



IOM International Organization for Migration

June 2006  
Issue N° 26

### Inside this Issue

- 1** News from HQs
- 5** News from the Field
- 10** Mail for Men
- 11** Gender Quiz
- 12** Special Annex
- 14** Noteworthy Statistics

## IOM GENDER AND MIGRATION NEWS



Dear Colleagues,

A word of sincere appreciation is in order for the hard work of the Permanent Observer Mission in New York for having co-organized, with UNFPA, the recent Expert Group Meeting on *‘Female Migrants: Bridging the Gaps throughout the Life Cycle’*. The Expert Meeting was successful and provided specific recommendations on how governments, IOM, UNFPA and other partner organizations could work together to ensure that the rights and needs of female migrants were addressed. The final report of this meeting will be shared with all.

The WGGI (again with the New York Observer Mission) will organize a ministerial round-table breakfast to discuss ‘Gender dimensions of Labour Migration’ in early July the outcome of which will also contribute to the preparation of the High-Level Dialogue (HLD) on International Migration and Development in September.

Much work has been devoted to the Gender Fact Sheets with another under preparation. Sylvia Ekra deserves much credit for her creativity in researching and preparing these Fact Sheets that are posted on the new Intranet along with other internal WGGI documents.

We should like to note with sincere regret that two pillars of the WGGI – Elisa Tsakiri and Theo Suter – have moved to Manila and Amman, respectively. The WGGI will sorely miss them but we know we can continue to rely on their expertise and assistance. We wish them well!

The Working Group on Gender Issues (WGGI)

### NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS



WGGI gathering on *‘Fathers and Work-Life Balance’* on 30 May. TDC, Denmark’s largest telecom company, giving their presentation on ‘Dad’s Hug’ campaign to IOM staff the composition of which was **almost** gender balanced for the first time ever.

Article follows on next page.

## NEWS FROM HQs (Cont'd)

Denise Glasscock, WGGI Head, writes:

### *Fathers and Work/Life Balance*

Within the framework of its second Gender Fact Sheet\* devoted to **Challenges to a Work/Life Balance**, the WGGI decided to organize an event to address male IOM staff members. This event entitled *Fathers and Work/Life Balance* took place on 30 May and was meant not only to specifically target men for a change, but also to take advantage of the visit of representatives from TDC, Denmark's largest telecom company, that was in Geneva to present its policy on maternity-paternity leave to various international organizations.

TDC's main theory was that its male staff that took advantage of the company's generous policy on paternity leave (8 weeks of absence before birth, 14 weeks after birth and 32 weeks of parental leave after the end of the 14 weeks, with full salary) did so with their CEO's personal endorsement. TDC found that these male staff members tended to be happier and better adjusted colleagues. At the same time this generous paternity leave made it possible for women to stay longer at work without missing potential career opportunities. This policy is also related to the country's gender equality

policy that aims at recognizing the interests, needs, and priorities of **both** women and men. Let me recall that gender equality is not merely a women's issue, it concerns and should engage **both** men and women. A lively discussion followed the presentation of TDC's 'Dad's Hug campaign'.

**\*wherein one could read *inter alia* that both women and men, although women to a lesser degree, are torn between opting for their rights (as in paternity leave) and feelings of insecurity regarding work performance and family balance.**

\* \* \*

Stefania Kirschman, WGGI intern, wrote this piece:

### **Initiatives en faveur de femmes migrantes : une expérience argentine.**

En tant que stagiaire auprès des questions de genre ici à l'OIM, j'ai décidé – en ces tous derniers jours de mon stage - de saisir l'occasion offerte par le WGGI Bulletin pour vous présenter le travail qui m'a amené à m'intéresser - et par la suite à me former – au sujet des spécificités des migrations féminines et des problématiques de genre.

J'ai en effet terminé l'année dernière un diplôme postgrad en Etudes genre ici à l'Université de Genève par un mémoire intitulé ***Explorations sur la question du genre et de la migration internationale : l'immigration***

### ***féminine à Buenos Aires et le programme Todas.***

Le sujet principal de mon travail est une exploration du domaine genre et migrations avec pour objet d'étude un programme municipal en faveur des femmes migrantes dans la capitale argentine Buenos Aires.

Plus précisément, il s'est agi d'étudier l'intégration et la thématisation de la perspective de genre dans ce programme qui s'appelle Todas et qui est composé de 2 travailleuses sociales. J'ai donc cherché à définir et montrer de quelle façon la réflexion de genre était présente dans ce programme dont l'objectif affiché est de contribuer à l'amélioration des conditions de vie des femmes migrantes. Par diverses approches, j'ai par exemple tenté de décrire les directions prises par ce programme concernant la perspective de genre, la propre définition qu'elles en font, l'intégration des migrantes aux projets et leur participation, l'accès aux ressources et à l'information, leur visibilité, les problématiques d'autonomisation ou encore les intérêts stratégiques et les besoins pratiques des migrantes.

Par ailleurs, et comme l'indique aussi le titre de ce travail, il a aussi été fondamental et central dans mon travail d'établir un **panorama** des questions incontournables liées au genre et à la migration internationale à un niveau plus général, puisque le manque de recherches exhaustives en ce domaine est incontestable.

Au départ, au moment de chercher un sujet de mémoire, j'avais comme intérêts très généraux l'idée d'aborder plutôt un sujet d'actualité - alors que je suis historienne de formation -, qui pourrait traiter d'un aspect évocateur d'un point de vue du genre en abordant un thème qui aurait pour contexte un pays du Sud. C'est en effet grâce à mes expériences historiques antérieures (j'avais effectué mon mémoire de licence sur les femmes esclaves à Cuba au XIXème siècle), que j'avais le désir d'aborder une question en lien avec l'Amérique Latine et le travail féminin dans le but de trouver une « sorte de lien » avec ce que j'avais fait auparavant.

