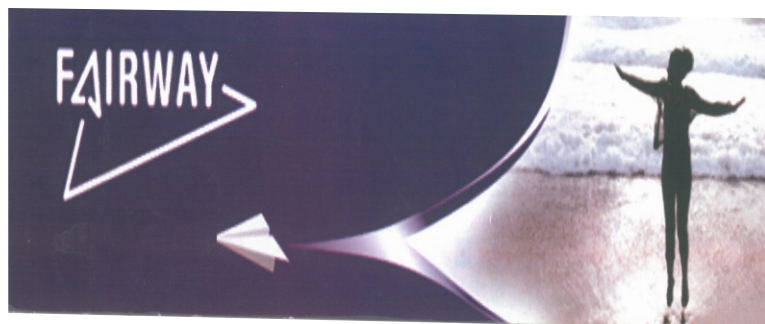




## **TRADE UNION INFORMATION GUIDE FOR RETURNING MIGRANTS AND MIGRANT WORKERS**



**Nigeria Organised Labour  
Contribution to Return, Re-admission  
and Reintegration in Nigeria**



## Preface

Nigeria's organised labour, led by the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), continues to hold it as immutable that it is the right of people to move freely, as well as live and work in communities of their choice. This view is in line with the national aspiration of promoting the free movement of persons, as the world has seen and experienced the benefits of migration.

In other words, when people move, they and their homes transit, and the host economies benefit.

We have also seen that the desire to move continues to increase globally. This is largely due to the fact that the world is witnessing a disproportional disaggregation of the benefits of globalization, democracy and economic growth.

The distribution and share of global prosperity are consistently being skewed against the majority of the people, and it is worse for women, migrants and other categories of indigent persons.

For Africa and Nigeria, particularly, other structural challenges exacerbating this dilemma include, but are not limited to, mono-economic production, infant and stagnant manufacturing strength, low technological advancement and utilization, and weak social protection provisions.

In essence, there are growing factors causing people, especially young people, to contemplate and undertake desperate and dangerous migration journeys.



However, we are also witnessing a situation where the forceful removal and deportation of migrants (noticeably in Europe and North America) and migrant workers (especially in the Middle East) are increasing.

Equally interesting is the fact that several migrants and migrant workers are committing to returning, with some voluntarily ready to do so.

Unfortunately, it has been observed over time that several potential returnees find it difficult, frustrating and traumatic to both successfully return and get reintegrated back home.

One of the challenges cumbering this process has been identified as the dearth of handy and easy-to-understand-and-utilise pieces of Information. This has made them susceptible to exploitation, vulnerability and, consequently, the unwillingness to return.

The NLC recognises the human and labour rights of these persons; and considering that these migrants and migrant workers are potential members of the trade unions, therefore, the NLC sees the need to assist and support returning migrants and migrant workers to return, be readmitted and reintegrated home in comfort and dignity. This is why this information guide has been produced.



The Trade Union Information Guide has been formulated to contribute to and complement the Standard Operating Procedures on Return and Reintegration already developed by the Federal Government.

It is a workers-friendly Guide that places migrant workers at the core and provides necessary links to facilitate an easy Return and Reintegration.

We are confident that this information guide will serve as a qualitative contribution to ensuring a comfortable and dignified return and a successful readmission and reintegration of returning migrants and migrant workers.

The NLC is immensely grateful to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) for its support in the production of this guide.

Comrade Ayuba Wabba, mni

President  
NLC

## **Acknowledgment**

The development of this Information Guide for Returning Migrants and Migrant Workers is an important landmark development for the Nigerian trade unions.

We continue to demonstrate, with actions, our commitment to effectively represent and serve our members and potential ones, including other compatriots and peoples.

We are excited and hopeful that this material will contribute to improving the enjoyment of the human and labour rights of the persons the guide is intended for and others who may want to undertake support and assistance interventions for these returning migrants and migrant workers.

We are pleased to assert that the process to ensure the collation, analyses and compilation of this Information Guide is a thorough, rigorous and fact-checked one.

It is on this note that we want to express our sincere gratitude to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Abuja Office for the support we had via the ILO Migration Portfolio under the Fairway Project in Nigeria.

The organisation's support that contributed to the successful publication of this Information Guide is immeasurable.

In particular, our special thanks go to the ILO Abuja Office Director, Ms Vanessa Phala, the Programme Officer and the entire ILO Abuja Office team for the professional guidance, input, commitment and patience.

We are particularly grateful to Mr Augustine Erameh, the National Project Coordinator of the FAIRWAY Programme in Nigeria, who provided technical oversight during the production of this Guide, Ms Inviolata Chinyangarara, Workers Specialist ACTRAV, and others who contributed to the Information Guide.

We appreciate the support provided by Comrade Abiodun Badru, who facilitated the development of the Information Guide, Comrade Akhator Joel Odigie for his immense contributions, Dr Adeyemo Adeniji, and other Social Partners for their inputs into the document.

Our profound gratitude goes to the NLC Affiliates and their Focal Persons, who provided the necessary information and also shared experiences that were harnessed in developing this Information Guide.

We do also appreciate and commend the efforts of Comrade Eustace Imoyera James, the NLC Focal Person on Migration and Labour Migration, for his drive, zeal and tireless efforts towards ensuring the actualisation of this document.

Our sincere appreciation also goes to Dr Onoho'Omhen Ebhohimhen, Head of Research, and Comrade Bello Ismail, Deputy General, NLC, who supervised the process.

