



INSIGHT Action Policy Brief 1: Returns to and Reintegration in Nigeria of people who survived trafficking

Introduction

This policy brief has been prepared by the SSIIM Unesco Chair of the University Iuav of Venice, as part of the INSIGHT Action and of a series of 4 policy briefs aimed at promoting and improving transnational cooperation in the fight against trafficking in human beings and in the protection of people who have been trafficked. The brief is based on research and the elaboration of qualitative (mainly semi-structured interviews to reintegration stakeholders and 3 interviews to returnees¹) and quantitative data carried out in the period June 2019 to September 2020 and it draws largely from Semprebon and Moses (2021)². It focuses on the return and reintegration from Europe to Nigeria of people who survived trafficking and more specifically on the capacity of Nigerian stakeholders to deal with the return of this specific target.

Migratory movements from and to Nigeria: some data

Nigeria has been playing a triple role as source, transit and destination country for people exploited in sex and labour industries. According to the most recent data, in the period 2017-2018, as in 2015-2016, the main country of citizenship of non-EU registered victims of trafficking in the EU was still Nigeria (with a total of 3,112 people)³, although the number of Nigerian arrivals by sea and land into Italy decreased in 2018. Yet, trafficking-related exploitation is far from being erased. On the contrary. Data regarding the migratory movements of Nigerians more generally remain largely unknown and it has become increasingly clear that migration, smuggling and trafficking are not always easily distinguished and often make up multiple parts of the journeys to Europe and other continents. Largely unknown are also movements internal to Europe⁴, internal to Nigeria⁵, as well as returns and repatriations to Nigeria⁶. Between 2017 and 2019, nearly

¹ Interviews to returnees were very much limited because of the Covid-pandemic, but also more generally due to the resistance of stakeholders in organising meetings because of protection reasons.

² Semprebon M. and A. O. Moses. (2021) The Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Women Returnees in Nigeria, SSIIM Unesco Chair, University IUAV of Venice. ISBN: 978-88-31241-44-1. Available at: <https://www.insightproject.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/REPORT-NIGERIA.pdf> Last access: 17.09.2021.

³ EU Commission (2018) Data Collection on Human Trafficking in the EU. Available: <https://bit.ly/2msM72d> Last access: 23.09.2019.

⁴ Frontex (2020). Risk Analysis. Available: <https://bit.ly/3qtl7et> Last access: 04.12.2019.

⁵ EU Commission (2018a). 2nd Report on the progress made in the fight against trafficking in human beings. Available: <https://bit.ly/3l1bxle> Last access: 04.12.2020.

⁶ Regarding Italy, an increasing number of Nigerians have been forced to return to Nigeria: in 2017 a total of 279 was recorded, in 2018 a total of 189, with a peak of

16,000 migrants of Nigerian origins were returned to the country. 12,000 joined the IOM Assisted and Voluntary Return Programme, mostly in Libya. Only 7,000 (58%), however, obtained support for reintegration⁷. It should be stressed that trafficking is a phenomenon that not only regards Europe but that occurs also the Middle East and Gulf States, where sexual exploitation, domestic servitude and other forms of labour exploitation are prevalent (UNODC, 2020)⁸. Furthermore, internal trafficking in West Africa is not to be underestimated, including

trafficking of adults and children for domestic servitude, street hawking, begging, forced labour in mining, quarrying, agriculture and exploitation in baby factories, etc. According to NAPTIP country Report (2019)⁹, 59 cases investigated represented cross-border trafficking cases, whilst 65 concerned domestic trafficking cases. The same report indicates since inception of the agency, in 2003, West African countries have accounted for 54% of the cases, that is to say over than half of the total.

348 in 2019, as stated by the Ombudsperson for the rights of detained people and people deprived of their liberty in the Monitoring Report of repatriation activities of foreign citizens.

⁷ Alpes J. (2020). Emergency returns by IOM from Libya and Niger. July 2020. Available: https://www.medico.de/fileadmin/user_upload/media

[/rueckkehr-studie-en.pdf](#)

Last access: 02.02.2021.

⁸ UNODC (2020) Global Trafficking in Persons Report. Available: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/data-and-analysis/glotip.html> Last access: 02.07.2021.

⁹ NAPTIP (2019) Data Analysis Report. Available: <https://naptip.gov.ng/downloads/> Last access: 27.07.2021.