J'ai donc pensé qu'il s'agissait là d'une occasion idéale pour connaître un environnement concret et proposer en même temps un projet de mémoire original qui se rapprochait de toute évidence de mes intérêts.

Suite à un stage préalable au sein du département des migrations internationales de l'OIT, j'ai pensé qu'il serait très motivant et intéressant de me rendre sur place pour enrichir ma recherche d'une dimension de terrain. J'ai donc effectué un voyage de 6 semaines à Santiago du Chili et Buenos Aires. J'y ai utilisé mon réseau de contacts-clés pour me rendre dans diverses institutions et rencontrer une grande quantité de personnes qui puissent m'aider à broser un tableau le plus complet

possible sur le genre et la migration dans la région. Les conditions matérielles et le temps imparti lors de ce voyage ne me permettait malheureusement pas d'effectuer des entretiens qualitatifs et approfondis qui auraient été l'idéal.

**A un niveau plus précis, les intérêts de ce sujet d'étude sont divers :**

D'une part, l'un de ses enjeux réside dans la tentative d'apporter des éclairages sur la manière dont réagit une société au nombre croissant de femmes immigrées dans une société donnée. D'autre part, cela permet aussi de s'interroger sur la manière dont est développée la question du genre en relation avec les enjeux que cela implique pour la population migrante. A plus long terme, cela donne éventuellement aussi l'occasion de mettre en avant les approches optimales et l'efficacité de ces démarches d'un point de vue du genre.

L'un des intérêts de mon travail a également été de mettre en évidence un type d'expérience « innovatrice » dans les faits et le contexte de Buenos Aires. C'est non seulement dans le but de donner à connaître une dimension peu étudiée dans le domaine du genre et des migrations mais aussi une réalité sociale et féministe latino-américaine qui a jusqu'ici très peu fait l'objet d'observations. C'est donc ici une occasion d'offrir un regard diversifié sur un certain type d'actions ou politiques féministes dans un contexte économique et so-

cial que l'on peut qualifier d'« explosif » et où la présence non négligeable de femmes immigrées suscite des questions ou des réactions. C'est à mon avis l'un des aspects intéressants de ce travail : tenter de donner à connaître une certaine réalité de terrain qui n'est pas toujours facile, en montrant autant que possible le travail effectué par les protagonistes et en même temps en réfléchissant à des problématiques pertinentes en genre et migrations et au sein d'actions destinées aux femmes.

Ensuite, le détour par les **caractéristiques de l'immigration féminine en Argentine** dépeint aussi une réalité particulière, dont l'intérêt historique ou social est passionnant : par exemple, ce sujet peut très aisément être lié à celui de la construction des identités nationales dans le continent ou en Argentine, aux relations ethniques et à la place de la femme en Amérique Latine.

Il a aussi été question de mettre en avant un **petit « guide » de bonnes pratiques** pour les initiatives en faveur des immigrées avec perspective de genre : pour ce faire j'ai utilisé l'unique publication disponible qui est particulièrement destinée à l'Amérique Latine.

Par exemple, j'ai décrit et explicité en détail l'implication de Todas dans la création et le suivi d'un **Réseau de femmes migrantes**, cette expérience étant en quelque sorte « pionnière » dans la région.

La place du concept d'empowerment en tant que renforcement collectif du pouvoir et d'autonomisation ainsi que de citoyenneté et participation y ont également été expliqués.

Il a justement été intéressant de constater que l'action collective et le renforcement du pouvoir par le regroupement, l'établissement de réseaux et de nouvelles formes de participation et de qualification par l'appropriation d'un certain pouvoir constituent des points de réflexion approfondis dans le programme Todas. La nécessité de visibilité pour remédier aux poids de la tradition patriarcale réduisant les femmes à la sphère domestique est également présent.

Finalement, je souhaite mettre un avant que l'un des enjeux de ce travail se situe au niveau personnel : j'ai tenté à travers un tel sujet et les diverses étapes qui ont composé ce projet de composer avec mes intérêts personnels et les exigences d'un master en incorporant à une approche académique une expérience ancrée dans une réalité pratique à travers un stage et une réalité de terrain sur place.

Ensuite, j'ai tenté de mettre en avant les données principales concernant les particularités l'immigration féminine actuelle à Buenos Aires, (la provenance des femmes, l'insertion sur le marché du travail, le niveau d'éducation, etc.) puis essayé de montrer les problèmes pertinents qui seraient à aborder d'un point

de vue du genre et particulièrement dans le contexte de Buenos Aires. Il s'agissait ici simplement d'une approche, car finalement je pense que le programme Todas donne à connaître également ces caractéristiques à travers d'autres types de documents que statistiques!

Rappelons ici que les recherches sur les actions communautaires ou étatiques dont l'objectif est une amélioration de l'intégration des immigrées d'un point de vue du genre sont quasiment inexistantes. Il pourrait ultérieurement être intéressant de travailler sur l'impact et la manière d'évaluer de tels programmes ou encore d'en faire des comparaisons avec ce qui se fait au sein des organisations se dédiant aux migrations comme c'est le cas ici à l'OIM ou dans les pays plus développés.

En effet, les enjeux de telles études pourraient à mon avis être conséquents, non seulement d'un point de vue théorique mais aussi pratique. Le lien entre l'intégration du genre et les résultats obtenus viserait à long terme à évaluer l'efficacité de telles initiatives et la remise en question éventuelle de leurs choix ou raisonnements entre problématiques de genre et migration.

