reasons: 48
- Family reasons: 104
- Low income: 109
- Political instability and security in Nigeria: 281

Total number of beneficiaries who mentioned at least one problem: 281
Total number of replies received (multiple responses possible): 318

---

**Figure 13** Envisaged future centre of life

- In the current city/village: 299 (90%)
- In another city/village in the same region: 2 (0.6%)
- In another region of Nigeria: 9 (2.7%)
- Abroad: 20 (6%)
- Missing: 3 (0.9%)

Total number of beneficiaries: 333
another city in Nigeria (1 mention) or abroad (4 mentions) and other projects (5 mentions), such as marriage. Only one beneficiary did not share his intentions regarding his future plans in the questionnaire.

There is no significant link between the nature of the implemented business project and the beneficiary’s desire to re-emigrate. The dissatisfaction towards the current situation corresponds to a push factor for re-emigration only in four cases (out of 49 beneficiaries who indicated dissatisfaction over current situation).

3. Reintegration assistance

With the exception of one beneficiary (minor) who opted for an education project, all beneficiaries who completed the monitoring questionnaire decided to invest the reintegration assistance into an income-generating project (332 projects). 24 returnees (7.2%) decided to use part of the reintegration assistance for housing. Moreover, 14 beneficiaries (4.2%) had been granted additional medical assistance by the SEM. Two returnees received both housing and medical assistance.

### 3.1. Business projects

#### 3.1.1. Types of implemented reintegration projects

The vast majority of the 332 business projects implemented by program beneficiaries were commercial activities (264 projects or 79.5%). Transportation/Taxi service businesses were chosen by 41 beneficiaries (12.3%), while 19 persons (5.7%) set up small enterprises in the service sector (internet cafés, bars, restaurants, hairdressers, cleaning services, etc.). Five projects (1.5%) could not directly be attributed to a category and include activities like dog breeding, production of bottled

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Number of Beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expanding existing business</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opening a new business</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding employment</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding a new house/apartment</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving abroad</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving to another city in Nigeria</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing further education</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number of beneficiaries who replied to this question: 332
Total number of replies received (multiple responses possible): 443
water, shoemaking, and music recording. Finally, only three beneficiaries (0.9%) opted for the agricultural sector (in particular for poultry).

In the commercial sector, the sale of motor spare parts and clothes or shoes was most popular. The following chart shows the different areas of commerce that were chosen:

**Figure 15 Types of implemented business projects**

The presented data about the types of projects implemented reflect the set-up businesses at the occasion of the monitoring visit. Changes of projects done after the monitoring visit are therefore not considered here. According to the results from the monitoring visits, 30 returnees (9%) had changed their business project before the monitoring visit.

The following **Figure 16** illustrates the differences in the choice of reintegration projects according to the respective state of residence. Enterprises in the field of commerce are realized not only in states with big commercial cities but throughout the country. In addition, the proportional distribution reveals that there is a relatively higher percentage of transportation projects in the states of the South-east (mainly Enugu and Imo).

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5 It is important to note that in the framework of the AVRR program, returnees can request to change their reintegration project by giving a reason for the change, filling in a new business plan and signing a new project agreement. IOM verifies and approves the business change, if necessary with a request to SEM counterparts for special cases.
Figure 16 Types of implemented business projects according to state of return

280 returnees (84.3%) indicated that they had previous experience in running a business. Of these beneficiaries, 163 had run the same business before leaving Nigeria. Two persons did not answer the question.

Although this could be seen an indicator for sustainability of a small enterprise, no significant link between previous experience and successful implementation of the business could be found, as most of the businesses considered in the report (business projects visited) were successfully implemented (see paragraph 3.1.2.).

