

Gender and Migration News



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Gender Mainstreaming: 5 Most Active and Visible IOM Missions

As the first half of 2008 is already behind us, the Gender Issues Coordination (GIC) would like to acknowledge the efforts made by IOM missions in mainstreaming gender. In particular, we would like to congratulate five missions for the excellent work they have carried out so far and for showing that mainstreaming gender in IOM's daily work is possible.

To come up with these top five, GIC has considered the following elements: commitment and leadership of the CoM/RR, active participation of the GFP(s), sharing of good practices and adoption of a gender work plan. The selected missions are (in alphabetical order):

IOM Bogota

Headed by a former Geneva WGGI member, José-Angel Oropeza, IOM Bogota has a very active gender team of 3 GFPs: Linda Eriksson, Delbert Field, and Carolina Lopez Laverde. The mission has established an internal Gender Working Group, functional GFPs at the programme level and in support units, its own gender mainstreaming tools; and is exemplary in sharing good practices. IOM Bogota has also recently published a study on gender and remittances from Spain to Colombia.

MRF Dakar

Under the leadership of Laurent de Boeck, Regional Project Development & Donor Liaison Officer, the two GFPs, Geertrui Lanneau and Aminata Niang, have adopted a gender action plan and organized a gender training for MRF staff. MRF Dakar was also selected in 2008 for WGGI support for a project on gender and irregular migration.

MRF Dhaka

MRF Dhaka was selected for WGGI project support in 2007 (see "Impact of Short-term Male Migration on Their Wives Left Behind: A Case Study of Bangladesh"). The GFP, Samiha Huda, is particularly active in disseminating information and good practices within the Network and in building the capacity of Dhaka staff. She benefits from the supervision of a very gender-sensitive Regional Representative, Rabab Fatima.

IOM Kabul

IOM Kabul has through the leadership of its CoM, Fernando Arocena, accomplished the remarkable achievement of exceeding IOM's gender balance targets in an emergency mission. The GFP, Althea Rivas, also conducted a survey of staff members to identify and address gender-related concerns and create an even more gender-sensitive work environment for all. She has also been successful at mainstreaming gender in programmes and in sharing good practices.

MRF Nairobi

MRF Nairobi has set up a Gender Working Group of 11 focal points and has adopted a comprehensive plan of action, thanks to the commitment of Timnit Embaye and Consolata Kimata-Waithaka and the leadership of Ashraf El Nour, the Regional Representative.

We must note that the improvement of gender mainstreaming at IOM is the result of the dedication and excellent work of all the GFPs worldwide. By mentioning these five examples, we hope to learn from each other's strengths as we aim to make gender equality a reality.

AROUND THE WORLD: GENDER AND MIGRATION NEWS

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New Study Focuses on Gender and Remittances

A new study carried by IOM and the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) reveals that when men migrate without their family, they are more likely to start a new family in the country of destination and eventually stop sending remittances to the family left behind.

The study, *Gender and Remittances: Colombian Migration from the West Central Metropolitan Area to Spain*, also confirms that in most cases when a woman migrates, children stay behind, usually under a grandmother's care, and family reunification is more likely to occur in the country of destination than upon the return of the migrant.

The study was conducted in Spain and in Colombia's West Central Metropolitan Area (AMCO by its Spanish acronym), an area with a population of 1.2 million which includes the country's coffee growing region and is bordered by the so-called economic triangle of Colombia which includes the cities of Bogota, Medellin and Cali.

Although the migration experience and its end result were different for each gender, remittance patterns for men and women were very similar when the amounts remitted were analyzed.

But the study emphasizes that although the amounts may be the same, they represent a bigger economic burden for women whose

salaries are much lower than those earned by male migrants. Notwithstanding the income disparities, women send remittances more often and for longer periods of time. Remittances sent by female migrants to the AMCO region account for 54 per cent of the total for that region. In 2006, Colombian migrants sent home US\$ 4.2 billion in remittances.

The study also revealed that when a woman migrates and sends remittances home, there is a marked improvement in the family's investments strategies, especially in housing. However, the authors explain that it is not due to the amount remitted, but because the salary of the man left behind also contributes to the families' finances. In contrast, in households headed by women whose husbands have migrated, investment is drastically reduced and remittances are spent on basic needs. This is explained by the fact that most men said they were motivated to migrate so that their wives could stop working and stay home with the family.

The study also highlights the fact that women migrate to improve the lives of their families, but many times they do so to escape domestic problems, including physical abuse.

A female migrant interviewed in Spain said, "When I decided to migrate, I told a small lie. I told my husband that I would send for him as soon as possible. But I knew I was lying, because I had said to

myself, 'enough is enough'. I could no longer stand our life together. He was abusive. I have very few good memories of our life together."



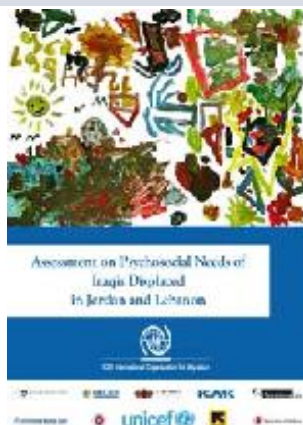
According to Colombia's Statistics Department (DANE by its Spanish acronym) in 2005 there were 3.3 million Colombians living outside the country; this translates into 7.3 per cent of the total population. The main destination countries are the United States (35.4%), Spain (23.3%) and Venezuela (18.5%).

The study was compiled using IOM's Study on International Migration and Remittances and interviews with migrants (male and female) in Spain and households in the AMCO region.

A copy of the study can be found at: <http://www.oim.org.co/anexos/documentos/publicaciones/libro172.pdf>

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Increased Domestic Violence Among Iraqi Refugees in Jordan



A study published in March by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on the mental state of Iraqis in Jordan and Lebanon has pointed to mounting social and economic problems as the cause of increased domestic violence.

"Most families prefer to sweep their problems under the carpet because [to them] reputation matters more than anything else," said Shankul Kader from the Jordanian-Iraqi Brotherhood Society, a non-

governmental organisation trying to help the Iraqi community in Jordan.

"The fact that most men are forced to stay at home due to the lack of jobs, and the lack of social interaction among the refugees, has heightened tension in households," the study said. It revealed that 15 per cent of women interviewed in female-only focus groups reported an increase in family violence.

"A well-raised Iraqi woman should tolerate everything in silence... My

husband has no other way to get rid of his anger," one woman told researchers.

Since the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, over half a million Iraqis have moved to Jordan, hoping to return home when things improve.

Most Iraqis in Jordan are middle class, but over the years their savings have run down, and there are few jobs. Only about 22 percent of Iraqi adults in Jordan work; the rest are jobless, according to a recent study by the Norway-based FAFO Institute for Applied International Studies.

A large number of Iraqis rely on financial aid from relatives outside the Middle East, mostly in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Sweden, while others rely on temporary jobs, as immigration rules prevent them from holding permanent jobs.



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With little or no income, Iraqis in Jordan are under increasing pressure, heightening tension in households

"Men resort to violence because of social and economic pressures. Iraqis in Jordan are living in constant worry about their future," Shankul said.

Activists involved in helping Jordanian women survive domestic violence say their doors are open to Iraqi women. Asma Khader, a women's rights activist and lawyer, said the Jordan Federation for Women is engaged in activities to help abused Iraqi women. "Social barriers remain the biggest challenge in tackling domestic problems," she told IRIN.

