

Sustainable Reintegration Knowledge Bites Series

Knowledge Bite #5 | October 2022

Types of Reintegration Assistance and Sustainable Reintegration Outcomes

Rationale of the Sustainable Reintegration Knowledge Bites Series

The Reintegration Sustainability Survey (RSS) was developed in 2017 with the aim of measuring reintegration sustainability. Designed to be easily deployed in IOM's reintegration programming, the RSS and related scoring system generate a composite reintegration score and three-dimensional scores measuring economic, social and psychosocial reintegration.

The Sustainable Reintegration Knowledge Bites Series aims to present findings pertaining to sustainable reintegration outcomes emerging from analyses based on RSS data and other monitoring and evaluation (M&E) data centrally available on the IOM's institutional case management system. This series is designed to bring such findings to the attention of reintegration practitioners and policymakers worldwide, as well as to inform and disseminate good practices, lessons learned and recommendations. The data presented in the series has been collected in the framework of the [EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration](#) and other [EU-IOM Actions](#) supporting migrant protection and sustainable reintegration.

Specifically, this series of Knowledge Bites attempts to: (i) empirically explain cross-country, cross-regional and cross-programme patterns on sustainable reintegration outcomes, (ii) assess the effectiveness of reintegration assistance in terms of achieving reintegration sustainability, (iii) determine which type(s) of reintegration support measures have proven to be the most impactful on each of the three dimensions of reintegration – economic, social and psychosocial, and (iv) investigate which are the external/structural factors affecting sustainable reintegration outcomes.

EU-IOM Knowledge Management Hub

The development and production of this series is supported by the EU-IOM Knowledge Management Hub (KMH), which was established in September 2017 under the Pilot Action on Voluntary Return and Sustainable, Community-based Reintegration, funded by the European Union. The KMH aims to strengthen learning across return and reintegration programmes, and support the harmonization of approaches, processes and tools under the EU-IOM Actions addressing migrant protection and sustainable reintegration in Africa and Asia and beyond.



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SUMMARY

This fifth Knowledge Bite aims to explore returnees' satisfaction with different types of reintegration assistance as well as whether there is a statistically significant relationship – positive or negative – between reintegration assistance received at different levels and respondents' individual reintegration outcomes. The analysis is based on statistical models that use the levels of reintegration assistance (individual, collective, community) and specific reintegration activities (such as micro-business or psychosocial assistance) that returnees receive as variables to explain variations in their reintegration outcomes in the three dimensions (economic, social and psychosocial) and overall. The analysis controls for the effect of other factors, such as the respondents' demographic profiles and countries of origin.

One of the key findings of the statistical analysis is that **receiving collective reintegration assistance has a positive effect on returnees' overall reintegration sustainability as well as on their economic reintegration sustainability**, that is, whether they have achieved economic self-sufficiency or not. Community reintegration assistance, on the other hand, is associated with less sustainable outcomes in the economic dimension and the returnees' overall reintegration sustainability. Finally, there was no statistically significant effect of individual assistance on returnees' reintegration sustainability in any of the three dimensions.

A further analysis of different reintegration activities that were provided at the individual, collective or community levels shows that – as in previous Knowledge Bites – **micro-business assistance proves to be the strongest factor for predicting more sustainable reintegration outcomes across the economic, social and psychosocial dimensions as well as for the overall reintegration sustainability**. However, there is no statistically significant difference in reintegration outcomes between respondents who received micro-business assistance at the individual level and those who received it at the collective level.



While not as strong as micro-business assistance, other reintegration activities also had an impact on returnees' reintegration sustainability. For example, financial services, including cash for work arrangements, have a statistically significant negative effect on the respondents' psychosocial reintegration sustainability. Training assistance, on the other hand, has a positive impact on reintegration outcomes, regardless of whether it was provided at the individual, collective or community levels.

Conversely, the effect of psychosocial assistance does vary by the level at which it was provided. Although the majority of psychosocial assistance in the dataset used for this analysis was provided at the collective level, those respondents who received individual assistance to reintegrate into their personal support networks achieved better psychosocial reintegration outcomes. This result indicates that **tailored and individualized psychosocial assistance may be more effective than collective activities in that regard.**

1. BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

1.1 Types of reintegration assistance

The provision of reintegration assistance is critical to support returning migrants in achieving more sustainable reintegration outcomes. Given the complex and multidimensional nature of reintegration, there is a wide range of reintegration activities that can be provided depending on the assessed individual needs and preferences of returnees.

IOM's Integrated Approach to Reintegration¹ classifies these reintegration activities according to three dimensions: *economic, social and psychosocial*. Activities in the **economic dimension** support returnees in achieving economic self-sufficiency by establishing a stable income. This includes assistance to set up a micro-business, skills trainings, financial services, and job placements. Reintegration assistance in the **social dimension** allows returnees to reach social stability within their communities, including access to housing, and public services such as education, justice, and health. Finally, activities in the **psychosocial dimension** address the emotional, mental, and psychological elements of reintegration, including the reinsertion into personal support networks, such as friends and family.

These activities can target **individual returnees** or small groups of returnees as well as communities to which migrants return. Assistance provided to individual returnees have the objective to address their specific needs and vulnerabilities, whereas **collective assistance** usually targets small groups of returnees who jointly participate in reintegration activities. This includes collective income generating activities, such as joint micro-businesses, or skills trainings in groups. Finally, initiatives at the **community level** respond to the needs of communities to which migrants return and can support both returnees and the host communities.

The EU-IOM Knowledge Management Hub (KMH) has already undertaken several analyses of monitoring data to explore the effectiveness of different types of reintegration assistance.² Nevertheless, there is still a lack of understanding of how activities at different levels – individual, community or collective - affect individual reintegration outcomes, especially in the case of initiatives that target entire communities.³

This report aims to fill this gap in existing research by shedding some light on how individual, collective, and community-level reintegration assistance are linked to individual reintegration outcomes of returnees.

¹ See IOM, [Reintegration Handbook](#), Module 1 (2019).

² See the previous publications of the EU-IOM Knowledge Management Hub's [Sustainable Reintegration Knowledge Bites Series](#): Knowledge Bite #1 – Introduction to the Series; Knowledge Bite#2 – Sustainable Reintegration Outcomes: Following Referrals for Reintegration Support; Knowledge Bite #3 – Insights from the Pilot Action on Voluntary Return and Sustainable, Community-Based Reintegration; Knowledge Bite #4 – Qualitative Study on Outwards Referrals.

³ Lucía Salgado et al., [Putting Migrant Reintegration Programmes to the Test – A Roadmap to a Monitoring System](#), Migration Policy Institute Europe (2022).



Types of Reintegration Assistance and Sustainable Reintegration Outcomes

As will be further explained in Section 2.1, the large majority of reintegration activities that has been provided to date within the framework of the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration and other EU-IOM Actions⁴ was aimed at the individual level. This paper is based on a granular analysis of reintegration monitoring data from IOM's central database⁵ and its results aim to inform reintegration programming by providing evidence on the effectiveness of different types of reintegration activities at the individual, collective or community levels.

