

# **IOM**

# **COUNTER-TRAFFICKING**

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# **ACTIVITIES**



# COUNTER-TRAF

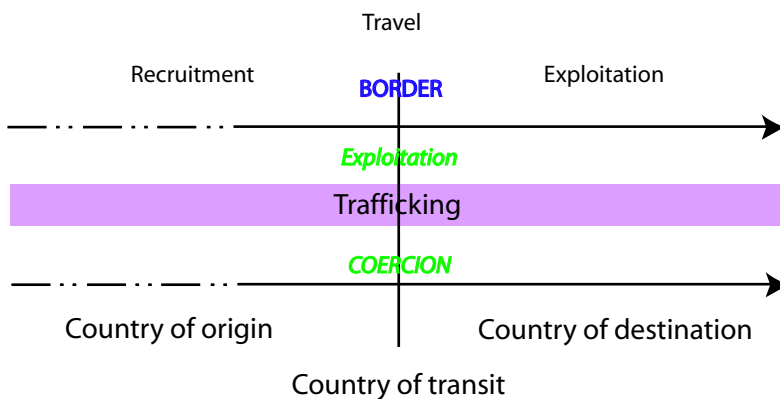
IOM's mandate is to promote orderly and humane migration, to help protect the human rights of migrants, and to cooperate with its Member States to deal with problems related to migration. One of the core challenges for IOM and its Member States is to combat trafficking in persons, which is an exploitative form of irregular migration involving the violation of the migrants' human rights.

In December 2000, the Organization adopted the definition of trafficking in persons as set forth in the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime:

*Trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.*

IOM counter-trafficking activities consider trafficking as a coercive and exploitative process starting with recruitment in the place of origin and continuing with exploitation in the places of transit and destination. Despite the fact that in general trafficking involves crossing at least one international border, it can also occur within a single country.

## The Trafficking Process



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In order to act against trafficking at each point of this process, **IOM** takes a multi-pronged approach to help *prevent* trafficking, mainly in the country of origin, and to *assist* and *protect* victims. This assistance is provided in the countries of transit or destination and continues, upon return to the countries of origin, with a reintegration component.

## IOM Counter-Trafficking Interventions

### Country of origin

#### Prevention activities

- Awareness raising/  
Mass information
- Capacity building and training
- Research/Data collection
- Law enforcement training

