

MIGRATION

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PAKISTAN QUAKE A RACE AGAINST WINTER



IOM International Organization for Migration

Contents

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Warrick Page / © IOM, 2005
Renewed hope for a boy in the Kaghan
valley as IOM delivers Dutch tents.

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operational challenges of migration;
advance understanding of migration
issues; encourage social and economic
development through migration; and
uphold the human dignity and well-being
of migrants.

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IOM AIMS HIGH
in Pakistan Earthquake Relief 3

LOOKING FORWARD INTO THE FUTURE:
Sri Lanka One Year On..... 8

AFTER THE TSUNAMI
Investing in Aceh's Future 12

MAROONED IN MOROCCO:
Stranded Migrants in Distress
Receive IOM Assistance 16

SECOND CHANCE
for Trafficked Women 18

ELENA'S ORDEAL –
The Story of a Trafficked Victim 20

A TRAFFICKING OVERVIEW
of Eastern Europe 23

MIGRATING
Safely and Legally from Ukraine 24

MIGRATION
in the Caribbean 26

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IOM AIMS HIGH in Pakistan Earthquake Relief

By Chris Lom, IOM Islamabad

On 8 October, an earthquake measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale struck Afghanistan, northern India and Pakistan, the latter the worst hit of the three. In Pakistan, more than 73,000 people were killed, another 70,000 injured and more than 3 million affected. IOM has responded with a six-month emergency humanitarian operation there encompassing the provision of emergency shelter, health assistance and surface transport for the distribution of relief items, and an appeal for US\$ 60.5 million to fund these activities.

Photo: A community waiting for help high up in the Kaghan valley.
(Photo: © Brian Kelly / IOM, 2005)

In the earthquake-shattered high valleys of Pakistan-administered Kashmir and North-West Frontier Province, IOM teams have a double role – coordinating the emergency shelter relief efforts of other agencies and delivering the tents and shelter repair kits that will help homeless families survive the Himalayan winter.

“We start high and work down. Our priorities in descending order are getting emergency shelter materials to people in inaccessible valleys above 5,000 ft., delivering tents to people at lower altitudes, providing warm clothing and blankets, and winterizing non-winterized tents already distributed by improving their insulation,” says IOM head of operations, Steven Lennon.

One month into the operation, international agencies and the Pakistan government are struggling to meet the

logistical equivalent of a perfect storm – the challenge of delivering relief to remote high altitude villages cut off by landslides and expecting heavy snowfalls by early December.

Despite intensive road clearing efforts by the Pakistan military, helicopters are now central to the relief operation. But in an operation that has received only 15 per cent of US\$ 550 million UN Flash Appeal, the huge cost of keeping them airborne means that their deployment is continually under threat.

With snow already capping the high peaks, inter-agency coordination that establishes which humanitarian agency is delivering what, where and to whom has become a crucial element in the race to deliver the right aid to the right people in the right locations. For that reason, “clusters” have been formed for each sector including



US Chinooks and IOM trucks form a logistics chain to deliver relief to remote highland valleys. Chaklala Airbase, Islamabad. (Photo: Warrick Page / © IOM, 2005)



IOM takes delivery of Dutch tent frames, Bedhi valley. (Photo: Warrick Page / © IOM, 2005)



As of 9 November, IOM deliveries to Pakistan earthquake victims included 4,369 tents, 600 shelter repair kits, 21,000 blankets, 2,700 mattresses and 6,100 plastic sheets. It also provided over 300 trucks to partner agencies including UNICEF, UNHCR, Islamic Relief, World Vision, Oxfam, Samaritan's Purse and JEN.

Local trucks form the backbone of IOM's earthquake relief logistics in Pakistan. (Photo: Warrick Page / © IOM, 2005)

emergency shelter, health, water and sanitation and logistics, each with a lead agency, and which gather all those working in any one field so that information can be shared and operations coordinated.

"As the lead agency of the Emergency Shelter Cluster, our job is to get accurate data from the field, collate it and disseminate it at high speed so it can be used equally by agencies on the ground and government policy-makers," says IOM Regional Representative in Pakistan, Hassan Abdel Moneim Mostafa.

While IOM cluster coordinators in Islamabad, Muzaffarabad, Mansehra, Bagh, Balakot and Batagram, including staff seconded from the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), crunch the

numbers and advise the government and donors, IOM operations staff use their output to target IOM interventions.

"From the outset we focused on relatively inaccessible areas not yet reached by other agencies or the military – initially Allai in Batagram district and Haveli in Bagh. We're now also focusing on the Neelum valley out of Muzaffarabad and the Kaghan valley out of Balakot," explains Steven Lennon.