It is our fervent belief that this Information Guide will go a long way in serving the interest of Returning Migrants and Migrant Workers. We solicit continuous support and cooperation in ensuring that the Guide achieves its purpose and is reviewed from time to time.

The President of NLC, Comrade Ayuba Wabba, mni, is singled out for special mention for bringing his vast international exposure to bear on this work.

Comrade Emmanuel Ugboaja Esq, mni  
General Secretary, Nigeria Labour Congress

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AVRR	Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration
CAC	Corporate Affairs Commission
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
FME	Federal Ministry of Education
FMHADMSD	Federal Ministry for Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development
FMLE	Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment
FMoH	Federal Ministry of Health
FMoJ	Federal Ministry of Justice
FMWA	Federal Ministry of Women Affairs
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NAPTIP	National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons
NCFRMI	National Commission for Refugees, Migrants, and Internally Displaced Persons
NEMA	National Emergency Management Agency
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NiDCOM	Nigerians in Diaspora Commission
NIS -	Nigeria Immigration Service
ONSA	Office of the National Security Adviser
RRR	Return, Readmission and Reintegration module



SMEDAN	Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
UNHCR	United Nations Humanitarian Commission for Refugees
CDC	Centre for Disease Control
NCDC	National Centre for Disease Control
MRC	Migrant Resource Centre

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Organised labour's position remains that migration is a human right, which is a historical and human phenomenon that has benefitted humanity and societies over the years.

Migration is not a crisis per se, but what has been observed is that the governance of migration leaves more to be desired. Of course, when migration is under discourse, it is the international dimension of it that is being considered.

In essence, migration within a territory (internal migration) has its own challenges. It is not prominent compared to international migration (movement across borders and territories) because of the governance arrangements involved.

Concerning international migration, sufficient pieces of evidence abound that point to the fact that the majority of the people who move do so for survival reasons, mainly in search of greener pastures.

Others move to further education and improve their skills/capacities, while some others do so for family reunions and healthcare. Some people may even move to escape political persecution.

Where people have moved to fill up labour demand gaps, the process has also been noted to be riddled with avoidable challenges that expose such a person (a migrant worker) to exploitation, abuse and vulnerabilities.



Some of these challenges include:

- Low and inadequate necessary information possessed and available to the potential labour migrant concerning the recruitment process,
- How to live and work in the host country,
- Labour laws and rights of migrant workers in destination countries,
- Mechanisms for seeking redress and getting remedies in the event of infractions, as well as information on how to return, rehabilitate and reintegrate migrant workers into communities after a period of stay abroad.

Similarly, organised labour affirms that it is the right of citizens to return to their home countries as a matter of choice. This is a human right recognised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and reaffirmed in other universal human rights instruments, including the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and their Families (ICRMW).

Traditionally, return migration has been positively viewed as a popular strategy to “reverse the brain drain” caused by the permanent migration of skilled persons abroad. In recent times, the return of migrants and their reintegration into home countries have received increasing emphasis in the light of perceived migration-development linkages and the proliferation of temporary labour migration programmes.

Return of workers is integral to the temporary migration cycle involving pre-departure, employment abroad, and return phases. At the same time, forced migration has led destination countries to launch assisted return, re-admission, and deportation programmes for

rejected workers in irregular status.

There have been several efforts to bring effective governance and coherence to the global labour migration governance architecture. Renewed efforts (at the national, regional and international levels) in recent times, especially since the turn of the new millennium, to achieve a more effective coherence and coordination of migration and labour migration have been furthered. The development, negotiation and adoption of the United Nation's Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) are seen as the latest outcomes of these efforts. Of course, existing instruments such as the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions 97 (Employment for Migration), 143 (Migrant Workers – supplementary), 189 (Decent Work for Domestic Workers) and General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment remain relevant. The GCM, nonetheless, represents a positive momentum in achieving multilateral coordination.

To ensure that these instruments are effective, there would be a need for a conscious, systematic and sustained utilisation and application as well as enforcement at the national, continental and international levels.

Besides, as migrants and migrant workers continue to suffer exploitation such as:

- integration in host countries,
- immigration and documentation issues,
- excess and long working hours without compensation,
- work in dangerous and unsafe conditions,
- denial and withholding of wages,

and other abuses such as discrimination, racism, slavery and in some cases death, as seen amongst trafficked victims.

The need for continuous interventions by the different stakeholders, including organised labour, remains crucial and urgent. The relevance and urgency of the need become imperative when there is a readiness and willingness on the part of migrants, especially irregular migrants, labour migrants and others such as unsuccessful asylum seekers and trafficked persons who wish to return home.

This is why the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), with support from the ILO under its Fairway project, has developed this information guide to fill the information gaps majority of would-be returning migrants and migrant workers would experience or are experiencing.

In specific terms, this information guide will assist migrants and migrant workers and other persons caught in the migration challenge wishing to return, be readmitted and reintegrated back home and into the communities they left.

The guide is designed as a hands-on, handy and simple tool for these categories of persons to navigate their return, readmission and reintegration and it is completing the national Special Operating Procedures (SOPs) developed by the Federal Government Agencies on Migration Governance in Nigeria.

The NLC is convinced and confident that the availability and accessibility of adequate and up-to-date pieces of information contained in this guide will serve and contribute substantially to how migrant workers can successfully prepare, undertake and achieve a return back home in fulfilment of Objective 21 of the Global Compact on Migration.

