

SUCCESS STORY

Returned migrants receive vocational training courses in countries of origin

Action for Protection and Integration of Migrants in Africa (APIMA) Project



Omar is very proud of his creation.

Photo taken by Nicoleta Ursescu

"My life is different now. Before I was losing a lot of time by searching for a job, but now I have a stable job place."

- Omar Kone

Searching for a job can feel overwhelming and endless, and the stakes are high. Without any income soon, you could risk losing your home. Meals are harder to afford. There are people that depend on you for their daily needs.

Omar Kone, 23 years ago, felt this heavy burden. He was taking daily jobs, often on fishing boats, but his income always depended on the type of fish found and the time of the year. Sometimes, he was able to earn \$25 a day, but mostly he could barely earn \$1.50 a day. The little income he earned was not enough to support his wife and two children.

Like many young people, Omar was discouraged by few employment opportunities and started to look outside his country and towards Europe, his last hope for a better life.

Seeing no other choice, he made the dangerous decision to migrate. When Omar reached the Canaries Islands, government authorities sent him back home.

The little money he saved for travel to Europe was gone, leaving him and his family in an even worse situation than before his journey.

Finally, Omar, as member of a local organization of returned migrants, found the opportunity he was looking for.

CRS enrolled Omar in vocational training so he could learn new skills, access employment and earn a decent living.

The CRS project, Action for the Protection of Irregular Migrants in West Africa, also known as APIMA, is helping hundreds of youth and returned migrants across the West African region.

"I like sewing traditional Senegalese clothes that's why I have chosen this training," says Omar.

Today Omar has a steady job in a local tailoring shop. He is able to support his family. His goal is to earn enough money to send his children to school, as he did not get this chance. Omar's dream is to own a tailoring shop and improve his skills in the client's service. For this reason, Omar followed a five-day Youth Life and Employability Skills development training. Thanks to CRS' APIMA program, Omar is building a decent life for himself and his family.