1.2 Methodology

The main objective of the analysis presented in this Knowledge Bite is to assess how different types of reintegration assistance at the individual, collective, and community levels are linked with and affect returnees' reintegration outcomes in the economic, social and psychosocial dimensions as well as their overall reintegration sustainability. Although being the main focus of the analysis, the levels of assistance are not analysed in isolation in order to explain reintegration outcomes. Instead, they are complemented by variables on the specific reintegration activities that were provided to respondents. By taking this broader approach to analysing reintegration assistance, this paper will generate new evidence and lessons learned from data collected across different geographical regions covered by the EU-IOM Actions.

The analysis is divided into three parts. The first part (described under Section 2.1) starts with a descriptive analysis of the datasets, focusing on returnees' demographic characteristics, origin and host countries, and the types of reintegration activities they participated in. It also provides an overview of the satisfaction levels of returnees who participated in different reintegration assistance activities at the individual, collective, and community levels. The second part (Section 2.2) presents the results of inferential statistical analyses, including multivariate regression models,⁶ to examine how different reintegration activities at the three levels affect returnees' reintegration outcomes, keeping all other factors equal.⁷ Reintegration outcomes of returnees are represented through the Reintegration Sustainability Survey (RSS)⁸ scores in the economic, social, and psychosocial dimensions as well as the RSS composite score. The analysis thus serves to investigate the existence of systematic differences in average RSS scores of survey respondents who participated in different reintegration activities at different levels.

1.3 Data

The data used for this analysis was drawn from three different datasets that are centrally available through IOM Migrant Management Operational Systems Application (MiMOSA): the *Reintegration Module* dataset, the *Reintegration Programme Satisfaction Survey* dataset, and the RSS dataset.

The *Reintegration Module* dataset contains monitoring data from the EU-IOM Actions. It has a total of 186,291 observations on reintegration assistance provided to 92,271 individuals between 2017 and 2022. The data was collected by case managers in EU-IOM Actions countries and contains information on the types and levels of reintegration activities provided.

⁴ In line with the European Union external policy and migration priorities, IOM and the European Union have jointly developed the following programmes focusing on migrant protection, dignified voluntary return and sustainable reintegration: EU-IOM Joint Initiative on Migrant Protection and Reintegration in Sahel and Lake Chad, North Africa and Horn of Africa; Pilot Action on Voluntary Return and Sustainable, Community-Based Reintegration in Southern Africa; Improving Reintegration of Returnees in Afghanistan (RADA) and Sustainable Reintegration and Improved Migration Governance in Bangladesh (Prottasha).

⁵ IOM uses the central institutional case management system Migrant Management and Operational Systems Application (MiMOSA) to store different types of data relevant to its programming.

⁶ A multivariate regression analysis allows to examine how several independent variables are related to selected dependent variables. Based on the results it is possible to assess whether there is a correlation and linear relationship between these and to predict how the values of the dependent variable changes depending on the specific values an independent variable has.

⁷ This assumption allows to isolate the effect of one variable on another, by holding all other factors constant.

⁸ More detailed information on measuring sustainable reintegration information can be found on N. Nozarian and N. Majidi, "[Measuring sustainable reintegration](#)", Migration Policy Practice, IX(1): 30–39 (2019). This article provides the background of IOM's definition of sustainable reintegration, as well as detailed information on the standardization of the measurement of reintegration.



The *Reintegration Programme Satisfaction Survey* dataset covers 6,393 respondents who received reintegration assistance in 17 countries between 2017 and 2021. The survey captures returnees’ satisfaction with the reintegration assistance and programme and is administered by case managers or monitoring and evaluation officers shortly after the provision of reintegration assistance concludes.

Finally, the RSS dataset covers 6,339 respondents who received reintegration assistance in 17 countries of origin covered by the EU-IOM Actions between 2018 and 2022. The RSS questions take the form of self-assessments by returnees and measures their reintegration sustainability along the three dimensions (economic, social and psychosocial), in addition to a composite score. This survey can serve as a baseline assessment before reintegration assistance is provided, as a progress assessment, as well as a final evaluation of returnees’ sustainability after the provision of reintegration assistance is concluded.⁹

2. ANALYSIS

2.1 Reintegration assistance and satisfaction levels

The *Reintegration Module* dataset contains data on reintegration assistance provided under the EU-IOM Actions. It gives a first overview of the types of reintegration activities provided as well as the levels at which they were carried out. Among all reintegration assistance activities within the data, 73 per cent is provided to individual returnees. Collective reintegration activities, on the other hand, make up approximately 25 per cent of the total, whereas the remaining 2 per cent are community-based activities (see Chart 1). This data shows that individual assistance is by far the most popular modality to support returnees’ reintegration.

An analysis of the specific activity types shows that 39 per cent of all reintegration assistance provided under the EU-IOM Joint Initiative was aimed at supporting returnees in setting up their own micro-businesses (see Chart 2). Of the micro-business assistance, 81 per cent was provided to individuals, 17 per cent collectively to groups of returnees, and only 4 per cent was community-based. Psychosocial support is the assistance type with the second highest number of activities in the dataset. In fact, 17 per cent of all activities addressed the psychosocial needs of returnees, mainly at the collective level (68%) and at the individual level (31%). The third main type of reintegration assistance is skills training, which amounts to 14 per cent of all reintegration activities provided. 63 per cent of the training activities targeted individuals and 36 per cent of returnees.

Chart 1. Levels of reintegration support activities

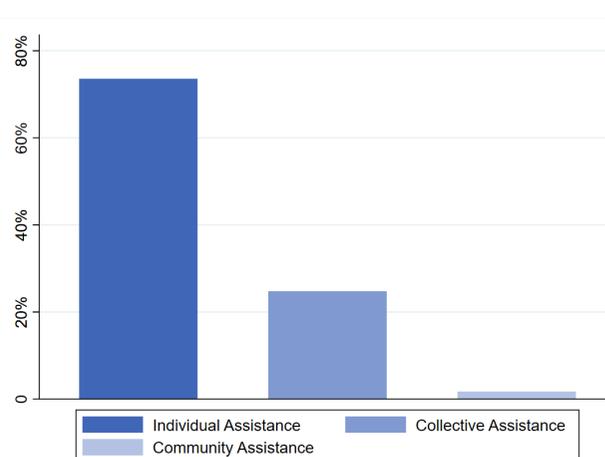
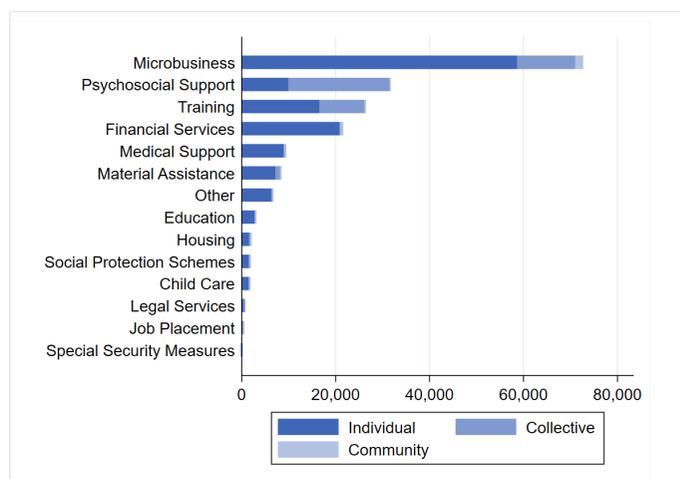


