



From Brain Drain to Skills Gain: Policy Recommendations for the Successful Integration of Return Migrants in Senegal

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Executive statement



This policy brief examines the impact of return migration on professional insertion in Senegal. Given the large number of Senegalese migrants that live abroad, this study focuses on the economic impact of their homecoming. The study highlights the positive impact of migration on their return and professional integration,



given the higher chances of return migrants being integrated into the labour market as compared to non-migrants. The study also identifies determinants of the economic reintegration of return migrants, such as their status in the host country and the skills they acquired as well as their social capital. The concept note recommends that policies that help in the integration of return migrants should be formulated, particularly for those return migrants who have not received any assistance in moving back to their country.



Background and statement of the problem

Senegal is one of the sub-Saharan African countries that has the highest number of emigrants. In 2019, out of a population of close to 16 million people, 640 thousand people that were born in Senegal, lived in another country, of which 45% were to be found in Africa, and 48% in Europe. The main factor that influences migration is the search for better standards of living and employment; wages, social security and employment opportunities being drivers for migration. A focus on Economic issues related to return migrants is important for two reasons: The first is that a significant number of return migrants (37%) consider migrating once more just six months after their return to Senegal. The second is that there are very few studies on the subject. This policy brief aims to fill this gap by examining the impact of return migration on professional insertion in Senegal.

Results and implications

Research has demonstrated that return migration has a positive and significant impact on professional insertion. Regardless of the location of their home country, return migrants have a better chance of being integrated into the labour markets than non-migrants. The status of the host country, the way they went back home, as

well as the competencies they acquired and their social capital, play a significant role in the economic reintegration of migrants on their return home. Senegal does not yet have a policy document on migration. Since 2015, ILO has coordinated and financed the process of coming up with a migratory policy for the country. Nevertheless there is an



Investment Fund for the Support of Senegalese migrants known as Fonds d'Appui à l'investissement des Sénégalais de l'Extérieur, which is mainly targeted towards the support of emigrants. This concept note recommends that policies be developed in order to help in the integration of return migrants, particularly those who received repatriation assistance. This could include access to income generating activities and to decent jobs, as well as satisfying the needs of returnees in terms of accommodation, healthcare and education. Targeted integration programmes, such as the training and requalification of returnees or the creation of an enabling environment that would allow them to put into use their competencies would be a way to resolve these problems. With the right support, return migrants could become a significant source of development for their countries of origin.



Mission

To strengthen local capacity for conducting independent, rigorous inquiry into the problems facing the management of economies in sub-Saharan Africa.

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