Normative Framework

International Framework

- UN Palermo Protocol (2000 - ratified by Nigeria in 2001)
- EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (2000)
- Council of Europe Convention Against the Trafficking in Human Beings (2008)
- EU Directive 2011/36 on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Protecting its Victims (2011)

African Framework

- ECOWAS Protocol of Free Movement of Persons, Residence and Establishment (1979)
- ECOWAS Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters (1992) and Convention on Extradition (1994)
- Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003)
- Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings Especially Women and Children (Ouagadougou Action Plan) (2006)

EU Framework on Returns and Cooperation with Third-Countries

- Common Agenda for Migration and Mobility (CAMM) and Valetta Summit Declaration and Action Plan (2015)
- Return Directive 2008/115/EC (2008)
- Action Plan on Return (2015 – amended in 2017)
- Several Cooperation Agreements with Benin, Niger, Italy¹⁰ and the UK¹¹
- Antitrafficking strategy (2021)
- New Migration Pact (Proposal) (2020)
- EU Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration (2021)

Nigerian Framework

- Criminal Code Act (1916 - revised in 1990)
- Penal Code Act (1960 - restricted to Federal Capital Territory of Abuja)
- National Commission for Refugees (Establishment) Act (1989)
- Federal Republic of Nigeria Constitution (1990)
- Immigration Act (1963 - repeatedly amended until 2015)
- Child Rights Act (2003)
- Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act was signed in 2003 (amendments in 2005 and 2015)
- Nigerian National Plan of Action against Human Trafficking was developed in 2006
- National Policy on Protection and Assistance to Trafficked Persons in Nigeria (2008 – which culminated, in 2017, in the definition of guidelines for a National Referral Mechanism)
- SOP for the Conduct of Return, Readmission and Reintegration of Migrants in Nigeria (2019)
- National Migration Policy (2015)

¹⁰ A first agreement was signed in September 2000; three agreements on mutual extradition, mutual assistance in penal proceedings and transfer of individuals prosecuted and charged with trafficking crimes were signed in 2016.

¹¹ Ikeora M. (2018). Bilateral Cooperation and Human Trafficking. Eradicating Modern Slavery between the United Kingdom and Nigeria. Global Ethic Series. Palgrave: Bristol.

Main policy issues

Considerable efforts have been done over the past 20 years at international, European and Nigerian levels to address human trafficking and smuggling in normative terms and protect the people who are victims of it, as the current normative framework testifies. However, there is still considerable space for improvements. As far as reintegration and returns are concerned, the INSigHT research points to the following 5 lines of policy interventions: (1) root causes and the relevance to reintegration, (2) the EU policy approach to migration and the system of returns, (3) reintegration facilities and programmes in Nigeria, (4) the conditions of return.

Root causes and the relevance to reintegration

As we explain in more details in Semprebon and Abe (2021), a major drive for Nigerian youth to travel to Europe is attributed to the socio-economic disparity between the global south and the global north. The proliferation of human trafficking is connected to its perception as an avenue to create wealth. Some families facilitate trafficking as it is still considered as a viable avenue to deal with poverty. Exposure to the living conditions of destination countries (labour demand, economic opportunities, document regularisation), through media coverage and the testimonies of former migrants, have largely contributed to this perception.

Context-specific features must be also taken into consideration. Nigeria is characterised by unequal gender roles, with limited access to education and employment, particularly for young women, and asymmetrical positions within family structures (Osezua, 2016¹²; Hynes et al., 2018¹³).

Job creation and skill acquisition are important elements for reintegration to impact on the lives of returnees in a positive way. At the same time, a major reason for the so-called re-trafficking movements, that can take place after people return to Nigeria, has been linked to business disconnection and empowerment dissatisfaction in trainings and business models provided as a reintegration tool¹⁴. Religion is also mentioned as a critical variable for reintegration, although this aspect is still underexplored. It is critical in two directions. It is mentioned with respect to the strong influence that juju rituals and oath taking have on exploited individuals, in terms of coercion and threat to trafficked returnees and their families¹⁵; religion has been used also, with more or less positive outcomes, to support people in reintegration by means of “cognitive restructuring” (psychological) approaches¹⁶.