Essentially, this information guide provides simple and easy-to-read pieces of information and illustrations on how to undertake the chain of return, readmission and reintegration in a comfortable and dignified manner.

Additionally, it demonstrates how the entire chain of return, readmission, and reintegration would be for migrant workers, and any other such persons the union is ready to lend a hand of support to in this same situation.

The guide also points to likely sources of assistance and support for returnees.

It is hoped that this information guide will be empowering for potential returnee migrants and other categories of returnees. No doubt, the guide demonstrates Nigeria's organised labour's commitment to assisting workers and citizens, especially Nigerians in this case.

The information guide is for both supported and spontaneous returnee migrants.

Return and reintegration in this guide shall refer to: "the process of going back to one's country of origin or citizenship." It also includes the preparation for and implementation of the return and how the returnee migrants are settled back home.

A return may be voluntary or forced, especially for migrant workers whose employment contracts have lapsed or unsuccessful asylum seekers/applicants and irregular migrants who fail to secure pathways to residency or citizenship in their host countries.

To help prepare the guide, NLC conducted interviews and focused group discussions with some of its affiliates and civil society partners.

In addition, links to useful websites are collated and provided in this guide to aid further information search by the user.

We advise that this material be considered mainly as an information guide, whilst it can be referenced appropriately, too.



This information guide is subject to review, and it is expected that this booklet be regularly updated to reflect current realities. NLC has developed and produced this publication with the assistance of the ILO under the Fairway Migration Programme and it is immensely grateful for the support (technical, institutional, material and financial).

## **SOME BASIC FACTS ON RETURN MIGRATION, READMISSION AND REINTEGRATION**

### ***Objectives -***

- ❖ Provide basic clarifications of terms and make users of the guide more familiar with the terms and their usages
- ❖ Users will understand who a returnee is and how they can be supported and assisted to return.
- ❖ Returnees will know and understand the processes for return and reintegration as well as know how they can access help and be helped.
- ❖ A good appreciation of effective and sustainable return and reintegration and a simple description of how they are facilitated and achieved as well as present the benefits of return to the migrants, communities and economies they returned to.

## **Who is a Returning Migrant or Migrant Worker?**



Generally speaking, returning migrants or migrant workers are persons returning from a country of destination back to their country of origin. The Statistics Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs describes returning migrants as “persons returning to their country of citizenship after having been international migrants (whether short-term or long-term) in another country and who are intending to stay in their own country for at least a year” (UNDESA, Statistics Division, 1998, p. 94)

While this definition identifies the home country with nationality, other views contend that it is better to use the country of birth as the yardstick for identifying returning migrants because those who were naturalized in countries of destination may otherwise be left out (Dumont and Spielvogel, 2008). Migrants may also move to a third country or countries before returning to the country of origin.

According to the 2018 ILO guidelines on migration statistics state, returning migrant workers will be “return international migrant workers are defined as all current residents of the country who were previously international migrant workers in another country or

countries....The minimum duration of labour attachment abroad for a person to be considered as a return international migrant worker [is] relatively short,such as 6 months” (ILO,2018b,p. 15).

Return migration might refer to: Repatriation, the voluntary or involuntary return of travelers and migrants to their place of origin. Circular migration is a phenomenon in human migration in which migrants repeatedly travel between origin and destination countries.

### Forms of return migration:-

There are two main forms of return migration: voluntary return and forced return. Data on forced return are usually collected and collated by national and international statistical offices, border protection and immigration law enforcement agencies.

### What is a forced return?



In a global context, forced return is a broader term that includes any action having the effect of returning the individual to a State,including expulsion, removal, extradition, rejection at the frontier, extra-territorial interception and physical return without the will and consent of the person being removed.

When you are raided by security forces in the night, blindfolded, taken into detention and taken on a plane the next day and deported to your country of birth/nationality, then you are forced to return home. Most irregular migrants face this situation. In 2021, authorities of the United Arab Emirates raided, rounded up, detained and deported scores of African labour migrants without their passports.

According to the IOM, forced return is described as “the returning an individual against his or her country of origin, to a third country that agrees to receive the person, carried out on the basis of an administrative or judicial act or decision”. Forced return also include deportation. In most cases, forced deportation and removal is carried out in inhumane conditions affecting irregular migrants, migrant workers and failed asylum seekers.

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## What is a voluntary return?



Voluntary return, also known as “administrative voluntary departure,” is a procedure whereby non-citizens are permitted to voluntarily depart from their host country to go back to their countries of origin or of birth at their own expense rather than undergoing formal removal proceedings. As much as possible, it is carried out in bearable conditions. However, for ease of comprehension, voluntary return literally means making the decision to return according to one's own free will or independently. It can be described as a freely chosen return.

Spontaneous return is “the voluntary, independent return of a migrant or a group of migrants to their country of origin, usually without the support of States or other international or national assistance” (IOM Glossary on Migration, 2019).

There are essential elements that must be present to say that a return is voluntary. For instance, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants: “Reintegration is possible only if the return has been truly voluntary, informed, free of coercion and with consideration of sufficient and valid alternatives to regularize a stay or to grant access to citizenship, and where the return has not been the only way out of exploitation and abuse in the destination country (United Nations, 2018, p. 12). Also, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) handbook on voluntary repatriation

states that for a return to be voluntary, a refugee must have the legal right to remain in the host country, must be free from detention, and must have their rights respected. Similarly, the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE, 2003) has clarified that voluntary return can only be exercised by those with a legal basis for remaining in the host country.

## Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR)



Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) refers to assistance provided to migrants in their return and reintegration exercise. The IOM utilised the AVRR mainly for rejected asylum-seekers and those in irregular status, including those who have undertaken dangerous and desperate migration journeys and are stranded in transit. For example, Nigerian migrants trapped in Libya and those freed from traffickers' hold and those released from detention centres have been returned home through AVRR actions. Those who failed asylum application processes, especially in Europe, have also benefitted from Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) actions.

The IOM defines AVRR programmes as administrative, logistical or financial support, including reintegration assistance, to migrants unable or unwilling to remain in the host country or country of transit and who decide to return to their country of origin” (IOM, 2019, pp. 10–11).



## Can refugees return?



Whilst this information guide is not focused on refugees, it is imperative to say that refugees can also return. Once the reasons for being displaced or having fled have disappeared and it is once more safe to live in their countries, refugees are free to go back to their countries of origin. The so-called returnees are still people of concern to the UNHCR and are, as such, under their legal protection.

## Reintegration



Whilst there are diverse and varied definitions of reintegration, for the purpose of this information guide, we shall refer to the definition provided by the Return Migration and Development Platform of the

European University Institute as the “process through which a return migrant participates in the social, cultural, economic and political life of the country of origin” (Cassarino, 2014b, p. 184).

It is also useful to note that reintegration cannot be easily measured compared to return migration.

Reintegration happens at different levels and dimensions. It can be observed at several levels - individual, family, community, economy, and society as a whole. The end of the reintegration process or the “end state”, as the UNHCR (2004, P.39) puts it, is when the universal enjoyment of full political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights” by the returning migrants in their country of birth, origin or naturalization occurs.

## Effective Return and Reintegration



Effective return by the migrant or returning migrant worker means he or she returns home safe and in a dignified manner. From the viewpoint of a country of origin, effective return means that their migrant workers return in a safe and dignified manner after achieving their migration objectives overseas.

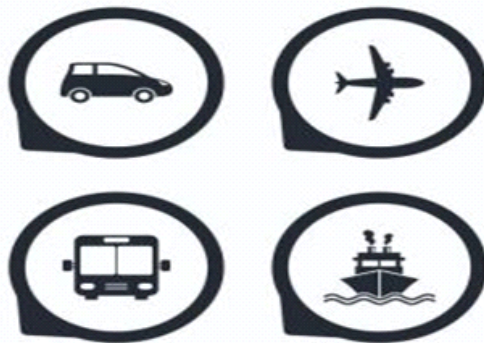
Effective reintegration means the successful reintegration of returning migrants or migrant workers into their families, communities, the economy, and society.

Effective return and reintegration may require the following:

- Embassies and relevant national agencies of returnee citizens assist with relevant travelling documents, especially for persons who have misplaced their travelling documents



Countries of origin collaborate with countries of destination to ensure the safe and dignified return of their citizens, including assistance with means of transportation in cases where such need is necessary, especially for the indigent, failed asylum seekers, irregular migrants and trafficked returnees



- The country of origin and home communities provide adequate reception services to returning migrant workers.
- Labour attachés and consular missions in the country of destination provide advice on and facilitate the safe and dignified return of migrant workers.

- Social Integration: The country of origin engenders a process that allows the returning migrants and migrant workers to be incorporated fully back into the society. This would ensure that they are able to build a good social network by forging a connection with others in the society that allows them to thrive.

- Discrimination and victimization: Host communities must ensure that returnees are not subjected to discrimination or hate of any kind that may cause psychological or physiological harm to them. The rights of migrants and migrant workers irrespective of factors such as: sex, language, religion, ethnicity, political affiliation, nationality, migration status, disability, and age must be protected. Also, regardless of whether they have been smuggled or trafficked, home countries must not only refrain from discriminating, but should also take proactive steps to forestall discrimination against migrants and migrant workers by private and state actors.

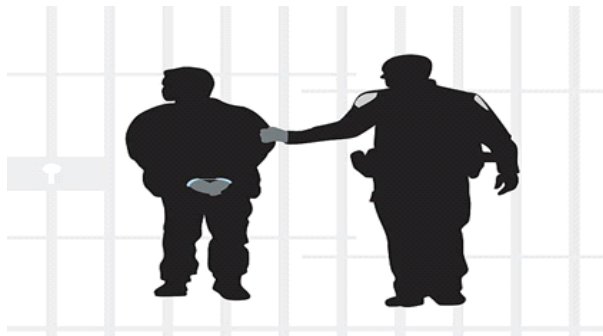
- Security and safety: There should be an effective framework that protects returnees from violence and also takes care of the following:

- ❖ Address root causes of violence in migration processes and responses.
- ❖ Address root causes of violence in transit and destination countries.
- ❖ Strengthen legislation to combat violence against migrants.
- ❖ Investigate and prosecute violence against migrants.
- ❖ Assist migrant victims of violence.
- ❖ Provide access to justice.
- ❖ Provide restitution and compensation.
- ❖ Sentence and rehabilitate perpetrators.





- Returning migrant workers register with the central and local authorities upon their return to facilitate access to support services as well as to contribute their skills and resources to the community and to society as needed.



- Employers facilitate the return journey on the expiry of migrant workers' employment in accordance with the employment contract and the laws and regulations of the country of destination.

## Are there benefits for returning?

Returning home should be a thing of dignity and pride for returnee migrants and migrant workers, especially when it is done voluntarily. Individual migrants benefit from return migration, as they tend to do better when they return. Home countries benefit from return migration when it leads to higher investment and productivity by returnees.

