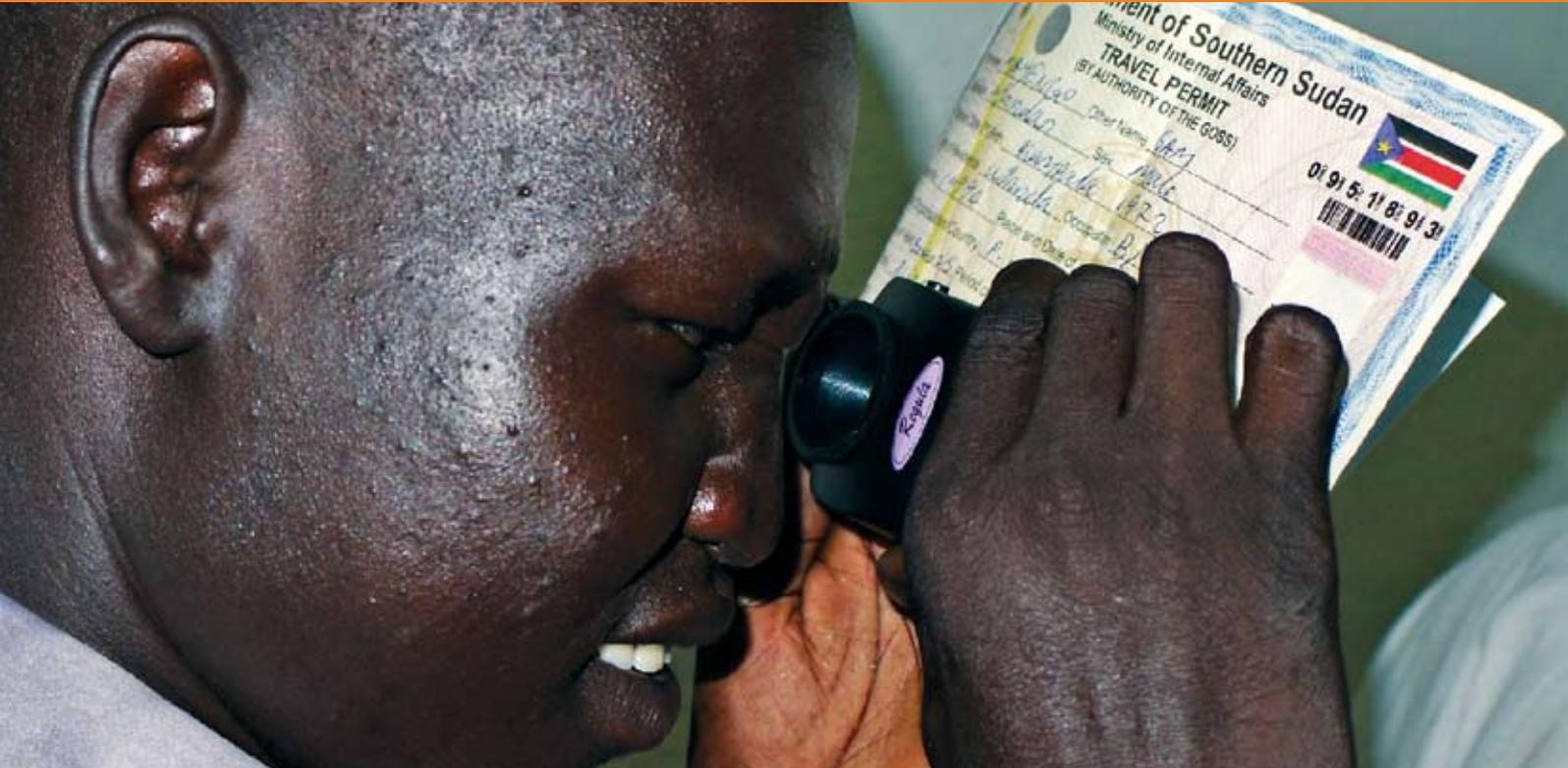




# The Immigration and Border Management Programme



An immigration official from South Sudan checks the security features of a travel permit under in the framework of a Capacity Building in Migration Management project, December 2010. © IOM

The Immigration and Border Management (IBM) programme has evolved steadily in recent years in response to the need for innovative solutions to manage ever-increasing migration flows.

The IBM team – a core group of specialists in both Headquarters and strategic locations in the Field – is committed to supporting this evolution by providing the highest quality of service to IOM’s Member States.

This newsletter – the first one specifically dedicated to IBM projects – provides an overview of some of the projects either being implemented or being planned under the IBM programme. The showcased projects reflect the diversity of our work under the IBM programme and our commitment to design solutions that align with the needs and realities of our government partners with a constant concern for reliability, flexibility and long-run sustainability.

In 2010, the IBM programme had over 300 active projects globally with a value of nearly USD 90 million. Throughout the year, 65 new projects were launched. These projects underscore ongoing government commitment to improve visa processing and migration and border management, and they all contribute towards IOM’s global objective of promoting humane and orderly migration.

Looking forward to jointly addressing IBM challenges that will arise tomorrow,

The Immigration and Border Management Capacity-building Team

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## IOM Sri Lanka to conduct a migration and border management exercise in the Maldives

After having led migration and border management assessments in over 20 countries in 2010, the IBM Team could soon be embarking on a new assessment exercise in the Maldives Islands with IOM Colombo staff.

This project appears particularly challenging given the Maldives' exceptional geographical configuration, which makes this archipelago with over a thousand islands one of the most dispersed countries in the world.

The Maldivian authorities face a double issue: the need to efficiently control sea borders that spread over 90,000 sq km and the necessity to efficiently manage incoming flows of people of different natures – tourists, migrant workers and irregular migrants. Indeed, the archipelago, favourably located south-west of India and Sri Lanka in the Indian Ocean, has been attracting increasing numbers of tourists in the past years. There were 750,000 tourists to the Maldives in 2010 (by contrast, the total population of the Maldives is estimated at 350,000), sustaining the growth of the tourist industry, which accounted for 23 per cent of the country's GDP in 2009. However, the Maldives also is a destination for migrant workers, notably from Bangladesh, of which a significant proportion is in an irregular situation. The Maldivian agency in charge, the Department of Immigration and Emigration, is therefore requested to deploy capacities accordingly, through its 224 officials, who either work at visa-issuing offices or at the two international airports and the four seaports.