A third aspect that should be considered in reintegration interventions is that the search for success, wealth and self-determination strongly affects migrants’ aspirations¹⁷. Hence in spite of EU migration policies being characterised by increasing border controls and an increasing externalisation of border management, the latter have been rather ineffective in countering trafficking¹⁸ and have encouraged individuals to take more complex,

¹² Osezua C. (2016). Gender issues in human trafficking in Edo State, Nigeria, *African Sociological Review*, 20, 36-66.

¹³ Hynes P., Burland P., Lenja V., Gaxha A., Brodie I., Spring D., Murray F. (2018). *Vulnerability' To Human Trafficking : A study of Viet Nam, Albama, Nigeria and the UK*. Research funded by the Home Office Modern Slavery Innovation Fund. October 2018.

¹⁴ Eghafona K. A. (2018). *Modern Slavery in Edo State: Victims Experiences and the Need for Psychosocial Post Trafficking Package*. Paper presented at the Inaugural National Conference of The Salvation Army, Nigeria

Territorial Headquarters, Anti-Human Trafficking Community Awareness & Recovery (CAR) Programme

¹⁵ Precious Diagboya. *Oath Taking in Edo: Usages and Misappropriations of the Native Justice System*. 2021. Last access: 22.02.2021.

¹⁶ Sine Plambech (2017) *God brought you home – deportation as moral governance in the lives of Nigerian sex worker migrants*, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 43:13, 2211-2227.

¹⁷ Carling J. and Collins F. (2018) *Aspiration, desire and drivers of migration*, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44:6, 909-926.

¹⁸ See note 13.

less safe, routes¹⁹. We will further on the EU policy approach to migration next, by focusing on the system of returns and how it affects reintegration in Nigeria.

EU policy approach to migration and the system of returns

In face of an increasing protection of borders and externalisation of border management, as explained above, returns have represented a cross-cutting theme of migration policy, alongside the fight of irregular migration movements and has been supported as a preferred strategy. Prioritizing returns has been gaining more and more consensus among Member States than the implementation of the international obligation for the protection of asylum seekers and refugees. In line with these trends, the 2020 (proposal for the) Migration Pact endorses increased coordination on returns and improved integration between asylum and return policies, with a progressively more complex framework. The latter, in face of the pending deficient implementation of the Return Directive, is likely to extend the application of accelerated border procedures which in turn pose a threat to the right of asylum and the principle of non-refoulement, as many observers have stressed. The risks for returnees are evident, particularly in terms of the missing attention to the vulnerable conditions of individuals. Accelerated procedures are unlikely to grant an effective assessment and, as a result, stakeholders in

Nigeria are unlikely to be informed about any specific support needed by returnees.

Returnees may still receive some support, depending on the type of return.

In the context of migration policy, returns can take place in a voluntary or forced manner, assisted or not. They can be more or less spontaneous²⁰. More specifically, **Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR)** refers to the voluntary return or departure of a person, supported by logistical, financial and/or other material assistance. **Forced Return**, refers to the compulsory return of an individual to the country of origin, transit or third country, on the basis of an administrative or judicial act. In the INSigHT research we have identified another type of return: **Facilitated Return**, taking place with the mediator and support of NGOs in the host and destination countries²¹. While there are differences among these types of return (see table 1), they are generally characterised by insufficient coordination among stakeholders and scarce transparency of the procedures, to the detriment of returnees protection and access to reintegration opportunities which are not made readily available to all individuals. Lack of transparency is particularly evident as far as forced returns are involved. Additionally, forced returnees have a far higher risk of being imprisoned as they are criminalised – having violated immigration laws of a host country. Not to be underestimated is the fact that, due to a weak referral system and inadequate risk assessment procedures, returnees, regardless of the type of return, are exposed to trafficking and other forms of exploitation.

¹⁹ Ellis T., Akpala J. (2011). Making Sense of the Relationship between Trafficking in Persons, Human Smuggling, and Organised Crime: The Case of Nigeria. *The Police Journal: Theory, Practice and Principles*, 84(1), 13–34.

²⁰ For more definitions on the types of return see: https://homeaffairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/en?file=2020-09/interactive_glossary_6.0_final_version.pdf
Last access: 20.09.2021.

²¹ Another type of return should be mentioned, but we will only briefly report about it here, as it was not specifically mentioned by our interviewees. We are referring to the ERRIN framework (European Return and

Reintegration Network), an initiative driven by 15 EU Member States and associated countries, Frontex and the EU Commission. The network facilitate the return and reintegration of third country nationals to their countries of origin through the development and implementation of joint projects. ERRIN provides post-arrival and reintegration assistance to returnees, by contracting service providers in non-EU countries of return. Caritas International Belgium is the contracted service provider for Nigeria and it works with Idia Renaissance as local service delivery partner to assist returnees, both voluntary and forced.

