

PROJECT SUMMARY

Georgia: Community revitalization pilot

In 2019, IOM's pilot assessment revealed that emigration and remittance-dependency are widely practiced as sole means of livelihood among households in Georgia. In the same year alone, over 20,000 Georgian citizens applied for asylum in the European Union, a common strategy to secure longer period for stay (and work) abroad in absence of a work permit. To maintain their visa-free relationship under such pressure, the EU and the Georgian government increased efforts to facilitate the return of i Georgian irregular migrants from the EU. Thousands of Georgians have thus been returning (voluntarily or not) to their communities of origin – rural and urban, where they often encounter conditions unsupportive of sustainable reintegration, and an absence of opportunities for local income generation. While IOM assists hundreds each year with reintegration assistance, majority are ineligible, remaining vulnerable to re-migration pressures. Together with local non-migrant population they struggle with lack of services, chronic underemployment and food insecurity manifested through high levels of food rationing.

In the spring of 2020, the situation has been exacerbated suddenly with the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic in Europe. In the first four weeks of the COVID-19 crisis in Georgia, at least 7600 Georgian migrants are known to have suddenly resorted to an unplanned return to their country of origin, unable to continue working and supporting their own livelihood abroad, or to send financial support to their families in Georgia. Upon return, facilitated via repatriation flights by the Government of Georgia, these migrants and their households are left without a means for livelihood, at risk of acute poverty, in the context of a global and local market downfall.

In line with IOM's AVRR framework, the Integrated Approach to Reintegration, the IOM Handbook on Reintegration, this project will select 10 municipalities experiencing high returns (both facilitated by IOM prior to COVID-19 and those triggered by the pandemic) in rural Imereti and Kakheti and in urban Tbilisi to pilot a three-fold strategy aiming to contribute to sustainable reintegration of all returning migrants and whole-of-community revitalization, aiming to (1) support local population in accessing support in individual and community efforts at establishment of sustainable livelihood and revitalization initiatives, including psychosocial assistance, (2) ensure that returnees in pilot municipalities achieve higher levels of sustainable reintegration, and (3) engage pilot communities in revitalization initiatives and generate new opportunities for sustainable livelihoods.

Activities will include (1) mapping of service accessibility and gaps, development of complementary services and referral package, and establishment of service hubs in pilot communities; (2) piloting of 5 collective or community reintegration projects in pilot municipalities with special focus on vulnerable persons including deportees, elderly women, female-headed households and youth, and (3) participative identification of community revitalization priorities and realization of 5 such initiatives. The pilot interventions will be evaluated thoroughly to provide operational recommendations for future reintegration and revitalization programming in mobility-dependent communities in rural and urban Georgia and in comparable contexts of return.

The total value of the project amounts to \$300,000, with a duration of 2 years.
Project structure is attached.

Georgia: Community Revitalization Pilot		
Objective: contribute to sustainable reintegration of returning migrants and whole-of-community revitalization in pilot municipalities		
Outcome 1. Local population access support in individual and community efforts at establishment of sustainable livelihood and revitalization initiatives, including psychosocial assistance	Outcome 2. Returnees achieve higher levels of sustainable reintegration in municipalities of origin	Outcome 3. Vulnerable communities engage in revitalization and generate new opportunities for sustainable livelihood
Output 1.1. Service hubs established and running in pilot municipalities	Output 2.1. Returnees run collective/community reintegration initiatives in pilot municipalities	Output 3.1. Pilot communities identify revitalization initiatives with potential for employment and livelihood generation
1.1.1. Establish 1 service hub in each pilot municipality with regular online/offline consultation hours 1.1.2. Train service staff (including 1 community member and min 1 IOM staff from regional field office) in delivering referrals, counselling services online/offline 1.1.3. Online portal facilitates access to quality online referral and counselling services	2.1.1.: Identify vulnerable returnees and community members in pilot municipalities in need of additional support, including deportees, women, women of FHH , and youth (criteria: reintegration sustainability scoring, interest, skills, previous support received) 2.1.2.: Offer support to potential beneficiaries interested in engaging in collective or community initiatives 2.1.3.: Pilot the development of 5 collective or community initiatives, including with skills training, equipment purchase, and business management coaching	3.1.1.: Organize community consultations in 5 target communities to identify top priorities of revitalization (livelihood or infrastructure), assessing viability/potential of projects previously identified for investment 3.1.2.: Support further development of ideas with high employment/revitalization potential (2 per community) 3.1.3. Organize community consultation to evaluate process and refer to other existing opportunities for support, with participation from local and regional government
Output 1.2. Up-to-date resources mapped		Output 3.2. Pilot revitalization initiatives implemented 3.2.1.: Select a winning pitch in each community (criteria: feasibility, cost, potential) .2.2.: Support the further development of winning revitalization initiative in each community 3.2.3.: Support and monitor implementation of an initiative in each pilot community 3.2.4. Evaluate revitalization effect of projects
1.2.1.: Conduct baseline mapping of national and local referral network, livelihood opportunities, service accessibility - consultancy & MRC staff 1.2.2.: Produce updated referral guides		
Output 1.3. Local population capacitated to access online resources		
1.3.1.: Develop remote (phone-in) internet literacy training tools and curriculum 1.3.2.: Deliver individual internet literacy training in pilot municipalities (remotely)		