Enfin, j'ai eu à cœur d'essayer de contribuer modestement à rendre visibles ces femmes et leurs actions : en leur donnant la parole, en faisant connaître leur travail et en essayant de transmettre

au mieux leur réalité et celle de leurs initiatives, en tentant de montrer une vision différente de l'expérience migratoire, et finalement en mettant à profit les échanges personnels qui ont eu lieu. Même si l'ampleur du phénomène de l'immigration en Argentine est à nuancer – particulièrement en regard de l'expérience européenne – il n'en demeure pas moins qu'on y constate une réelle féminisation de la migration et des transformations dans les mouvements migratoires.

Mais surtout, je tiens à souligner encore une fois l'importance et la valeur d'un tel travail à un niveau personnel et humain, et qui m'a permis dans ses diverses étapes de m'immerger et de connaître les personnes et l'environnement où ces expériences ont cours et qui m'ont – d'une manière ou d'une autre – permis d'avoir le plaisir de vous les faire partager ici.

### **Quelques ressources internet sur le sujet de la migration en Amérique latine, en Argentine et sur le domaine genre&migrations dans le continent :**

**Agenda de las Mujeres**, portail des Femmes argentines, ibéroaméricaines et du Mercosur  
<http://agendadelasmujeres.com.ar/index.html>

**CECYM**, Centre de rencontres, culture et femme, Argentine  
<http://www.cecym.org.ar>

**CELS**, Centre d'études légales et sociales de Buenos Aires, aire des migrations  
[http://www.cels.org.ar/Site\\_cels/index.html](http://www.cels.org.ar/Site_cels/index.html)

**CEMLA**, Centre d'études migratoires latino-américaines de Buenos Aires, fait partie de la congrégation catholique des Scalabrinien  
<http://www.scalabrini.org/~cemla>

**CEPAL/ECLAC**, Conseil Economique et Social de l'ONU pour l'Amérique latine  
<http://www.eclac.cl/> et sa division **CELADE** de population et développement dont un projet de données sur les migrations dans le continent  
[www.eclac.cl/celade/](http://www.eclac.cl/celade/)

**Choike**, portail sur les sociétés civiles du Sud  
<http://www.choike.org/>

**CLADEM**, Comité d'Amérique latine et des Caraïbes pour la défense des droits des femmes en réseau  
<http://www.cladem.org/english/>

**Consejo nacional de la Mujer**, conseil national argentin dédié aux questions féminines  
<http://www.cnm.gov.ar/>

**Dirección nacional de migraciones**, service des migrations du gouvernement d'Argentine  
<http://www.mininterior.gov.ar/migraciones/>

**Directoire des institutions sociales en Argentine**, directoire latino-américain de la CEPAL  
<http://www.eclac.cl/dds/noticias/proyectos/6/7796/pais.asp?idpais=ar#>

**GobBsAs**, Portail du gouvernement de la ville de Buenos Aires, direction générale de la femme où se trouve le Programme Todas  
[http://www.buenosaires.gov.ar/areas/social/mujer/?menu\\_id=153](http://www.buenosaires.gov.ar/areas/social/mujer/?menu_id=153)

**INADI**, Institut national argentin contre la discrimination  
<http://www.mininterior.gov.ar/inadi/>

**INDEC**, Institut national argentin du recensement et de la statistique  
<http://www.indec.mecon.ar/>

**IUED**, Dossier genre et migrations de l'Institut universitaire d'études du développement de Genève  
[http://www.unige.ch/iued/new/information/bibliotheque/dossiers\\_femmes-migrations.html](http://www.unige.ch/iued/new/information/bibliotheque/dossiers_femmes-migrations.html)

**Latin American Network Information center**, de l'Université du Texas, portail avec un nombre très considérable de ressources sur l'Amérique Latine  
<http://www.lanic.utexas.edu/>

**Mujeresdelsur**, réseau latino-américain des femmes du sud  
<http://www.mujeresdelsur.org.uy/>

**Red Cimal**, réseau et centre de documentation de l'Organisation Internationale des Migrations (OIM) sur les migrations en Amérique latine  
[www.oim.web.cl/1023/cimal.html](http://www.oim.web.cl/1023/cimal.html)

**Repem**, Réseau d'éducation populaire entre femmes d'Amérique latine  
[www.repem.org.uy](http://www.repem.org.uy)

**DAWNE**, Development alternatives with women in a new era, réseau féministe du Sud  
<http://www.dawn.org.fj/>

**Mujeres latinoamericanas en cifras**, statistiques sur les femmes en Amérique Latine sous divers angles d'analyse par la Faculté latino-américaine de sciences sociales (FLACSO)

<http://www.eurosur.org/FLACSO/mujeres/>

**Université de Buenos Aires**, Faculté des sciences sociales  
Etudes genre  
<http://www.fsoc.uba.ar/Instituto/genero/index.htm>  
Institut de recherches sociales  
Gino Germani  
[www.iigg.fsoc.uba.ar/](http://www.iigg.fsoc.uba.ar/)

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## **NEWS FROM THE FIELD**

### **AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST**

#### **IOM Damascus**

GFP Razan Issa writes:

Under the patronage of H.E. Mrs. Emin Erdogan, The World Business Women Summit hosted in Istanbul on 27-28 April was in cooperation with the TIKAD Association of Turkish Business Women and Women In Business International. Realized one year ago in London on December 5th and then in Syria on May 20th, this year's summit brought together seven leading ladies and businesswomen from all around the world and introduced business experts from different market sectors.

Held at the Ciragan Palace, the summit was inaugurated with speeches by leading ladies Mrs. Emine Erdogan of Turkey, Mrs. Asma AI Assad of Syria, Mrs. Zinet Karzai of Afghanistan, Mrs. Oya Talat

of Cyprus, Mrs. Ronda Beri of Lebanon, Mrs. Miada Terzic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Minister of State Nimet Cubukcu, and by Women in Business International Parliamentarian Christine McCafferty MP, TUSIAD Chairman Omer Sabanci, and Tunisian Senator Leila Khayat.