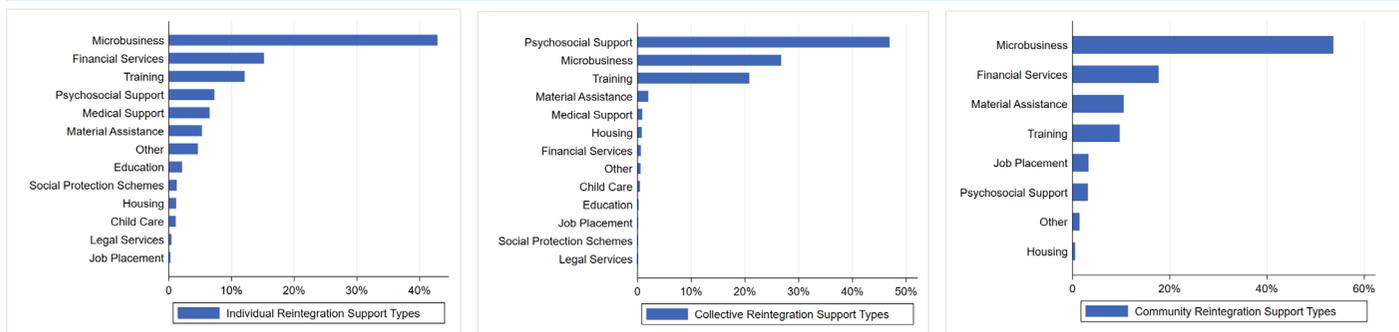
Chart 2. Number of reintegration support activities per type and level



⁹ The numbers of observations presented for the *Reintegration Programme Satisfaction Survey* and the RSS datasets were obtained after removing all observations that were not registered under one of the EU-IOM Actions. Before cleaning, the datasets contain 17,378 and 16,732 observations respectively across all IOM programmes worldwide.



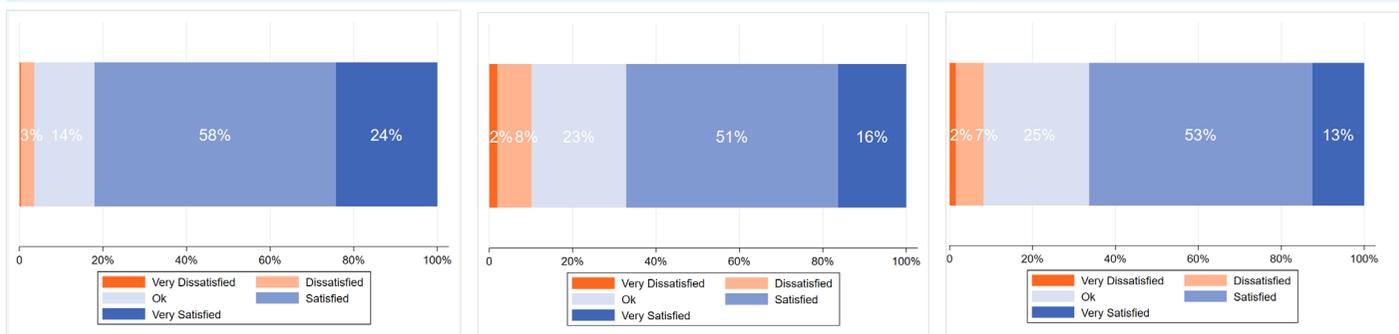
Chart 3. Share of types of reintegration support at each level: individual (left), collective (middle) and community (right)



The remaining activities are almost exclusively provided to individual returnees. This includes financial services (12% of all activities), medical support (5%), material assistance (5%), and education (2%). Chart 3 showcases the different types of reintegration activities per assistance level.

The *Reintegration Programme Satisfaction Survey* dataset shows that 69 per cent of respondents reported to be “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the reintegration assistance received, independently of the specific assistance type. On the other hand, 21 per cent were “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied” and 10 per cent reported to be “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied”. When looking at the satisfaction levels disaggregated by whether the reintegration assistance was provided at the individual, collective or community levels, slightly different results are noticeable. In fact, 82 per cent of respondents reported to be “satisfied” with the reintegration assistance received at the individual level, which is 13 percentage points higher than the overall satisfaction rate. Only 4 per cent of respondents reported to be “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied”. Satisfaction with the collective reintegration assistance received, on the other hand, is two percentage points lower than the overall satisfaction with 67 per cent of respondents reporting to be “satisfied” or “very satisfied” and 10 per cent being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. Finally, 66 per cent of recipients of community reintegration assistance reported that they were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” and 9 per cent reported to be “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied”.

Chart 4. How satisfied are you with the individual (left), collective (middle), and community (right) assistance received?



These results show that support at the individual level is not only the most common type of reintegration assistance, but also the one for which respondents report the highest levels of satisfaction (see Chart 4).

Looking at respondents’ satisfaction levels with reintegration assistance disaggregated by the three dimensions reveals another interesting trend. Whereas the overall satisfaction with reintegration assistance is at 69 per cent, as reported above,



the satisfaction levels broken down by whether the reintegration activities targeted the economic, social or psychosocial dimensions are significantly more positive. In fact, 76 per cent of respondents reported to be “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the economic support, 74 per cent with the social support, and 80 per cent with the psychosocial support. A reason for this difference could be that when respondents are asked about their overall satisfaction with the reintegration assistance received, they may associate this with their current overall reintegration situation and therefore give fewer positive responses. On the other hand, if asked for specific activities, the responses may be more likely to reflect respondents’ actual satisfaction with the activity and not with their current situation.

Chart 5. Did the reintegration assistance meet your needs?

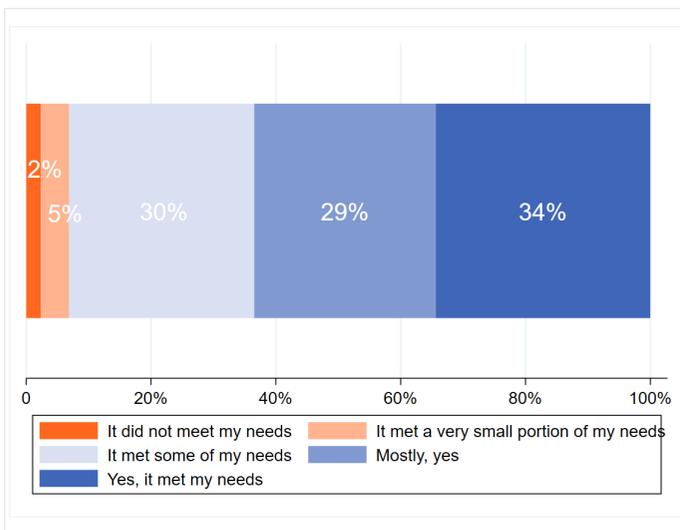
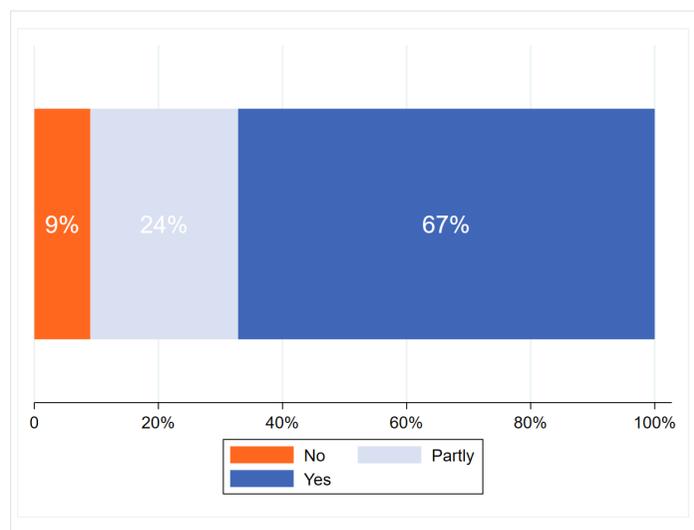


Chart 6. Did the reintegration assistance meet your expectations?



