



REGIONAL SUPPORT OFFICE
THE BALI PROCESS

Concept Note

Effective Practices on International Migration and Refugee Protection

Thematic Brief on “Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration”

In 2012, the Bali Process Ad-Hoc Group suggested that the Regional Support Office (RSO) of the Bali Process activity could include “the development of best practice models on refugee protection, victims of trafficking in persons protection; and international migration.”¹ Further to this direction, the RSO with interested Bali Process Members will develop a series of thematic briefs on *Effective Practices on International Migration and Refugee Protection* on migration management that require comprehensive responses that also address protection and humanitarian needs.

The overall objectives of the brief is to provide Bali Process Members with a better understanding of existing tools they can use to address key challenges of irregular migration in the Asia-Pacific region in a comprehensive way, and to increase regional cooperation and develop more harmonized response to people smuggling, trafficking in persons and related transnational crime.

As part of this initiative, IOM with the support of an academic expert is currently developing a thematic brief on “**Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR)**.” The Brief will consist of three components:

- a) an eight-page summary that provides an overview on the issues under consideration, key principles and signposts for the achievement of effective practice;
- b) a thirty page document with analysis, checklists and summary of available resources;
- c) online resources with links to identified projects and available material corresponding to the theme of each brief.

IOM has accumulated extensive experience in resettling and returning Third Country Nationals (TCNs) and other migrant populations. Since its establishment in 1951, IOM has been increasingly adapting its services to the needs of the returning migrants and the governments of the countries of origin, transit and destination and expanding its services to more countries, including in the Asia-Pacific region.

The RSO has promoted return in safety and dignity preferably on a voluntary basis for persons found not to be in need of protection, including through the **Voluntary Return Support and Reintegration Assistance Project** which is a foundation project of the RSO. The objective of this project, implemented by IOM, is to provide a regional support mechanism to assist the voluntary, safe and dignified return of irregular migrants, and support participation of individual or groups located at the time of their application in one of the Bali Process Member States and for whom no other mechanism exists to facilitate their voluntary return.

¹ See Establishment of a Regional Support Office Bali Process Ad Hoc Group Working Group Paper, April 2012, p.2.

The planned thematic brief on AVRR will build on the outcomes of the “**Capacity Building Workshop on Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration for Bali Process Member States**” that took place from 15-17 December, 2014 in Bangkok, Thailand. The meeting was jointly hosted by IOM and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and brought together officials from 16 Bali Process member states who are involved with return and reintegration programs.

The proposed brief will benefit Bali Process members by:

- Providing a comprehensive overview of best practices and programmes to assist orderly and humane return and reintegration of migrants who are unable or unwilling to remain in host countries and wish to return voluntarily to their countries of origin;
- Providing guideline on legal frameworks, both procedural and substantive, on returning and reintegrating of victims of trafficking;
- Providing examples of the effective cooperation and participation of a broad range of actors, including the migrants, civil society and the governments in both host countries and countries of origin;
- Identifying and consolidating effective practices from within and beyond the region and discuss different options how to address challenges related to assisting irregular and stranded migrant to return home and providing social-economic basis for successful reintegration into society;
- Develop a user-friendly checklist for policy makers and practitioners based on identified practices and a review of international legal obligations; and
- Strengthening members’ ability to effectively respond to challenges of irregular migration, specifically vulnerable migrants, including unaccompanied and separated children, victims of trafficking and related issues, such as health emergencies.

In order to make best use of existing expertise of Bali Process members and to create synergies with ongoing regional and national initiatives on AVRR, the RSO will organize an **expert workshop on 15 May, 2015** to give interested Bali Process members an opportunity to review a draft version of the brief and provide inputs.