

Emergency and Post Conflict Activities

April/May 2003



An IOM convoy departs Tabou for Burkina-Faso, carrying 440 Third-country Nationals stranded in Côte d'Ivoire by rebel fighting.

Afghanistan

Security

Generally the security situation deteriorated in the north and south of Afghanistan. After a return of Taliban into Afghanistan with reportedly a new strategy to attack the Humanitarian Aid community, the UN established a "Mission Freeze Zone" (MFZ) in all southern regions until further notice. Additionally for UN staff armed government escorts are required on roads in southern Afghanistan after gunmen fired at a UN vehicle in the country's east and injured two Afghan workers. In northern Afghanistan the national UN security focal point and five other people were killed in fighting between local commanders. Therefore on 17 May the UN suspended all activities in Mazar until further notice.

In western, northern and central Afghanistan IOM continues to assist **IDP RETURN MOVEMENTS**. Up to now IOM in Afghanistan has assisted over 23,000 IDPs (5,300 families) to return to their places of origin in 2003. In northern Afghanistan the registration for voluntary return in cooperation with UNHCR and the Ministry for Repatriation and Refugees (MoRR) is ongoing. To inform the IDPs about the situation in their home district and help them in their decision to return, meetings with the IDP leaders and representatives are held and all available information given. On their home journey the returning IDPs have overnight stays in nine ECHO funded IOM transit centres in western and northern Afghanistan. For the return assistance IOM runs a fleet of 100 trucks and 25 light vehicles. For the first time IOM will assist IDPs in the south of Afghanistan to return to their home in other areas of Afghanistan as soon as security allows.

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The **RETURN OF QUALIFIED AFGHANS** Programme continues to facilitate the returns and the employment of the Afghan Diaspora. Up to now, 440 experts from 24 countries have been assisted. 195 RQA returnees work in 21 ministries of the Afghan Interim Authority, 86 in governmental institutions, 158 candidates work in NGOs, international and other organizations and one candidate is self-employed.

Under the **ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN** Programme the Airport Coordination Cell in Kabul has assisted 305 returnees from different countries in 2003 with customs and immigration procedures, temporary accommodation and with onward transportation to the returnees' final destination.

The **AFGHANISTAN TRANSITION INITIATIVE** Programme continues to work with offices in Kabul, Bamyán, Gardez, Kandahar, Herat, Kunduz, Maimana and Mazar-e-Sharif, which cover 23 provinces. ATI provides targeted, quick impact infrastructure improvements guided by local priorities while supporting community decision-making and links to the Afghanistan Transitional Administration (ATA). With new funds recently secured, IOM started preparations to build 14 Provincial Women's Centres, which will serve as the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) outreach to women in the provinces. These centres will provide a variety of services, through the MoWA and NGOs, including, but not limited to, literacy, health education, economic empowerment and social participation courses. IOM will provide the infrastructure, equipment and support initial training courses and workshops, the latter through a small grants mechanism. Each centre will be equipped with a resource centre to facilitate training and individual and group learning. After construction, the centres will be handed over to the MoWA and will serve to support the development of women in the community and strengthen the relationship between the Kabul Ministry and its departments in the provinces.

At the request of IOM Afghanistan, at selective intervals during 2002 and 2003, EPC deployed technical staff in **DISARMAMENT DEMOBILIZATION AND REINTEGRATION (DDR)** to support programme development opportunities. An IOM project proposal was produced in May of 2002, which, in coordination with UNAMA, the World Bank, UNDP, UNICEF, the transitional government of Afghanistan and other stakeholders, was used to establish a framework programme for the DDR of an estimated 175,000 former combatants. Most recently, upon receipt of a request from UNAMA, EPC redeployed IOM support staff on TDY to continue cooperation between UNAMA, the transitional government of Afghanistan and others, with regard to the implementation of the DDR framework programme as manifested under the name of Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme (ANBP). On 8 May, the Minister for Rehabilitation and Rural Development confirmed his request for the secondment of an IOM Advisor on DDR to the Government's Commission on Reintegration. The IOM technical specialist in DDR will support the Minister for Rehabilitation and Rural Development in strengthening a clear and holistic strategy, facilitating informed policy discussions, liaison with UNAMA and other Ministries that will play a key role in the process, as well as resource mobilization. Human Resources Management (HRM) and EPC are presently coordinating the selection and deployment of a DDR expert to Afghanistan.