Among all respondents, 63 per cent reported that the reintegration assistance has met their needs mostly or fully, 30 per cent that this was only the case to some extent, and 7 per cent said that only a small portion or none of their needs were met (Chart 5). Similarly, the expectations of the majority of respondents have been met with 67 per cent reporting that this is the case, 24 per cent agreeing partly, and 9 per cent disagreeing (see Chart 6). It is worth highlighting that for this question, there is a statistically significant difference in average response rates between the sexes. Whereas 72 per cent of females said that the reintegration has met their expectations, this was only the case for 66 per cent of male respondents. This result is in line with previous analyses.¹⁰

The two survey questions on whether the assistance has met respondents’ needs and expectations refers to the overall reintegration support they received. Since many of the respondents participated in several reintegration activities of different types and at different levels, it is in fact not possible to disaggregate this data in the same way it was done with the satisfaction data.

2.2 Levels and types of reintegration assistance

This section analyses the relationship between the types and levels of reintegration assistance and respondents’ individual reintegration outcomes in the economic, social and psychosocial dimensions, as represented by the RSS scores in the three dimensions as well as the composite RSS score. The analysis is based on four regression models, which aim to examine if the

¹⁰ EU-IOM Knowledge Management Hub, Sustainable Reintegration Knowledge Bites Series, [Knowledge Bite #3: Insights from the Pilot Action on Voluntary Return and Sustainable, Community-Based Reintegration](#) (2021).



type or level of reintegration assistance an individual receives affects their reintegration sustainability, and if yes, whether this effect is positive or negative. As a first step, the *Reintegration Module* dataset and the RSS were merged on the basis of the unique case number of each respondent, which allows to jointly analyse variables from both datasets. The merged dataset contains information on 5,565 returnees.¹¹

The multivariate regression models include variables on the types and levels of reintegration assistance,¹² while controlling for other factors, such as sex, age, the number of reintegration activities per beneficiary as well as countries of origin. Many of the respondents received more than one type of reintegration assistance, such as individual support to set up a micro-business and simultaneously collective skills trainings. The regression analysis allows to isolate the influence each one of these activities has on the reintegration sustainability of individual returnees.

Interestingly, the results show that although **individual reintegration assistance** is both the most common type of support and the one with the highest levels of respondent satisfaction, there is no statistically significant effect of individual assistance on the reintegration sustainability of respondents. The differences in RSS scores¹³ (see Chart 7) of respondents who received at least one type of support at the individual level and those who did not, are only very small and do not allow to draw conclusions on the effectiveness of individual reintegration assistance. This holds for all three reintegration dimensions as well as the overall score.

Having received **collective reintegration assistance**, on the other hand, has a statistically significant positive effect on the economic and the overall reintegration sustainability of returnees. Respondents who received at least one activity at the collective level achieve an economic RSS score that is, on average, 0.15 higher than those who did not. Likewise, the overall reintegration score of returnees who received collective assistance is 0.10 higher. This is an interesting result considering that psychosocial assistance makes up almost half of all collective reintegration activities, followed by micro-business assistance and skills training. The section below analyses specific reintegration activity types and will provide more detailed insights into the effects that they have on reintegration outcomes.

Finally, whether a respondent received **community reintegration assistance** is a predictor for a lower composite reintegration score (0.02 points on average) as well as a lower economic

Chart 7. RSS scores, individual assistance

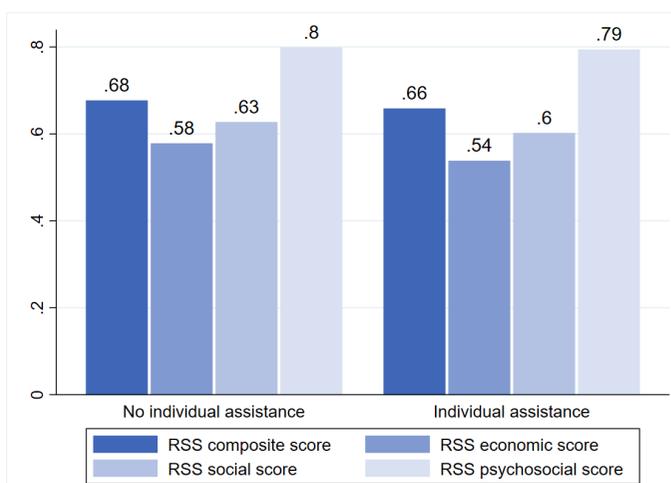
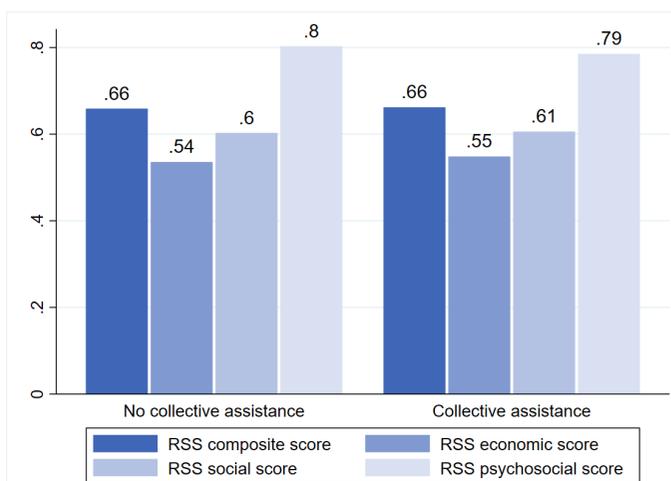


Chart 8. RSS scores, collective assistance



¹¹ 774 of the initial of 6,427 observations in the RSS dataset were dropped in the process of merging both datasets, due to the lack of information in the *Reintegration Module* dataset.

¹² The independent variables are: Individual assistance, collective assistance, community assistance, micro-business support, training, financial services, psychosocial support, material assistance, education assistance and number of activities.

¹³ RSS scores range from 0, indicating that a respondent's reintegration is not sustainable, to 1 demonstrating that a respondent has achieved the highest level of reintegration sustainability. IOM considers beneficiaries with RSS scores of above .5 as having achieved sustainable reintegration outcomes.



reintegration score (0.04 on average) as compared to those who did not receive reintegration assistance at the community level (see Chart 9). These differences in RSS scores are statistically significant.

A second regression analysis takes into account whether individuals received a mix of reintegration activities at different levels or assistance exclusively at one level (e.g., only individual activities) in order to further test the relationship between the levels at which assistance was provided and the reintegration sustainability of returnees.¹⁴ However, this analysis did not show any statistically significant results (see Annex II).