This difficult equation highlights the need to develop an ad hoc border management policy, able to tackle issues as diverse as improving efficiency while relying on limited staffing capacities, enhancing border and identity management procedures, reforming the visa-issuance system, training immigration and border officials, and framing this policy in effective legal instruments.

Eager to address these numerous migration challenges, the Maldives, through its Department of Immigration and Emigration, requested the assistance of IOM to carry out a comprehensive migration management assessment in the

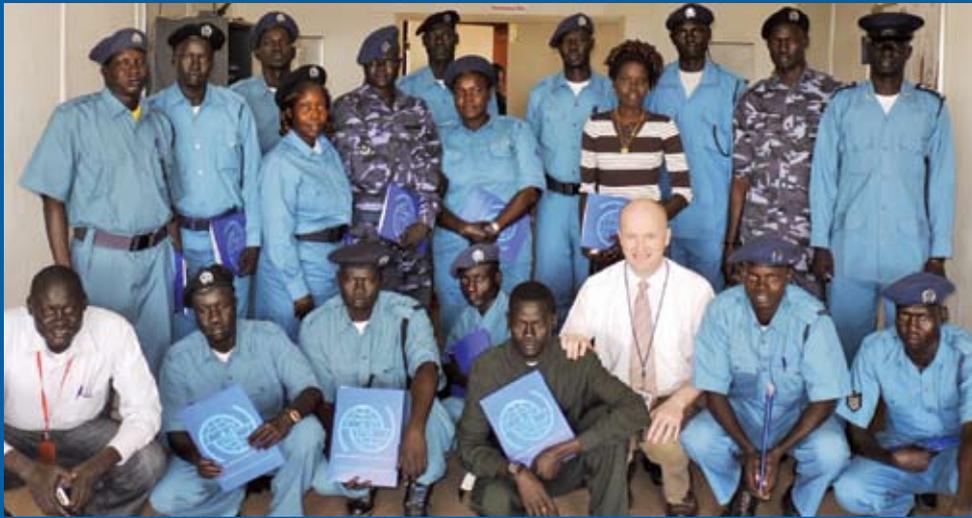
country and subsequently elaborate, in close cooperation with the authorities and based on the assessment's holistic recommendations, a five-year strategic plan aimed at improving overall migration management capabilities.

Due to the geographical proximity of the archipelago to Sri Lanka, the Controller General of the Maldives' Minister of State for Immigration and Emigration has been in contact with IOM Colombo, whose staff are preparing to conduct an assessment of the Maldives' migration management and border control systems, including its capacity to manage regular and irregular movement of people. Richard Danziger, Chief of Mission of IOM's office in Colombo, outlined that this project would embody "an important cooperation opportunity between the Maldives and IOM, which would be of particular significance given the upcoming membership of the Maldives to IOM."

When funding becomes available, IOM Colombo will be conducting an assessment in the framework of the IOM-established diagnostic template, which is broken down into four interrelated components (regulatory framework, administration, information technology and operational systems). A questionnaire would first be sent to Maldivian authorities in order to obtain an overview of the existing border control and migration management system in use. Once the questionnaire is completed, the IOM assessment team will visit the archipelago for an in-country mission to hold discussions with Maldivian government officials from relevant migration and border management agencies on identified needs, as well as to review actual facilities and equipment and to collect material on laws, policies and procedures and their application.

The final report resulting from this forecast assessment exercise would then be presented by IOM to the Government of Maldives at a one-day workshop in the capital, Malé, to which senior management of the Department of Immigration and Emigration and other key stakeholders would be invited. □

## Capacity-building in migration management in South Sudan



South Sudan immigration officials from three land border check points (Nadapal border with Kenya, and the Nimule border and Kaya border with Uganda) who attended the IOM training on travel document security, document fraud, impostor detection and elements of IOM's *Essentials of Migration Practice* under the CBMM project "Enhancing Border Security and Migration Along Sudan's Borders with Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda" in December 2010. © IOM

South Sudan has experienced complex dynamics since the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005 and the end of the civil war in Sudan. Under the Peace Agreement, the responsibility for immigration functions sits with the central government in Khartoum. However, the realities on the ground led to a refinement of this arrangement, whereby the land borders in the south are in fact controlled by the Government of South Sudan's Directorate of Immigration and Alien Control and Juba International Airport reports to Khartoum. Such a situation is highly unusual and has had potentially inconsistent consequences: for example, a person holding a travel permit for South Sudan arriving at a land border in the south may be welcomed in; however, when arriving at Juba International Airport, this person may nonetheless be deemed unacceptable on account of his or her nationality being restricted by Khartoum.

The Capacity-building in Migration Management (CBMM) project consequently developed was the first Sudan-specific border management programme and was funded by the Government of the United Kingdom. Implementation of the project began in September 2010. Although originally conceived as a project covering the whole of Sudan, it quickly became apparent – even at the early stages of implementation – that both north and south would have to be treated separately, even in advance of the referendum on independence for the southern part of the country. IOM has been working closely with the Government of South Sudan in matters connected with border management. Three borders (two with Uganda and one with Kenya) are to benefit from IOM's personal identification and registration system (PIRS). This will enable immigration officials to manage data concerning those crossing the borders and will also include an alert list to assist with the

identification of specific people. To ensure sustainability, IOM has arranged for government officials to be trained in IT skills at the University of Juba. In addition, training on travel document examination and impostor identification and on IOM's *Essentials of Migration Practice* has been delivered by in-house experts. The trained officials had previously only received rudimentary training or no training at all; thus, they were extremely engaged in the theoretical and practical sessions.

The project has given IOM the opportunity to assist with border management challenges in a country in waiting with little or no infrastructure currently in place. The challenges are enormous in number but a start has been made and IOM has been recognized by the Government of South Sudan as a reliable, active and commercially neutral partner to work with. It seems highly likely that IOM will receive further funding to build on the achievements to date. □



Immigration officials from South Sudan's Nimule border with Uganda check the security features of machine-readable and electronic passports during an IOM travel document training delivered under the CBMM project "Enhancing Border Security and Migration along Sudan's Borders with Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda" in December 2010. © IOM

## Capacity-building in migration management in Haiti



CBMM training aims to build government capacity and ensure border management viability. © IOM

Despite improvements in Haiti's security situation since 2004, the violent events of 2008, the earthquake of January 2010 and the recent election havoc have shown that the country is still vulnerable and has considerable challenges ahead.