Colombia

1) Post-Emergency Assistance to Displaced Groups and Receptor Communities

During April and May, 23 projects were approved in the areas of health, institutional strengthening, social infrastructure and housing, education and income generation, for an amount of US\$ 1,010,571.

The construction of 25 houses for displaced families was achieved. This was done in a joint strategy between the IOM, the Buga Housing Institute (Instituto de Vivienda de Buga), the Jesuit Service of Refugees (El Servicio Jesuita de Refugiados) and the community, with an IOM contribution of US\$ 18,939 for a total value of US\$ 29,866.

During the same period, IOM assisted six different educational institutions in improving their infrastructure and developing pedagogic materials. IOM financial participation amounted to US\$ 109,383 for a total of US\$ 355,908. This will benefit 1,950 displaced children, as well as 4,677 local children.

Additionally, USAID has submitted to IOM a project in the area of education for approximately US\$ 250,000. This project will be run in the region of Soacha Cundinamarca (close to Bogota city).

2) Strengthening Peace in Colombia

A framework agreement between the Colombian Government and the Organization of American States (OAS) was signed on 12 March. This act counted with the presence of the General Secretary of OAS, Mr. Cesar Gaviria. IOM was invited to this event and received President Alvaro Uribe's special tribute for the support that it provided to the Government in the landmines issue through the strengthening of the Antipersonal Landmines Observatory of Vice-presidency of the Republic.

In that same month, IOM supported the First Lady of the Nation's Office through a donation to the "Colombia Oye, Colombia Ve, Colombia Camina" Program (Colombia hears, Colombia sees, Colombia walks). IOM provided 385 wheelchairs, 140 hearing aids, 144 refractive surgeries and 54 pieces of communication equipment.

During the month of April IOM started the construction of a Coexistence Centre (Centro de Convivencia Ciudadana) in the municipality of San Gil and it purchased the equipment for the Centre of San Vicente del Caguán.

A project was started with the Colombian Association of Family Members of Public Force Retained and Liberated by Guerrilla Groups (ASFAMIPAZ), through which IOM will assist policemen and soldiers kidnapped by the guerrillas and liberated by the humanitarian exchange of 2001.

3) Support Programme for Ex-combatant Children

The Programme has helped in two different types of emergency:

a) Individual: IOM provided and financed transportation, board and room and humanitarian kits. This was carried out in close coordination with the Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF) that has the legal mandate to protect children in Colombia. 80 children have been assisted during the last two months (28 girls and 52 boys).

b) Massive: The contingency plan covers 13 departments of the country, representing 65 per cent of the total network. The mapping exercise includes specific information regarding the rating of each institution and up-to-date contact information of the person responsible for implementing the contingency plan. The Plan also identified the ICBF's protection agencies that could receive and assist 965 demobilized child soldiers. This Contingency Plan was updated in February, in anticipation of a possible mass demobilization announced by the United Self Defence Groups (AUC). A mass demobilization has not yet occurred. In such an event, the Contingency Plan assigns different tasks to 11 agencies, among them IOM, USAID, UNICEF, Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF), Colombian Red Cross, Ministry of Health and the Human Rights Ombudsman Office. The Contingency Plan includes six key components: levels and strategies for inter-institutional coordination; phases of reception and assistance; general and specific actions for each phase; designation of responsibilities for each action and activity by phase; targeted assistance, training of officials and staff training for identified contingency plan partners; as well as financial aid.

Côte d'Ivoire and Subregion

IOM staff in west Africa is organizing the repatriation of the Third Country Nationals (TCNs) who have fled the Liberian port of Harper to seek refuge in Côte d'Ivoire. Approximately 10,000 people crossed the border to Côte d'Ivoire and 350 more Guineans arrived in Tabou around 24 May from Harper.

The target beneficiaries for the overall IOM operation are 1,888 TCNs (850 from Tabou and 1,038 from Harper). In Harper, the TCNs are from Ghana, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Niger, Benin, Mali and Togo and were caught up in the hostilities. There are still another 850 Burkinabes who are under the auspices of the Catholic Mission and who will need rapid assistance from IOM Côte d'Ivoire.

The repatriation operation had to be suspended after the fall of Harper to the rebels on 17 May and new strategies are now in place. IOM is planning to repatriate TCNs by land, through Abidjan and Ghana, except TCNs from Guinea, who will be transported by boat.

In the following weeks, IOM will be completing the registration process in Tabou and setting up an operational presence. A database, update and the preparation of passengers will also be organized. A medical mission coordinated with IOM Accra for the repatriation of the convoys will be put into operation as soon as possible and a new transit centre will be set up in Abidjan.