These first results indicate that collective assistance has a positive effect on the overall and economic reintegration sustainability, whereas community assistance has a negative effect on both. Following this, it is worth looking more in-depth at specific activity types, how these affect the reintegration outcomes of returnees, and whether this effect varies at different levels.

Social reintegration assistance

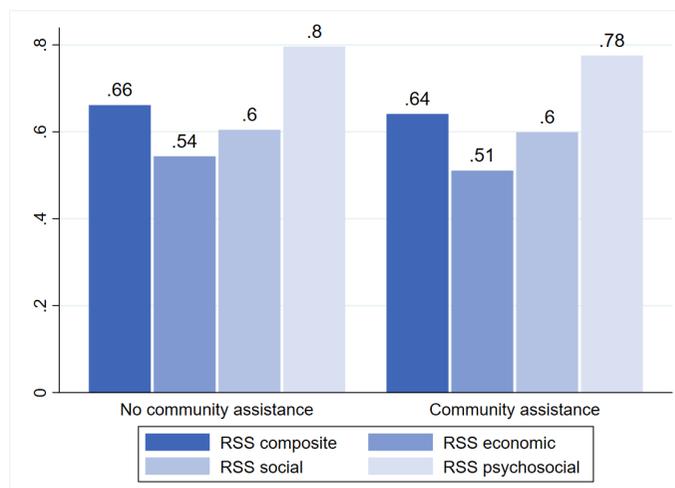
Among the reintegration support measures in the social dimension, education assistance and material assistance both have a positive effect on respondents' reintegration outcomes. Respondents who received **education assistance** achieved a more sustainable reintegration overall as well as better reintegration outcomes in the social dimension. Contributions to returnees' tuition and examination fees as well as the purchasing of school materials may help improving their educational outcomes, which can have an indirect positive effect on their reintegration sustainability. Recipients of **material assistance**, on the other hand, have better reintegration outcomes overall and in the economic and social dimensions than those who didn't receive any material support. This hints at the importance of covering returnees' basic needs with food and non-food items, such as clothes, and hygiene kits as a cornerstone of a successful reintegration.

Psychosocial reintegration assistance

Looking specifically at **psychosocial reintegration assistance** reveals an interesting result. While respondents who received psychosocial support achieve a higher economic RSS score (0.02 points), they also had less sustainable reintegration outcomes in the psychosocial dimension (0.02). The first result may be explained by the fact that returnees who receive assistance to reintegrate into their support networks, may be able to focus more on their economic activities while receiving support from family, friends and the community. The lower psychosocial RSS score, however, is more difficult to interpret. This result is consistent with previous statistical analyses of RSS data and may hint at a reverse relationship with those returnees facing challenges in their psychosocial reintegration being more likely to receive tailored support by IOM to overcome these

A follow up analysis looking at the differences between psychosocial assistance at the individual and collective levels found that returnees who received individual psychosocial assistance have on average better psychosocial reintegration outcomes than those who received it at the collective level. This result supports the above interpretation that those returnees who are having more difficulties with their psychosocial reintegration require more tailored and individualized psychosocial assistance.

Chart 9. RSS scores, community assistance



¹⁴ Considering that only 22 respondents received reintegration assistance exclusively at the community level, this variable was excluded. For more information about the regression models and the regression coefficients, please see Annex II, Charts 11–14.



Types of Reintegration Assistance and Sustainable Reintegration Outcomes

In the same vein, recipients of collective psychosocial assistance achieved more sustainable economic reintegration outcomes than those who received psychosocial support at the individual level. This again indicates how the different dimensions are interrelated and psychosocial needs may also affect returnees' economic reintegration outcomes.

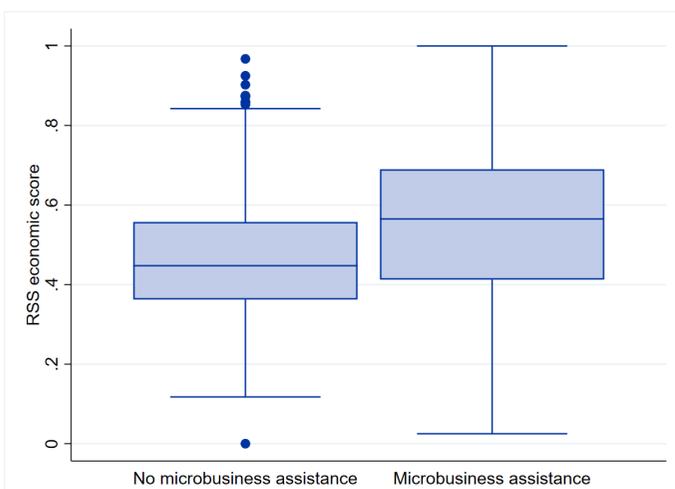
Economic reintegration assistance

As in previous similar studies, economic reintegration activities show a number of correlations with respondents' reintegration sustainability scores. **Training assistance**, which includes business development and management training as well as vocational training, has a significant positive effect on the respondents' economic reintegration sustainability (on average, 0.01 points higher). Training activities are an important component of reintegration support packages, especially when returnees are assisted to set up a micro-business. A follow-up analysis differentiated by the level at which training assistance was provided doesn't show a statistically significant difference in the effects it has on the economic reintegration score of returnees. This indicates that training assistance is an effective measure for supporting returnees in reaching economic self-sufficiency, irrespective of whether it is provided at the individual or collective level.

Another type of economic assistance that showed statistically significant results are **financial services**, which include cash for work arrangements, cash for reintegration, and subsistence allowance. Interestingly, those respondents who received financial services achieved lower reintegration scores in the psychosocial dimension and a lower composite reintegration score. Since the negative effect of financial services on the psychosocial reintegration sustainability is quite strong (see Annex II, chart 11), it may be worth further investigating why this is the case. These results indicate that cash grants may not be as effective as other types of economic assistance such as micro-business support and trainings.

Among all the reintegration activity types analysed above, one specific variable stands out: the provision of **micro-business reintegration assistance** has a statistically significant and very strong positive impact on the overall RSS score and on the scores in all three dimensions. Micro-business assistance can therefore be considered a reliable indicator for predicting more sustainable reintegration outcomes of returnees.

Chart 10. RSS economic score, micro-business assistance



A follow-up analysis of the levels at which micro-business assistance was provided did not reveal a statistically significant difference in reintegration outcomes between those respondents who received it at the individual level and those who did so at the collective level. However, respondents who received micro-business assistance at the community level achieved lower reintegration sustainability scores in all three reintegration dimensions as well as in their overall reintegration. However, this last result is not very robust since only 3.30 per cent of micro-business activities were carried out at the community level. Therefore, in the regression model developed for this analysis, micro-business assistance is the single strongest predictor for better reintegration outcomes in all three dimensions, independently of whether it was provided to individuals or collectively.

The effect of micro-business assistance on reintegration sustainability is especially strong in the economic dimension (see Chart 10). The RSS scores of those respondents who



received micro-business assistance have a high variability, reaching from 1, which means full economic self-sufficiency, to close to 0, which indicates a very challenging individual economic situation. This variance in respondents' reintegration outcomes reflects the diversity of countries and contexts in which the data was collected.