Other esteemed guests included Mrs. Dudu Soyer of Cyprus and daughter of the President of Albania Mrs. Rubena Moisiu, and Sultan Nilufer, Princess Ira Von Furstenberg and her son Prince Christoph Von Hohenlohe, and Prince of Georgia Georges Bagration.

At the close of the first day, H. E. Mrs. Emine Erdogan hosted a gala dinner at the Ciragan Palace.

The topics addressed at the summit were 'The Problems that Affect National Economies', 'Job Opportunities', 'Development of Human Resources', 'International Trading', 'Resource Problem in Developing Jobs' and 'Energy-Environment'. Global Economy was addressed during many sessions and statistics of many countries regarding stocks, bonds, shares and monetary policies were shared.

With regard to Turkey, guests learned that women compose 31% of Turkey's architects, 26% of Turkey's lawyers and 36% of Turkey's university professors. Today, Turkey is working hand in hand with

the EU on Active Labour Force programmes and many of its NGOs work closely with women who are outside the registered economy and of low-level education. Turkey is increasing schooling of girls, an important engine in female development, and it is also constructing a road map to ensure gender equality.

Sustainable growth should be the agenda of all countries whose framework is to boost their national economy. To ensure that agenda, women must be integrated into the labour force.

"Let us make use of globalization and not be spectators. Let us make our own contributions even though we can't solve national problems individually. We need to join hands and bring together women's organizations from all around the world. Let us raise our voices in unity for Justice!" – H. E. Mrs. Emine Erdogan.



**Leading Ladies**

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**Razan also shares this piece:**

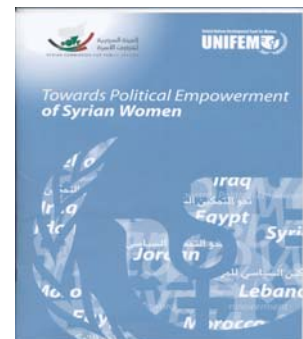
## **Towards Political Empowerment of Syrian Women**

Attended by Dr. Najah Al Attar, Vice President of the Syrian Arab Republic, a workshop on the launching of a study on the political empowerment of



**Workshop participants**

Syrian women was held by the Commission for Family Affairs in Syria in cooperation with UNIFEM, on 27 April 2006 in the Oriental Club in Damascus.



The workshop was also attended by H.E. Dr. Buthaina Shaba'n, Minister of Expatriates, H.E. Dr. Dayala Haj Aref, Minister of Social and Labour Affairs, Ministers of Information and Culture, and various representatives of the International Organizations and Diplomatic Missions in the Syrian Arab Republic.

During the Workshop, women's issues, roles and in-

volvements in Syrian public life were discussed gaining great and increased attention not only at the national level but also at the regional level and by opening new opportunities for women to prove themselves in the contemporary world.

This study is an attempt to examine the political system in Syria and identify obstacles and challenges facing women's political empowerment in the country.

**IOM Luanda**

GFP Luz Tantaruna shares this piece:

**OUTCOME OF SEMINAR ON HIV/AIDS FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE**

**Huambo Province in Angola 20-24 February, 2006**

Since 2003, IOM Angola has been developing projects for the reintegration of Angolan returnees and former combatants in Huambo Province, including the component of HIV/AIDS sensitisation. With the purpose of strengthening the capacities of IOM staff and their partners at the field level, IOM organized a Seminar on "HIV/AIDS from a Gender Perspective" which was held in Huambo city from 20 to 24 February. This seminar involved 36 participants, of whom 20 were representatives from governmental and non-governmental organization partners such as: Health,

Education, Science and Technology, Youth and Sports, ICSED (High Institute for Sciences and Education), Ministry of Assistance and Social Reinsertion, Family and Women Promotion, Information; Municipal Administration of Mungo and NGOs such as: Angolan Red Cross (CVA), Population Service International (PSI) and Group to Support Children (GAC), Advance Angola (AA); and 16 were IOM staff of Huambo Province.



Seminar participants

The opening ceremony was attended by Dr. Finde, Provincial Director of Health, and Mr. Luís Caíca, provincial Director of IRSEM. This event was covered by the local radio and press as well as the national television (TPA).

The various themes focussed on Gender and Development issues, myths of socializations, gender value, sexual and reproductive rights, groups at risk related to Sexually Transmitted Infections and HIV/AIDS, prevention, family support for the infected people and the lessons learned from the HIV/AIDS Programme im-

plemented by IOM during recent years. The participants, influenced by the group dynamics and audiovisual techniques, participated very actively and men and women had heated discussions about the themes. Finally they concluded that myths and cultural practices determine the behaviours as follows:

- Men have more open sexual behaviour and become irresponsible; they also have the power for all decisions on sexual and reproductive life.
- Women are educated and prepared for giving sexual satisfaction to their partners; even in the cases against their desires; and they have children without any power to negotiate with their partners.
- Women asked for more respect and affection and they appealed for no rape by their partners.
- The actual education of men and women has negative consequences in development and constitute obstacles for proper sexual protection against the infections.

We expect that the heated discussions about cultural issues, especially about the myths, have motivated participants to reflect in order to achieve progressive changes in the sexual behaviour of men and women and contribute to the reduction of the foreseeable spread of infections.