In contrast, there is a remarkable relation between the type of chosen business and the satisfaction of a returnee. 27.8% (5 out of 18) of the beneficiaries who set up a business in the services sector were not satisfied with their current situation at the time of the monitoring visit. Equally, one-fourth (8 out of 40) of the beneficiaries who had started a transportation business were dissatisfied with their situation. In contrast, only 13% (34 out of 262) of the beneficiaries who opened a shop were not satisfied at the time of the monitoring visit.
Moreover, out of all returnees who opted for a transportation within the reported timeframe business, 32 persons (out of 73, 43.8%) could not be monitored at all because they were no longer reachable, not available for the scheduled appointment or never contacted IOM after submission of the business plan.

IOM discourages taxi and transportation projects for several years already as internal evaluations showed the limited success, the challenges encountered in the set-up and the poor sustainability in this particular business. In coordination with the SEM, IOM informed the returnees about difficulties, dangers and high costs of this particular project and introduced more strict conditions for the approval of such a project in 2009. Since 01 January 2014, taxi and transportation projects are generally prohibited in the framework of the AVRR program and only allowed in exceptional cases.

3.1.2. Status of business projects

At the time of the monitoring interview, 324 business projects (97.6%) were successfully implemented. Six beneficiaries stated different reasons for their activity not being realized yet, such as problems with the rent of the business location, little funds and lack of equipment. Two persons did not give an answer.

304 projects (91.6%) were operational and income generating. The proportion of operational projects not yet generating revenue amounted to 5.4% (18 projects). Six beneficiaries were still planning and setting up their business and two had closed their business with a loss of the initial investment. These two beneficiaries gave different reasons for their business to be closed: due to the increase in importation taxes for electronics, one beneficiary could no longer make sufficient profit in the sale of electronics; he stopped this activity and opened a grocery store instead, but was robbed recently. The other person had started a transportation business, but sold the car because it was not suitable for his purposes and invested the money in a partial payment of a more suitable one. Two beneficiaries did not respond to this question.
When monitored, 21 persons (6.3%) stated that their business was struggling. The main problem encountered was lack of funds to consolidate the activity (14 out of 26 answers*); other beneficiaries mentioned local competition (4 mentions), security (4 mentions), low level of business activity in the area (1 mention), little experience and local corruption (each 1 mention) as reasons.

Below figure shows the status of the project per type of business project (commerce, transportation, etc.). However, no significant link between the two variables could be identified.

### Figure 18 Stage of implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning/development stage</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational but no income</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational and generating income</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed business</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>91.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number of implemented business projects: 332

### Figure 19 Status of implementation according to the type of project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Planning/development stage</th>
<th>Operational but no income</th>
<th>Operational and generating income</th>
<th>Closed business</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number of business projects implemented: 332

### 3.1.3. Business registration and ownership

Since 2009, the official registration of the business with the respective authority (Corporate Affairs Commission) is mandatory in order to support the returnees in the regular legal procedures of business set-up and thus strengthen sustainability of the individual projects. Consequently, the registration is a requirement for the payment of the last instalment of the reintegration assistance.⁶

At the time of the monitoring visit, 219 returnees (66%) had already obtained the business registration.

The great majority of the returnees who started an income generating activity declared to own the small enterprise (320 persons or 96.4%). Only three beneficiaries started a business with family members (a couple and a single returnee). Seven beneficiaries (2.1%) decided to join an existing business.

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⁶ The procedure of obtaining the business registration can take up to several weeks, but is also subject to the returnee’s timely submission of the request to the respective authority.
business of a non-family member and signed a partnership contract. Two persons did not answer the question.

3.1.4. Business finances and revenues

Thanks to the successfully implemented business project and the regular income, 111 persons (33.4%) could offer employment opportunities to other Nigerians. Below figure shows that the majority employed one or two persons, others employed up to seven persons. Two beneficiaries did not give a response.