More generally, the analysis reveals that recipients of micro-business assistance have an average economic RSS score of 0.55 as compared to an average score of 0.46 of those respondents who did not receive this type of support. This result is even more relevant since 0.50 is the theoretical threshold that separates sustainable from non-sustainable reintegration outcomes. From this perspective, receiving micro-business assistance can be a key factor for enabling returnees to reintegrate sustainably into their communities of origin. Likewise, recipients of micro-business assistance achieved psychosocial reintegration sustainability scores that are on average 0.45 higher than of those respondents who were not supported to set up a micro-business.

Micro-business provision has also a positive, statistically significant effect on reintegration outcomes in the social dimension, but less so than in the other two dimensions. The reason for this may be that the social dimension is based to a large extent on the public service infrastructure in communities of origin and thus has a weaker link with the individual economic situation of returnees. While micro-business assistance and the resulting more stable source of income may allow returnees to afford access to certain social services, such as health care and education, it may not contribute to returnees' access to many other types of public services, such as documentation and drinking water.

Other factors

Another factor that has a statistically significant impact on the reintegration sustainability is the return type, with beneficiaries of Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) programmes,¹⁵ scoring consistently higher than those who are assisted to return under Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programmes or by actors other than IOM. This result is surprising since beneficiaries of VHR programmes are assisted to return from humanitarian and conflict situations and are more likely to have been exposed to potentially distressing events during their migration journey. One possible explanation for the more positive reintegration sustainability results of VHR-beneficiaries is that their perception of their situation after return might be affected by the comparison with the very challenging context they are returning from in Libya or Yemen. The personal situation in the country of origin may therefore be perceived as having considerably improved as to the situation before return. Nevertheless, it would be interesting to further investigate the differences in reintegration outcomes between beneficiaries of VHR, AVRR and non-IOM programmes.

Looking at demographic factors, sex and age both correlate with reintegration sustainability scores. First, male returnees have better reintegration outcomes overall and in the three dimensions, compared to female returnees. This effect is especially strong for the psychosocial dimension where males score, on average, 0.50 higher than females. This result is in line with a recent study on reintegration outcomes through a gender perspective, which provided evidence that many female returnees face higher risks of social exclusion and stigma in their communities of return as well as rejection by their families as compared to male returnees.¹⁶ Second, older respondents have on average better reintegration outcomes than younger ones. Although this result holds for all three dimensions and the overall reintegration sustainability scores, respondents' age has only a very weak effect on reintegration outcomes.

¹⁵ VHR is based on the assisted voluntary return and reintegration approach but applied in humanitarian settings. VHR often represents a life-saving measure for migrants who are stranded or in detention. Currently, returns under VHR take place from Libya and Yemen.

¹⁶ EU-IOM Knowledge Management Hub and Maastricht Graduate School of Governance, Research Study, [Comparative Reintegration Outcomes between Forced and Voluntary Return and through a Gender Perspective](#) (2021), p.78.



2.3 Limitations

As in the previous Knowledge Bites, the main limitation of this study is the data availability on IOM's central institutional information management system, MiMOSA. In addition to that, the merging of the Reintegration Sustainability Survey dataset and the Reintegration Module dataset resulted in the deletion of many observations which did not match. In spite of many countries having representative sample sizes, dropping these observations leads to the merged dataset losing some of its. Both these issues, the lack of data and the loss of information when merging datasets, make it more difficult to generalize the results to all EU-IOM Actions and target countries or even to returns in general.

Moreover, several of the variables that could have been relevant for the analysis, such as respondents' vulnerability and length of absence, contained a large number of missing values. One of the main explanatory variables of the analysis – whether a respondent has received community reintegration assistance or not – only contained very little information due to the fact that only 2 per cent of all reintegration activities carried out under the EU-IOM Joint Initiative support communities as a whole. This lack of data may have also affected the robustness of the results of the multivariate regression analysis when it comes to analysing assistance at the community level.

All four dependent variables - the RSS composite score and the three dimensional scores – contain many outliers that reflect respondents who either achieved very positive or very negative reintegration outcomes.¹⁷ These cases were not removed from the regression model in order to account for respondents with unusual reintegration outcomes.

Lastly, as most beneficiary monitoring tools, the Reintegration Programme Monitoring Survey, the Reintegration Programme Satisfaction Survey and the RSS take the form of self-evaluations by the returnee. This type of assessment could be susceptible to self-reporting bias¹⁸ and social desirability bias.¹⁹

3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main objective of this paper was to present a comparative analysis of respondents' satisfaction with different types of reintegration assistance as well as to examine whether there is a statistically significant relationship – positive or negative – between the reintegration assistance received at different levels and respondents' reintegration outcomes. The regression model used for this study included the type and level of reintegration assistance received while controlling for other factors, such as respondents' demographic profiles.

An analysis of the levels of reintegration support indicates that having received individual assistance does not correlate with returnees' reintegration outcomes. Looking at collective assistance, on the other hand, shows a positive effect on returnees' overall reintegration sustainability as well as on their economic reintegration sustainability, that is, whether they have achieved economic self-sufficiency or not. Finally, community reintegration assistance is associated with less sustainable outcomes in the economic dimension and in the returnees' overall reintegration sustainability.

A further analysis of different types of reintegration activities that were provided at the three levels (individual, collective and community) showed some interesting results. Micro-business assistance proved to be the strongest factor for predicting more sustainable reintegration outcomes across all dimensions, which reflects how closely tied support in establishing a stable source of income is with the 30 indicators that are used to determine the reintegration sustainability scores. However,

¹⁷ Outliers can be mainly found on the lower end of the scale with RSS values of below .35. Therefore, the datasets were slightly left-skewed.

¹⁸ Response bias that occurs when the participant self-reported answers deviate from the true.

¹⁹ Response bias that influences a participant to choose responses that reflect what they believe is more socially desirable or acceptable rather than their true thoughts and feelings.



there is no statistically significant difference in reintegration outcomes between respondents who received micro-business assistance at the individual and collective levels. This result also holds true for training assistance, which was equally effective at both levels.

However, the effect of psychosocial assistance on reintegration outcomes does vary by level. Psychosocial assistance has an overall negative effect on psychosocial reintegration, which potentially results from a reverse relationship with returnees facing challenges in reintegrating into social support networks receiving more support in that regard. Interestingly, returnees who receive individual psychosocial assistance have on average better psychosocial reintegration outcomes than those who receive it at the collective level. This result is in line with the interpretation that more tailored and individualized psychosocial assistance contributes to better psychosocial outcomes. At the same time, it is worth mentioning that psychosocial assistance has a moderate positive effect on respondents' economic reintegration sustainability. In that regard, a follow up analysis shows that recipients of collective psychosocial reintegration assistance achieved more sustainable economic reintegration outcomes than those who received individual support.

Based on these findings, it is recommended to analyse more in-depth and under controlled circumstances how different types of reintegration assistance that are received at the individual, collective and community levels affect individual reintegration outcomes. For that purpose, it would be worth conducting a longitudinal research study that analyses the reintegration outcomes of returnees over longer periods of time and how these relate to the type of reintegration assistance received. This type of analysis would allow to track the ups and downs of individual reintegration processes at different points in time and provide more evidence on how (in)effective different reintegration assistance types at different levels are. The purely quantitative analysis could be complemented with the collection of additional qualitative data through interviews and focus group discussions with returnees and non-migrant community members who were, for example, included in community reintegration activities. This approach would allow to explore more in-depth over several months – and not just at one particular time – how different types of reintegration assistance at different levels may relate to returnees' individual reintegration outcomes. Moreover, a more comprehensive research design would also allow to analyse how non-migrant community members are affected by different reintegration assistance activities that are implemented in their communities.