In terms of migration management, this translates to porous borders and ineffective border control. Such weaknesses are easily exploited by organized criminal networks that have transformed Haiti into an important place for the trafficking of drugs, arms and people. Moreover, illegal migration transiting in, or originating from Haiti, towards more developed countries increases social tensions with Haiti's neighbouring countries in the Caribbean.

Haiti's CBMM programmes were drafted in 2005 to address these issues. Formed by IOM, the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism within the joint Haiti Migration Management Assessment group, the objectives of these programmes are to strengthen border and migration management, improve government capacities in counter-trafficking and smuggling in persons, and eventually enhance security in the country and in the region.

The CBMM programmes rely on the funding of the Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force of the Government of Canada – with over 6 million Canadian dollars so far. They are unfolding in three phases from 2007 to 2013.

During the 2007–2008 pilot phase, and in partnership with the Ministry of Interior and of Collective Territories and its Office for Immigration and Emigration, CBMM focused on

reinforcing the technical and human capacities of Haitian officials in charge of migration management. This notably resulted in the creation of a permanent training unit on border management within the Ministry of Interior, in the provision of both basic and specialized technical equipment to the mainland, border and sea posts, as well as in the update of national legislation on migration.

The second phase of the project, CBMM2 (2008 to present) puts further emphasis on training of immigration, customs and police officers. To date, these programmes have trained over 600 law enforcement officers and ensured that all newly recruited police cadets receive counter-trafficking training.

CBMM2 also introduced new project components: the evaluation of the existing Border Management Information System (BMIS) and of the Passport Production and Issuing System was launched in collaboration with the Canada Border Service Agency and Passport Canada. This was followed by the installation of a newly purchased BMIS at 12 land, sea and air border posts in Haiti, aiming at collecting entry and exit migration data. These activities permitted the enhancement of regional dialogue through regional consultations and technical workshops that led to encouraging results.

Last but not least, eager to contribute to the emergency response after the devastating earthquake of January 2010, Haiti's CBMM project team responded to the emergency situation by providing condensed border management training (mobile sessions) at border posts to boost officers' capacity to face the surge in activities. □



## Russian Federation: The Rosgranitsa Interactive Learning Centre

Since 2007, the Russian Federation has undertaken a number of developments in its border management strategy. In particular, a new entity responsible for the management, administration and development of the borders of the Russian Federation has been established: the Federal Agency for the Development of the State Border of the Russian Federation, also named Rosgranitsa.

Rosgranitsa's objective is to address the well-known border management challenge of finding an accurate balance between facilitating movement of legitimate people and goods while maintaining secure state borders.

Building on IOM's sound IBM experience, IOM Moscow established close working contacts with Rosgranitsa in January 2009. This resulted in the signing of the IOM–Rosgranitsa Memorandum of Understanding eight months later. The cooperation shortly led to the joint development and implementation of the “Enhancement of Management of the Russian Federation's Border Checkpoints” project, which was launched on 15 September 2009, with support and financing from the European Union Representation to the Russian Federation. “We have one objective: to combine questions of security and thorough control with the rights and freedoms of the citizens,” Rosgranitsa's leader, Dmitry Bezdelov, highlighted in the project kick-off meeting on 6 April 2010.

This joint initiative aims at providing policy advice, building the capacity of Russian state agencies, and strengthening international cooperation in the area of border management. To achieve top-quality capacity-building performance, a comprehensive training curriculum was put into place. It comprises operational familiarization with border management best practices through study visits, awareness-raising workshops and training sessions. It also includes the setting-up of a computer-based training tool aimed at both evaluating and providing the agency's staff with additional border management skills. The new Interactive Learning Centre (ILC) shall be incorporated into Rosgranitsa's internal information system and will be accessible for all officers of the agency, including those working in regional offices, on remote mode. The officers will be enabled to use the ILC's modules according to their specific needs:

- The informational module contains corresponding Russian legislation, European Union legal documents and border management documents.
- The testing module consists of 60 questions for evaluation of the level of the professionalism for the staff of the agency.
- The interactive 3D simulator allows users to build checkpoints virtually and establish matching operational scenarios. □



The delegation of Rosgranitsa visiting Muuga sea port of Estonia within the framework of study tour to Poland and Baltic states in October 2010. © IOM

## The African Capacity-building Centre: Capacity-building in migration and identity management within Africa<sup>1</sup>

Capacity-building in migration and identity management within Africa is a challenge to say the least. The task is complicated by the fact that most migrants enter or leave at remote land border crossing points (BCPs) that lack basic communication infrastructure, electricity and piped water, let alone sophisticated border management information systems (BMIS), 24/7 Internet access and other services that one might expect to see at an advanced border crossing point.

It is at these extreme locations that the continent's real immigration officers carry out their work, often with limited initial training in migration and identity management. Some officers manage BCPs on their own, without any support from colleagues. To complicate matters, these officers are expected to keep the BCP open 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Few are able to take leave, least of all find the time to attend a training course.

A more pronounced focus on capacity-building by receiving partner countries has been evident across the African continent since the turn of the century. It is a shift that has been well received by the majority of countries, all the more so because some lack even the fundamental capacity to train their own staff, not to mention updated laws or documented policies and procedures. The majority of training has traditionally focused on airport staff, albeit coordination between programmes and countries was often lacking. This was partly because countries are trained on a bilateral rather than regional basis.

However, this approach fails to acknowledge that most migration movements in Africa – even flows from a central hub in a single country – actually originate from any number of surrounding countries. It could be argued that some of the earlier training ignored migration patterns within African countries, focusing exclusively on the migration pattern of the receiving country.