Moreover, a great number of returnees declared to support someone with their income (224 beneficiaries or 67.5%). The overall majority of these persons supported one to four persons. One beneficiary says that he is asked to support 16 persons. Five returnees did not indicate whether or not they supported someone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 20 Number of persons employed</th>
<th>Figure 21 Number of persons supported</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1: 73</td>
<td>1: 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: 23</td>
<td>2: 67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: 5</td>
<td>3: 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4: 3</td>
<td>4: 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5: 2</td>
<td>5: 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6: 2</td>
<td>6: 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7: 1</td>
<td>7: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total beneficiaries who employ at least one person: 111</td>
<td>Total beneficiaries who support at least one person: 224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total beneficiaries who answered to this question: 109</td>
<td>Total beneficiaries who answered to this question: 218</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to set up their business projects, the majority of the returnees needed extra funds to invest in addition to the reintegration assistance (247 beneficiaries or 74.4%). Three fourth of these beneficiaries (187 mentions out of a total of 254 answers*) received assistance from friends/relatives. 35 returnees used personal savings from Switzerland and 27 returnees could benefit from family savings. Only three persons stated that they got a bank loan/micro-credit.
Finally, 25 returnees (7.5%) stated that they have other sources of income: 19 of them mentioned owning another small enterprise (another shop, a cyber café, farming etc.). Two beneficiaries were employed; only one person indicated assistance from friends/relatives as another source of income and one indicated having a contract with the Nigerian government to supply computer accessories.

### 3.1.5. Business training

Out of 332 program participants who implemented a micro-business activity, 176 (53%) had already taken part in a business training session before the visit of IOM colleagues. A comprehensive overview on the organization of the trainings will be given later in a specific section of this report.

All persons who had participated to the business training stated that it was helpful and indicated different reasons why. The subject “business management” was mostly appreciated (54 mentions out of 183 answers*) as returnees specified that they learnt useful details and advices on how to better manage their own enterprise. In particular, 39 beneficiaries got more acquainted with the book keeping methods.

Some beneficiaries who participated in the vocational business trainings were fascinated by new business ideas, such as fish breeding or poultry farming. Several persons appreciated the sessions about customer care and development of business plan. Finally, others were generally happy because they appreciated having learnt a lot.

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*The basic aim of the business training component within the AVRR program is to improve sustainability of the business projects. However, this indicator cannot be measured in this framework as the timeframe of the monitoring is too short. The impact of having attended a business training session on the sustainability should be assessed in a long term evaluation. See section “Business training”, page 28*
3.2. Housing projects

As mentioned at the beginning of the third chapter, 26 returnees invested part of the reintegration assistance in housing. Upon return, 12 (46.2%) among them resided with friends/relatives and 12 (46.2%) rented a house or an apartment. Only one was in a temporary accommodation and one did not give specification here.

Thanks to the reintegration assistance, 23 beneficiaries were able to rent a house or apartment and only two kept on staying with their friends/relatives. One did not answer the question.

At the time of the monitoring visit, 21 returnees (80.8%) out of those who answered to this question stated that they had an adequate accommodation, three still had a temporary solution and two did not answer here. 22 beneficiaries (84.6%) were still living in the accommodation that was granted to them through the reintegration assistance, while three had moved out of the flat paid by the reintegration assistance\(^8\). Again, one person did not answer the question.

In conclusion, 12 persons (46.2%) were very satisfied about the housing assistance, 11 (42.3%) were satisfied, one was neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and two did not advance an opinion.

4. Job placement

Questions from 35 to 40 in the monitoring form concern job placement possibilities as reintegration assistance. Nevertheless, no interviewed beneficiary benefited from this particular assistance.

5. Medical assistance

Out of the 333 beneficiaries interviewed, 16 mentioned that they were granted medical assistance. 11 of them (out of 24 answers\(^*)\) received medication before return in Switzerland, while eight received it in Nigeria. Five beneficiaries mentioned that they received medical treatment in hospital or from a physician.

Three beneficiaries stated that they had not been able to continue/start an adequate medical/therapeutic treatment since their return. The indicated reasons were temporarily not available medicaments or problems with the payment of medical bills.

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\(^8\) One person did not mention the reason; one stated that the rent expired and he moved in with a relative; one had found another accommodation.
After having benefited from the medical assistance, 13 beneficiaries depended on medicines/medical treatment while two had finished it. One person did not answer the question.