IOM moved into Haveli, a remote sub-division of Bagh district close to the Line of Control dividing Pakistani and Indian-administered Kashmir, with partner agency Islamic Relief to distribute 500 ten-person arch tents, 500 heaters, 500 mattresses, 5,000 blankets and 120 camp beds donated by the Dutch military.



Women-headed households are among the most vulnerable groups in the Neelum valley and are a key priority for IOM shelter kit assistance. (Photo: © Matt George / IOM, 2005)

The equipment, which was flown into Islamabad's Chaklala airbase from Afghanistan aboard giant Antonov cargo planes, was loaded onto IOM trucks and moved to a Pakistan army base in the town of Forward Kahuta.

British airforce Chinook helicopters coordinated by the UN Joint Logistics Cell (UNJLC) then airlifted the 200 kg tents from the base to a military helipad on the Haji Pir pass at just over 5,000 ft. for distribution in villages in the Bedhi and Mota valleys.

"People in the valleys on the far side of the pass had no help up to that point and snow cuts road access to the area until April," says Islamic Relief field coordinator, Arshad Rashid, who organized food distributions in the area before the earthquake.

Islamic Relief and IOM four-wheel drive jeeps picked up the tents from the Haji Pir helipad to move them as close as they could to the rubble-strewn villages in the valleys. In the villages, they were distributed to homeless families previously identified by Islamic Relief and the Pakistan military.

But the complex logistics behind the Haveli operation seem almost tame compared with the ongoing Operation Winter Race – a programme that airlifts small IOM, Islamic Relief and IFRC teams by helicopter into isolated villages to assess earthquake damage and deliver shelter repair kits to homeless families.

The programme, which is focused on the Neelum valley close to Muzaffarabad, uses self-sufficient

five-person teams supported by helicopters coordinated by UNJLC and UN Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS).

The teams, which include men, women and shelter construction specialists, go house to house to assess damage and identify vulnerable people. They then use satellite phones to call in helicopter airlifts of shelter repair kits.

Items in the locally procured kits, which are stockpiled in forward bases at Muzaffarabad and Batagram, include corrugated galvanized iron sheeting, plastic sheeting, hammers, nails, pickaxes, saws, wire, buckets, and other items essential for salvaging the remains of houses and building "a warm room" for each family to survive the winter.



Villagers in the Neelum valley use tools provided by Operation Winter Race to build shelters from salvaged timber. (Photo: Brett Williams / © IOM, 2005)

"We start by finding the most vulnerable people in the village and building them a shelter. That gets everyone's attention and then we get them working on shelters for everyone. This is about giving them the materials and the skills, but mostly about motivating them to help themselves," says IOM team member, Brett Williams.

IOM, which has ordered 10,000 of the kits, the last of which is scheduled for delivery on 25 November, has asked partner agencies in the Emergency Shelter Cluster to contribute materials and staff to the programme. Three engineering battalions of the Pakistan army assigned to earthquake

relief will provide support to Winter Race and UNHCR has already made a significant contribution of material.

"Winter Race is a window of opportunity that offers people in valleys above 5,000 ft. an improvised alternative that may be preferable to tents in deep snow. We know that many people don't want to come down to camps at lower altitudes and we think that this could be the solution to minimizing displacement and all the problems associated with it," says Lennon.

But with the weather in the mountains expected to deteriorate daily, nobody

is under any illusion that the logistical challenge facing IOM and other agencies will become progressively worse through November and into December. Rain and snow will reduce the number of helicopter sorties and may bring down more landslides, blocking more roads.

The other major challenge, similar to other organizations, is the lack of funds needed to keep working on getting help to those who, without it, will probably not survive the Himalayan winter. ●



▲ A simple eye check in a mobile clinic can make a huge difference to a tsunami survivor.

▶ **Kandapan Velmurrhu,** one of the many people helped by IOM's livelihood restoration programme.

LOOKING FORWARD INTO THE FUTURE: Sri Lanka One Year On

By Gina Wilkinson, IOM Colombo and IOM Geneva

▶ **Tsunami survivor Y. Kamalathan** has space and privacy to study in his IOM built transitional home in Ampara district, Sri Lanka.
(Photos: Gina Wilkinson / © IOM, 2005)

"I was miserable in the camps because it was so hot and crowded, and I never had any privacy," says 20-year-old Kamalathan, looking up from a desk topped with books, a reading lamp, and a vase filled with flowers.

"Now I have space to study without being disturbed and I can give myself the skills and education to make a better life," he continues, adding that he feels much more safe and secure in his sturdy new accommodation.