### Country of destination or transit

#### Direct assistance

- Protection/Shelter
- Health assistance
- Legal counselling



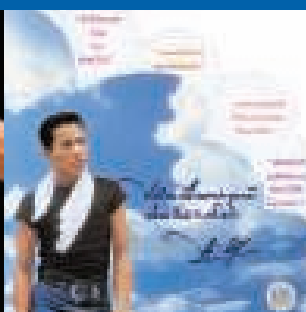
#### Voluntary return and reintegration

- Travel assistance
- Reception assistance

## Prevention Activities

### Awareness raising

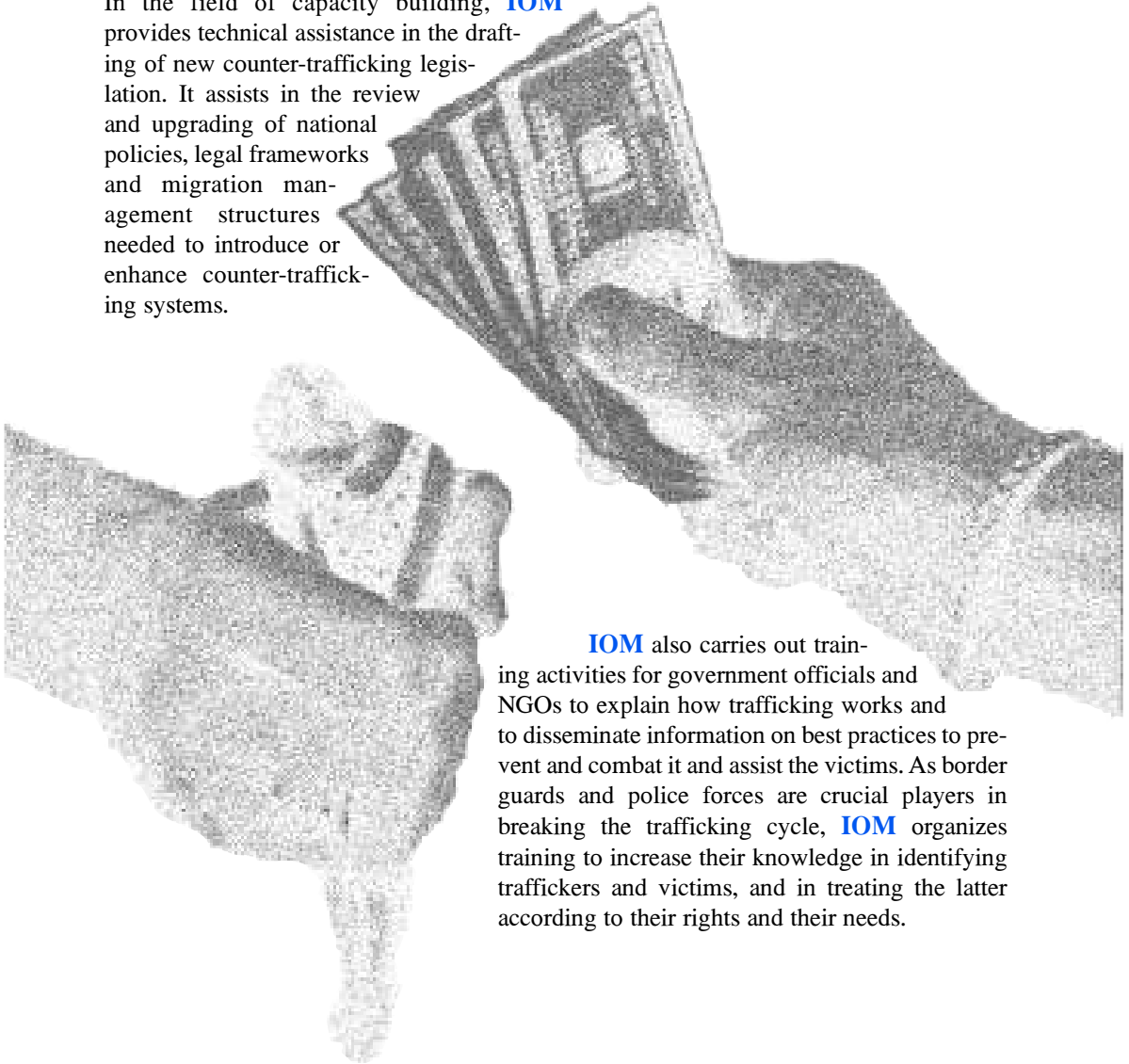
In the prevention field, **IOM** conducts information campaigns in countries of origin to inform potential victims of the dangers of trafficking and irregular migration. **IOM** awareness-raising activities target schools, urban and rural community groups and families. In the destination countries, **IOM** also tries to raise the awareness of potential clients of women who have been trafficked and forced to work in the sex industries. The methodology, tailored to each target group, includes the utilization of a variety of communication activities using several media outlets. Mass media ensures that the information reaches large audiences quickly while direct grassroots contacts provide the informal setting required for a more in-depth and frank discussion.



# COUNTER-TRAFFICKING

## Capacity building

In the field of capacity building, **IOM** provides technical assistance in the drafting of new counter-trafficking legislation. It assists in the review and upgrading of national policies, legal frameworks and migration management structures needed to introduce or enhance counter-trafficking systems.



**IOM** also carries out training activities for government officials and NGOs to explain how trafficking works and to disseminate information on best practices to prevent and combat it and assist the victims. As border guards and police forces are crucial players in breaking the trafficking cycle, **IOM** organizes training to increase their knowledge in identifying traffickers and victims, and in treating the latter according to their rights and their needs.

## Law enforcement

**IOM** is working on the establishment of a law enforcement coordination function. For this purpose the organization establishes a directory of multi-agency contacts on a country-by-country basis, which will improve its ability to coordinate counter-trafficking actions around the world. It is also a tool to rapidly gather, evaluate and exchange intelligence on an inter-agency basis. In addition, **IOM** provides practical training to national and international law enforcers in how to detect and intercept traffickers, and how to collect and analyse information. At the same time it provides expert support to key areas in other agencies dealing with victims of this type of crime.

# KING ACTIVITIES

## Sharing expertise

**IOM** supports the international dialogue on counter-trafficking, and since 1994 it has organized a series of global and regional seminars, workshops and conferences on this issue. These fora provide governments, NGOs and international organizations with the opportunity to share their perspectives, strengthen their cooperation and develop projects and plans of action to deal with the trafficking problem.