A recent study commissioned by IOM<sup>2</sup> substantiates this view. The study estimates that between 17,000 and 20,000 irregular (male) migrants are smuggled from the Horn of Africa to the south of Africa each year (along the eastern



Gatumba border control office. © IOM

land and marine routes). According to the study: “The irregular migrants looking to be taken to the Republic of South Africa (RSA) from Ethiopia and Somalia have a number of choices in terms of mode of travel, depending primarily on their economic status but also on the choices offered by smugglers at any particular time. The ‘deluxe’, and most direct, entry into RSA involves flying. The necessary paperwork, including obtaining a passport, visas as well as the ticket itself, makes this a costly option for most aspiring migrants. However, (those who fly) are a minority, comprising only 5 per cent of Ethiopians interviewed and 3 per cent of Somalis interviewed.”

The challenges faced by African nations extend beyond training capacity. As indicated in the working paper of the 19th meeting of the Technical Advisory Group on Machine Readable Travel Documents<sup>3</sup> (TAG-MRTD), there are 12 states that currently do not issue machine-readable passports (MRPs), even though they are expected to meet the April 2010 deadline. Of these, five are African. Perhaps more significantly, of the nine states that are not expected

<sup>1</sup> This article was published in the *Keesing Journal of Documents & Identity*, Issue 31, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> International Organization for Migration (IOM), *In Pursuit of the Southern Dream: Victims of Necessity, Assessment of the irregular movement of men from East Africa and the Horn to South Africa*, April 2009.

<sup>3</sup> International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Working Paper, 19th Meeting of the Technical Advisory Group on Machine Readable Travel Documents (TAG-MRTD) [www.icao.int/icao/en/atb/meetings/2009/TAGMRTD19/Docs/TagMrtd19-wp14.pdf](http://www.icao.int/icao/en/atb/meetings/2009/TAGMRTD19/Docs/TagMrtd19-wp14.pdf), accessed 17 December, 2009.



ACBC headquarters in Moshi, Tanzania. © IOM

to meet the deadline, five are African. Moreover, three African states that already issue MRP passports have failed to meet all ICAO standards. These statistics clearly indicate that the process of upgrading passport design has been – and continues to be – a significant challenge for many African nations.

When it comes to passport issuance and the availability of credible breeder documents, African nations face an even greater challenge. In the past, the TAG MRTD has clearly indicated that breeder documents have the potential to undermine passport integrity.

Africa houses large populations in areas with limited access to services and government infrastructure. It is a medley of thousands of different cultures, most of which have not historically attributed as much importance to breeder documents as the governments of developed nations. As indicated in a UNICEF report dated 2005,<sup>4</sup> with regard to unrecorded births across the world, approximately 55 per cent of births in sub-Saharan Africa are unrecorded. To put this percentage in perspective, Africa's population was estimated at 999 million<sup>5</sup> in 2009. This high incidence of non-registration may be attributed to several cultural, educational and institutional factors, including, of course, the absence of government infrastructure and mechanisms needed to support full registration. The high number of unregistered births presents authorities with a monumental identity management challenge.

Even if all citizens are registered and issued with an MRTD, there is no telling how many African states have passport readers at all airports, not to mention overland crossing

points. A workable infrastructure – including border management information systems – is clearly missing, preventing African states from properly managing, anticipating and planning migration movements.

Of course, the above is not news to the African states themselves. As such, they recognize the need for enhanced capacity-building as well as better coordination and support for (and of) infrastructural and technology improvements. They also recognize that they face the same or similar challenges when it comes to identity and migration management, as well as the exchange of information and local experience at the bilateral and regional levels. As it was felt that this exchange would benefit from a pan-African mechanism for capacity-building, the 127 Member States of IOM at the time asked the organization to establish

a bespoke capacity-building centre in mid-2008.

In February 2009, William Lacy Swing, the IOM Director General, signed an agreement establishing the African Capacity-building Centre (ACBC). The centre is located in the same building as the Tanzania Regional Immigration Training Academy. Operations at the ACBC commenced with the arrival of a training specialist in migration management in June 2009. The organization's offices were refurbished by September 2009, whereupon they were occupied by a migration specialist in technical cooperation and two programme assistants, allowing training courses to be given in French as of October/November of the same year.

The ACBC is located in a modern, well-equipped building in Moshi, Tanzania. The centre focuses on the development, coordination and delivery of customized, needs-targeted migration and identity management training to migration officials from all over Africa. It consists of three training rooms equipped for 20 people each, three computer rooms for 12 people each, a conference hall with interpretation booths for up to 120 people, a forensic laboratory, and a forensic training room for up to 12 people. The facility includes two residential towers that can accommodate up to 40 people. One of the computer laboratories is equipped to provide BMIS training using webcams, finger-print readers, and passport scanners. The complex also offers

<sup>4</sup> UNICEF, *Universal Birth Registration: The Challenge in Africa*. Paper prepared for the Second Eastern and Southern Africa Conference on Universal Birth Registration Mombasa, Kenya, September 26 - 30, 2005, [www.africanchildforum.org/Documents/Universal%20Birth%20Registration\\_final.pdf](http://www.africanchildforum.org/Documents/Universal%20Birth%20Registration_final.pdf), accessed 17 December, 2009.

<sup>5</sup> Population Reference Bureau (PRB), *World Population Datasheet - 2009*, [www.prb.org/Publications/Datasheets/2009/2009wpds.aspx](http://www.prb.org/Publications/Datasheets/2009/2009wpds.aspx), accessed 17 December, 2009.

six electronic smart boards, six LCD projectors, a VSAT Internet link, and air conditioning in all rooms. The forensic equipment was generously donated by various companies and donor governments. It is equipped with a microscope, a Projectina Dragon Docubox video spectral comparator, a Foster & Freeman VSC4-PLUS Video Spectral Comparator and F&F Eye-D unit, a Regula 4017 videoscope with a Regula 4305 spectral luminescence magnifier smart mouse, 10 Projectiona desk-top combo units, multiple Regula brand handheld 1012 combo units, and various other passport examination combo kits. As a result, the centre is able to provide cross-training on different types of document examination equipment.

The centre is also equipped with a library, which boasts important reference works, including the seven-volume set of Regula's *Atlas of Passports*, the *New Zealand Police Printing Manual*, and several copies of the *IOM Passport Examination Procedure Manual* in both English and French. Via the ACBC, IOM actively assists African states with their migration and identity management challenges. Although 2009 was a start-up year, several training courses and related developments have already been initiated (and are ongoing).