News report from IRIN 29 April 2008

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=77972>

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In Southern Africa, Women are Changing the Face of Migration

Gender, Remittances and Development: Preliminary Findings from Selected SADC Countries, published by UN-INSTRAW and the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), highlights the growing impact of women's migration on households, families and communities in selected countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

The study focuses on female migration from and between six SADC countries, namely Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland and Zimbabwe, principally to South Africa. Through a combination of literature review, focus group discussions, and personal interviews, the study documents the changing role of women within migratory flows in Southern Africa, explores the potential impact of the increase in women who migrate independently as heads of households as well as migrants' access to financial and other services.

With over 16 million migrants, Africans account for one fifth of global migrants. Projections indicate that by 2025, one in ten Africans will live and work outside their country of origin. In particular, South Africa has the largest number of foreign-born persons (excluding irregular migrants). "In the past, women in Southern Africa were often prohibited from migrating. Today, with an increasing number of African women migrants, traditionally male-dominated patterns of migration are changing. Overall, women now encompass 37.4% of regular migrants from the SADC region to South Africa," stated Hilary Anderson, Information Officer at UN-INSTRAW.

The UN-INSTRAW/SAIIA study found that the informal economy is a significant source of employment for women migrants, who are most likely to work as vendors, street traders, or hawkers. According to a 2006 survey that

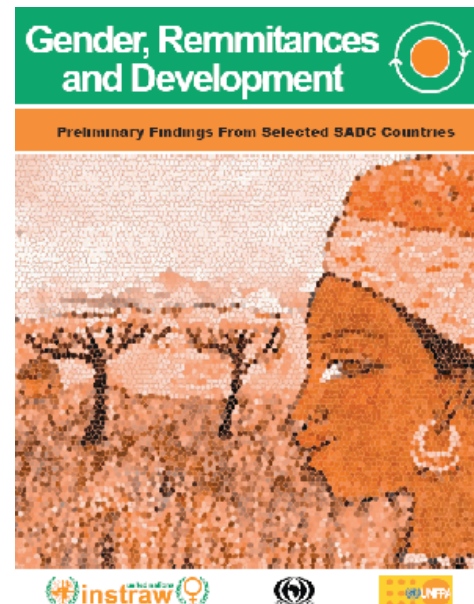
monitored over 85,000 traders passing through 20 border posts connecting ten countries in the SADC region, 70% of all traders at the main border post between South Africa and Zimbabwe were women. The informal economy generally provides low incomes, which has a negative impact on integration in the destination country and the ability to send remittances. In the mining sector, some women migrate with their husbands or partners and provide services to male mine workers. In the case of Lesotho, the increase in unemployment among Basotho men in South African mines has forced women to migrate to the capital of Lesotho to work in textile companies, or to migrate to South Africa.

"Women migrants are more likely to be disadvantaged by the migration experience than their male counterparts. While South Africa is an increasingly popular destination for migrants in numeric terms, it is often an intimidating and unstable destination, where women migrants suffer violence, overt hostility and social exclusion, as well as economic exploitation," emphasized Elizabeth Sidiropoulos, National Director of the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA). "These trends have negative repercussions on salaries, working conditions, labour stability and, consequently, on remittances," she continued.

In the case of Southern Africa, extremely little data are available regarding the sending, utilization and impact of remittances, particularly by women. While we know that women both send remittances as migrants, and receive them as heads of households, we still don't know what the implications of these different roles are for women's economic and social status. The UN-INSTRAW/SAIIA study highlights that the total value of remittances has quadrupled from less than US\$2 billion in 1990 to US\$8 billion in 2005. This could have significant implications for the well-being and development of

the households and communities that receive remittances.

Existing research in SADC countries, including that conducted by the Southern Africa Migration Project (SAMP) shows that remittances are significant in enabling households to meet basic needs and buy basic services. An overwhelming number of households (93%), purchase food and groceries with remitted funds. "Cases of investment of remittances in productive activities exist in Swaziland, particularly in agriculture, and in Mozambique, in building materials. However, there is no evidence of the emergence of new economic activity generated by the receipt of remittances. Remittances protect human development because they allow families to pay for education, health, electricity, water and other services, when they are not provided by the State," stressed Hilary Anderson.



(Continued on page 5)

Fatherhood More Difficult for Migrant Men in Europe



Fatherhood and Health outcomes in Europe



A new review published by WHO Regional Office for Europe concludes that maternal and child health programmes have had difficulty reaching immigrant fathers, and recommends that targeting these groups could greatly benefit the health outcomes of many parents and children.

Studies have shown that many immigrants lack health awareness because of language barriers or bureaucracy and often have limited access to health-related information and services. Parents born outside Sweden for example, make considerably fewer visits to maternity and child health centres compared with parents born in Sweden. Similarly, other surveys show that participation in parent education programmes is not only lower among fathers in general but particularly among fathers with lower socioeconomic status and fathers born abroad. The explanation for this varies from study to study, but in most research, it is “language difficulty” and “the problem in the meeting of different cultures”. Researchers state that the reasons can be found in the normative structure of maternal and child health services, which are largely based on motherhood and white middle-class values.

The fact that people born in another country receive poorer support when they become parents is worrying, given that they mostly live in segregated housing areas and have poorer health than other groups in society. A longitudinal study in southern Sweden of children's health and living status showed that non-native parents experienced greater financial stress and received weaker emotional and practical support than other groups. They also face a high risk of separation, which in turn can negatively influence both parents' and children's sense of well-being.

Studies are scarce. However, Williams¹ is study

of African-Caribbean fathers in the United Kingdom concludes that “anticipated or perceived racist prejudice, abuse or discrimination influenced their health experiences”. Ny et al² examined men of Middle Eastern origin living in Sweden and their experiences of maternal and child health care. The study was based on focus group interviews with Iraqi men living in Sweden for just a couple of years who became fathers during this time. The men had no contact with maternal and child health services before or after the birth. Nevertheless, almost all these men, with the help of a midwife and others, had participated in the birth itself and described it as a very positive experience. The men said that, apart from the increase in involvement, it had helped give them greater understanding and respect for the woman. However, generally speaking men's discussions about parenthood were of mostly negative experiences. Most emphasized, for example, the difficulty in establishing effective parenthood that meets the expectations of both oneself as well as of others. Some even said they “regretted” having children in Sweden, relating difficulty to economic and social segregation. When asked to speak more specifically about parenthood they described poverty, unemployment, living in highly segregated areas, overcrowding, limited social network, shame, isolation and inadequacy – in relation to the children, to the woman and to themselves. Many went on to say that the experience of powerlessness and lack of role as parent had led to deterioration in their emotional as well as physical health.

Similar studies confirm this result. Roer-Strier et al³, whose study was based on fathers who had migrated to Canada and Israel, found that these fathers experienced great difficulty in finding employment and this adversely affected their parenthood. The study showed some positive effects of migration, where the men emphasized the opportunities for getting information about children and parenthood, the increased options for education for the children and a greater availability of places supporting contact between fathers and children, such as playgrounds and sport arenas.

“...Men say that the experience of powerlessness and lack of role as parent had led to deterioration in their emotional and physical health...”

In the same vein, studies in sociology and social anthropology show how men's parenthood is severely strained as a result of migration, including the loss of legitimacy and authority. Al Badawi⁴ claims that the high rates of unemployment, dependence on social welfare and language problems that often characterize the situation of many immigrant men are key factors for their experience of losing vital and important aspects of their parenthood: that is, the position as breadwinner or the position as

spokesperson for the family. In contrast, motherhood is less exposed to strain as women often get better support in their parenthood from different health and welfare institutions. Through the closeness to the children, the mother also gets better and continuously up-

“...Studies show that men's parenthood is severely strained as a result of migration, including the loss of legitimacy and authority...”

dated knowledge about the new surrounding society. Given this background, these experiences should be taken into consideration, including how they influence men's health, their life situation and their role as parents.