6. Suggestions / recommendations

The success of the program and the general positive outcomes are reflected in the remarks and comments that the returnees wrote at the end of their monitoring form. Below compilation is an attempt to group the big variety of answers received.

186 beneficiaries (out of 464 answers*) stated that the program was good and helpful for their return and reintegration in Nigeria. 158 persons also conveyed their big gratitude to the Swiss government and to IOM for the assistance they received. 56 persons expressed their wish for the program to continue in order to help other Nigerians to return home voluntarily and build a new life in the same way they did.

Furthermore, 48 respondents mentioned some difficulties that they had encountered, in particular the payment procedure and the need for more financial assistance. In order to speed up the business set-up, some returnees suggested simplifying the procedures, e.g. to disburse cash or to pay out all the money in one instalment.9

A few beneficiaries gave other suggestions: three returnees proposed that it would be beneficial if the program helped them to get loans or micro-credits or even that IOM could lend money. Two beneficiaries underlined the importance of the monitoring visit and the fact that it could take place more often, and they highlighted the significance of a personal assistance to the single returnee by IOM staff. One person recalled that it would be good to let all the returnees meet once in a while to share ideas and give encouragement.10 Finally, one person suggested that the AVRR program needs more publicity among migrants, in order to tackle and reduce the mistrust and disbelief that the assistance is really given. Indeed, a lot of respondents stated that they will communicate their good feelings towards the program to their friends in Europe to suggest them to go back.

Some examples are presented below:

“It really helped me to unite in my family again. Beside it helps me to settle down instead of running from a place to another. Continue with the program, it is encouraging!” (Mr. O. returned to Lagos in 2011)

“The program is nice and helpful. It helped one to start life again. Thanks, I am very grateful for the assistance.” (Mr. P. returned to Port Harcourt in 2012)

“The program is very helpful; it makes one not to be stranded when he returns back to his country. Thanks to all involved.” (Mr U. returned to Lagos in 2013)

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9 Program participants frequently express a wish for cash payments during their return counselling sessions in Switzerland and their appointments with IOM staff in Lagos. However, reintegration assistance is always disbursed in connection with a reintegration project and paid out, wherever possible, directly to the landlord or supplier on the presentation of pro-forma invoices. Multiple instalments over a certain timeframe encourage higher sustainability.

10 IOM Nigeria organizes reunions in the framework of the business training or duty travels of SEM and IOM Bern officials. Since 2013, regular meetings – so called “interactive sessions” – are part of the AVRR program.
The program is good/helpful
I am grateful
Continue the assistance
Need for more financial assistance
Faster payments - Simplified procedures
Other

Total number of beneficiaries who answered this question: 333
Total number of replies received (multiple responses possible): 464
BUSINESS TRAINING

As highlighted in the paragraph 3.1.5., the business training is generally appreciated by all returnees who take part in it. Therefore, this section will present a more detailed descriptive overview on the business training taken from the results of feedback forms that are distributed to training participants. It is important to note that the here considered group of beneficiaries does not correspond to the target group of this monitoring report.

The business training was adopted as an inherent part of the benefits of the AVRR program for all participants in 2008. IOM Nigeria organized business development training in cooperation with the national partner SMEDAN (Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria)\textsuperscript{11}.

Following an interactive session with returnees and their wish to continue the trainings, IOM introduced a vocational training with the facilitator Patriotic Citizen Initiative (PCI) in December 2013, focusing on determined types of businesses. Returnees can voluntarily take part in one of these workshops or might also attend more business trainings if need be and if the number of participants allows it.

The below presented results reflect the opinions of the beneficiaries who filled in the feedback form distributed at the end of the training. Between 2012 and 2014, a total of 247 business training feedback forms were received.

1. Training with SMEDAN

1.1. Background and organization

As mentioned above, IOM included the business training to the benefits of the AVRR project in 2008 in cooperation with SMEDAN. The business training sessions and the returnees’ participation are coordinated by IOM, while SMEDAN’s faculty team usually facilitates the program and delivers the training.