To assist states with the redesign and procurement of new identification documents, IOM has supported the production of *Documents: The Developers Toolkit*. Resources of this type enable the ACBC to offer multinational training courses to countries in the process of redesigning or procuring ID documents. As an active member of the ICAO Capacity-building and Implementation Working Group, IOM has, over the last four years, organized several multi-country workshops throughout Africa, covering subjects such as biometrics and identity documents. The courses support ongoing preparations for the introduction of new MRPs. The centre scheduled a workshop for 2010 that aimed to share information and local experiences with the implementation of processes and systems, as well as the registration of citizens.

*The Passport Examination Procedure Manual* is currently being translated into Spanish and Russian, with a Portuguese version set to follow shortly. The manual is authored by the ACBC training specialist and designed with the African continent in mind. It offers a step-by-step examination procedure and decision flowchart supported by step-critical answers to frequently asked questions. This information-assisted, step-critical approach is important for all immigration officers who lack technical support on account of the geographical isolation of their BCP. The manual is already available in English, French and Arabic, and provides an excellent tool for detecting

document fraud across Africa. Several training courses have been given using this resource; under one initiative, for example, 12 Somali border officials from Bosaso and Mogadishu attended a three-day course at the centre. In the past, these officials would have had limited access to such training, which also provides an excellent opportunity to meet and compare notes with colleagues. Given the centre's forensic facilities and focus on the coordination of information, training-of-trainers courses on the subject of document examination were also held and were attended by border officials of East African states. The ACBC also hopes to establish a coordination centre for the exchange of document alert information. To this end, it hopes to train a local government official as the in-house forensic specialist charged with the analysis, development and coordination of future document alerts. Given ACBC's in-house expertise, the official would undergo one-on-one training to ensure the effective transfer and retention of knowledge and skills.

To assist countries with technology enhancements, the ACBC also coordinates implementation support with the personal identification and registration system (PIRS). Developed by IOM, PIRS is an affordable, open-architecture border management information system that is already used by 11 African states. ACBC is scheduled to develop a computer-based training package for PIRS in early 2010, stimulating the competency-based training of African border officials.

As the objective is to establish multi-country training, a regional approach will also help to reduce national barriers to the exchange of migration data. In turn, this will improve future planning for regional migration movements. □



## Enhancing border management capacity along the Kenya–Somalia border



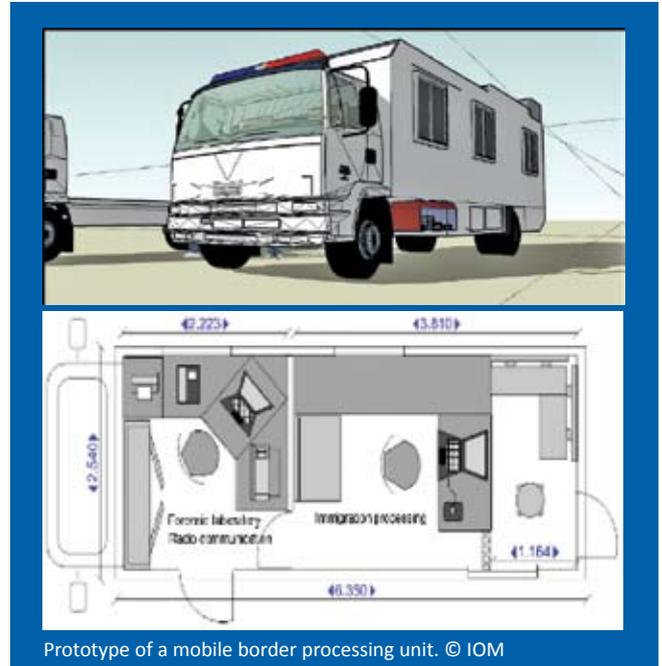
The Government of Kenya maintains only two official border points along the border with Somalia, situated approximately 600 km apart. This is far inadequate given that hundreds of migrants from Somalia enter Kenya at unauthorized ports of entry.

The concept of a mobile border processing unit (MBPU) was borne as a response to the challenges of border porosity – including an upsurge in regional transborder crime and the irregular entry and trafficking of persons from war-torn Somalia and the Horn of Africa in transit to Southern Africa – which represent important security concerns for Kenya and the East Africa region. The introduction of an MBPU appeared to be an appropriate solution to strengthen border surveillance, safety and security, and to enable the mitigation of irregular entries into Kenya.

Taking into account best practices from the European Union under the Schengen Agreement, as well as the expected operational conditions of the unit, a concept with key specifications for efficient and effective border control was developed, and included maximal mobility and flexibility of the MBPU and the appropriate IT and communication equipment to contact the central authorities and/or police units in the area.

The unit consists of two components, the first of which is to provide appropriate office space and adequate technical infrastructure to operate in remote border areas, with maximum technical self-reliance regarding power supply. These specifications are met by a single heavy duty 6/4x4 truck carrying a mobile office that includes a forensic laboratory and a communication centre in a 20-foot container. The second component consists of two patrolling vehicles with maximum off-road capabilities that complement an MBPU; these vehicles shall be used to identify, apprehend and transfer irregular migrants to the MBPU stationed at a temporarily fixed location, in accordance with previously conducted risk assessments and intelligence gathering. An MBPU is designed to operate in remote areas and under challenging climatic conditions, without any operational support for long periods; as such, priority is given to maximum off-road capability, as well as functionality through radio communication systems (HF/VHF), mobility (portable forensic/IT/power supply equipment) and durability (heavy-duty nature of truck and vehicles).

The inclusion of an MBPU to the migration management projects in Kenya is foreseen to significantly enhance the performance of the Immigration Service by increasing their presence outside official ports of entry, particularly areas where irregular movement of persons are known to happen



but are inaccessible due to challenging terrain or lack of infrastructure. Indeed, the MBPU will allow immigration and border officials to operate along main transit routes and to set up mobile checkpoints to monitor and control irregular migratory routes, with a particular attention given to the dismantling of smuggling and human trafficking networks. It should thus permit efforts to address the issue of criminal networks operating in far-flung areas that was outlined in a study conducted by IOM in 2009, where Kenya was notably described as a country of transit for numerous people smuggled across borders, on their way from East and Horn of Africa towards South Africa.