Men's support towards their partners is also especially important in vulnerable groups in which the women (and the men) have poorer health than average. Immigrant families are one such group. Several studies have showed that women born abroad run a higher risk of giving birth to babies with limited growth and run a greater risk of perinatal death. Since previous research has shown that increasing men's involvement can positively influence this situation, it is particularly important to reach out and involve these men.

1. Williams RA (2007). *Masculinities, fathering and health: the experiences of African-Caribbean and white working class fathers*. *Journal of Social Science and Medicine*, 64:338-349

2. Ny P et al. (2006). *The experience of Middle Eastern men living in Sweden of maternal and child health care and fatherhood: focus-group discussions and content analysis*. *Midwifery*, Nov 28 Epub ahead of print.

3. Roer-Strier D et al. (2005). *Fatherhood and immigration: challenging the deficit theory*. *Child and Family Social Work*, 10:315-329.

4. Al Badawi R (2002). *Migration och familjestruktur. Om psykosociala konsekvenser av förändringar i familjestrukturen hos invandrare*. *Migration and family structure. On the psychosocial effects of changes in the family structure among immigrants*. In: Ahmadi N, ed. *Ungdom, kulturmöten, identitet* [Youth, cultural interaction, identity]. Malmö, Liber.

Link to the publication: <http://www.euro.who.int/document/e91129.pdf>

(Continued from page 3)

In the context of Southern Africa, formal remittance channels, including banks, the post office and money transfer agencies, are expensive and notoriously slow in terms of transfer times. To-date, the majority of remittances are sent informally through migrating friends or relatives (31.9%) and taxis drivers (21.3%). In addition, the great majority of migrant-sending households (85%) receive remittances as cash. "In this context, women are less likely than men to have access to formal banking and other financial services. In Botswana and Swaziland, for example, women have to provide permission from their husbands or fathers before they can open a bank account. This is a significant obstacle to women's ability to make the most of the income they send or receive as remittances," stated Elizabeth Sidiropoulos.

As the majority of migrants carry remittances

themselves, the regularity and frequency at which remittances are received is related to how often they return home. On average, 59% of households received remittances once a month, with those in Lesotho (77%) being most likely to do so and those in Mozambique (20%) being least likely to do so.

The data and information reviewed in the UN-INSTRAW/SAIIA study point to an urgent need for more research on the migration of women and their role in sending, receiving and utilizing remittances. In particular, data should be disaggregated by sex so that we have a better idea of how many women migrate, for what reasons (employment, family, etc.), how they experience life away from their families and how this migration is changing household formation and dynamics.

In addition, the UN-INSTRAW/SAIIA study calls for increased dialogue on the policy con-

text of migration in Southern Africa that takes into account the extremely diverse nature of migration in this region, which includes permanent, temporary and contract migration, localized mobility, asylum-seekers and refugees, and irregular migration. Migration policies should also take into account women's changing role in migratory flows, and reflect the needs and priorities of women migrants in terms of mobility, access to employment, personal security, and access to financial services.

UN-INSTRAW press release of 03 April 2008.

<http://www.un-instraw.org/en/media-center/press-releases/in-southern-africa-women-are-changing-the-face-of-migra-2.html>

The report is available here: <http://www.un-instraw.org/en/downloads/gender-remittances-and-development/preliminary-findings-from-selected-sadc-countries/view.html>

Project outlines approach to the integration of female immigrant workers

A comprehensive approach should be taken when developing policies for the integration of immigrant women in European society. This is the main message coming from a raft of recommendations published by the EU-funded project, FeMiPol (Female Immigrants in Labour Market and Society Policy Assessment and Policy Recommendations).

Addressing the situation of female immigrants is extremely important to the social cohesion of the European Union, believes FeMiPol coordinator Dr Maria Kontos of the Institute of Social Research in Frankfurt, Germany. 'For a long time, women immigrants have been overlooked because there was the assumption that they were not part of the labour market.' Instead they were seen as housewives, staying at home to mind their children 'This idea is widespread in public opinion and among policymakers,' Dr Kontos told CORDIS News.

However, research has shown that in the last 15 years, women coming to Europe are in fact breadwinners, working in a variety of informal labour sectors, such as domestic work, tourism and agriculture. In fact, migrant women make up a significant section of the formal and informal workforce.

"...In the last 15 years, women coming to Europe are breadwinners, making up a significant section of the workforce..."

The project set out to find just how labour, social and other related policies affect this important population group. To do so, a team of researchers conducted a series of document analyses and interviews with experts on national policies from individual EU Member States, as well as those set at EU level. The project also interviewed immigrant women to find out about their personal experiences of

working in the EU and the strategies they adopted to improve their situation and to cope with certain restrictive policies.

The research found that policies such as those preventing or combating irregular work are not only ineffective and counterproductive, but often worsen the plight of female migrant workers. 'Most migrant women working in the informal labour sectors are undocumented [with no official resident's permit] or are semi-legal,' notes Dr Kontos. This makes them easy targets for exploitation by employers looking for cheap labour.

Because their work is undeclared, these women have no job security and are unable to benefit fully from health, welfare and other social services. Also off limits to them are language and training programmes and job schemes aimed at increasing integration into the labour market. 'These women are invisible and have no rights,' says Dr Kontos.

Steps have been taken in some Member States to formalise work in the domestic sector, where many migrant women work. Other Member States such as France have introduced tax deductions as an effort to absorb undeclared workers in these sectors. Sweden, Germany and the UK have also introduced tax breaks for domestic services. Meanwhile, several Member States have acknowledged the need for migrant domestic and care workers in their immigration legislation and have started immigrant recruitment schemes. In Spain and Italy for instance, foreign domestic and care workers are integrated in quota systems.

However, even when immigration and labour legislation recognise the need for female migrant domestic and care workers, these women still face poor working conditions. For instance, live-in arrangements, which are more widespread in southern Europe, may provide a

transitional solution to housing problems. They may also help workers to save money on rent, which is important for fulfilling their role as breadwinner. But women who are live-in domestic helpers also run the risk of becoming trapped in the sector and subjected to exploitation. In northern Europe, live-out domestic work predominates, which often implies having multiple employers and fragmented working hours.

"...Policies preventing or combating irregular work often worsen the plight of female migrant workers..."

Much more needs to be done and can be done at policy level, believes Dr Kontos, to empower these women and improve their work conditions. One important recommendation made by the project is to ensure that legislation separates the rights associated with resident's status from worker's rights. Giving all workers, both those with legal and irregular status, the same rights would help reduce discrimination and exploitation.

Other recommendations include: recognising the skills and qualifications of women immigrants so that they can pursue their work aspirations; providing increased access to training, language and orientation courses; and re-evaluating domestic and care work so that it is recognised not just as 'help' but 'work'.

In addition to improving the situation of women immigrants in the domestic and care sectors, the project has also developed recommendations on policies to increase civic participation among immigrant women and on policies affecting migrant women who chose to enter prostitution or were victims of trafficking.

Work has begun to share the project's recommendations with policy-makers. Dr Kontos

hopes that the response will be a comprehensive set of policies. 'It will not suffice to develop single policies in relation to immigrant workers because integration is multilayered, so policies

will need to interconnect. Migration mainstreaming is needed,' she concludes.

Bringing together eight partners from seven

Member States, the project was funded under the 'Scientific Support to Policies' thematic area of the Sixth Framework Programme (FP6).