The main goals of the trainings are to strengthen beneficiaries’ capacities in developing and managing the implemented businesses in order to facilitate the creation of sustainable and long term reintegration mechanisms within the national context.

All workshops comprise basic modules on entrepreneurship education with topics such as business visioning, start-up, bookkeeping, basic marketing, banking and finance. The schedule and level are adapted to the participant’s needs and educational background, since some returnees only have limited knowledge in reading and writing or are illiterate. On the last day, the training participants receive a state-recognized certificate.

Beneficiaries should take part in it ideally shortly after return. Nevertheless, it happened that some of them did not want to take part initially, but showed interest at a later stage in the reintegration process. On the other hand, the training sessions were organized two to four times a year at one or two locations in Nigeria and thus not all persons could take part before their business start-up. For all training participants, transportation to the training site and meals are provided. For those persons living outside Lagos, overnight accommodation for the duration of the training is organized as well.

After the first SMEDAN-training was held in July 2008, IOM Nigeria organized two business development workshops in Lagos in 2009 and one in 2010. For the first time, a training session was held in Benin City in June 2010, as many of the project participants had returned to that area.

In 2011, the two workshops were again organized in the cities Benin City and Lagos. The third training planned for November 2011 was postponed to February 2012 due to other activities.

\textsuperscript{11} This agency was established in 2003 by the Nigerian authorities in order to promote the development of the small and medium enterprises in the Nigerian economy (www.smedan.gov.ng).
number of returnees in November and duty travel of SEM and IOM Bern project officers). Consequently, four trainings were held in 2012: two in Lagos, one in Benin City and one in Abuja, in order to respect proximity to beneficiaries’ places of residence.

In 2013, IOM organized two business-training sessions with SMEDAN in Lagos. The workshop in March included also six returnees from Austria\(^{12}\) and the one in September included six returnees from Switzerland within the R.A.S. program, who were exceptionally allowed to participate, as program participants finally did not attend the training because of professional or personal reasons. In addition, a first follow up training with SMEDAN was organized in 2013 for persons who had participated in a workshop in 2012. Unfortunately, the interest for this training was rather low and most of the persons who took part in the SMEDAN training in 2012 could no longer be contacted or were not interested in participation, e.g. as they did not want to leave their business for another four-day-workshop.\(^{13}\)

In 2014, IOM organised two business training sessions with SMEDAN in Lagos and Benin City.

1.2. Analysis of feedback

As of 2012, a one-page feedback form was introduced to allow structured analysis of the responses. At the end of every training session, the forms are distributed and proposed to the returnees in order to evaluate the training and obtain some suggestions or recommendations. These recommendations also influenced the adjustments and the extension of the business training component within the AVRR program. During the nine training sessions held in 2012, 2013, and 2014, a total of 183 returnees participated in the business training and 164 feedback forms (89.6%) were received.

The analysis shows that 144 persons of those who filled in the form (87.8% of all responses) considered the SMEDAN training as very good, 17 good (10.4%) and three moderate (1.8%). Nobody found it not good or very bad.

![Figure 25 General evaluation on the SMEDAN training](image)

The participants mainly liked the section about cash flow management and book keeping (59 mentions\(^{*}\)) and the development of business plan (56 mentions). 31 returnees expressed their

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\(^{12}\) The AVRR project Austria-Nigeria was developed on the model of the Swiss AVRR project and comprises a business-training component as well. These beneficiaries did not fill in the Swiss feedback form and are not taken into consideration in this analysis.

\(^{13}\) Based on that experience and upon request from several beneficiaries, a first vocational training was organized in late 2013. (see p.31 Vocational Training)
interest for the business management skills which were illustrated and 26 appreciated more the marketing session, e.g. because they learned how to interact with the customers.