Speaking at the handover ceremony, the Minister for Immigration and Registration of Persons, Otieno Kajwang, acknowledged IOM's efforts and collaboration with the ministry in controlling and ensuring the orderly movement of persons: "Garissa and Isiolo are some of our most difficult borders to manage due to the deteriorating security situation in Somalia, with high numbers of people crossing the borders—mainly uncontrolled—every day. It is important for us to know who is moving across our borders in a timely manner and this mobile border control unit will facilitate our mobility and presence in these difficult areas."

In response, the IOM Regional Representative for East and Central Africa, Ashraf El Nour, emphasized IOM's support to the ministry: "Movement of people is fluid and this border control unit can now enable immigration officials to go where needed. It is a major milestone in the ministry's effort towards effective border management for Kenya." □

## Solomon Islands' border strengthening programme



The nation of Solomon Islands is an arc of islands in the western Pacific. It has a maritime border with Papua New Guinea in the north-west and stretches towards Vanuatu in the south-east. It has a predominantly Melanesian population of around 520,000. The capital, Honiara, is located on the northern coast of the island of Guadalcanal.

IOM's on-the-ground operation in Solomon Islands commenced in 2009 when the Border Strengthening Programme was established on the basis of a tripartite MOU involving the Government of the Solomon Islands, the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC), and IOM as the programme manager.

The need for a review of immigration legislation and service delivery capability was first identified by the Solomon Islands government in 2005. The scope of the review has been very broad. Some of the concerns that the government was seeking to address included the need to do the following:

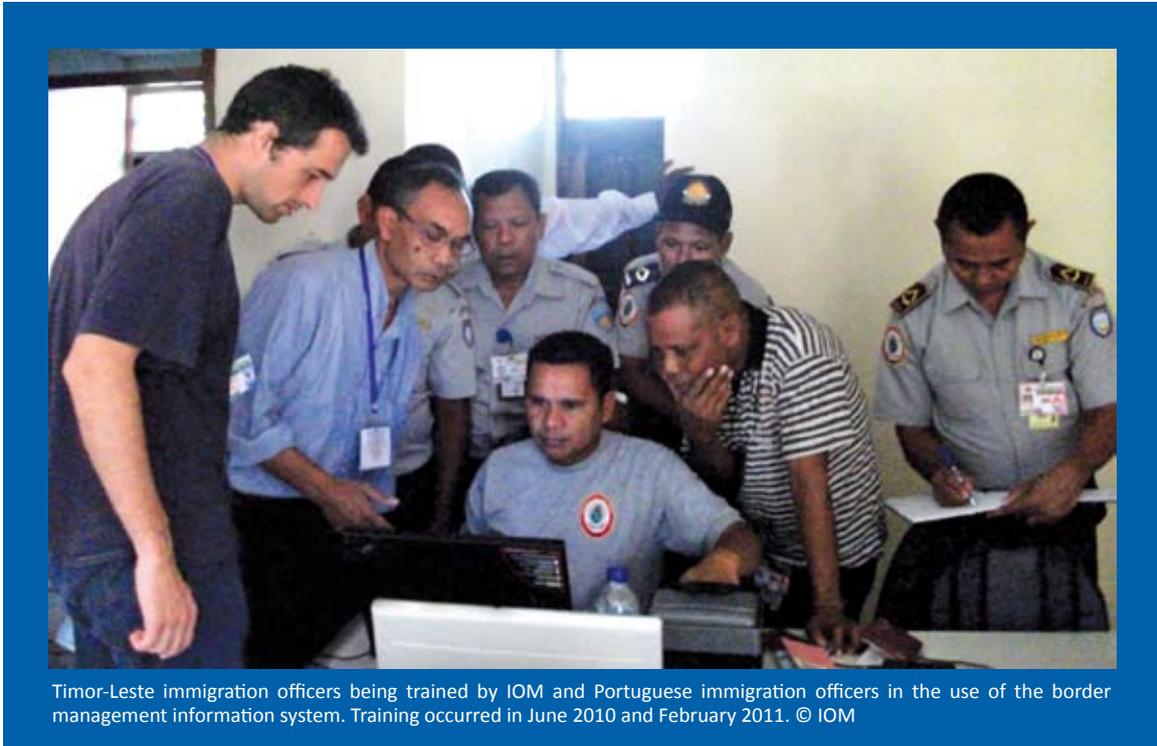
- Update legislation, to make it more comprehensive and transparent and ensure that it is harmonized with other areas of legislative development.
- Develop a more comprehensive visa system with clearly defined criteria.
- Ensure that the entry of foreign workers is managed in a way that meets the best interests of the developing economy.
- Move towards a modern and responsive system of recording data.
- Develop a more effective alert list and improve capture of advance passenger information.

The IOM Programme Manager has worked as a guest of the Solomon Islands Immigration Division. International experience and best practice mandates that broad reform processes of this type are most likely to succeed when they are well attuned to local needs and conditions and are developed within a consultative framework. To this end, IOM has worked very closely with the Immigration Division and with other stakeholders in the government and the community to develop an incremental plan for reform. IOM has also used the services of a number of expert consultants to work on specific aspects of the project.

The outcomes of this programme to date have been significant. A number of pieces of legislation are at an advanced draft stage – a passports bill, an immigration bill, supporting regulations and comprehensive policy guidance to support immigration staff in implementing the new legislation. The legislation is not a “patched up” clone of the original. It has been developed from first principles based on local needs and priorities. It includes new provisions for sanctions against people-smuggling and people-trafficking, as well as a specific visa for victims of trafficking.