4. Annex I

Table 1. Reintegration Sustainability Survey Dataset – number of observations broken down by country

Country of Origin	No. of observations	Per cent
Bangladesh	83	1.29
Burkina Faso	207	3.21
Cameroon	284	4.41
Côte d'Ivoire	246	3.82
Ethiopia	778	13.59
Gambia	472	7.32
Ghana	152	2.36
Guinea	363	5.63
Guinea-Bissau	176	2.73
Malawi	192	2.98
Mali	182	2.82
Mozambique	117	1.82
Niger	284	4.41
Nigeria	919	14.26
Senegal	167	2.59
Somalia	432	6.70
Sudan	1,285	20.05
TOTAL:	6 339	100.00

Table 2. Merged Dataset: Reintegration Sustainability Survey & Reintegration Modules – Number of observations broken down by country

Country of Origin	No. of observations	Per cent
Burkina Faso	196	3.46
Cameroon	279	4.93
Côte d'Ivoire	245	4.33
Ethiopia	724	14.36
Gambia	398	7.03
Ghana	152	2.69
Guinea	262	4.63



Country of Origin	No. of observations	Per cent
Guinea-Bissau	173	3.06
Mali	180	3.18
Niger	249	4.4
Nigeria	893	15.77
Senegal	148	2.61
Somalia	422	7.45
Sudan	1,244	22.1
TOTAL:	5 565	100.00

**Table 3. Reintegration Satisfaction Survey Dataset –
Number of observations broken down by country**

Country of Origin	No. of observations	Per cent
Burkina Faso	164	2.55
Cameroon	386	6.01
Côte d'Ivoire	307	4.78
Ethiopia	1,195	18.59
The Gambia	385	5.99
Ghana	177	2.75
Guinea	284	4.42
Guinea-Bissau	145	2.26
Malawi	443	6.89
Mali	333	5.18
Mozambique	92	1.43
Niger	290	4.51
Nigeria	999	15.54
Senegal	157	2.44
Somalia	394	6.13
Sudan	654	10.18
TOTAL:	6 405	100.00



5. Annex II

Chart 11. Regression analysis results (coefficients) – RSS Composite score, reception of assistance at one of three levels (left) and reception of assistance exclusively at one level but not at others (right)

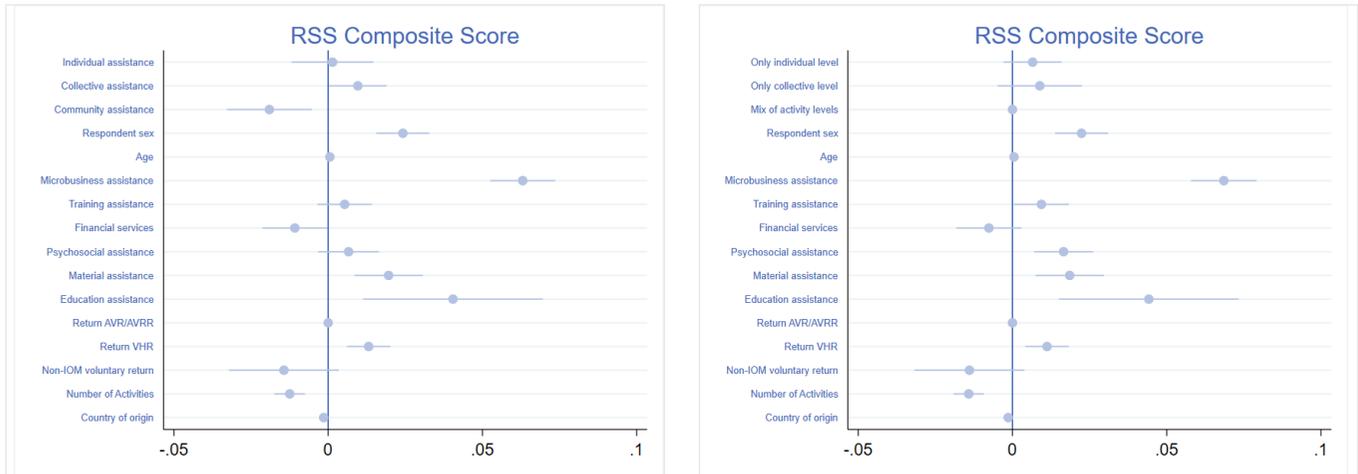
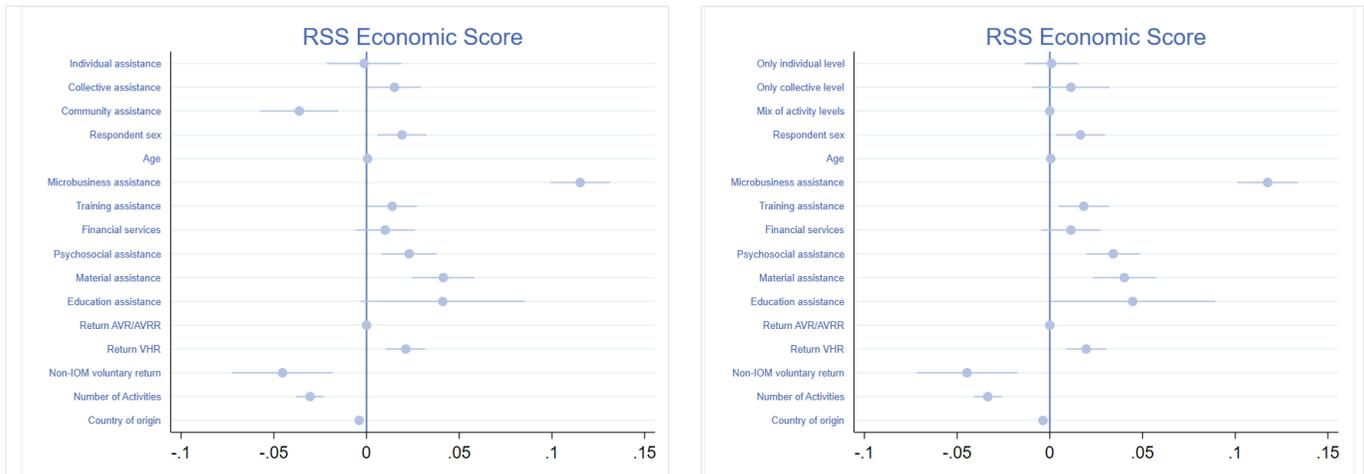


Chart 12. Regression analysis results (coefficients) – RSS Economic score, reception of assistance at one of three levels (left) and reception of assistance exclusively at one level as compared to a mix of activity levels (right)





Types of Reintegration Assistance and Sustainable Reintegration Outcomes

Chart 13. Regression analysis results (coefficients) – RSS Social score, reception of assistance at one of three levels (left) and reception of assistance exclusively at one level as compared to a mix of activity levels (right)