**Figure 26 Most liked component of the SMEDAN training**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everything</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of business plan</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash flow management and record keeping</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business management</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number of beneficiaries who answered this question: 164
Total number of replies received (multiple responses possible): 212

143 participants (87.2%) stated that the training was very helpful and 21 (12.8%) considered it as helpful. Nobody actually stated that the training was not helpful.

63.4% of the respondents (104) indicated that they would change something in their respective business projects. Almost half of them stated that they plan to improve their record keeping (50 out of 118 mentions*); 32 beneficiaries expressed the intention to modify their attitude towards the customers or their marketing techniques and only two had the idea to opt for another project. 34 beneficiaries mentioned the desire to generally change something in their business. 26 persons (15.8%) did not indicate if they plan any changes or not.

Finally, 135 participants indicated some suggestions or recommendations for the training. 47 beneficiaries (out of 142 answers*) were satisfied and thankful for having attended the workshop. 38 beneficiaries encouraged the organizers to maintain the training for the next program participants as they considered it really helpful. 28 persons requested attending more than one session and suggested to organise trainings more often or for a longer period. Another 14 suggested global improvements, eight preferred that the training would be organised before the business set-up and four stated that the training should be promoted strongly among returnees.
2. Vocational training

On the basis of the low interest in the follow-up training with SMEDAN experienced in 2013 and the feedback from discussion rounds with beneficiaries, another training possibility adjusted to migrants needs was identified. As a pilot experiment, a vocational training was organized for the first time in the framework of AVRR program in December 2013. The workshop was organized by IOM with the facilitator of Patriotic Citizen Initiative (PCI), a Nigerian NGO active against irregular migration and founded by an ex-migrant and returnee. This first endeavour of vocational training and its content was thus a follow up action of the findings gained from an interactive session held in 2013.\(^\text{14}\)

As the returnees were interested to learn about concrete activities, the facilitator presented businesses such as poultry farming, fish farming and repair of mobile phones. These fields were identified during the interactive session.

Thus, the component “vocational training” replaced the initial idea of a SMEDAN follow up training and consequently another two workshops were organised in 2014 (Lagos and Benin City) in cooperation with PCI.

After a general introduction into business management, three concrete branches were presented in the workshops in 2014 according to the interest of the returnees: poultry and catfish farming (production, breeding and sales) and interior decoration/event management.

The total participants to these three vocational trainings were 93, out of which 83 (89.2%) filled in an evaluation form.

67 beneficiaries (80.7%) considered the vocational training very good, 14 (16.9%) found it good and two (2.4%) found it moderate. No respondent ticked the categories “not good” or “very bad”.

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\(^{14}\) The aim of the interactive session is to foster a kind of tutoring mechanism amongst returnees, to have their feedback on the reintegration procedure, to give them the possibility to share knowledge and experience and discuss potential solutions to problems encountered.
During the training different business activities were presented; some of the returnees were already doing something similar (e.g. poultry), others had established their businesses in completely different fields. Nevertheless, 59 beneficiaries (71.1%) considered the training as very helpful, 21 (25.3%) as helpful. The categories “neither helpful nor unhelpful”, “unhelpful” and “not helpful at all” were ticked by one person each.

The majority of the respondents appreciated the session about fish farming most (41 out of 104 mentions*). 31 beneficiaries preferred the poultry farming session and 17 the part about mobile phone repairs. Five beneficiaries considered the whole training interesting and did not specify one component. The session on event decoration techniques was highlighted by four beneficiaries only.

37 beneficiaries (44.6%) stated that they do not plan to change anything in their business, but mainly because they were running different activities from those presented during the training. Indeed, 42 participants (50.6%) planned to change something in their business: either to change their business activity completely or add an activity that could be a secondary source of income. Four persons (4.8%) did not give an answer to this question.

In conclusion, participants expressed their suggestions and recommendations as follows:
3. Comparison/Conclusion

Both trainings fulfil the needs of beneficiaries based on their educational or professional background. In some cases, returnees took part in both workshops and the different approaches complemented the returnees’ requirements.