As this article was being written, we were nearing the end of a three-month public consultation process. This may result in some fine-tuning of the draft legislation. It is expected that the legislation will go to Parliament later in 2011. A key feature of the new legislation is that it lays the foundation for further reforms in processes and capacity. It includes provision for a Web-based visa system, which, once implemented, would give Solomon Islands a quantum advance in terms of its capture of advance passenger information, its understanding of visa trends, and its overall capacity for border control. □

## IOM Timor-Leste develops a border management information system for the Migration Service



Timor-Leste immigration officers being trained by IOM and Portuguese immigration officers in the use of the border management information system. Training occurred in June 2010 and February 2011. © IOM

IOM's Enhanced Migration Management project in Timor-Leste is building a border management information system (BMIS) for the Migration Service. The BMIS will be used at all Migration Service offices, border posts, as well as in the consular section at the Foreign Ministry and in Timor-Leste's consulates in Indonesia. The key features of the system include a movement database, a visa-processing module and alert capabilities, which will support the Migration Service in achieving enhanced border management in Timor-Leste.

While managed by IOM, the development and implementation of the BMIS is a collaborative effort among the Timor-Leste, Australian and Portuguese governments: the Government of Australia's Department of Immigration and Citizenship is funding the system; the Portuguese Foreigners and Borders Service (SEF) has tailored its own movement database and developed a visa module specifically for Timor-Leste; and the system relies on Timor-Leste's communication infrastructure, which is currently being implemented.

The first phase of installation occurred in June 2010. The movements module was installed and has been operating in a pilot mode since then at Dili International Airport. IOM has been providing ongoing support to the Migration Service to ensure that BMIS operates successfully. IOM has also supported the delivery of training to all border officers in the use of the system.

In February 2011, a second phase of the BMIS was installed. This included the introduction of the visa module, which includes a range of capabilities and will most critically allow the Migration Service to process and monitor visas globally and to report on their visa-processing activities. In addition to the visa module, SEF upgraded the movements module so that it can be installed at all Migration Service offices and border posts. This will mean that information about the entry and exit of people collected from every location can be stored and reported centrally.

The BMIS was formally launched in April 2011 at Dili International Airport. It will be rolled out to all border and visa processing locations throughout 2011. □

## Identity management in Central America

With funding from the European Union, IOM is implementing a regional project in Central America called “Supporting Regional Integration through Improved Migration Management in Central America”.

One of the principal objectives of this project is to strengthen migration and identity management in Central America, promoting data capture and exchange by strengthening key migration institutions through improved infrastructure and operational systems for migration management. As part of this process, the team in charge of the project has organized a “Regional Workshop on Data Sharing”.

The workshop was held over three days in October 2010 at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the Central American Integration System (SIECA), located in Guatemala City. The workshop aimed to pave the way for the harmonization of national registers in order to synchronize regional migration policies through data sharing and output of regional statistics.

Through this three-day meeting, the legal and IT working groups, with representatives from the General Migration Offices of Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama, developed the necessary steps to implement a Central American Sharing of Migrations Data through an interconnected National Alerts Database to share the following five categories of data:

- Restrictions, disability, rejection, attachment or circulated;
- Denied visas and residence;
- Expulsion and deportation;
- Altered or fraudulent documents;
- Admission denial or administrative rejection.

The opening session was attended by the EU’s representative for Guatemala, IOM’s Regional Project Coordinator, IOM’s



Snapshots of the October 2010 workshop on data sharing. © IOM

Technical Cooperation Specialist for the Americas, as well as the Chief of Mission of IOM Guatemala, national coordinators and experts from IOM, representatives from SIECA, and representatives of the legal and IT departments of the General Migration Offices of Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.

During the first two days, a draft agreement was prepared detailing the categories of data to be shared and the actual process of exchange between countries. This information was then presented to the General Directors of Migration who arrived from Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras in order to approve and sign the agreement.

The workshop ended with the XIX Extraordinary Meeting of OCAM, where the General Directors agreed to promote the sharing of information on border security gathered at the national level.

The workshop was positively welcomed by the Central American attending countries, whose representatives outlined the importance of regional interconnectivity and information sharing for the design of future policies. The participants expressed confidence that the information sharing mechanisms will enhance border control efficiency and enable the development of viable migration management policies based on the analysis of collected data. □

## Immigration and visa support services: Australian visa applications in Viet Nam



An approved visa applicant receives her passport and visa. © IOM

In 2004, in order to improve services to clients and to reduce the administrative burden on its visa staff, the Embassy and Consulate-General of Australia in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, decided to outsource the administrative functions of the visa application process to an external service provider. A competitive public tender was subsequently issued and IOM Viet Nam submitted the winning proposal. As a result, for more than six years, IOM has been operating two visa application centres (VACs) on behalf of the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) in Viet Nam, processing up to 40,000 applications per year on a fee-for-service basis (USD 20 per applicant). The VAC operations provide much-needed funding for the Viet Nam mission, while improving service standards and visa processing times for visa applicants and DIAC.

Under VAC arrangements, visa applicants in Viet Nam no longer submit their applications to DIAC visa staff at the Australian embassy or consulate. Instead, they visit an IOM-operated VAC for assistance. IOM provides a help desk and call centre to facilitate accurate and timely information, as well as visa forms and checklists to applicants. In addition, IOM staff are responsible for carefully reviewing each visa application to ensure that it is properly completed, in the correct order and that all the required supporting documentation is submitted. IOM staff also electronically capture the biographical data of each applicant for

daily transfer to DIAC, and they are responsible for collecting visa processing fees. Each day, passports and completed applications are transferred to DIAC at the embassy and consulate for the visa decision. Once the visa decision has been made, the applicant's passport and supporting documentation are returned to the applicant by IOM along with the visa decision. IOM handles all the front- and back-end processing of the visa application, but the Organization has absolutely nothing to do with the visa decision itself, which is the sole prerogative of DIAC in Viet Nam.

VAC operations are a win-win for everyone. DIAC benefits by having more time to focus on visa decisions and counter-fraud work, and by not having to deal with the collection of fees or biodata entry. In addition, security at the embassy and consulate is improved. Applicants benefit from easier access, longer service hours, more staff dedicated to providing information and guidance, shorter wait times and faster visa processing times. IOM benefits by providing valuable assistance to an important Member State in keeping with the Organization's mandate and strategy. Furthermore, the service fees generated provide significant funding and flexibility for the Viet Nam mission. □



IOM-operated visa application centre. © IOM

Adequate operational systems can add tremendous value to immigration and border management projects. Of particular interest are travel document issuance systems, border management information systems, data systems enabling the analysis of migration patterns, and solutions related to immigration and visa support services.