## THE AMERICAS

### IOM Port-au-Prince

Chief of Mission, Maureen Achieng, shares this note following her participation in the Seminar:

#### **CIMIC Seminar on Gender and Civil-Military Relations: Moving towards Inclusion- April 10–12, 2006**

In the context of continued collaboration with NATO, IOM was invited to attend a seminar organized by the Civil-Military Cooperation Centre of Excellence (CCOE) on how to better integrate gender issues in NATO Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) operations.

#### **Background**

The CCOE supports the development, promotion and implementation of new concepts, policies and doctrines that seek to improve NATO operational capabilities. The importance of CIMIC in modern military operations -- where peace-building and stabilization operations call for the attention and increasingly active involvement of armed forces -- is increasingly appreciated.

In light of the increasing participation of soldiers in the field in post-conflict operations and disaster recovery actions, military leaders recognize the need to enhance their understanding of the ways in which their policies and assistance interventions impact on women and men

differently and can imperil their mission's objectives.

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and a similar European Parliament Resolution state that gender must be incorporated in peace operations at all levels of activity. However, this is often easier said than done, and it is in recognition of this fact that the CCOE is seeking to build dialogue and cooperation with non-military actors in post-conflict contexts so as to facilitate the operationalisation of the objective of gender awareness in military operations.

#### **Participation**

Participants came from a range of backgrounds, including military planners and decision-makers at strategic and operational levels, civilian organizations, and academics and researchers. IOM was one of about a handful of civilian organizations that were represented.

The participants comprised gender experts and gender-aware development practitioners on the one hand (estimate 65%) and military planners and other personnel with less of a formal background and/or experience with gender issues on the other (estimate 35%). This led to the view among some participants that the overwhelming presence of development practitioners with a good understanding of gender issues may have resulted in a situation where the converted were preaching to each other, and that future seminars

should include more participants from the military side. The response from the CCOE was that this was intended as a 'training of trainers' sort of arrangement, and that there was a need to bring in as broad an array of civilian practitioners as possible.

#### **Objectives**

The seminar sought to identify and learn the approaches of the UN, EU, NATO and IOs to the question of gender through discussion around practical field experiences, especially from the Balkans, Asia and Africa. By so doing, the seminar sought to arrive at a clearer understanding about how gender awareness could positively impact CIMIC operations, and inform their curricula development, which would ensure better pre-deployment preparation for CIMIC personnel.

#### **Discussion and Conclusion**

A succinct summary of the deliberations would be that Gender is a subject often overlooked, thereby undermining the effectiveness of military operations. Taking full account of gender issues will increase acceptance of the military presence among the local population and among the other international actors on the ground.

There is therefore urgent need to enhance the understanding and positively influence the mindset of the armed forces (CIMIC in this instance) that are likely to be involved in post-conflict missions, on gender issues. (Note: The WGGI was particularly pleased that IOM accredited a woman to this Seminar).



## ASIA

### MRF Dhaka

GFP Samiha Huda writes:

IOM Dhaka has a balanced combination of female and male staff members who enjoy equal facilities and opportunities. Gender mainstreaming is one of the prime agenda items in every project and programme planning.

MRF Dhaka is actively involved in the capacity building of partner organizations. The Bangladesh Institute of Peacekeepers Support Operations and Training (BIPSOT) is one of such partner of IOM Dhaka. A seminar for students and officers of BIPSOT was organized at the IOM Dhaka office on 22 March. ‘Gender and Peacekeeping’ was one of the discussion items in the programme. The session was organized in a participatory method and students –officers of BIPSOT-enjoyed the session very much. The session started with basic concepts and understanding of gender issues from a peace-keeping perspective and gradually discussed peace-keepers role in pre- conflict, conflict and post-conflict situations.



**BIPSOT Seminar**

A good start from the project perspective is the commencement of a training manual for women migrant workers who are migrating as domestic aides to the Middle East and Southeast Asian countries. Women of Bangladesh have always been active partners in migration although their contributions are not highlighted as much when compared to male migrant workers. Apart from some skilled professions, most of them are going as semi- or unskilled workers, mainly as domestic aides. The Bangladesh Government requested IOM Dhaka through the concerned ministry to develop a training manual for potential women migrant workers so that they can go with minimum skills and knowledge about their profession. IOM Dhaka has initiated the development of the training manual. A day-long needs assessment workshop was organized in April 2006 with different stakeholders and the manual is being prepared with suggestions and recommendations coming from the workshop.



**Needs assessment workshop**

Project Assistant, Asma Khatun, wrote this:

### **Assisting Stranded Migrants: challenges**

In the socio-cultural context of Bangladesh, although women are coming out of their traditional surroundings and have proved to be equally efficient in the job market, they still face various challenges in the workplace. As an IOM staff member, one of the important activities I performed was assisting stranded migrants in the airport. Dhaka Airport is a place that can be compared with any other male dominated place/public office in Bangladesh. No matter how the gendered division is set in terms of numbers at the airport, women (particularly the outsiders who go to the airport for different reasons) face difficulties from male officials in pursuing any assignment. Some people are sometimes very curious to see a woman in their workplace dealing with an issue that is not so common. Assisting stranded migrants was one of those issues with which they were unfamiliar - particularly with me as a woman dealing with them (male)- and on occasion would begin asking irrelevant questions. It is not very common to see a woman inside the airport - whether at night or day - only to assist the stranded migrants.

My presence as assistant to these stranded migrants sometimes surprised immigration and civil aviation people. A woman receiving a group of people coming from different

places is not something very common in this country. The surprise was greatest when I escorted a group of stranded migrants from Dubai. Even the stranded migrants could not believe their eyes. They were astonished to see a woman ‘rescuing’ (actually escorting) them from their misery. They were very grateful and their happiness (over being rescued) encouraged me to do my utmost to perform my job in current circumstances. The feeling uplifts my self-esteem. At the same time, I remember how the customs people (in Dhaka Airport) were teasing me, thinking I was a female migrant surviving by an unethical profession.