## Research and data collection

All counter-trafficking activities must be supported by solid and realistic information. **IOM** carries out research on the characteristics and mechanisms of trafficking in different countries in order to tailor its responses appropriately. Recently, the **IOM** Counter-Trafficking Information System was developed to facilitate management of assistance, voluntary return and reintegration activities for victims of trafficking, as well as to strengthen research capacity and understanding of the causes, processes, trends and consequences of trafficking.

## Protection and assistance activities

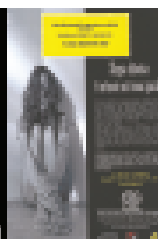
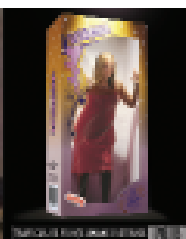
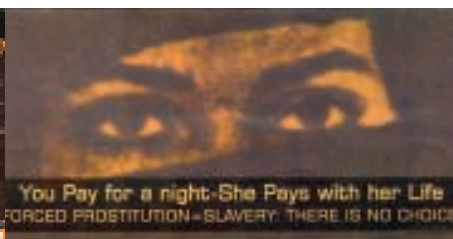
To assist and protect the victims, **IOM** works with NGOs, other international organizations and government agencies to provide legal and medical counselling and other welfare services. Safe shelters and accommodation are arranged for the victims; and voluntary return and reintegration assistance are also offered as a humane and safe alternative to deportation. Reintegration assistance can range from a modest allowance to referral and counselling in specialized shelters, or micro-enterprise support after return. Returnees are monitored with a view to improving services through further research, advocacy, information and evaluation.

## Policy Considerations

When carrying out its counter-trafficking activities, the following main considerations are taken into account by **IOM**:

### Human rights

**IOM** is committed to working towards effective respect for the human dignity and well-being of migrants. This commitment is reflected in its activities, projects and programmes. Often, the safeguarding of migrants' rights will ensue as a consequence of the assistance provided. At other times, **IOM** actively promotes migrants' rights through, for example, information campaigns. The dignity and self-respect of migrants are fundamental concepts within all activities of **IOM**.



# COUNTER-TRAFF

## Gender

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**IOM** Counter-trafficking activities are closely linked with the Organization's gender policy promoting the consideration of a gender perspective in **IOM** programmes. Trafficking in human beings relies heavily on certain elements such as: vulnerability of victims, coercion, abusive exploitation, and sexual violence. In many parts of the world women and girls are at the bottom of the economic ladder and in subordinate positions in society. Therefore, they tend to be more prone to seemingly attractive promises of economic opportunities and more vulnerable to falling prey to traffickers. At the same time, with the feminization of migration, the number of migrant women who are travelling on their own is increasing, putting more women at risk of exploitation. Today, there are millions of women and girls who find themselves in slavery-like conditions in foreign lands ignorant of their rights and means of obtaining assistance.

## Health

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**IOM** seeks to promote better understanding about health concerns of trafficking victims and supports concerted efforts by its Member States, partner organizations and concerned communities in incorporating the health dimension in all counter-trafficking interventions. Evidence compiled by **IOM** indicates a particularly strong vulnerability among trafficking victims to a variety of risks to their health, with negative consequences for their immediate family or community. These health risks include mental conditions, reproductive health conditions and a range of communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS and a host of sexually transmitted illnesses.

The exploitative and abusive contexts in which they are victimized deprive them of any empowerment that would help them realize their basic reproductive health rights. This is often compounded by poverty that renders them vulnerable to poor health and victimization, often at very young ages. Thus, a key aspect of **IOM's** advocacy and service delivery is to address the entire spectrum of health challenges for the victim. This is done along a continuum that includes the periods before, during and after the trafficking experience.



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## IOM's partnership

The complexities of the trafficking problem and the vast geographical extent involved ask for concerted efforts by relevant entities at the local, national, regional and international levels. Therefore, **IOM** continues to build up partnerships with governments, NGOs, international organizations, academic communities, legislators, community leaders and families confronted with trafficking in order to work collaboratively at policy, legislative and operational levels. Their respective expertise, extensive networks, access to and in-depth understanding of local communities complement **IOM**'s rich experience in counter-trafficking worldwide and help to address the causes and consequences of trafficking around the world. In the field of counter-trafficking, **IOM** has a long-standing relationship with international and local NGOs as operational partners. These cooperate with **IOM** in both prevention and direct assistance projects. If relevant, before taking part in projects, **IOM** works with NGOs through training, workshops and seminars to improve understanding of trafficking issues.