Returnee migrants and migrant workers bring needed capital, ideas, skills and new work ethics that are needed to improve the investment and labour market climates of their countries of origin. It has also been seen that returnee migrants and migrants workers contribute to increased political participation, integrity and accountability, which enhance the quality of governance and the consolidation of participatory democracy.

At the community level, returnee migrants, especially those with long years of stay abroad, are considered as respected opinion-builders and influencers given their experiences and considerable knowledge. Community infrastructure development has also been improved because of the contributions of returnee migrants who make financial contributions and rally other members of the community to make contributions to the development of shared and communal infrastructures.

They sometimes use their agencies to get the government to be more responsive to the needs and yearnings of the people. Yes, returnee migrants and migrant workers are change agents and so it is fulfilling for them and seen as a thing of pride to return home and make tangible contributions to the growth of their communities.

For young persons forced to return home, notably those who undertook desperate and dangerous



journeys in the bid to escape socio-economic hardships at home, the possibilities of getting state assistance and community support to reintegrate make returning less frustrating, traumatic and hard.

These persons must not consider themselves as failures and are encouraged to stay hopeful and be ready to engage in activities that will advance their welfare and wellbeing. The trade unions stand ready and willing to lend and mobilise the necessary support for ensuring comfortable and dignified return and reintegration. Objectives

- ❖ Users of the guide, especially migrants and migrant workers, will learn useful pieces of information, understand them and know how to safely and successfully undertake return and reintegration.
- ❖ The needs of returnee migrants and migrant workers will be better understood and how to access them.
- ❖ Importantly, potential returnees will know how to prepare and engage in the return and reintegration processes.

## HOW CAN A MIGRANT OR LABOUR MIGRANT UNDERTAKE COMFORTABLE AND DIGNIFIED RETURN AND REINTEGRATION?

### *Objectives*

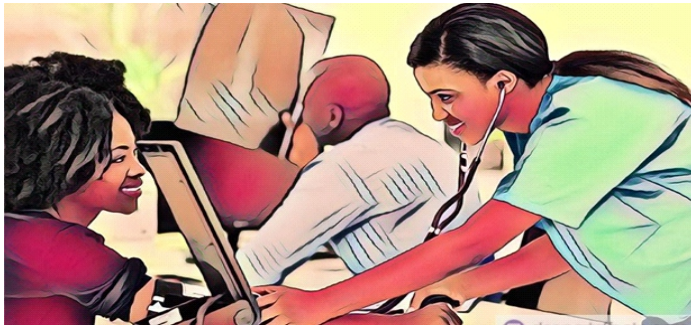
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- ❖ Importantly, potential returnees will know how to prepare and engage in the return and reintegration processes.

Planning to return home is an excellent and commendable decision by a migrant or a migrant worker. In this case, it is taken that the person wants to return home voluntarily and not forced. It is also important to note and state clearly that returning migrants and migrant workers have needs in their return and reintegration process.

Some migrants are forced returnees, such as workers in irregular status deported from destination countries. There are also victims of fraud, trafficking, abuse, and exploitation who did not manage to complete their migration objectives and who may need special assistance in integrating.

Some of these needs include –

- Medical and psychological support – The Nigeria Red Cross and other assigned organisations can help provide this support for you or direct you to where such support services are readily available.



- Shelter support, especially for those who will need some time upon return to settle in a place and prepare for reunion with their families and also for those without or who cannot easily retrace their families – the relevant government agencies should and will help you. The Ministry of Labour and Employment, IOM and GIZ can also support temporal shelter provisions.



- Information access and reliable sources on how and where to access support and assistance (this information guide also attends to this need).
- Economic need – possibilities for economic engagement and means of income generation.





- Legal services, especially for persons forcefully returned and abused in the process, we urge you to approach the relevant Nigerian agencies, including the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment, GIZ, Legal Aid Council, Human Right Commissions offices and that of the Nigeria Labour Congress in States for possible assistance.



To meet these needs, the trade unions are advocating for and pointing returnee migrants and migrant workers to some of these support and assistance services -

- Psychosocial support;



- Intensive awareness campaigns through diverse media and NGOs;
- Economic empowerment of returnees, through training in entrepreneurship



- Financial literacy, vocational skills, and business development services;
- Placement in wage employment through private sector partnerships;
- Developing standardized training modules with local vocational training institutes for delivery of training;
- Access to finance through revolving funds; and
- Building the capacity of national providers for reintegration.



However, for persons wishing to voluntarily return home, it is advised that you may need to think about several factors before returning. Some of the factors are highlighted here-

- Willingness and readiness to return are central considerations in return and reintegration. Therefore, you should start considering plans for reintegration even before leaving your country of origin to be successful or maximize gains while working abroad.



Understanding the stages and processes involved in the return and reintegration process - The different stages of the reintegration process require different actions. This means that one would go through different phases of reintegration and require additional support throughout the reintegration process. If you are in doubt and not clear on how to commence the process, seek the assistance of NGOs in your area or visit the ILO and other organisations such as the IOM and UNHCR.

#### Quick tips to note!

To facilitate a smooth return, readmission and reintegration process, it is the responsibility of the Nigeria Government to ensure;

You return safely

Your aspirations and concerns are addressed

Your rights as returning migrants are protected

You have access to relevant information about conditions back home

You are provided with continuous assistance and counselling before and after return

You have access to employment, housing, health and education opportunities when you return

Your skills and qualifications are valued and utilized.