I was not always teased, I also gained appreciation from different people. I felt proud when the Officer-in-Charge of immigration (Dhaka Airport) on duty highly complimented me for performing this task - especially as a woman in Bangladesh. There were others who also gave me all possible support.

The support and encouragement I got from my office and family members encouraged me to face the challenges in a positive way. Sometime I had to work very early in the morning or in the middle of the night to assist stranded migrants in the airport. My family managed to cope with this odd timing.

## EUROPE IOM Minsk

GFP Pavel Kholod shares this interesting piece:

Journalists of the on-line periodical “Secretary” launched a phone-poll to find out the percentage of male secretaries in the top 100 Belarusian companies and organizations. None of the respondents indicated having a male secretary enrolled, meaning that their number is close to zero. Most of the companies’ managers were greatly astonished by the very idea of having a male secretary. The overwhelming majority of company owners fear having a male secretary due to the possible rumours of their different sexual orientation. Although men are reported to be quite self-confident and career-oriented, Belarusian directors prefer to have meek and obedient secretaries instead.

Pavel added that, from his memory, most Belarusian directors preferred to hire attractive young women as they projected a positive image of both company and director among business partners and vis-à-vis the clientele.

## MAIL FOR MEN

GFP Ziad Sokiri wrote this piece:

As a new member of the Working Group on Gender Issues I was pleasantly surprised that I am part of, what seems to be, an ever-increasing minority of men who are members of *the group*. At first, one may have been excused for feeling apprehensive and a little concerned as to how this may be taken by my fellow [male] colleagues but one’s fears were quickly allayed when a warm and pleasant welcome was afforded to me by the head of the WGGI as well as by those other WGGI members that I have, thus far, had the pleasure to meet.

It is true that I am interested by and I involved in the gender equality debate as whole. This is mostly through my own professional experience of providing business and government with consulting advice. Within the WGGI I am able, allowed and encouraged to continue my interest in, what I believe to be, an area in which there remains much to be done whilst also learning about what the IOM does in its daily work to improve the situation within the Organization and throughout the world via the work that it completes.

Having returned from a recent WGGI-organised event on the subject of “*Fathers and Work-Life Balance*” and having had the opportunity to hear how the subject of parental leave is and was handled by our partner International Organisations I am now certain that IOM is a leader in the field of gender equality where the international organizations and com-

munity is concerned and I am also convinced that the WGGI is an excellent *think-tank* from which many new ideas are born and also at whose events staff members can learn much about their own rights as staff members but also as citizens. The event itself was one from which I learned much but also one that allowed me to understand the complex nature of managing a ‘double-life’. By ‘double-life’ I mean a situation where one is striving to please one’s colleagues through dedication and good performance at work whilst also trying to please one’s partner or spouse as well as one’s children through being a good partner and parent at home.

I would encourage my fellow [male and female] colleagues to attend the WGGI’s events for they are moments during which the staff are encouraged to ask questions and share their views on the good as well as the more difficult aspects of working in an environment made up of people from differing backgrounds and, hence, differing attitudes to gender equality.

I started out by saying that “I was pleasantly surprised that I am in an ever-increasing minority of men who are members of *the group*”. Yes, it is true that the trend indicates that there are increasing numbers of men within the WGGI. However, my question remains: **Why are men not more fully [and equally] represented in the Working Group on Gender Issues?**

After all, how can the WGGI be able to spread equality when within itself it is not equal?

Come on people – **GET INVOLVED!**

\* \* \*

## **GENDER QUIZ**

The answer to the question in the last issue of who said:

**“Women have always struggled for the abolition of slavery, the liberation of countries from colonialism, the dismantling of apartheid and the attainment of peace. It is now the turn of men to join women in their struggle for equality”.**

**Gertrude Mongella  
President, Pan African  
Parliament since 2004**

This issue’s question is, who said:

**“One is not born a woman, one becomes one”.**

**Opinions expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IOM.**

## SPECIAL ANNEX

**“Receiving countries should rely more upon women migrants if they wish to introduce changes in their integration policies”**

Interview with **Ms. Ndioro Ndiaye**, Deputy Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) By Laurent Duvillier of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW, May 2006):

*One out of two migrants is a woman. Increasingly present and increasingly visible, women who live and work away from their countries of origin send billions of dollars to their relatives - often more frequently than men.*

*Can this money sent back to Africa, Asia and Latin America serve as a sustainable development tool for the entire population? Can migrant women become investors in their countries of origin?*

*Ms. Ndioro Ndiaye explains how the face of migration - as well as that of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) - is becoming increasingly feminized.*

**At the international level, migration flows are becoming increasingly feminized. Does this only mean that more women are leaving their country of origin, or also that they are contributing more to the financial development of their countries of origin?**

There are between 175 and 180 million migrants in the world, according to the last reports of

the International Organization for Migration (IOM). It is generally understood that women make up half of these migrants. This is something new in the migration phenomenon. For a long time men were believed to be the ones leaving to look for work and that, once they were established, women would join them to educate the children and assume their reproductive responsibilities. Today, migration flows tend to follow another pattern: women migrants are more present and more visible than before in terms of the magnitude of their movement and because they are able to move more freely and independently.

In addition, the status that women acquire after migrating has created added value in the field of migration management. If women migrants are educated, they contribute to their receiving countries as well as their countries of origin. If they are not educated, they run the risk of falling into the net of traffickers. This is the phenomenon called human trafficking which all of us must fight against.

It cannot be over-emphasized that receiving countries should rely more on women migrants if they want to introduce changes in their integration policies. In the field of education for example, women play an essential role and can therefore be an appropriate vehicle for change in receiving countries.