Monitoring of the Abidjan mission is being maintained and expanded to the subregion, with the assistance of the neighbouring missions: IOM Accra, Burkina Faso, Conakry, Freetown, Mali and Monrovia. All these activities are being assisted and supervised by MRF Dakar. The liaison and coordination with other agencies help the reinforcement of IOM's position in Côte d'Ivoire.

Iraq

Summary

IOM's activities in and around Iraq to date have concentrated on its responsibilities under the inter-agency response plan to assist those fleeing Iraq as well as the IDPs in central and southern Iraq. IOM's assistance for the population outflows has been focused on transit support and the return home of stranded third country nationals (TCNs).

IOM is implementing the Iraq Transition Initiative (ITI), which has begun to identify and support quick impact community rehabilitation projects in post-war Iraq. The initial phase of the Medical Evacuation and Rehabilitation Programme for Iraq (MERPI), is under way to provide specialized out-of-country treatment, rehabilitation and capacity building of the health sector. Other responses to the post-conflict needs in Iraq currently



The rebuilding and refurbishment of the Umm Qasr Secondary School has been identified as a key project for IOM's Iraq Transition Initiative Programme (ITI).

under preparation include: assisted voluntary return of refugees and asylum seekers; demobilization and reintegration of former combatants; compensation for refugees and IDPs who lost property under the former regime; migration information Centres (MICs), Internet cafés, quick impact projects for communities of return; and capacity building for migration management.

IOM's IDP and ITI project activities are now operational inside Iraq, and will grow as security permits.

Capacity

Within Iraq, IOM has a presence in Baghdad, Basrah, and Erbil. Offices in Hillah, Mosul and Kirkuk are in the process of being set up. IOM offices in neighbouring countries (Jordan, Syria, Turkey, Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Egypt) continue to provide adequate assistance for TCN activities. IOM also maintains its Regional Humanitarian Coordination Office in Larnaca, Cyprus.

IOM has deployed 37 officials with specialized operations skills, including field security, communications and IT technicians to reinforce IOM's presence in the region. A standby roster of additional staff is ready to deploy on short notice.

Progress to date

Third Country Nationals – Transit and Return Home

- Since 20 March, IOM has assisted a total of 4,389 TCNs to return to their home countries, as well as 667 Jordanians who arrived at the Iraq-Jordan border. The exodus of TCNs has increased since the cessation of hostilities. Almost all TCNs have been received in Jordan and Syria.

Refugees and Asylum Seekers Stranded at the Border – Transport

- A total of 1,061 individuals have been transported from the Iraq – Jordanian border to UNHCR's Camp A in Ruwayshed since April 21. Of these, 978 are Palestinians. The balance is made up of spouses and dependants of various nationalities who have chosen to remain with them in the camp.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in central and southern Iraq

Since 11 March when the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) confirmed IOM's focal point responsibility for the welfare of IDPs in central and southern Iraq, the following progress has been made:

- Under the coordination of the UN Office of the Humanitarian Coordination for Iraq (UNOHCI), consultations have been carried out with UN agencies in Larnaca, Cyprus, and with agency representatives and NGOs in Amman and Kuwait where IOM now chairs weekly IDP Task Force meetings.
- A General Framework (with 30 annexes) for IDP coordination in central and southern Iraq has been finalized and circulated. The document defines operational roles and responsibilities, provides standardized formats for registration and reporting, and presents implementation and monitoring modalities.
- Twelve NGOs have signed agreements with IOM to serve as IDP Governorate Focal Points in the 15 governorates of central and southern Iraq. All of these are now operating in their assigned governorates and providing initial rapid assessment reports.
- Recruitment of the first of three IDP Protection Officers (Liaison) is underway. Their work will enhance the flow of information to UNOHCI, which has protection responsibilities for all IDPs in Iraq.

- IOM is procuring Non-Food Items (NFI) packages for 10,000 families (50,000 individuals).
- In cooperation with UNOHCI, IOM sponsored a two-day IDP protection training work-shop in Amman for NGOs.
- Training of NGOs in IDP registration was carried out in Amman and Kuwait.
- IOM led or participated in IDP humanitarian assessment missions in Badrah, Um Qasr, Az Zubayr, Nasariya and Safwan.
- As of 20 May, the total number of IDPs verified by Governorate Focal Points is 34,927.
- The total number of IDPs from all sources (including unverified reports) is 104,877.