Useful to join support organizations such as the trade unions - While abroad, you have the right to join organisations that could assist in preparing for your eventual return. Joining a trade union in the country of destination while maintaining ties with your union in your home country can help protect your rights, provide a successful migration experience, and allow for a coordinated reintegration process any time, if and when you choose to return to your home country. For migrants, they are advised to identify and contact supporting Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in their host countries and also home countries who can support their return and reintegration efforts.



Own savings and funds to support self - You can also implement a plan to manage your savings even before getting back home through information regarding investments, enterprises, and employment possibilities available to migrants and migrant workers. Where no savings and personal funds exist, migrants and migrant workers should not be deterred. This guide provides information on where "soft" capital can be sourced and accessed.



Be familiar with existing return, readmission and reintegration plan -A comprehensive reintegration plan is a service the government must render to citizens who are considering and or returning to their home countries.



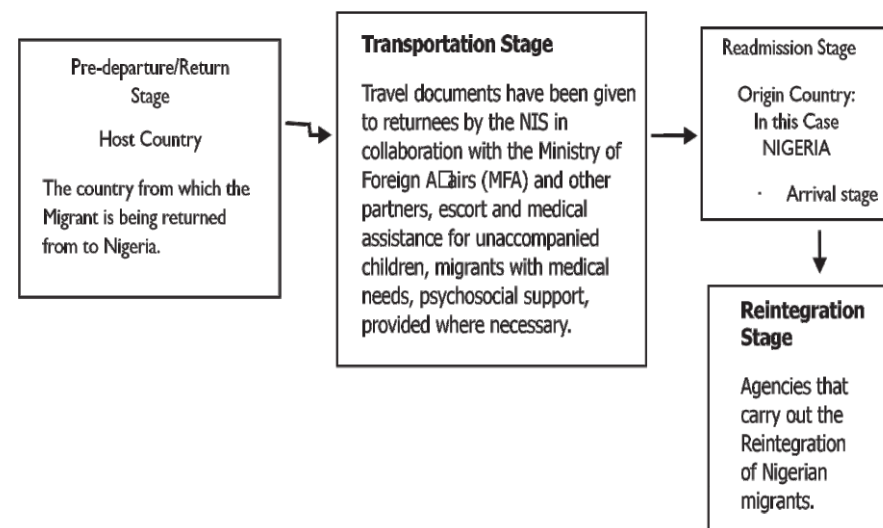
#### CURRENT GOVERNMENT SUPPORT SERVICES FOR ALL RETURNING MIGRANT WORKERS USING THE RETURN, READMISSION AND REINTEGRATION (RRR) MODULE

##### Objectives

- ❖ A simple description of the roles of governments and their agencies in the processes for returning citizen(s).
- ❖ A simple and easy-to-understand stages of the actual return and reintegration processes are outlined.
- ❖ Medical, social and economic assistances that are necessary and needed are outlined and the agencies responsible for providing them are indicated.

To ensure effective and successful return, readmission and reintegration to their countries of origin, governments and their various and relevant agencies, as a mark of being responsible to their citizens, are responsible for assisting these migrants and migrant workers in these processes. To undertake these processes, most governments have Return, Readmission and Reintegration (RRR) module for advancing the tasks contained in return, readmission and reintegration processes.

The RRR module is contained in the standard operating procedure (SOP) for managing the process of return and readmission and reintegration modules in Nigeria. The chart below is a simple diagram explaining the RRR used in Nigeria.



Psychosocial support and vulnerability assessment: Through the Nigeria Embassy in the host country of the intending returnee, one can apply for the RRR. The Nigeria Embassy and the NIS in partnership with IOM will organize a psychosocial session for such a fellow, which is at no cost to the intending returnee.

The counseling session aims to:

- i. Inform the potential and intending returnee on the RRR options and process.
- ii. Register such a person on the RRR application and collect information (biodata and profile).
- iii. Assess the potential needs and vulnerabilities, if any, of such an intending returnee.
- iv. Assist the intending returnee in making an informed decision.

- v. Assist with issuing travel documents from consular authorities for migrants who lack one.
- vi. Refer such a person for medical assistance, basic needs, temporary shelter or protection considerations, as relevant.
- vii. The MFA also should inform NCFRMI, who will coordinate with the relevant agencies.

#### 1) Reception at the airport or bus station

For all cases of returns, upon your arrival at the airport in Nigeria, you can request services and support from officials of NCFRMI, NIS, MFA, FMOH, and NAPTIP.

Officials of the NIS and NCFRMI will be on standby to facilitate smooth border checks and luggage collection and provide you with initial information on the reintegration process,

#### 3) Pocket Money and Onward Transportation

When and where applicable, NCFRMI may provide pocket money upon return. In addition, if required, onward transportation until final destination (and overnight accommodation) will be arranged by NEMA and NCFRMI in Nigeria or by international partner(s) such as the IOM and UNHCR and CSOs for returning migrants and migrant workers, especially those in dire and vulnerable situations.

#### 4} Reintegration Assistance to a returning migrant or migrant worker

Upon return, you are entitled to reintegration assistance. Some of these assistances include -

- 1. Psychosocial support,
- 2. Information and referral services,
- 3. Training to develop and sharpen employability skills
- 4. Employment opportunities (e.g. information on the job market,

employment agencies, youth employment programmes, specialized CSOs) and, where feasible, job placement assistance, internship etc.