## Tackling the problem on a long-term basis

As long as the market for trafficking in persons exists, the human rights abuses it entails will continue. Unsuccessful economic transition, poor governance, corruption and gender-based discrimination caused by deep-rooted patriarchal structures have also aggravated the problem of trafficking, despite the efforts made by the international community. Apart from raising public awareness of the problem of trafficking in both sending and destination areas, the intricacies of the root causes of trafficking call for long-term work, cooperation and assistance in building strong economies, democratic societies, civil society and education systems. Instead of allowing illegal labour migration run by exploitative agencies or criminal groups to flourish, a continuous dialogue between sending and receiving countries is needed in order to develop channels for legal and non-exploitative labour migration, which would be beneficial for all.

◆ *All the illustrations used in this document are posters from IOM's counter-trafficking campaigns.*

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## Selected IOM Publications

*Trafficking in Migrants*, published quarterly by IOM, compiling and analysing information from the media, governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, *Trafficking in Migrants* includes sections on trends, policies, meetings, publications, and networking activities.\*

### Migration Research Series\*, ISSN 1607-338X

- Myths and Realities of Chinese Irregular Migration*, No. 1  
*Combating Trafficking in South-East Asia: A Review of Policy and Programme Responses*, No. 2  
*Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation: The Case of the Russian Federation*, No. 7  
*A Review of Data on Trafficking in the Republic of Korea*, No. 9  
*Journeys of Jeopardy: A Review of Research on Trafficking in Women and Children in Europe*, No. 11

### Books

- Huddled Masses in Uncertain Shores*, ISBN 90-411-0531-X, 1998  
*Paths of Exploitation: Studies on the Trafficking of Women and Children between Cambodia, Thailand and Viet Nam*, ISBN 92-9068-090-3, 1999  
*To Japan and Back: Thai Women Recount their Experiences*, ISBN 92-9068-093-8, 1999  
*Migrant Trafficking and Human Smuggling in Europe*, ISBN 92-9068-097-0, 2000  
*Trafficking in Women and Prostitution in the Baltic States: Social and Legal Aspects*, ISBN 92-9068-117-9, 2001

### Reports

- Baltic Trafficking in Women from the Dominican Republic for Sexual Exploitation*, 1996  
*Trafficking in Women to Austria for Sexual Exploitation*, ISBN 92-9068-056-3, 1996  
*Trafficking in Women to Italy for Sexual Exploitation*, ISBN 92-9068-057-1, 1996  
*The Route: the Trafficking of Migrants through Lithuania*, ISBN 92-9068-060-X, 1997  
*Trafficking of Cambodian Women and Children to Thailand*, ISBN 92-9068-084-9, 1997  
*Trafficking in Women to Japan for Sexual Exploitation: A Survey on the Case of Filipino Women*, ISBN 92-9068-064-4, 1997  
*Trafficking of Vietnamese Women and Children to Cambodia*, ISBN 92-9068-070-9, 1998  
*Illegal Migration in Lithuania: Trends, Current State and Problems*, ISSN 1238-8211, 2000  
*Trafficking in Women and Children from the Kyrgyz Republic*, ISBN 92-9068-102-0, 2000  
*Deceived Migrants from Tajikistan – A Study of Trafficking in Women and Children*, ISBN 92-9068-109-8, 2001\*  
*Hardship Abroad or Hunger at Home: A Study of Irregular Migration in Georgia*, 2001\*  
*In Search of Dreams: Study on the Situation of the Trafficked Women and Children from Bangladesh and Nepal to India*, 2001  
*Second Research Report on Third Country National Trafficking Victims in Albania*, 2001\*  
*Trafficking in Unaccompanied Minors for Sexual Exploitation in the European Union*, ISBN 92-9068-108-X, 2001\*  
*Trafficking in Women and Children from the Republic of Armenia: A Study*, ISBN 92-9068-114-4, 2001\*  
*Victims of Trafficking in the Balkans*, ISBN 92-9068-113-6, 2001\*  
*Victims of Trafficking in the Balkans: A Study of Trafficking in Woman and Children for Sexual Exploitation to, through and from the Balkan Region*, ISBN 92-9068-113-6, 2001  
*Irregular Migration and Smuggling of Migrants from Armenia*, ISBN 92-9068-128-2, 2002\*  
*Shattered Dreams: Report on Trafficking in Persons in Azerbaijan*, 2002\*

\*These publications can also be downloaded from the IOM Website: [www.iom.int](http://www.iom.int)