Drawing from its extensive field experience, the IBM Team develops specific operational systems that back a number of IBM activities – keeping in mind that technological capability is a function of policy and political choices, rather than the determinant. The IBM Team is particularly committed to supporting access to such technologies for states with limited resources, by providing entry-level systems at affordable cost and soliciting donor's favourable attention.

### Personal identification and registration system (PIRS)

In recent years, IOM has developed and refined PIRS, its own border management information system. PIRS is designed to collect, process and store information on travellers entering and exiting border points, including travellers' biodata, for the purpose of statistics, identification and/or authentication. It has an alert list function enabling officials to identify lost or stolen passports or persons of potential risk to states. In addition, PIRS enables better evaluation of cross-border flows to determine human and financial resources needed to manage cross-border movement, feed into policy development, and support migration investigation and law enforcement. Among its many benefits, this system may help states identify irregular migration and human trafficking.

PIRS provides a comprehensive, flexible, cost-effective and affordable solution for states that have no or inadequate data capture systems. PIRS runs on basic Microsoft software and is currently available in both English and French. It is entirely customizable as per the request and needs of the receiving country.

PIRS has been installed in Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea Conakry, Islamic Republic of Mauritania, Kenya, Liberia, Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone, Somalia (Puntland), Somaliland, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Other countries, such as Swaziland and Somalia (Somaliland & South Central) will soon start implementing the system.

### Mobile border processing unit pilot project

The introduction of MPBU's to IBM activities emerged as a response to the challenges of border porosity, including an upsurge in regional transborder crime, irregular entry and trafficking of persons in the East Africa region. In enhancing border management capacity and humanitarian services along the Kenya–Somalia border, IOM handed over an MBPU to the Kenyan immigration authorities, the first of its kind in the region. This pilot project is currently being implemented and could be extended to other regions presenting similar migration management challenges.

The MBPU is designed to operate under challenging climatic and geographic conditions, without any operational support for long periods. It comprises a mobile processing unit and two patrol vehicles designed to operate along porous borders and at sites with no immigration infrastructure or officer presence. It is used as a mobile office for operating along main migratory routes and can effectively help detect, identify and intercept any kind of irregular immigration or transnational crime. The mobile office has equipment such as a passport reader, a passport atlas, a PD 350 forgery detection system, fingerprint readers, a photocopier machine, printers, maps and magnifiers.

### Visa application centres

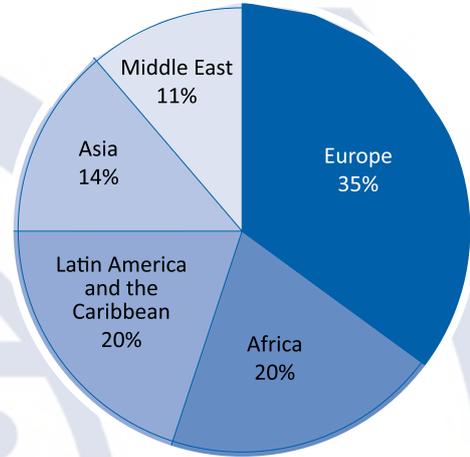
IOM operates visa application centres (VACs) to handle all the time-consuming administrative tasks of the visa application process to ensure that only properly completed visa applications, along with all required supporting documentation, are submitted. Such outsourcing partnerships result in reduced costs and workloads for diplomatic missions, faster visa processing times and improved service standards for visa applicants. Most importantly, they enable visa and immigration officers to make informed decisions based on complete information, and help them to focus on their core function – adjudicating visas. IOM handles all administrative tasks including: information dissemination, receiving fees and applications, capturing biographical information and handling all data-entry duties, capturing and securely transferring biometrics data, passport/visa return and reporting. IOM currently operates VACs for both DIAC and Citizenship and Immigration Canada in eight countries. □

## The IBM programme: Facts and figures

The IBM portfolio is steadily growing, with over **300 active projects**, valued at nearly **USD 90 million**, implemented worldwide in 2010.

In 2010 alone, **65 new projects** were launched, geographically distributed as follows:

**IBM Projects in 2010**

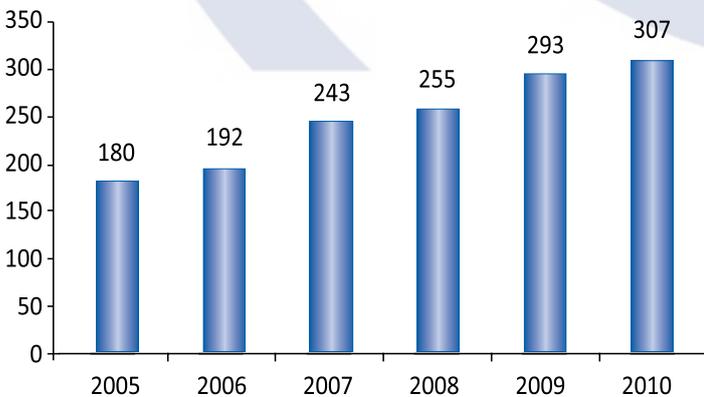


In support of IOM strategy, IBM activities are directed at helping governments create policy, legislation, administrative structures, operational systems and the human resource base necessary to respond effectively to diverse migration challenges and to institute appropriate migration governance. Such activities are designed as partnerships, with the requesting government and other relevant interlocutors working closely with the IBM Team to identify needs, determine priority areas, and shape and deliver interventions.

The IBM Team is committed to assist governments in five key areas:

- Migration and border management assessments
- Capacity-building in migration management
- Border and identity management, with particular focus on integrated border management
- Operational border management solutions
- Immigration and visa support services

**IBM programming worldwide  
Number of projects**



### The IBM Team works in close cooperation with

- Frontex
- the immigration and border agencies of partner governments
- the Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC)
- the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
- Interpol
- the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)
- the Organization of American States (OAS)
- the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee (UNCTC)
- the World Customs Organization (WCO)

### Top international donors supporting IBM initiatives are

- Australia
- the European Commission, together with European Union Member States
- Japan
- the United States of America



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