**Migrant persons are still frequently depicted as asexual beings and migration as a gender-neutral movement. To the contrary, the IOM and INSTRAW highlight the importance of taking into account the differences between the men and women who migrate. Which specific actions**

**do you undertake on behalf of women?**

IOM has long been active in the fight to make the contribution of women migrants visible. Our working group on the thematic of gender is composed of more than 80 gender « focal points » spread throughout the world. In almost all our offices there is a specific person in charge of the gender policy in IOM's programs - for those developed in the field as well as for those planned at headquarters.

In the field, there are differing cases and therefore several levels of intervention used depending on the women encountered in each context. We are generally asked to work in conflict and post-conflict situations. In the camps of refugees and displaced people, we intervene in collaboration with other United Nations agencies such as the High Commissioner for Refugees (HCR), UNICEF, or the World Health Organization (WHO) so that women can receive the required attention. Information campaigns are developed so that women can acquire more knowledge. They are given tools and equipment so that they can promote health correctly and improve their environment.

In the case of professional women who leave their home countries on their own, they demand access to decent work and proper payment, and to be able to live on their salary in their host country. One of the other requests from the majority of professional women migrants is to have the possibility of contributing to the development of their host countries, either by sending money to help the family left behind, or as investors with local associates to create employment and profit-generating activities for them-

selves. These are the new factors, the new requests that have required a new approach from IOM.

**In recent years remittances sent by migrants worldwide have constantly increased. In some countries like the Philippines, family members often encourage women rather than men to migrate because women tend to send remittance money more frequently. Is this a local phenomenon or a global tendency?**

The fact that women send more money to their countries of origin more regularly is a general tendency. Often, the funds sent by women on one sole occasion may be less significant than those sent by men. However, since women send remittances more frequently, the additional volume tends to make their contributions more substantial.

Concerning the increase in remittances sent by migrants, the IOM is very concerned with what individual States think about it. In February 2006, we organized a conference on remittances sent by migrants originating from less developed countries (LDC) in collaboration with the governments of the LDC and the Secretariat of the United Nations in charge of the LDC.

In Benin, for the first time, experts from the Economy and Finance Ministries, as well as government officials from State departments, met to express their views and to hold discussions with the World Bank (WB), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the African Development Bank, central banks, etc. As to the controversy regarding the pri-

vate nature of these funds, IOM fully agrees that remittances cannot be an alternative to development assistance. On the other hand, we want to go further than this comparison. We could find out which synergies can be established within the development assistance that should continue flowing to the LDCs and the financial flows generated by migrants. We could also reflect on how to channel this money through development efforts made by the country of origin, and the ways in which the migrants themselves could be considered as investors, owners, or financiers.

**There is no doubt that some of the billions of dollars sent each year by migrants to their countries of origin have improved the well-being of certain families. However, how could those remittances become a real sustainable development tool for the whole population?**

We have been given concrete examples of this possibility. IOM has observed what has happened in Mexico. During the debates, this country informed us of initiatives such as the « one for three » program. That is, for each dollar remitted to Mexico by a migrant, the Federal State adds a dollar and the local authorities add another one. Together those three dollars are invested in a development program that benefits everyone. The same type of programs exist elsewhere, however it is Mexico's example that has been the most convincing.

In Guatemala, the IOM representative has helped to initiate an extremely fruitful housing program, whereby migrants were able to contribute to the creation of decent, modern, and

beneficial housing for their families by depositing their funds into a system created for that purpose. And this is working very well. These actions can be reproduced elsewhere if migrants know that they can improve the living conditions of the people left behind, even if the money does not exclusively go to their family members.

**What has been your greatest victory?**

I have never asked myself if the progress that I have achieved from myself, for my family or for my community could be considered a victory. It's natural. But one of the victories is without doubt, my family and children.

**Your greatest difficulty?**

Working with men most of the time and forgetting that I am a woman.

**Your greatest complaint?**

The feeling of insecurity in my ideas; I have to work in order to spread and share the ideas that I defend.

**Your greatest hope?**

That women migrants will play more active roles in their receiving countries as well as in their countries of origin.

## STATISTICS

### Movimientos Internacionales de Mujeres en Mesoamérica<sup>1</sup> \*

Durante el año 2005 los movimientos internacionales en Mesoamérica tienen un alto componente femenino. En este año, más del 30% de los movimientos internacionales en la Región fueron realizados por mujeres, observándose la cifra menor en Guatemala (33.8%) y la mayor en México donde este porcentaje se eleva a 46%. Del total de movimientos internacionales llevados a cabo por mujeres, registrados en El Salvador y Nicaragua, más del 52 % es realizado por personas cuya nacionalidad corresponde a otro país de Centroamérica. Es decir, en la Región se produce una gran cantidad de movimientos de mujeres, desde su país de origen a otro país centroamericano. En el caso de Nicaragua el 78% de los movimientos de mujeres son realizados por personas en edades entre 18 y 29 años, mientras que en Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala y México, más del 60% de los movimientos se produce en mujeres cuyas edades oscilan entre 30 y 64 años. Dichas cifras confirman que estos movimientos internacionales se producen principalmente en el grupo de mujeres que se encuentran en edades productivas.