While the scenario sketched out above is evident in returns more generally, not only with reference to Nigeria, it is important to look at the functioning of Nigerian

reintegration projects in order to understand how returnees are dealt with once they arrive in Nigeria, if they manage to access reintegration services at all.

Table 1: Types of returns and features

	Assisted and voluntary Return	Forced Return	Facilitated Return
Origin countries	Libya	Mostly from EU countries (Germany)	Russia, Middle East (i.e. Dubai), western African countries
Operated by	IOM	Frontex	NGOs in Nigeria and origin countries
Other actors involved	<p>NCFRMI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> notifies stakeholders of arrivals undertakes profiling and risk assessment refers to NAPTIP or ETHAT and NEMA and other trusted stakeholders for assistance <p>FMWA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> facilitates reception 	<p>NIS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> should be notified by Frontex may take people to jail <p>NCFRMI, NEMA and NAPTIP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sometimes collaboration with NAPTIP EU ECPAT International + Nigerian Embassies
Critical issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scarce sharing of information between IOM and national agencies Limited information on the “return package” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient protection of returnees No prior notice between origin and destination countries about return No risk assessment upon departure/arrival Criminalisation and risk of detention Return patterns are militarized (equal number of returnees and security personnel on board) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing of information between NGOs and access to reintegration programme offered but often without referral to NAPTIP No formal coordination on monitoring and evaluation of services

Map 1: Location of shelters for returnees victims of trafficking in Nigeria



Reintegration facilities and programmes in Nigeria

The following main stakeholders are involved in return and reintegration in Nigeria:

- **3 federal agencies:** NCFRMI (National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and IDPs), NAPTIP (National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons), FMLE (Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment),
- **2 state agencies:** ETAHT (Edo State Taskforce Against Human Trafficking) and Ipaja Transit Home (Lagos State)
- **8 NGOs:** SOWOGIDI (Solidarity with women and girls in distress), BAKHITA, PJI (Pathfinders Justice Initiative), Idia Renaissance, WOHF (Web of Heart Foundation), GPI (Girls Power Initiative), PCI (Patriotic Citizen Initiatives), WOCON (Women Consortium of Nigeria)

Shelters are scattered across 8 States: Abuja, Lagos, Benin, Uyo, Enugu, Kano, Maidiguri, Sokoto (see map 1). While the availability of shelters across Nigeria has improved, with an increasing number of territories covered over time, the existing system of reintegration is still not granting opportunities throughout the country. To date opportunities are available in locations that are mostly associated with trafficking. While this is associated with the fact that returnees normally return to their town/village of origin, we should not forget that this may mean exposing them to risks of threats and further exploitation by traffickers. The capacity of shelters varies from a minimum of 20 bed spaces (Bakhita, PJI), to 60 (Web of Heart Foundation, NAPTIP Lagos), to a maximum of 150 (Ipaja Transit Home). Some shelters are dedicated to people victims of trafficking only, others (i.e. Ipaja Transit Home) are open to various occupants. The interviewed stakeholders have described the mixed occupation shelter as often inadequate to cater for the specific needs of the most vulnerable returnees,

including for example lone mothers with children. It was mentioned that some shelters have been opened for them and that, whereby they have returned through the AVR system, they have been provided with a specific package for reintegration, but we could not gather more specific details on this²².

The average length of stay in shelters is 6 weeks, a period that is hardly insufficient to provide effective support for reintegration. At the same time, some occupants have stayed over two years due to on-going investigations in which they were involved, arguably to the detriment of their reintegration. We will come back to this point.

Once they eventually leave shelters, returnees can find themselves stranded in face of unwelcoming attitudes by their communities due to stigmatisation. This points to the need to involve communities in the process of reintegration, rather than working on returnees alone, as it they were isolated individuals with no social ties.