News release published on Cordis website on 2008-04-02

http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=EN_NEWS&ACTION=D&SESSION=&RCN=29293

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Link to final project policy brief: http://www.femipol.uni-frankfurt.de/docs/policy_briefs/Final_Project_Policy_Brief.pdf

Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies of the Mediterranean Pledge to Better Address Migrant Women Hardships

Last February, the Italian Red Cross in collaboration with the Centre for Cooperation in the Mediterranean and in consultation with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross, organized an international meeting on Gender and Migration in the Mediterranean (Palermo, Italy / 14-17 February 2008).

The meeting conveyed under the high patronage of H.E. Mr. Giorgio Napolitano, President of the Italian Republic, provided a forum for National Societies to share experiences and advocate with Governments of the region for a humanitarian response to migration challenges.

During the meeting, the National Societies of the Mediterranean region adopted several recommendations, which included the commit-

ment to ensure gender mainstreaming in all programmes and activities. They pledged to take into account the extreme hardships often endured by vulnerable women and children during their migration, which include violence, sexual assault and abuse. They will also raise awareness and encourage authorities to take measures to prevent and reduce such risks, and to ensure appropriate programmes for those affected.

Mr. Peter Schatzer, IOM Regional Representative for the Mediterranean region gave a presentation on challenges faced in the development of voluntary return programmes and IOM's approach to address the needs of vulnerable returnees including women.

The National Societies also took note of the example provided by the work of the Italian

Red Cross and Italian authorities in Lampedusa and Sicily in cooperation with UNHCR and IOM.



The meeting report can be viewed here: http://www.hck.hr/upload/english_news/20/file_1/Palermo%20Recommendations%202008.pdf

In Moldova, Women Receiving Remittances Save More Than Men

At the end of last year, IOM's Mission in Moldova published a study entitled "Looking Forward and Including Migration in Development: Remittance Leveraging Opportunities for Moldova".

According to the World Bank, Moldova has the largest ratio of remittances in proportion to GDP in Europe. The National Bank of Moldova reports that Moldovan migrants remitted almost US \$855 million in 2006. IOM's "Migration and Remittances Survey 2006" demonstrates that over 40 percent of Moldovans live in households that receive remittances. The majority of these flows are used to fund basic household consumption, consumer dur-

LOOKING FORWARD AND INCLUDING
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FOR MOLDOVA



ables, housing, and debt repayment.

IOM's survey also shows that women recipients of remittances save more than men. The data indicates that women save nearly US\$2,400 as opposed to US\$1,800 saved by men. This is particularly important because 65% of recipients are female. Yet, only 15 percent of women have bank accounts compared with 30 percent among male remittance recipients.

As caretakers of households, women face more responsibilities and need to have greater financial literacy to improve their budgeting. The study therefore recommends an approach focusing on women.

International Seminar on the Participation of Women and Youth in the Reconciliation Process Held in Rome

Carmela Godeau and Cristina Montefusco
IOM Rome

On 6 May 2008, IOM Regional Mission for the Mediterranean region, in collaboration with the General Direction for Development Cooperation of the Italian

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, organised an International Seminar on the Participation of Women and Youth in the reconciliation process in Afghanistan, Lebanon and Sudan. The seminar which took place in Rome focused on the empowerment and protection of women and children in post-crisis settings and exam-

ined specific programmes active in these three countries.

It also intended to promote the exchange of experiences and good practices from the programmes carried out by civil society organisations and IOM with the support of the Italian

Cooperation.

The seminar also identified means to enhance the impact of future interventions with particu-

lar emphasis on the pro-active role of local civil society, local government and economic actors. It was recommended that they use a 'bottom-up' approach in enforcing women's rights and

the protection of minors in the reconstruction and reconciliation process.

More Attention Required for Women Returnee Migrants in Bangladesh

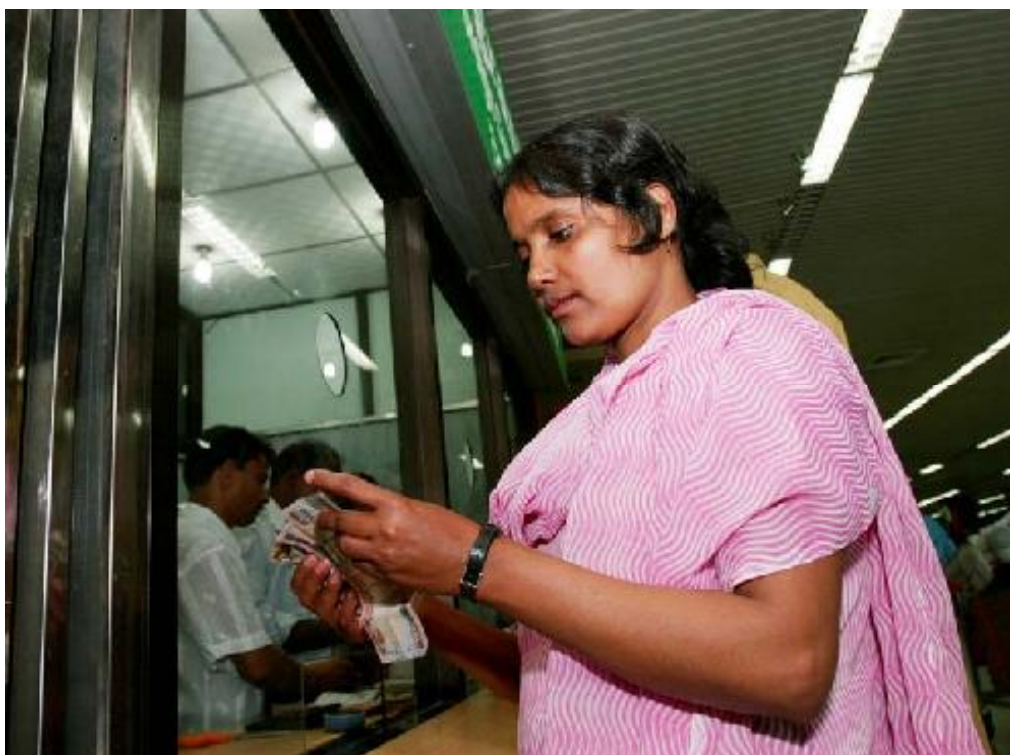
By Tasnuva Chaudhary and Samiha Huda
IOM Dhaka

Bangladesh has been identified as one of the major labour sending countries of South Asia. An increasing number of women are migrating in various semi-skilled work categories, yet the numbers are not as significant as their male counterparts. One major reason for the low rate of women's migration is the government policy on women's migration since 1976, when certain categories of unskilled or semi-skilled women workers were barred from working overseas. This ban was relaxed in 1988 and reinstated in 1997. The ban was lifted partially in 2002 by allowing migration of female domestic workers with a large number of conditions to fulfil. In 2005, the government relaxed those conditions. Such policies were taken to prevent women from being exploited even though increasing numbers of women were migrating independently for economic reasons.

Bangladeshi women's mobility is still low due to low levels of education and access to information, limited socio-economic independence, inadequate resources and support networks. A woman travelling independently is not accepted in many circles making it difficult for women to reintegrate into the society, especially when they return nearly empty handed. Lack of awareness and information often push returnee female migrants into a vulnerable situation, where they have almost no control over their remitted amount in the country. Like many other labour sending countries, there are fewer number of skill categories available for women than men and subsequently women remain restricted in domestic work, the readymade garment (RMG) sector and manufacturing sector. Field observation reveals that the women

returnees find it difficult to reintegrate into the family, community and society and are psychologically stressed. Many women find it difficult to adjust from their role as bread-earners in a foreign country to the traditional role of village housewife. Societal expectations foster a sense of guilt among the women migrant workers because of their apparent failure to fulfil their responsibilities towards the family and in particular the children. It is thus imperative to have well-defined reintegration programmes that provide information about potential invest-

ment and placement opportunities, and saving schemes among other things. Moreover, government subsidy on projects undertaken by returnee migrants as well as channelling the Wage Earner's Welfare Fund for re-integration programmes will be crucial. A gender equitable migration management policy should aim to mitigate discrepancies and address the many challenges faced by women returnees.