This was Kamalathan in August 2005 and the safe new accommodation he is talking about is an IOM transitional shelter designed to last at least two years. The shelter is one of 5,775 that IOM has committed to providing as part of its efforts to rebuild the lives of the survivors of the 26 December tsunami in Sri Lanka with funding from Japan, Greece, China and the Humanitarian Aid Department of the European Commission, ECHO.

As the one year anniversary approaches, IOM has already built over 4,500 of these 200 square foot homes with concrete floors, electricity, running water and sanitation facilities, an outdoor kitchen and that vital protection from the elements, especially the monsoon.

Kamalathan's mother, Varaluxmy, thought the world had ended in the disaster that claimed the life of her own 68-year-old mother and reduced her home to a pile of rubble in Sri Lanka's eastern district of Ampara.

"However, now that we're out of the emergency camp and back on our own land, I feel like we have a second chance at life," she says.

It is that second chance that holds the real key to the true recovery of tsunami survivors – and for many, that means having a real home with a roof and not a tent.

"When I saw a wave as tall as a coconut tree heading towards my village, I was sure my wife would never manage to survive because she was heavily pregnant at the time," recalls Suvendar, Kamalathan's neighbour. Luckily, his wife did survive and in addition to a toddler, the couple has a baby girl.

"I was so worried and upset when my wife had to give birth in a cramped emergency camp. My children suffered terribly from the constant heat and my oldest child was so unhappy that she stopped eating and talking," he explains. "But now, our house is surrounded by shady trees, and as our neighbours move into their own transitional homes, the kids are all back playing with their old friends and happy once again."

Suvendra and Kamalathan are fortunate they have been able to take a big step forward in putting the tragic events of last December behind them. Their transitional homes have been built on their own land.

However, that option isn't available for hundreds of thousands of tsunami survivors. In order to protect people from future tsunamis, the Sri Lankan government established buffer zones restricting the construction of homes within 100 metres, and in some areas up to 200 metres, of the sea. The rules were relaxed in October, with new buffer zone requirements established on a divisional basis. Nevertheless, the need to find new land for people who previously resided on the coast, coupled with a shortage of building materials and skilled labour still means it could be several years before all of those displaced by the tsunami are back in permanent housing.

It is a delay that could have an impact on the long-term recovery and rehabilitation of communities. And yet the benefits of getting people back into homes and working communities as quickly as possible are clearly evident.

IOM transitional shelters not only provide homes, but can also serve as community centres aimed at re-establishing a normal life.

For a community in Vattavan in the eastern district of Batticaloa, this is truly the case.

"There's lots of room for us to play, and there are always plenty of games and activities," says 11-year-old Danujan, whose family lived in a tent for several weeks before moving to their IOM transitional shelter in Vattavan. "I come here every day after school

and now I have lots of new friends," he adds before racing towards the newly installed swings and slides in the playground.

Providing children with the time and space to play and express their emotions is vital. But adults too are benefiting from IOM community centres – both mentally and financially.

Twenty-five-year-old Nirosha Chandrakumar, elected by her fellow residents as one of the camp leaders at Vattavan, now teaches basic sewing skills to other residents in a workroom fitted with two sewing machines.

"I already had experience as a seamstress and I feel happy helping other people living here to keep busy, learn new skills and get on with their lives, if only in a small way," she says. "Sixteen people are taking part in the sewing classes, and already they are able to make small things for their families, which has given them a real sense of accomplishment."

But this is not the only activity aimed at the psychological well-being of survivors. The centres, part of an IOM psychosocial programme funded by Japan, South Korea, Poland and the USA, also host evening classes, art projects, workshops on health issues and child protection as well as cultural activities.

The bonds being made in this new community established through an IOM transitional shelter site will not only last a lifetime, but are already forging new lives.

Part of that forging ahead is due to the reclaiming of livelihoods, another essential component of any real recovery from the devastation caused by the tsunami. An estimated 400,000 people lost their source of income in the devastation caused by the giant waves. Helping people to once again earn a living, or in the case of some, to give families who have lost their main breadwinner new skills and opportunities so that someone can provide for the family, is an important part of IOM's tsunami programmes in Sri Lanka.



Children uprooted by the tsunami play at a community centre at an IOM transitional housing site in eastern Sri Lanka. (All Photos: Gina Wilkinson / © IOM, 2005)

More than 3,000 families in five tsunami-affected districts have been assisted in reestablishing livelihoods in 15 different industries, including clothing, rice cultivation, basic trades and animal husbandry.

By establishing partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations such as the Sri Lanka Red Cross, IOM has been able to reach out to a wide population. And a partnership with Sri Lanka's Institute of Human Development and Training (IHDT) has meant particularly vulnerable groups such as female-headed households in Kalutara district are being helped to support their families.