Iraq Transition Initiative (ITI)

- One school project in Umm Qasr has been initiated.

Medical Evacuation and Rehabilitation Programme for Iraq (MERPI)

- IOM assisted the evacuation of 11 medical cases by the Austrian Ministry of Health.

Sri Lanka

In order to support the peace negotiations between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), IOM has been asked by both parties to move ahead urgently with the implementation of a project for the reintegration of former combatants and their families in Sri Lanka. To this effect, EPC has been supporting IOM Sri Lanka through the deployment of its specialist staff in demobilization and reintegration of former combatants. This staff member has been supporting the mission with the design, negotiations and the operational establishment of the Information Counselling Referral Service with Reintegration Fund (ICRS/RF).

The ICRS/RF aims to pave the way for sustainable reintegration into civilian life of all categories of former combatants in Sri Lanka by addressing the multiple challenges of humanitarian assistance and rehabilitation requirements, with longer-term poverty alleviation, through the provision of referral, personalized counselling, technical assistance, training and the use of a reintegration fund for sustainable income generation for qualified candidates. These measures are set to thus provide tangible benefits of peace to former combatants and reinforce peace-building and reconciliation endeavours.

The start-up phase, initiated at the end of May, will deal with support that will be given through the ICRS/RF to 2,500 war widows and disabled former combatants and their dependants. This will include the establishment of database systems and the registration and socio-economic/demographic profiling of the caseload in question. Through the analysis of the data obtained in the registration, the ICRS/RF will support the identification of obstacles to reintegration and matching of needs and expectations to sustainable employment opportunities. With the consolidation of the peace agreement, the ICRS/RF will serve as the framework programme that will offer reintegration assistance to all categories of former combatants in Sri Lanka. The ICRS/RF proposal is initially budgeted at US\$ 1.8 million (12 months), but is expected to grow in both size and cost as peace consolidates in Sri Lanka.

To date, a total of 283,110 demobilized combatants and over 1 million dependants worldwide have benefited from IOM-implemented demobilization and reintegration assistance programmes since 1992. The total value of these programmes has been US\$ 149.7 million. IOM demobilization/reintegration activities are still ongoing in Bosnia, Kosovo, Cambodia, Colombia, Guinea-Bissau, and Sierra Leone.

Uganda

IOM Kampala involvement in IDP issues

As of June 2003, IOM Kampala will be involved in the following pre-return activities, funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

1. Support to OCHA in setting up a Return and Reintegration Task Force

In order to define the required integrated assistance strategy, a Return and Reintegration Task Force (RRTF) will be established to support the implementation of the integrated return and reintegration assistance for IDPs. The RRTF will be established as per the procedures of the National Policy on Internally Displaced Persons, under the leadership of the Department for Disaster Preparedness and Management (DDPM), in coordination with OCHA, UN agencies, NGOs and government authorities concerned.

Among other issues, the RRTF will take the lead on ensuring a common operational definition of IDPs, standardization of assistance strategies (minimum standards, codes of conducts), and ensure coordinated interventions based on agreed criteria for target beneficiaries.

Indeed, it is expected that spontaneous return movement will be constrained by security conditions, lack of access to land and sustainable livelihoods, limited absorptive capacity of return communities, and lack of basic

services and social infrastructure. Considering different social and economic conditions as well as causes and duration of displacement for individual IDPs, it is crucial to prepare for flexible and different approaches in response to the specific needs of IDP groups. The support to IDP return should include the range of measures for local integration into the area of displacement, return of IDPs into their place of origin, and possibly, but to a lesser extent, resettlement into a new area.

At the District level, the RRTF will provide support to the District Disaster Management Committees, who, in collaboration with the representatives of the internally displaced persons, are responsible for preparing and implementing plans for IDP safe return or resettlement.

2. Support to the Office of the Prime Minister, Department for Disaster Management and Preparedness

The creation of an Information Collection, Analysis and Dissemination System within the Department of Disaster Preparedness will be supported so as to assist the GOU in its capacity to coordinate assistance for IDP return

3. An IDP survey which will ensure the provision of vital information on IDPs and return communities.

This will facilitate the formulation of an effective IDP assistance strategy and the identification of concrete activities to support return and reintegration. The survey will be carried out in Acholiland, but will also target urban IDPs in Kampala whose number and status are virtually unknown. The main focus of the survey will be to identify the social, economic and human capacities of the communities of return. Collaboration with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and their ongoing Information, Counselling and Legal Assistance on Return is envisaged.