© IOM 2007 - A woman returnee migrant worker from Saudi Arabia exchanges money at the money changer booth at the ZIA International Airport, Dhaka, Bangladesh

New Study Shows Relatively Higher Rates of Women Brain Drain

A discussion paper titled "A Gendered Assessment of the Brain Drain" was published in December 2007, by the Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA) based in Germany.

This paper by Frédéric Docquier (FNRS, IRES, Catholic University of Louvain, World Bank and IZA), Lindsay Lowell (ISIM, Georgetown University) and Abdeslam Marfouk (Free University of Brussels) updates and extends the

Docquier-Marfouk data set on international migration by educational attainment.

The authors use new sources, homogenize definitions of what a migrant is, and compute gender-disaggregated indicators of the brain drain. Emigration stocks and rates are provided by level of schooling and gender for 195 source countries in 1990 and 2000. The data set can be used to capture the recent trend in women's brain drain and to analyze its causes

and consequences for developing countries.

The paper shows that women represent an increasing share of OECD immigration stock and exhibit relatively higher rates of brain drain than men. The gender gap in skilled migration is strongly correlated with the gender gap in educational attainment at country of origin. Equating women's and men's access to education would probably reduce gender differences in the brain drain.

Link to the discussion paper: <http://repec.iza.org/RePEc/Discussionpaper/dp3235.pdf>

HIGHLIGHTS ON IOM GENDER ACTIVITIES

- **Development Programme Targets African Women Migrants**
- **Female Genital Mutilation Now a Reality in Western Countries**
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- **Helping Sri Lankan Female Headed Households with Livelihood Options**

Development Programme Targets African Women Migrants

A new IOM programme aimed at engaging West African women migrants in the development of their countries has been launched in Italy, representing an increasing need to target the sizeable numbers of women migrants in development efforts.

The programme, funded by the Italian Government, builds on existing IOM efforts to involve African migrants in the development of their countries of origin through investment and business creation.

Migrant Women for Development in Africa (W-MIDA) hopes to tap into the significant numbers of West African migrant women living in Italy. Although overall, women represent nearly 49 per cent of all migrants in the country, among some West African diasporas, including the Nigerian, Cape Verde and Niger ones, women outnumber men. In other diaspora communities in Italy such as the Ghanaian, Cameroonian, and Ivorian, women migrants represent a significant force.

Currently, remittances are seen as the main factor linking migration and development. West African migrants in Italy sent home nearly US\$262 million in 2005 alone and although Sub-Saharan Africa has witnessed a 72 per cent growth in official remittances received since 2001, it is still the region which receives the lowest amount of remittances in the world. However, despite little available gender analysis of remittance patterns, women migrants do tend to remit more of their money over time than men. They also send remittances to the extended family instead of just spouse and children, confirming the idea that women feel responsible for the well-being of a community and not just a nuclear family.

W-MIDA will build on this by sup-

porting West African women migrants interested in committing all or part of their remittances to establish small or medium enterprises (SMEs) in their countries of origin through joint ventures with Italian partners and host communities.

A maximum of 15 SME projects will be selected with the women chosen to be given training in business development and management and in the processes of accessing credit in

as well as home and host communities."

Through Italian-funded MIDA programmes in Ghana and Senegal, IOM has already helped 18 migrants and their associations set up businesses in their home countries, which have already seen the creation of many new jobs both in Italy and in Ghana and Senegal.

A knock-on benefit of W-MIDA is



Ms. Tana Anglana, programme manager of W-MIDA in Italy during a mission in Ghana

order to enhance their entrepreneurial skills.

"W-MIDA will be another way of making more effective use of remittances, the value of which can be greater if the cost of money transfers are reduced or if they are used to generate investment or towards social initiatives that will help in the long-term development of communities and countries," says Tana Anglana, programme manager of W-MIDA in Italy. "We have seen with other MIDA programmes the enormous benefits such initiatives and investment brings to migrants

that in the process of outreach to migrant women, IOM will be able to map West African women in Italy and diaspora organizations and networks that have been set up and which could also work on migration and development issues. IOM will also be able to get a clearer picture of remittance practices of West African women as well as set up a database of migrant women wanting to invest in SMEs.

For further information, please contact Flavio Di Giacomo, IOM Rome, Tel: + 39 06 44 186 207 email: fdigiacomo@iom.int

Female Genital Mutilation Now a Reality in Western Countries

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a traditional practice that violates the basic human rights of women and girls. It can indeed be regarded as a form of violence that threatens the health of women and girls with many risks and no known benefits. As part of the several ongoing efforts at different levels to fight against the continuation of the practice, the Inter-

African Committee on Traditional Harmful Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Girls (IAC), coordinated a side event during the 61st World Health Assembly for all stakeholders and parties interested in the issue of FGM. This well attended parallel event, was held on 20 May, 2008 at the UN Headquarters, Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland.

The panel was attended by IOM, the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU), the Medical Women International Association (MWIA), UNESCO (Chair), UNFPA, UNHCR, WHO and IAC.

Sylvia Lopez-Ekra, IOM Gender Officer, gave a presentation on IOM's programmes and approach.

She explained that over the past 30 years, the practice of FGM has migrated to western countries that have received migrants originating from areas where it is practiced. This evolution, while raising problems similar to those arising in countries of origin, also poses new challenges calling for adaptation of the strategies put in place to address the issue.

Since FGM is highly linked to culture, in countries of destination, it becomes an integration issue, in addition to being a public health and a human rights issue. Through pre-departure cultural orientation courses, IOM advocates against FGM among groups preparing to resettle. In recent years, the organization has also been increasingly involved in raising awareness among European governments as well as providing assistance for concrete activities.

In this framework, IOM has developed a comprehensive strategy to address FGM in the context of migration. Key aspects of this strategy are inclusiveness, community leadership and ownership, and capacity-building

of health professionals. IOM interventions seek to empower women in a sustainable manner in support of their greater decision-making power, especially when it comes to their sexual and reproductive health. Sensitisation campaigns are also organized to deconstruct the myths that sustain FGM with all members of the communities. IOM also places an emphasis on collaboration with local health professionals as still too few practitioners in Europe and Northern America have experience in addressing the special health care needs of women who have undergone FGM. Health service providers must be trained to identify and treat problems resulting from FGM. This includes the capacity to treat various long-term complications as well as to offer relief options such as defibulation not related to pregnancy and delivery, and access to reconstructive surgery.



A participant wearing a dress with embroideries depicting the childbirth experiences of women who had undergone FGM in Burkina Faso

An Actress Returns Home to Build a Better Future for Afghanistan

By Katsui Kaya, IOM Kabul

Afghan actress Storai Mangal, 51, firmly believes that women and the arts can play a central role in the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

Ms. Mangal, one of the female Afghan experts selected under IOM's Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals (TRQN) programme, arrived in Kabul last August and completed a six-month assignment with Radio Television Afghanistan (RTA).

Funded by the Dutch Government, the TRQN programme assists qualified Afghans residing in the Netherlands to return home and helps to place them in key positions within government, ministries and the private sector. IOM works closely with the Government of Afghanistan to identify positions that are important to the country's reconstruction and sustainable development plans, but which cannot be filled by nationals already living in Afghanistan.

In today's Afghanistan, experienced actresses like Storai Mangal are certainly few and far between. She started her career as a voice actress some 25 years ago and starred in a popular series which the RTA continues to air.