Although there is neither specific indicator nor proved evidence that can be taken from the feedback forms or the monitoring responses towards measuring the impact or a higher sustainability, the results show that the gained knowledge is very important for the returnees’ professional activity. The high ranking of the categories appreciation and usefulness of both the SMEDAN and the PCI training workshops displays the significance of the training component. The majority of the persons would also never have the chance to attend training without the possibility given in the framework of the AVRR program benefits. In addition, the fact that the majority of the respondents plan to change something in their way to manage their small enterprise illustrates that the training matches the needs.

Only a long term evaluation of the professional activity of training participants compared to returnees who did not attend a workshop could reveal the impact.
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The above presented results underline that the AVRR program Nigeria is achieving its primary goals, namely the facilitation of the return and reintegration of voluntary returnees in their country of origin. The outcome confirms equally the results of the first monitoring report of this AVRR program compiled in 2011.

First of all, the high percentage of successfully completed monitoring visits can be attributed to the fact that the visit is a requirement and integral part in the process of reintegration assistance in this AVRR program. Concurrently, the monitoring as precondition for the final payment might influence the number of successful visits, as well as create bias of certain answers (general satisfaction, satisfaction with IOM services, future plans, etc.).

The majority of the interviewed returnees consider the reintegration assistance being very helpful and confirm their satisfaction with the overall situation at the time of the monitoring. IOM Nigeria informs that many of the returnees appreciate the fact that someone takes an interest in their well-being and progress after return. Secondly, almost all respondents are still living at the place of return and the most widespread wish is to definitively settle down in Nigeria and expand the existing professional activity. However, Nigeria being the centre of life does not necessarily mean that beneficiaries do not leave the country. According to IOM Nigeria’s experience, returnees often go on short-term business trips to neighbouring countries, South Africa or even India to purchase goods for their enterprise.

In contrast, returnees express various difficulties faced upon arrival in Nigeria. Reintegration is not considered as an easy process, as the challenging environment largely affects the success of professional reintegration. As in the 2011-report, financial problems and low income are mentioned most frequently as source of problems in the realization of the business set-up and towards sustainability of the professional reintegration. A new factor since 2011 could be identified as well: political instability and insecurity in the country became the main concern among returnees according to present results. This reflects the ever-increasing instability mainly in the northern region of the country over the past few years.

Despite the challenges faced by many program participants, the majority of them successfully launch a small enterprise and register the activity with the respective national authority. Similarly to the results in 2011, returnees generally settle in urban areas rather than rural, and the majority of all professional activities can be attributed to the commerce sector. Only a very small number of persons opt for agriculture. In general, the respondents tend to return to the field of activity done previously to the migration to Europe. Although no proof could be identified, this can be a factor for sustainability as the returnees have advance knowledge about the activity.15

A further outcome is that the returning migrants re integrate into family network with mutual dependence relations. The revenues generated by the small enterprises set-up with the help of the Swiss reintegration assistance not only contribute substantially to covering the beneficiaries’ daily living costs but also enable them to support other individuals, mainly family members. However, the return and reintegration into the often vast family network of support could at the same time also be a burden for a successful and sustainable enterprise. On the contrary, returnees often need extra funds from family members and friends in addition to the reintegration assistance to successfully start their business project. Single returnees generally start their business activity independently. Community projects or businesses shared between returnees are very rare in the Nigerian context, as beneficiaries claim fear from untrustworthy business partners when asked if they would like to do business in partnership.

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15 As no clear indicator can prove evidence here, only a long-term evaluation could reveal this assumption.
The professional reintegration of the returnees from Switzerland within this AVRR program still has an impact on non-migrants. One third of the respondents employs staff in their micro-business, and thus creates jobs for non-migrants.