Services provided range from basic medical services, that are present in most shelters - although not always with adequate standards - to psycho-social and counselling support services that are also scarce. The latter have been thoroughly described as very important in the reintegration of returnees. Human Rights Watch (2019) reported that the majority of the survivors suffer from long-term mental and physical health problems. However, from our interviewees' statements, it is not clear what psychological support actual entail. Additionally, their impact on returnees' trajectories been monitored, leaving such impact open for further research. In some shelters the staff is insufficiently trained and the shelters are poorly managed as a result. Particular criticism has been raised regarding the "closed shelter policy" operated by NAPTIP, for example. While it is intended to protect occupants, it does not seem to fulfil this goal and it frustrates the reintegration of people. As a few returnees that we managed to interview explained, shelters are often

²² Fieldwork note, 21.01.2021.

experienced as detention-like types of accommodation with severe limitation to people's freedom which prevents them from progressively re-building contacts with their families and communities. Critical observations have been made by stakeholders also with regard to access to training and employment opportunities: various programmes are available for returnees but insufficient efforts have been made to inform returnees and scarce coordination among providers resources have resulted in overlaps and fragmented support. Furthermore, returnees have lamented little consideration for their aspiration and the non-sustainability of employment support. In many cases, economic resources have been delivered for the launch of small enterprises, but these have proved sufficient only when they open it and run them for a year, not to consolidate the actual activity, meaning that returnees often find themselves without a job in the medium term, with the likelihood for them to experience the same conditions that brought them to undertake irregular migration and eventually trafficking trajectories.

More generally, the INSigHT research highlighted the need to promote a regular monitoring of shelters' activities but also of the experiences and trajectories of returnees in order to assess the effectiveness of programmes and improve the understanding of how returnees can be best supported in the short and even more also in the medium-long term.

MRC argued that funds are disbursed to returnees without punctual follow up and that training activities are hardly evaluated. GPI and ETATH reported that little evaluation is undertaken by IOM with regard to AVR, let alone by other stakeholders dealing with forced returns. Institutional steps towards

improved monitoring have been made with the introduction of a referral mechanism. The latter entails, among other steps, a process of self-assessment by reintegration stakeholders, on a monthly basis. Yet, to our knowledge, this has not been done.

Returns should not be understood as the last step of migration. It is a process, a complex process. In order to deal with it, stakeholders should consider individuals' experience and social status prior to migration and in the country of destination, besides considering the conditions of their return. Returnees are not always accepted by their communities, they can suffer stigmatisation and feel unwelcome, besides experiencing exposure to risks. This suggests that policy definitions should not focus on individuals only, but also on the receiving society.

Communities and families should be definitely involved in reintegration programmes as well as in awareness raising targeted to people who were victims of trafficking but also communities and families themselves, as forms of stigmatisation and rejection by family members and communities have been reported²³. As pointed by the INSigHT Research (see Semprebbon, 2020)²⁴, awareness raising campaigns have been on-going for more than a decade and they have increased considerably in the period 2014-2017, with strong support by EU institutions and Member States, as well as international organisations such as UNODC and IOM. Our interviewees reported of regular weekly awareness-raising activities by the National Youths Service Corp, in collaboration with the NAPTIP Lagos Zonal Command. The involvement of the Corp members has been explained as crucial to the agency, since they operate with and within the community and are very close to people. The involvement of survivors has been argued as

²³ Iziengbe, O. (2017). The Economy of International Prostitution in Benin and the Place of the "Purray Boys". IFRA E-paper. Available: <https://www.ifra-nigeria.org/publications/e-papers/222-patiziengbe-omoregie-2017-the-economy-of-in>; see also Eghafona, 2018 in note 14.

²⁴ Semprebbon, M. (2020). "Fighting Human Trafficking in Nigeria: a Gap Analysis of recent and ongoing projects (2010-2019)", SSIIM UNESCO Chair, Università Iuav di Venezia. Available: https://www.insightproject.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/INSigHt_Gap_Analysis_Report_ICMPD_DEF20200928-2.pdf Last access: 20.02.2021.

crucial too but it has been unpopular, with some exceptions, including the activities by Pathfinders Justice Initiative. Needless to say, the protection of returnees and survivors begins with their identification and referral. As mentioned above, a National Referral Mechanism was established in Nigeria, in 2015. According to the related guidelines, it is the responsibility of all stakeholders to refer returnees and survivors to NAPTIP and to

service providers for access to specialized services. This is certainly a crucial aspect to complement any awareness raising activity, but as lamented by NAPTIP, not all awareness raising activities include the contact point of NAPTIP in all their information packages. Because of this the agency argues that potential victims of trafficking may be left without a reference contact should they wish to ask for help.