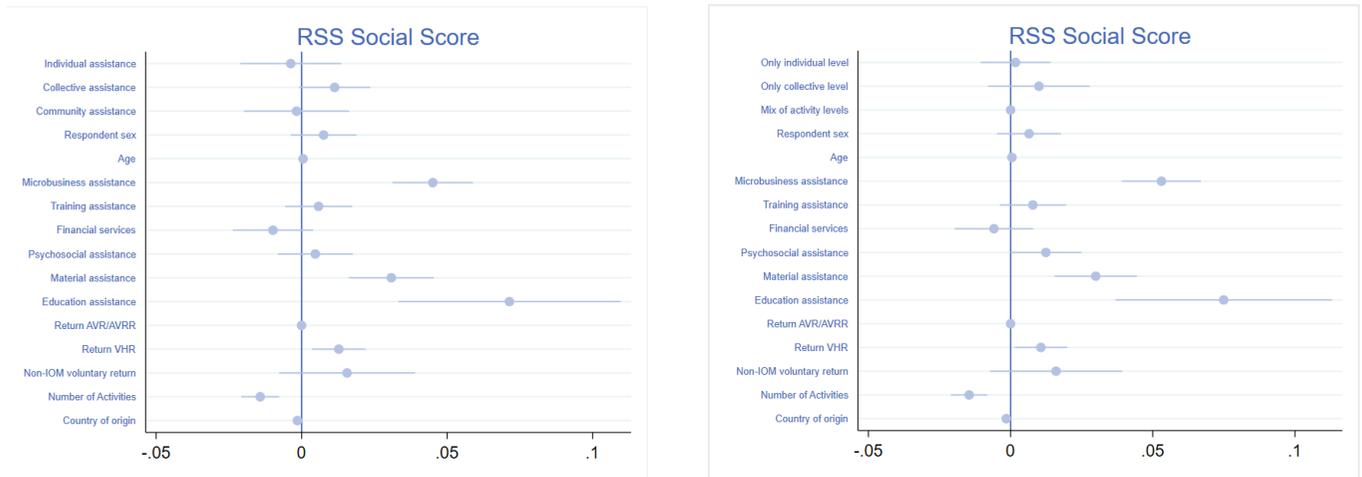
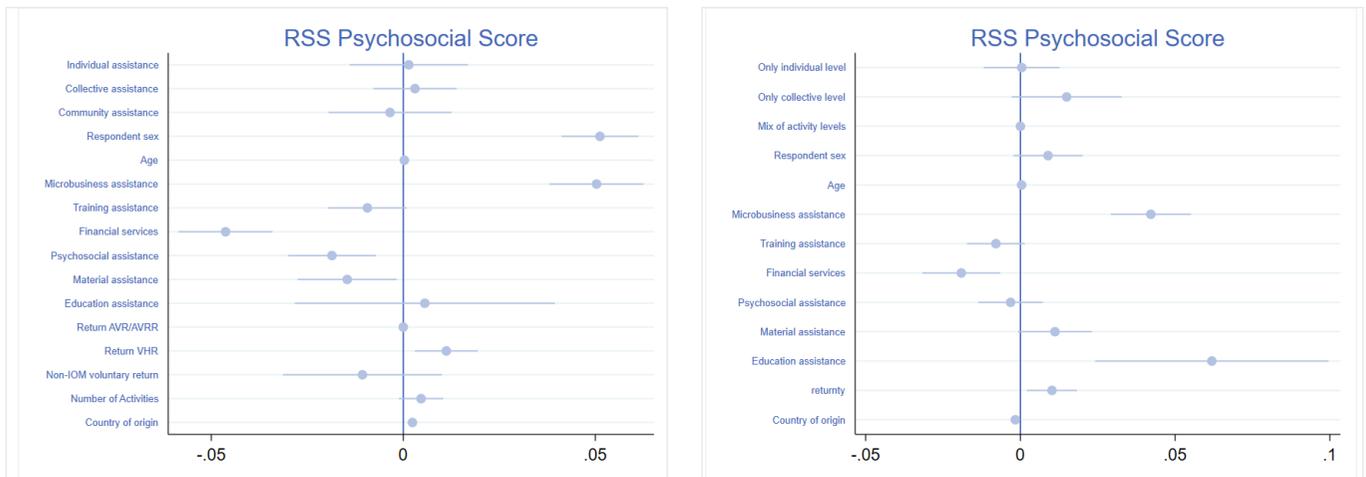


Chart 14. Regression analysis results (coefficients) – RSS Psychosocial score, reception of assistance at one of three levels (left) and reception of assistance exclusively at one level as compared to a mix of activity levels (right)





Types of Reintegration Assistance and Sustainable Reintegration Outcomes

Chart 15. Regression analysis results (coefficients) – RSS Psychosocial score, psychosocial assistance at the individual or collective level (left) and RSS Economic score, psychosocial assistance at the individual or collective level

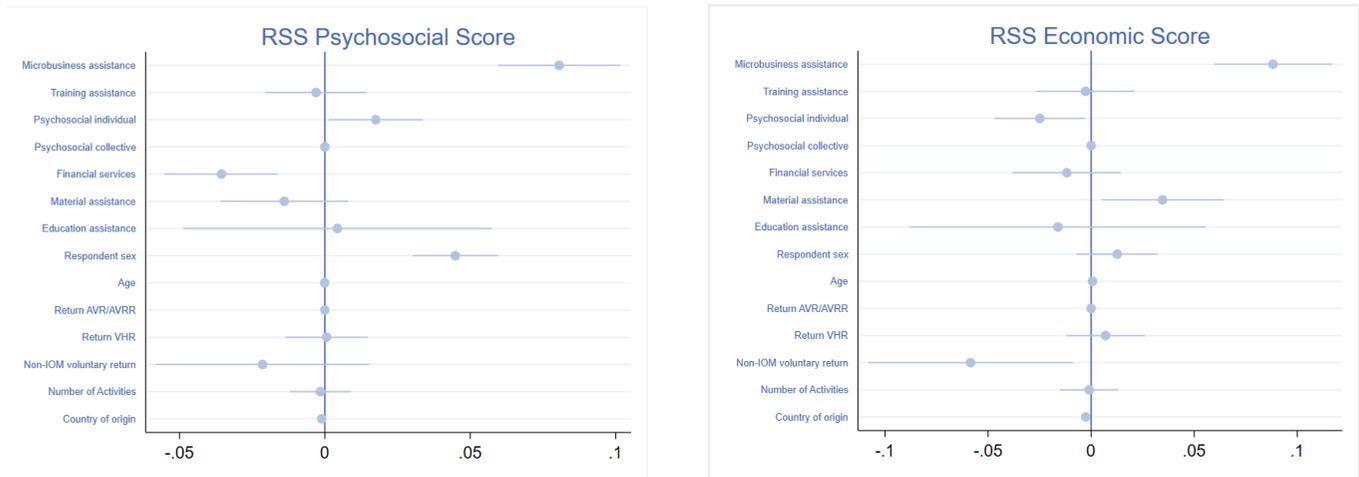


Chart 16. Regression analysis results (coefficients) – Reception of micro-business assistance at the individual, collective and community levels by RSS Composite Score (top left), RSS Economic Score (top right), RSS Social Score (bottom left), and RSS Psychosocial Score (bottom right)