The positive outcome of this monitoring endeavour also illustrates the importance and strength of a country-specific program that is adapted to the special circumstances. As shown in the suggestions of the monitoring report of the R.A.S. program in 2013, this particular flexibility is often not possible in a global reintegration program. The almost 10 years’ experience of the AVRR program to Nigeria proves that a program tailored to the needs of the beneficiaries and adjusted to country can offer comprehensive reintegration assistance. Further suggestions can be made for the continuation of the AVRR program Nigeria:

**Continued provision of return relevant information to program participants in Switzerland**

The results confirm the important function of the return counselling offices in Switzerland as well as their high standard. In contrast, the few program participants who mistakenly expected to receive the reintegration assistance in cash or in one instalment when they left Switzerland were highly disappointed and dissatisfied after their return to Nigeria. Therefore, personal counselling sessions with potential program participants should be maintained and continue to provide clear-cut information and explanations on AVRR program procedures and the nature of support available within its framework. Consequently, potential program participants may start reflecting on the challenges and opportunities with regard to their return early in the process, to adjust their expectations and to make an informed decision regarding their return. This can mitigate cases of re-entry shock and potential disappointment following arrival in Nigeria and simplify the collaboration with the local IOM office.

In order for return counsellors to provide accurate information on the program procedures, relevant information material should be continued to be distributed to them. The organization of an information meeting for return counsellors wherein the AVRR program is explained in detail, ideally with the presence of an IOM Nigeria colleague, would be advisable.

**Maintain and reinforce support provided to beneficiaries during project implementation**

As regards IOM assistance in Nigeria, respondents rated positively the services received and only a minority encountered problems. This finding confirms the good working relationship between all partners in the AVRR program. In general, only few negative feedbacks were identified, mainly related to payment procedures and requested documents. Indeed, some beneficiaries stated that they struggled with a lengthy administrative process after their return, specifically with the registration of their activity with the respective Nigerian authority, the identification of an appropriate supplier and the submission of invoices and offers as payment requirement. Several returnees indicate therefore that they would appreciate to receive the whole amount in one payment and preferably in cash.

Due to IOM’s commitment to respecting donor requirements, internal procurement rules and local legal frameworks, the reintegration process necessarily requires some time. For instance, acquiring purchase documents, or obtaining the business license is necessary but can be time consuming.

Among the few negative feedbacks, beneficiaries who returned in 2013 tend to be slightly less satisfied with their situation and also encountered more problems in the delivery of the assistance due to the special circumstances in this particular year. However, taking into account the decrease in the number of new applicants to the program since the change in admission rules, the reintegration process will be optimised and the time of implementation reduced.

In order to allow beneficiaries to implement their individual reintegration projects within an adequate time span, IOM Nigeria should continue to provide and reinforce its support to all beneficiaries through individual counselling tailored to the respective needs. As it has been done in
the past years, the AVRR program should continue to be flexible enough to take into account returnees’ feedback and adjust certain procedures and components accordingly.

*Continuation of business training and interactive session*

Business trainings were extremely positively received by program participants and considered as useful preparation for the start-up or as useful guidance in the management of an income-generating project. Many also appreciate it as advantageous in the fierce competition of commerce and present their certificate during the monitoring visit.

Being a crucial component of this AVRR program, the business training should be maintained and the content might be further adapted according to beneficiaries’ needs, recommendations and suggestions.

The separately organized interactive sessions were not part of the analysed components in the monitoring form, as they were adopted later on. However, as experience shows, beneficiaries appreciate to have the exchange amongst other returnees, share ideas and participate in giving feedback and recommendations for the future of the AVRR program.

*Continuation of the monitoring component and adaptation of the questionnaire*

The monitoring component is crucial in the whole process of counselling, support and guidance of the reintegration projects and should thus be maintained in future. The visits and analysis of the collected feedback allows for a more comprehensive overview of the various experiences of the single program participants. Together with the feedback from the interactive sessions and the discussions within the business training workshops, the collected data from the monitoring is the basis for further suggestions towards possible adaptations of the AVRR program.

Following the experience gained during the collection and compilation of the data for this present monitoring report, the monitoring questionnaire should be slightly adapted to adequately reflect returnee’s reintegration experience.