#### Informed consent

It is important to note that before receiving assistance or accessing services, you should consider possible risks and benefits freely. Consent can be given in whole or in part, and accessing one service should not be contingent on consent to others.

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You are at liberty to demand, accept and utilise any of the benefits on offer.

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- 1. Funding and support mechanisms available for entrepreneurs (e.g. credit and microfinance institutions, specific support programmes for micro/small businesses, especially for returning diaspora.
- 2. Support services available for vulnerable migrants (e.g. healthcare services, shelters, family tracing)

#### 5) Training and General Support (Business Skills Training)

You can get Information through the NCFRMI on its partner(s) providing training and building the returnees' capacity to start micro-businesses as a strategy for promoting the sustainability of return migration and reducing vulnerabilities to irregular re-migration.



You may be referred to the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment (FMLE) for possible job placements if interested in paid employment. The FMLE can also refer you to a technical and vocational education and training centre, should you indicate interest.

NCFRMI or its partner(s) inform(s) the returnees of the reintegration packages and processes accordingly and, if they are interested, register(s) them.



## ROLES OF TRADE UNIONS IN RETURN AND REINTERGRATION

### Objectives

- ❖ A simple presentation of what the trade unions are and their relevance.
- ❖ How migrant workers can join and be active in the trade unions and access their

### What is a trade union?

Trade Unions are membership-based organizations that represent their members, protect their rights and interests, and provide services and benefits to their members. Trade union activities are based on collective power and solidarity, whose engagements range from the workplace to the industry and

society. It is the voice of the working people and a facilitator of integration.

What do trade unions do?

Aside from the statutory roles trade unions play in enhancing labour migration processes and governance, as a returning migrant worker, you can access support and information from the Nigeria Labour Congress through the National Desk Officer. The Desk officer will provide you with the necessary information that will link you directly with government MDAs and INGOs that engage in return, readmission and reintegration issues/themes.

Further, the NLC will support you to settle in successfully as you scout for gainful employment. Once you find gainful employment, you should join the trade union to benefit from the membership privileges of being a union member. Some of the critical roles and benefits of the trade unions are stated below:

- Trade unions defend the interests (social, economic, political, cultural and environmental) of their members.



- Trade unions provide industrial practice education to their members about their rights and provide information and advice about work-related issues.





- Trade unions make members with a range of services, including research, training, professional development, insurance, financial services and legal counselling.
- Trade unions negotiate or bargain on behalf of workers with employers to get better pay and working conditions for members.



- Trade unions campaign on important issues such as low pay, discrimination at the workplace, healthy workplaces, speaking up for vulnerable groups such as women, migrants, people living with disabilities, young workers and precarious work for the benefit of their members.



## Why Join a Trade Union?

The trade Union will support you if you have a grievance or a problem at work.



- Trade unions through collective agreements will ensure you benefit from higher wages, social security, decent jobs and social protection.
- You will benefit from additional membership services of the union, such as insurance.



- You have more opportunities to train and improve your vocational and professional qualifications.
- You are safer and more secure in a union. Unionized workplaces have better health and safety practices and fewer accidents.
- You will be treated fairly at work. Unions protect members from unfair and discriminatory practices in workplaces.
- You will experience a sense of belonging to a group that values and cares for you. People who have a sense of belonging have better physical and mental health, have a greater capacity to manage stress, and live happier lives.



- You have the opportunity to support campaigns that promote a more just and equitable society.



### How do you join a trade union?

Every worker, including migrant workers, has the right to join and belong to a trade union organisation. The trade unions desire to have workers belong to the trade unions. This is because workers, when they are organised and belong to a trade union organisation, are better placed to demand and secure their human and labour rights.

As it is with return, you must make up your mind to join the trade union and to be active in its activities.

Trade unions are present in workplaces, in sectors and at the national, continental and international levels. You join the trade unions from the enterprise/workplace level. If your workplace is unionized, you can

approach the shop steward to indicate your interest. Where no trade union exists, you can initiate the process of forming one and affiliating it to the relevant sectoral trade unions. In Nigeria, the affiliates of the Nigeria Labour Congress are sectoral trade unions. You can contact the NLC ([www.nlc.org.ng](http://www.nlc.org.ng)) or any of its affiliates in Nigeria to find out which union is relevant to you and how you can join one.

Health professional associations and non-government organizations are possible sources of information on return and reintegration options for migrant health workers. In addition, a number of these organizations also provide direct assistance to returning migrants and their families, such as counselling, livelihood support and various training programs. The directory below contains links to professional associations and non-governmental organizations to contact for more information and assistance.





## Conclusion

Return, readmission, and reintegration start from the point of pre-departure for labour migration.

For migrants, these processes sometimes are not planned before departure, as most of them leave without much certainty of the life and future that await them when they set out in stark comparison to their migrant workers' counterparts. However, for these categories of returnees and others, their families and governments of recipient and host (departing from countries), all stakeholders are committed to an orderly, humane and fair return and reintegration. To achieve these will require, among other things, collective actions and the design, deployment and enforcement. It will also require genuine efforts to make migration a voluntary and not a forced process by addressing socio-economic push/forced factors.

For those who have made the decision to return, knowing how to navigate the process relating to return and reintegration successfully is key. Reliable, ready and easy-to-access-and-understand pieces of information are critical. The Nigerian organised labour under the umbrella of the Nigeria Labour Congress is willing and available to offer useful information to the intending returnees. Indeed, all workers, including migrant workers, deserve the support and solidarity that the trade unions can offer.