She was also active in directing plays, and her poetry recitals on various radio programmes won her such a mass following that it was once difficult to find an Afghan radio listener nationwide who was not familiar with her unique, translucent voice.

But in the summer of 1998 during the Taliban regime her voice also proved her undoing. Like other professional women she was banned from working and when police officers recog-

nized her voice in the street, despite the fact that she was wearing a burqa, she knew that it was time to leave. "My life was in danger and I had no choice but to escape," she says.

After fleeing Afghanistan, Ms. Mangal was granted refugee status in the Netherlands, where she continued her work as an actress, mainly for Afghan audiences. She teamed up with other Afghan artists and produced plays, films, dramas and magazines. Some of them were educational products designed to teach Afghan children about the culture of their homeland.

According to the Ministry of Education, an estimated 11 million Afghans are illiterate. It is commonly agreed that the best way to educate the adult population in Afghanistan is not through the books and newspapers, but through other means such as broadcast media.

Despite her achievements, Ms. Mangal found life in the Netherlands a struggle, mainly due to limited knowledge of the Dutch language. "It is very difficult to work for Dutch TV without speaking the language fluently and I am too old for that. When I found out about the IOM programme, I was so happy and applied immediately. I realized that I would be able to work again. It was like I finally found what I had lost in my life," she says.

Back in Kabul, Ms. Mangal started work on a TV drama about one of the most famous figures in Afghan history - Mirwais Nika. He overthrew the governor of Kandahar in 1709 and successfully defeated the Persians, who were attempting to convert the local population of Kandahar from Sunni to Shia Islam.

"Learning about Mirwais Nika is important for

all Afghans as he is like a father of the nation and a symbol of unity and solidarity for solving the problems of the Afghan people through Jirga (a traditional assembly of elders)," says Ms. Mangal.

Storai Mangal not only directed the drama, but also played the roles of four different female characters. This was not to show off her excellent acting skills – it was because finding suitable actresses, allowed to work by their families, is one of the most difficult things about producing films in Afghanistan.

"This has been my complaint against Afghan men all this time. Why do they not allow their wives to work? Islam does not say that women should be kept at home. On the contrary, the acquisition of knowledge is compulsory for both men and women," says Ms. Mangal.

Ms. Mangal is convinced that TV and radio programmes can only be successful if they include female characters. "As we reconstruct the country, we need to also reconstruct our minds and re-educate families for a better future – a future in which women participate,"



Ms. Mangal dressed in a widow costume for her role, poses with her co-actors during the movie production

Kenya: Men More Vulnerable to Trafficking as They Try to Fulfil Traditional Breadwinner Role

Following the crisis in Kenya, many informal camps were formed as IDPs sought refuge at police stations, churches, and other locations. At the height of the crisis, the Kenya Red Cross estimated the number of displaced at 350,000. Although some of these groups were assisted to return home or to be relocated when they felt it was safe, many remain in camp settings or with host communities.

Due to the rapid onset of the emergency situation in Kenya, many people's livelihoods were destroyed in the process of displacement and they have become dependent on humanitarian relief or alternative livelihoods for survival. Forced displacement can result in the loss of livelihood, possessions, and identity documents, among other deleterious effects, which can increase the risk of trafficking in human beings. The formation of camps creates an environment where numerous people of all ages and both genders are concentrated and living in conditions that could be utilized by traffickers wishing to recruit victims under the false promises of jobs, education, or simply transportation to other areas of the country.

In this context, IOM organized a rapid assessment of IDPs' vulnerability to trafficking in order to develop strategies and provide information to partners and the Government of Kenya (GoK). Two counter trafficking officers were accompanied by a Children's Officer of the GoK to undertake assessments of the IDP camps and settlements in Nairobi and surrounding areas over two days in late February 2008. This exercise was conducted in three locations outside of Nairobi: Tigoni, Kirathimu, and Juja, as well as five areas within Nairobi: Runda, Huruma, Mathare, Dandora, and Eastleigh.

One of the objectives of the assessment was to identify potential changes in gender roles and occurrences of gender based violence. Indeed, crisis can cause the disruption of gender roles, leading IDPs to try and find alternative means to fulfil such roles. This is particularly pertinent to the male role in the household and if such is disrupted, there may be more motivation to look for other livelihoods. Again, such a situation could be exploited by traffickers who could more easily convince men to accept their offers by preying on the absence of employment opportunities within the camp.

The assessment showed that in the camps visited, the role of women tended to be maintained. For example, in Kirathimu and Mathare Police Depot, women maintained a collective kitchen and continued to be responsible for household chores as they had been pre-displacement. In all locations it was observed by the mission that men's gender roles had been disrupted; many men were idle and were not visibly participating in aspects of camp or household management. There had been some reports that men had been seeking casual employment in host communities with some success. As the traditional wage earners, displaced men with families may be more inclined to accept offers of employment, which could be used by traffickers to recruit male victims.

Sexual violence and insecurity in the camps may also contribute to the increased vulnerability of women and girls and increase their willingness to accept offers from traffickers in hopes that it will provide the safety and security from such fears or actual acts of GBV by leaving the camp. During the IOM assessment, women confided



that they were sleeping together in tents when they felt security was lacking, demonstrating that they were already taking precautionary measures as they fear of GBV. Some camp managers reported known incidences of domestic violence, and said they had been addressed through the appropriate channels, such as the Gender Violence Recovery Centre of the Nairobi Women's Hospital, and the removal of the perpetrator from the camp environment. There had been no reports of forced marriages when the assessment team made inquiries, but it is possible that this information would not have been shared or would not have been known by respondents.

This article is based on the Rapid Assessment Report: *Vulnerability to Trafficking due to Post-Election Conflict-Driven Displacement in Kenya (Nairobi and Environs)* prepared by **Lara Quatterman & Noela Barasa**

Income Generation Project for Women in Baghdad

By Muna FADHIL, IOM Baghdad

Through IOM funding and supervision, the Italian Consortium of Solidarity (ICS), in partnership with a local Iraqi women's NGO has completed an income generation project for 36 women in Baghdad and Anbar. These women have started their businesses in sewing, livestock management, baking, internet centers and photocopy shops among other small projects.

The project included two phases. The first starting July to October 2007 was aimed at supporting existing community centres to provide vulnerable women with a wide range of activities such as sewing, cooking, computer and literacy courses and therefore improve their skills and capacities. The second phase

began in December 2007 and was completed in March 2008. This intervention was meant to follow up on the previous phase with income generation activities. Out of those women attending the vocational trainings provided by the community centres some beneficiaries were selected to have a chance to put their skills and knowledge into practice and to achieve a direct involvement in the labour market starting a small business activity. The selected grantees took part in a structured income generation programme based on their specific needs and on the peculiarities of the context. The income generation programme included training on business management, definition of the business activities, assignment of in-kind grants, monitoring and continued on-job assistance.

Suha (not her real name) is an Iraqi pharmacist

from Baghdad and one of the managers of the local NGO partnering with ICS for this project. Suha spoke of her experience as an Iraqi woman involved in this project. Suha expressed enthusiasm in such projects because she said



In the literacy course...

many husbands had gone missing, were killed in the midst of violence or were currently unemployed. "Our work changes women from vulnerable persons asking for charity hand outs to self sufficient women who are proud of themselves" said Suha.