Promising practices

Nigeria-German Centre for jobs, Migration and Reintegration (NGC)

The NGC gives support to specific target groups, including unemployed young people, refugees within Nigeria and returnees, in collaboration with the Migrants Resource Centre of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment. The NGC started operated in 2018. As at today, the centre operates in 3 states across the country, Abuja, Lagos and Benin, with focus on job creation and reintegration programmes.

The services include the following: job opportunities and training (on employability, development of entrepreneurial skills, digital skills), start-up opportunities for returnees and help with developing job prospects and give referrals to employers, temporary accommodations for returnees and referral to partner organisations, psychosocial support and social integration, health services with partners and importantly also informed advice on options for regular migration to Germany.

Contacts

Website: <https://www.startfinder.de/en/advisory-centre/nigeria>

Email: info@startfinder.de

Pathfinders Justice Initiative and the “Pathway to Freedom” Package for reintegration

Pathfinders Justice Initiative has developed a programme with two arms: help young women and girls vulnerable to being trafficked and assist those who have already been trafficked to rebuild their lives with custom PATH (Personalized Action to Healing), legal services, financial literacy and start-up capital, vocational skills training, education scholarships, job training and placement, counselling, medical services and housing. The Pathfinder Project can count on a social enterprise, an adapted ‘basic income guarantee model’ to provide survivors with sustained, monthly income generated via their own businesses. Pathfinders manages a 20-bed safehouse facility in Benin, entirely dedicated to sex-trafficking survivors. The programme Truth Tellers engages male allies as a way of building cross-gender support and breaking down cultural norms around the devaluation of women, through campaigns, training, seminars, daily public service announcements on radio and monthly outreach initiatives and workshops. Pathfinders has partners in Russia, Europe and Middle East.

Contacts

Website: www.pathfindersji.org

Email: info@pathfindersji.org

Nigerian Women Association and awareness raising with communities

Nigerian Women Association carries out family tracing activities with the assistance of members resident in Nigeria. Occasionally, it set up temporal shelters for survivors to facilitate their reintegration in their family. Nigerian Women Association has been operating, thanks to the INSigHT Action, an anti-trafficking helpdesk in Lagos (Ikeja) targeting survivor returnees but also people victims and potential victims of trafficking more generally and potential migrants, with the main aim to provide them and the wider community with a stable contact point at the local level to find information on how to counter trafficking and protect those involved as well as to organise awareness raising activities with the involvement of schools, community leaders and local municipalities, as to reach out to local communities.

Contacts

Website: <https://nwaverona.org/>

Email: <https://nwaverona.org/contact/>

Recommendations for improved transnational cooperation to protect returnees victims of trafficking

1. Ensure the active involvement of returnees in the definition and implementation of reintegration programmes, as to promote programmes that respect minimum standards but are also best tailored to their needs and aspirations thus preventing any form of further exploitation.
2. Fund transnational research on the experience of returnees in the medium-long term (considering experiences in both the sending and the destination countries) to evaluate the effectiveness of return and reintegration programmes.
3. Put in place a monitoring mechanism aimed at ensuring improved transparency of all forms of returns and of reintegration programmes, aimed at favouring improved collaboration among relevant stakeholders and to ensure the protection of returnees, particularly the most vulnerable (i.e. women, women with children and unaccompanied minors);
4. Promote capacity building to ensure the implementation of the National Referral Mechanism in Nigeria and to extend its scope to European host countries and Nigerian local communities.
5. Continue working towards the eradication of the root causes of trafficking, including poverty, lack of educational and employment opportunities, but also lack of legal migration channels and of channels for circular migration to ensure people are granted the right to movement and are facilitated in the development of transnational entrepreneurial and employment activities, while also strengthening the cooperation between Nigeria, as well as other African countries, and EU countries.

This policy brief was written by Michela Semperebon and Abe Oluwafemi Moses, SSIIM Unesco Chair, University Iuav of Venice (Italy), as part of the INSigHT Action (Building capacity to deal with human trafficking and transit routes in Nigeria, Italy, Sweden) that aims at increasing the capacity of key local stakeholders in the Veneto region (Italy), Edo and Lagos states (Nigeria) and Sweden to tackle human trafficking and to deal with its evolving dynamics. The Action will focus on the trafficking of young Nigerian women while promoting knowledge-based policymaking in the respective countries and reinforcing transnational cooperation on the topic.

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