## Appendix

IMPORTANT sources and links to consult for help, assistance and support in Nigeria

List of places and organisations to access assistance and support –

1. Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) Headquarters - Plot 829/821, Labour House, Central Business District, Abuja. Tel - +234-9-6276042, Fax: +234-9-6274342
2. Nigeria Labour Congress (Lagos Office) - 29, Olajuwon Street, Off Ojulegba Road. P.O. Box 620, Yaba, Lagos. Tel. - 234-1-7743988, +234-1-5840288. Email: [gsec@nlcng.org](mailto:gsec@nlcng.org)
3. Nigeria Red Cross Society - Plot 589, T.O.S. Benson Crescent, Utako District, Abuja. Phone Number (TOLL FREE) (+234) 803 1 2 3 0 4 3 0 (+234) 809 993 7357. Email - [admin@redcrossnigeria.org](mailto:admin@redcrossnigeria.org)
4. Ministry of Foreign Affairs - No 1, Federal secretariat, Central Business District, Abuja, Nigeria. Tel. 00234 84 666 876, 00234 (0)9 5230 828, 00234 (0)9 5230 185-9. Email: [info@mfa.gov.ng](mailto:info@mfa.gov.ng)
5. Federal Ministry for Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development  
– Phase I, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Federal Secretariat Complex, Shehu Shagari Way, Central Area, Abuja, Nigeria. Tel/SOS Lines - (234) 08024175445, 08028216336, 080131638164. Email: [info@fmhds.gov.ng](mailto:info@fmhds.gov.ng).
6. National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons – No. 2028 Dalaba Street, Wuse Zone 5, Federal Capital Territory, Abuja – Nigeria. Tel – (Toll Free) 002340000 203. Email: [info@naptip.gov.ng](mailto:info@naptip.gov.ng)
7. National Emergency Management Agency -

Some useful links for further consultation

1. NIGERIA LABOUR CONGRESS AFFILIATES  
<http://www.nlcng.org/affiliates-contacts/>
2. DIRECTORY OF NIGERIAN FOREIGN MISSIONS <https://nigeriaunmission.org/directory-of-nigerian-foreign-missions/>
3. PROFESSIONAL BODIES/ASSOCIATIONS IN NIGERIA.  
<https://nairametrics.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/A-LIST-OF-PROFESSIONAL-BODIES.pdf>
4. MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (M.F.A.)  
<https://foreignaffairs.gov.ng/>
5. FEDERAL MINISTRY OF JUSTICE (FMoJ)  
<https://www.facebook.com/FedMinOfJusticeNG>
6. FEDERAL MINISTRY FOR HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS, DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (FMHDS) <https://www.fmhds.gov.ng>
7. FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (FME) <https://education.gov.ng/>
8. FEDERAL MINISTRY OF WOMEN AFFAIRS (FMWA)  
<https://www.womenaffairs.gov.ng/?fbclid=IwAR0RkAnRp2gcEQMG99wIV6ATesklXgGPwjs5ojxYHydJbimY38WCz40akg>
9. FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH (FMoH)  
<https://www.health.gov.ng/>
10. FEDERAL MINISTRY OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT (FMLE) <https://labour.gov.ng/>
11. NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR REFUGEES, MIGRANTS AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

- (NCFRMI) [https://ncfrmi.gov.ng/?fbclid=IwAR3FFaGsoi9L\\_sE0WgNbZJNlgLeXKKImOlviViO-lgBtT8skfABJSvevs90](https://ncfrmi.gov.ng/?fbclid=IwAR3FFaGsoi9L_sE0WgNbZJNlgLeXKKImOlviViO-lgBtT8skfABJSvevs90)
12. OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER (ONSA) <https://statehouse.gov.ng/presidency>
  13. NIGERIA IMMIGRATION SERVICE (NIS.) <https://immigration.gov.ng/>
  14. NATIONAL AGENCY FOR THE PROHIBITION OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS (NAPTIP)  
<https://www.naptip.gov.ng/>
  15. NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (NEMA) <https://nema.gov.ng/>
  16. SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES DEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF NIGERIA (SMEDAN) <https://smedan.gov.ng/>
  17. CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION (C.A.C.)  
<https://www.cac.gov.ng/>
  18. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION (I.O.M.) <https://www.iom.int/>
  19. INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS  
<https://internationalpartners.org/>
  20. MIGRANTS RESOURCE CENTRE LAGOS  
<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064317686822>
  21. NATIONAL ELECTRONIC LABOUR CENTER (NELEX)  
[https://www.facebook.com/NelexLagos/?\\_rdc=1&\\_rdr](https://www.facebook.com/NelexLagos/?_rdc=1&_rdr)
  22. NIGERIAN-GERMAN CENTRE FOR JOBS, MIGRATION AND REINTEGRATION  
<https://www.startfinder.de/en/advisory-centre/nigeria>
  23. NIGERIANS IN DIASPORA COMMISSION (NiDCOM)  
<https://nidcom.gov.ng/>

24. CIVIL SOCIETY LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY CENTRE(CISLAC)  
<https://www.cislac.org/>
25. WOMEN CONSORTIUM OF NIGERIA(WOCON).  
<https://www.womenconsortiumofnigeria.org/>
26. NIGERIANS IN DIASPORA COMMISSION  
Phone: +234 (0) 817 438 3962  
Email: admin@nidcom.gov.ng  
Website: nidcom.gov.ng

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