Suha was asked if this project faced any challenges being run by women and for the benefit of women, due to the conservative culture in Iraq. Suha replied "sure there are difficulties for us as women, for example when there is a road block and we are forced to stay out late, men have easier mobility. But our sex has also helped us reach areas men cannot reach. We have less trouble at check points than men and we have easier access into people's homes. Religious and tribal leaders

were very respectful of our work and appreciative of the risks we take. Many of them asked their wives and daughters to join us. This positive attitude helped us reach wider communities." Suha did add that the situation was still challenging regardless of gender "we have been increasingly asked in the last two years to which religious sect or political group we belong. This is a problem that affects men and women. We take pride in the diversity of the women volunteering for our group."

Um Ali (not her real name) is one of the beneficiaries of this project. She and her children moved to live with her brother, his wife and their children after her husband was killed two years ago. She now sews and mends clothes from home and earns her own income. "I feel

like a human being now, I can look my brother and his wife in the eye. In the past I felt they were giving us charity. Now when I take my nephews and nieces with my children to buy them candy from my own money I feel the greatest joy."

"Charity comes and goes, this project gave these women confidence and that they will keep ... this is why this project will be successful and because these women are talking to more women of their same predicament and sending them to us for help. This is how I measure our success" concluded Suha. ICS is in the process of conducting an evaluation to determine impact, results and lesson learned. This evaluation will help shape future similar intervention.

Building Women Migrant Entrepreneurship Skills in Chile

By Viviana MELLADO, IOM Chile

IOM Chile, in partnership with a community parish in the northern region, is implementing a micro-enterprises project for Aymara migrant women.

Some of these women live in extreme poverty, seeking social support and material assistance from the community parish to cover basic needs such as food, housing and health. They have faced various obstacles and difficulties in finding a job since they are discriminated against due to their ethnicity and foreign condition.

The major innovation of this project is that it transcends the assistance perspective and focuses on capacity building through activities already familiar to the migrant women, such as the production and marketing of handicrafts. The main objective is to empower Aymara migrant women to improve their standards of living and obtain livelihood opportunities.

This project provides training, including training of trainers as well as concrete productive activities. It is hoped that the project will create progress in various areas, and develop the capacity of the Aymara migrant women to enjoy their rights in Chile.



To promote the full integration of Aymara migrant women in the area, workshops on gender, cultural identity, spiritual issues, alcoholism, marital infidelity, violence and women's rights are also taking place.

Afghan Female Headed Households and Widows Benefit from Distribution of Winter Kits

By Katsui Kaya, IOM Kabul

Since February 2008, IOM has started the distribution of non-food winter kits to internally displaced persons in Afghanistan. The assistance package includes two blankets, three sweaters and three shawls which will protect vulnerable people in the freezing weather.

Most of IDPs are temporarily settled in makeshift huts made of mud and material donated by sympathetic neighbours; having been displaced as a result of natural disasters, conflict and deportations.

In selecting the beneficiaries, the situation of women is considered in terms of vulnerability, and priority is often given to female heads of households and widows. Women's needs are also taken into account when selecting Non-Food Items for distribution. IOM is working in close coordination with the Afghan Government, NGOs and various UN agencies including WFP, UNHCR and UNICEF.



Study explores women's ex-combatant experiences in Colombia

By Luisa DIETRICH, IOM Bogota

Little is known of women's experiences in the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC). During Colombia's DDR processes in the 1990s, women represented approximately 27% of the demobilized. From 2002-2005, 8390 individuals participated in individual DDR, of whom 14% were women. Collective DDR processes demobilized 31 652 individuals from the AUC from 2003 – 2006.

Of this total, 29 740 (94%) were men while 1911 (6%) were women.

IOM supported a qualitative study of female AUC members who participated in the 38 collective DDR processes of the AUC from 2003 – 2006. The study include a survey, semi-structured interviews and focal groups in Medellín, Bajo Cauca, and Urabá in the Antioquia department, where 77.7% of the 569 women demobilized from the AUC in Antio-

quia reside.

The study outlines the socio-demographic profile of female ex-AUC combatants. It notes that the majority of women in the AUC are of mixed ethnic origin and from urban locations. More than half are under 30 years of age and 66% are from the lowest income bracket. They typically have low levels of education. 90% are mothers, while 78% of the women are heads of household. 70% are unemployed and 8% work

in the informal sector. Women reported low levels of sexual violence; however, levels of domestic violence rose from 26% to 46% following DDR.

On women's experiences in the AUC, 70% of the women joined between 2001 and 2005, and 73% were in the paramilitary groups for less than three years. Economic considerations represented women's main reason for joining the AUC (68%). While in armed groups, women's roles reflected traditional gender roles: 22% served as combatants, 31% filled domestic roles, 22% served in logistical support roles. Few held commanding positions.

Women had little say about participating in the collective DDR. Nevertheless, 92% indicated agreement with the process. The main reasons for their willingness to demobilize include their children (36%) and the need for peace (34%). Women in AUC groups did not experience difficulties being included on the lists of armed groups for DDR, as occurred in DDR programs elsewhere. They did, however, experience difficulties during the DDR process due to its male-centric design and implementation.

In the reintegration process, they have experienced significant difficulties. They are often stigmatized by host communities and forced

into traditional gender roles. The study noted that women's experiences in the paramilitary groups left them ill-prepared to reintegrate into civilian life. Their work within the AUC, such as nursing, is rarely recognized by civilian institutions. Many lost the support structures developed within the AUC.

Women held highly differing opinions on the themes of truth, justice, and reconciliation. 45% recognized that the paramilitary groups committed acts of violence against the civilian population; however, 51% denied that their own paramilitary group committed such acts. By contrast, 69% expressed willingness to participate in reparation activities with civilian communities for abuses committed by their paramilitary group. Some women did express a sense of responsibility for the suffering experienced by civilians. Many women argued that the paramilitary groups only targeted 'bad' civilians who collaborated with the enemy and pointed out positive benefits brought to civilians by the AUC, such as 'protection.'

The study points out that women often sought to justify their actions to remove their individual responsibility. Women had mixed feelings about the possibility of uncovering the truth of abuses committed during the conflict. Many expressed security concerns about participating

in truth-telling activities and a desire to forget. They emphasized that efforts to uncover the truth must also address the actions of the government and guerrilla groups. There were many different conceptions of justice provided.

The study examined and sought to develop the relationship between demobilized female AUC members and female community leaders in five host communities where the highest numbers of former female AUC members reside. Knowledge of the presence of female ex-AUC members varied greatly between community leaders. Many female ex-combatants expressed their desire to remain anonymous to avoid stigmatization and for personal security reasons. Some felt marginalized and socially isolated in their host communities.

Female leaders expressed feelings of apprehension, and sometimes hostility, towards female ex-combatants. Others, however, especially those demobilized in the 1990s, pointed to their efforts to reach recent female ex-combatants. The children of ex-combatants also face stigmatization in host communities. Both groups expressed a willingness to engage in dialogue and other activities with one another, highlighting shared challenges they face as women.

Helping Sri Lankan Female Headed Households with Livelihood Options



By Anushka ABEYRATNE
IOM Colombo

As part of its recovery operations, IOM has developed livelihood support programmes that enable IDPs to develop self-sustaining activities. IOM in partnership with Sewalanka Foundation (SF), a local NGO, recently developed a livelihood support project to promote Hybrid goats among 60 female-headed households affected by the conflict in the Jaffna district, North of Sri Lanka.

Women from low income families in the district were identified by IOM and local government authorities to be assisted under this ECHO funded project. They received support in overall livestock management and trainings on business skills development. Beneficiaries were also provided with material to construct sheds and other items required for goat rearing such as feeding equipment and livestock medicine and food. The project aimed at empower-

ing the women who were otherwise involved in labour work by assisting them in earning an additional income through the sale of goat milk and manure.

