



## JOINT EU-IOM-MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS (MINREX) CAMEROON PRESS RELEASE



### **More than 1,500 returnees to Cameroon settled by the International Organization for Migration, with the support of the State and with funding from the European Union**

**Yaoundé (Cameroon), 12 November 2019** - Today, 12 November 2019, the Steering Committee of the Joint EU-IOM Initiative for the Protection and Reintegration of Migrants met in the Proceedings Room of the Ministry of External Relations. This session is the penultimate of this project, which ends at the end of 2020.

*"The EU is pleased to have been able, through an initiative led by IOM, to support the voluntary return and reintegration of large numbers of Cameroonian migrants stranded on the "Mediterranean Route". The results of this initiative, at mid-term, are very encouraging, particularly here in Cameroon. More generally, it must be said that the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, set up in 2015, is a very concrete initiative that has created more than 167,000 jobs for African migrants. It is therefore a beneficial project, both for these migrants and for the economy in their countries of origin,"* said Ambassador Hans-Peter SCHADEK, Head of the EU Delegation in Cameroon.

The joint EU-IOM initiative for the protection and reintegration of migrants, implemented by IOM with the support of the Cameroonian government and under EU funding, aims to support the socio-economic reintegration of returning migrants and raise awareness among potential migrants and their communities about the dangers of irregular migration.

*"Cameroon, while pleased to be one of the 14 target countries of this Initiative, measures its challenges in order to reap the best possible dividends. The strong involvement of public authorities alongside development partners is a strong commitment of the Government. The presence in this room of representatives from thirteen ministerial departments, four administrations involved, and six civil society organizations is a sufficient proof of the importance*

given to migration issues in our country," said Mr ABANCHIME LIMANGANA, Acting Secretary General of MINREX on behalf of Minister MBELLA MBELLA.

Launched in June 2017, aiming to offer a second chance to 850 migrants returning to their countries of origin, the project has so far received more than 3,500 migrants, more than half of whom have been supported in starting an income-generating activity or training.

*"Despite the challenges related to the major increase in the number of direct beneficiaries of the project, we were able to assist 3,590 migrants. 3,514 of them, in vulnerable situations, received counselling for better reintegration. 1,574 were effectively reintegrated, 3,389 received social support and 571 received psychosocial support,"* said Dr. Boubacar SEYBOU, IOM Head of Mission in Cameroon.

Today's meeting provided an opportunity to review progress, challenges and lessons learned in the various components of the initiative. It also provided an opportunity to reflect on strategies to ensure the sustainability of this initiative.

According to Mrs Allegra Maria Del Pilar BAIOCCHI, Resident Coordinator of the United Nations System in Yaoundé, *"The sustainability of this project will make it possible to preserve its current achievements for the benefit of the Cameroonian population. It is also, she added, an important contribution to efforts to achieve the MDGs related to poverty reduction, justice and economic development in Cameroon"*.

The meeting was attended by the heads of the administration's members of the Steering Committee, representatives of the civil society organisations involved in the project, representatives of international organisations and representatives of Member States of the European Union.

**For more information:**

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