Mesoamérica. Distribución de los movimientos realizados por mujeres según grupos específicos de edad. 2005

Variables	Costa Rica <sup>1</sup>	El Salvador	Guatemala <sup>1</sup>	México <sup>2</sup>	Nicaragua <sup>1</sup>	Panamá
<b>Mujeres</b>	<b>965,698</b>	<b>1,903,350</b>	<b>616,268</b>	<b>4,894,573</b>	<b>494,959</b>	<b>680,968</b>
0-17	97,961	235,464	72,531	588,240	71,128	194,544
18-29	118,113	231,084	77,067	1,010,748	386,440	111,941
30-64	683,938	1,289,224	421,537	2,977,046	37,307	333,877
65 y más	65,686	147,578	45,133	318,539	84	40,606

<sup>1</sup> Cálculo basado en los movimientos de enero a junio de 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Las cifras de 2005 obtenidas del Sistema Integral de Operación Migratoria, representan el 89,1% del conteo de entradas por los aeropuertos de San José del Cabo, Guadalajara, Puerto Vallarta, Ciudad de México, Cancún, Monterrey, Cozumel, Mazatlán, Silao, Hermosillo y Mérida.

Fuente: Proyecto SIEMMES - OIM con base en la información de las Direcciones de Migración de Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua y Panamá y del Instituto Nacional de Migración de México.

<sup>1</sup> Prepared by Seidy Alvarez in MRF San Jose

Mesoamérica. Saldos migratorios de mujeres según grupos específicos de edad por grupos de nacionalidad. 2005

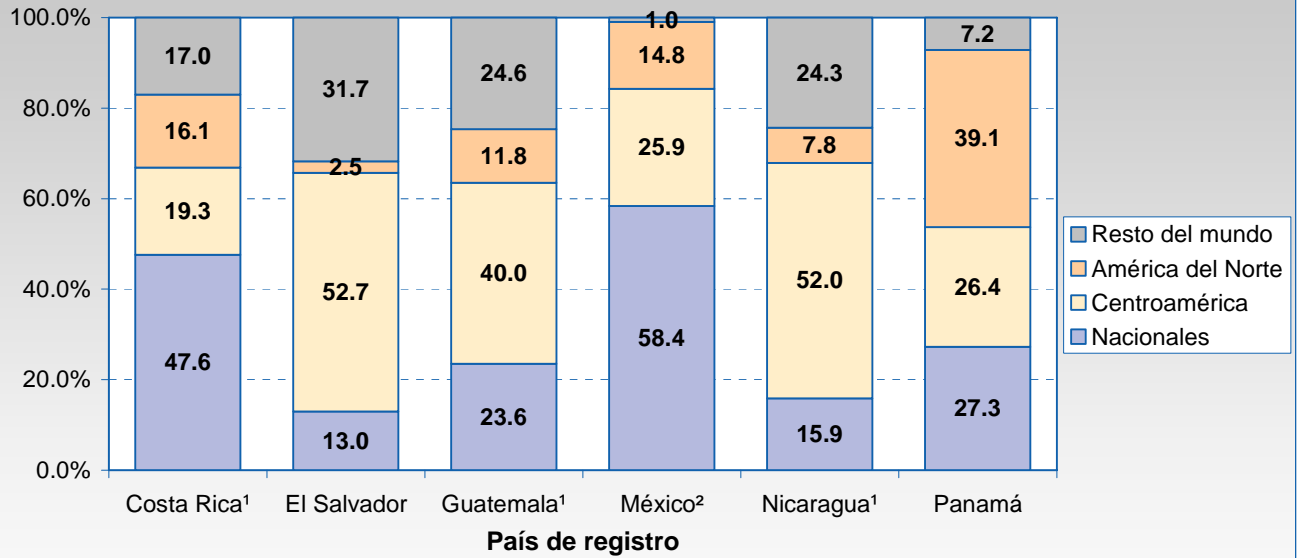
Grupos específicos de edad	Costa Rica <sup>1</sup>		El Salvador		Guatemala <sup>1</sup>		Nicaragua <sup>1</sup>		Panamá	
	Nacionales	Extranjeras	Nacionales	Extranjeras	Nacionales	Extranjeras	Nacionales	Extranjeras	Nacionales	Extranjeras
<b>Mujeres</b>	<b>769</b>	<b>15,254</b>	<b>-109,172</b>	<b>51,220</b>	<b>-31,835</b>	<b>60,892</b>	<b>-45,676</b>	<b>4,083</b>	<b>2,268</b>	<b>6,997</b>
0-17	2,024	2,130	-9,623	799	-4,214	4,370	-970	-490	1,869	-3,452
18-29	97	4,266	-27,009	7,773	-4,949	<sup>2</sup> 11,820	-7,594	824	-184	1,208
30-64	-1,271	9,612	-69,915	40,201	-21,322	41,851	-35,910	3,658	655	8,823
65 y más	-81	-754	-2,625	2,447	-1,350	2,851	-1,161	90	-72	418

<sup>1</sup> Cálculo basado en los movimientos de enero a junio de 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Las cifras de 2005 obtenidas del Sistema Integral de Operación Migratoria, representan el 89,1% del conteo de entradas por los aeropuertos de San José del Cabo, Guadalajara, Puerto Vallarta, Ciudad de México, Cancún, Monterrey, Cozumel, Mazatlán, Silao, Hermosillo y Mérida.

Fuente: Proyecto SIEMMES - OIM con base en la información de las Direcciones de Migración de Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua y Panamá y del Instituto Nacional de Migración de México.

### Mesoamérica. Distribución porcentual de los movimientos realizados por mujeres según grupos de nacionalidad por país de registro. 2005



<sup>1</sup> Cálculo basado en los movimientos de enero a junio de 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Las cifras de 2005 obtenidas del Sistema Integral de Operación Migratoria, representan el 89.1% del conteo de formas migratorias por los aeropuertos de San José del Cabo, Guadalajara, Puerto Vallarta, Ciudad de México, Cancún, Monterrey, Cozumel, Mazatlán, Silao, Hermosillo y Mérida.

Fuente: Proyecto SIEMMES - OIM con base en la información de las Direcciones de Migración de Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua y Panamá y del Instituto Nacional de Migración de México.