Bouncing back to life

Hariharan Mankajatkarakasi from Sandilippay, North of Jaffna has had her share of challenges, trials and tribulations in life. Eight years ago she and her family fled to India after being displaced as a result of the conflict. She received a double blow when in India she lost her husband, the sole breadwinner of the family. Three years later returning home with neither a permanent place to dwell nor any means of income she tried hard to keep the home fires burning.

"After returning we moved from village to village and finally arrived in Sandilippay", says Hariharan. "I started a home garden and struggled to feed, clothe and educate my children with whatever I earned from home gardening and with what I received as assistance from the state". However, with the renewed conflict they were once again affected and the economic situation worsened. "It was then that I decided to register with the local government authority in the village. Words cannot describe how happy I was when I heard I was selected to undergo training on the goat rearing project" she adds.

Officers from the SF visited Hariharan at home, and the next thing she knew was that she was attending a training on livestock management conducted by officials from the Veterinary De-

partment. "I received a lot of knowledge on how to rear goats. Not only was the training free-of-charge but the participants were also provided with meals, travelling expenses and handouts during the training" says Hariharan. She also attended a training on business planning and at the end submitted a business plan. After the workshops the family received goats, material to construct a shed, medicine and food.

Now busy with the latest venture, Hariharan is certain that the additional income she earns will help her educate her children and provide improved living conditions for them. "This venture has given me a lot of hope and courage. I am interested in expanding it and right now whatever I earn from this will go into educating my children. One of my children has already passed his GCE Ordinary Level examination with A's", concludes the proud mother with a real sense of achievement.



INSIDE IOM: WHAT'S NEW?

- New Policy on Special Leave Without Pay
- Mainstreaming Gender in IOM Nairobi
- Gender Sensitization in MRF Dhaka
- A Minimum of Six Weeks of Paid Leave for Adopting Parents

New Policy on Special Leave Without Pay

On the 14 March, General Bulletin 2033 introduced a new Special Leave Without Pay (SLWOP) policy in IOM.

SLWOP allows staff members with a minimum of 2 years of uninterrupted service and the intention to continue working for IOM to take leave without pay for care of family members including children, personal reasons including the career demands of a spouse/partner and to study.

SLWOP which can be granted for a

minimum of 1 month and a maximum of 1 year (a one-year extension is possible and a third year may exceptionally be granted), is not an entitlement but is granted at the discretion of the Administration. Staff members must submit their request with sufficient advance time to their immediate supervisor.

Staff members who have been granted SLWOP remain staff members of IOM. They are considered internal candidates and will be given priority consideration recruitment-wise.

Although the Organization is not able to guarantee that there will be a position commensurate with the staff member's qualifications and experience available upon expiry of the SLWOP, the Administration will make every effort to facilitate his/her return within the Organization.

For more information please refer to GB 2033.

Mainstreaming Gender in IOM Nairobi

Consolata KIMATA-WAITHAKA
IOM Nairobi

MRF Nairobi has revived its Gender Working Group (GWG) under the motivating leadership of the Regional Representative, Mr. Ashraf El Noor.

The GWG is unique in 2008, as it has two Gender Focal Points and nine other members appointed from each department and sub-offices, including the Regional Representative. This creates diversity in contribution of ideas and expertise in carrying out activities within the mission. In total, the group comprises six women and five men.

Over the years, MRF Nairobi has grown in size and capacity, hence the need to continually emphasize and promote gender mainstreaming within the organization.

To achieve this, the GWG has made it a priority for all its members to be trained on their duties and responsibilities, and expectations on Gender Issues. Members who have had previous trainings will train the others as the mission sources external training from organizations such as UNIFEM.

The GWG work-plan includes periodical, compulsory gender trainings for staff in collaboration with the Human Resources Department. The trainings will sensitize staff on

gender issues within the workplace and in their home environments.

It is also the intention of GWG to develop projects that will bring in funding to sustain the activities of the group. This may be done in partnership with other agencies or government ministries.

Sensitizing staff on gender issues will help enhance relationships amongst staff and also improve the quality of services provided by the mission in migration management and assistance. In co-ordination with the HR Department and Heads of Departments, the GWG hope to achieve 100% gender parity within MRF Nairobi in the next 2-3 years.

Gender Sensitization in MRF Dhaka

By Samiha Huda
IOM Dhaka

MRF Dhaka is expanding in terms of projects and staff members. Currently, 34% of staff members are female but this figure becomes 50% when accounting for the sub-offices alone. A strong need for gender briefing has been increasingly felt and was echoed by the Regional Representative and the GFP during MRF Dhaka retreat this year.

Common belief

Gender is often perceived as a women's issue and comprehension is also influenced by custom. The training therefore aimed to get the message across that this is a common issue for both women and men. Exercises such as the sharing of individual experience and peer

discussions were initiated in the gender sensitization session conducted by the GFP. In addition, basic gender concepts and misconceptions linked to traditional belief systems were discussed through interactive sessions. IOM's position in promoting gender was highlighted as well.

Daily life

The role of gender in daily life was discussed with great enthusiasm by the staff members. Balance between work and home was also an issue of debate in this regard. While analyzing

gender, the critical role of culture and values were also discussed and noted.

Programmatic approach

Special emphasis was given to gender-related interventions under IOM mandate. Since the sub office staff members are more involved in service-oriented activities, a brief presentation was made on IOM



Dhaka's role in programme interventions in promoting safe migration. In addition, gender-sensitive budgeting was also covered during the sensitization session.

For the sub office staff members, this was their first encounter with such sensitization sessions. The staff members found it very interesting and expressed a desire for more comprehensive future training on gender issues to adapt with

their professional and personal lives.

A Minimum of Six Weeks of Paid Leave for Adopting Parents

On 14 April 2008 General Bulletin 2036 introduced new IOM Guidelines on Adoption Leave. This document expands current benefits by granting travel costs for an adopted child to all staff members and 30 days' DSA in favour of each adopted child to Officials serving outside their home station. Adoption leave is leave with full pay granted to

staff members who have a contract subject to Staff Regulations and Rules or have continuously worked for IOM for 12 consecutive months on special contracts and who provide a certificate of adoption issued by the competent National Authority.

Six weeks (or eight if the adopted child is un-

der 2 years of age or handicapped) will be granted upon request.

For more information please refer to GB 2036

Recommended reading



INDIGENOUS ROUTES: A FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING INDIGENOUS MIGRATION

Publication by IOM. Indigenous peoples are increasingly on the move as part of the phenomenon of global migration. The publication includes diverse examples of indigenous peoples' migration, its distinctive features and commonalities.

Link to the report: http://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/published_docs/books/Indigenous_route_final.pdf



NO ONE TO TURN TO: THE UNDER-REPORTING OF CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE BY AID WORKERS AND PEACEKEEPERS

Report by Save the Children UK. The extent of sexual abuse by aid workers and peacekeepers is being under-estimated because mechanisms to encourage victims to speak out against their attackers and to protect them are poorly developed.

Link to the report: http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/docs/No_One_to_Turn_To.pdf



GENDER AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT MAXIMISING THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ROLE OF WOMEN

Publication by OECD. Includes a chapter on women and migration. Women make up more than 50% of all new immigrants to OECD countries.

Link to the report: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/58/1/40881538.pdf>



(SHE GIVES BACK) MIGRANT WOMEN'S PHILANTHROPIC PRACTICES FROM THE DIASPORA

Research report by Mama Cash / Fund for Women.

Practices of 'giving back' from diaspora communities have existed for many years. Migrant women's groups and organisations are important players in philanthropy.

Link to the report: http://www.mamacash.nl/uploads/File/she%20has%20news/publicaties/shegivesback_researchreport.pdf

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