An added bonus of helping skilled craftsmen or women pick up the pieces of their former businesses is that it also allows the country's rich heritage in traditional crafts to continue.

Brass-smith Kandapan Velmurrhu in Ondachchimadam, is one of the many people IOM has been able to help thanks to funding from Greece, USA and ECHO.

"My grandfather and father were both brass-smiths and I began studying the trade under them 50 years ago," he recounts. Kandapan lost not only his home to the waves, but also his workshop where he made everything from ornate brass statues of Hindu gods for temples to humble, yet useful, rice bowls.

IOM provided him with tools and stocks of brass so he could resume his traditional way of life.

"Now that I am busy again, I don't have time to sit around and worry, and I feel much more confident we can recover," he says, as some of his many grandchildren gathered around

to watch him polish a brass tray to a gleaming shine.

"Despite what we have suffered in the tsunami, I am hopeful that at least one of my grandchildren will continue the traditions that we've built up over generations and my family will be able to prosper in the future," he adds.

The destruction caused by the tsunami last year was so great that it will take a long time to really get everyone affected back on track and looking to the future with optimism and hope. Providing shelter, the means to make a living and once again to be part of a thriving community, are critical in any rehabilitation programme for an organization like IOM. But other aspects are just as important – such as good health and personal security.

Information campaigns on disease prevention and environmental hy-

giene, vaccination campaigns against diseases such as chicken pox, the provision of clean water and sanitation in various districts and mobile health clinics that can treat infections, are just some of the health activities that IOM is carrying out.

A simple eye check in a mobile clinic can make a huge difference to a tsunami survivor.

People with cataracts can have them removed; those with visual impairments are given spectacles; and people with eye infections are given medication.

"Improvement of eyesight is not just about improving a medical condition," says IOM health coordinator, Dr Qasim Sufi. "It is about giving people back a quality of life. After the tsunami, it's important for people to be able to return to doing all the things they did before. A simple thing like losing your glasses can dramatically limit your activities."

A visit to one of IOM's mobile health clinics by seven-year-old Vithusan in the northern district of Jaffna had a life-changing result. The screening team assessed the young boy who had been born deaf and found they could treat his condition. A simple hearing aid they provided ended seven years of silence and opened up a whole new life.

Because displacement can make women and children vulnerable, IOM also carries out information campaigns that focus on the risks of human trafficking and HIV/AIDS awareness and link these with livelihood projects for extremely vulnerable families.

"There are so many things that tie in together when trying to help people start over," explains IOM's Chief of Mission in Sri Lanka, Christopher Gascon. "You can't address any issue without looking at cause and effect and as a result, all our programmes try to maintain a comprehensive approach. It is this which best ensures that people can really benefit from a new start and face the future with confidence." ●

Nirosha Chandrakumar teaches sewing classes in an IOM built community centre in Vattvan, Batticaloa district, Sri Lanka. ▶



T. Suvendra and his family survived the tsunami and are now back on their own land in an IOM built transitional home in Thampatti, Ampara district, Sri Lanka.



“The tsunami affected people and communities in different ways but the one thing that everyone has experienced, even the people who don’t live along the coast, is the effect on the economy and the way people are thinking about the future.”



By Paul Dillon, IOM Banda Aceh

AFTER THE TSUNAMI — Investing in Aceh’s Future



A week before the end of the holy month of Ramadan, Banda Aceh’s busiest market is humming with activity.

In a scene repeated around the Islamic world, women in their festive best drift through narrow lanes crowded with bolts of cotton and silk cloth, fresh-baked goods and costume jewellery looking for just the right gifts to mark the celebration.

There’s an added weight and poignancy this year as communities in devout Aceh come together to mark the first Ramadan since the Asian tsunami claimed the lives of an estimated 160,000 of their friends and neighbours.

Beyond the terrible human toll, the tsunami wiped out the livelihoods of tens of thousands of people, farmers, fishermen and small traders who had struggled to make ends meet through decades of conflict and isolation in Indonesia’s northernmost province.

“The tsunami affected people and communities in different ways but the one thing that everyone has experienced, even the people who don’t live along the coast, is the effect on the economy and the way people are thinking about the future,” says Marites del la Cruz, IOM’s livelihood section head in Aceh. “Through all our work, we are trying to give people a future.”

In August, IOM handed over more than 1,200 temporary market stalls in the provincial capital to the local administration. Hundreds of others were also built on the remote islands of Nias and Simeulue.

Among the beneficiaries was Adi Mitari, a 35-year-old father of three who like so many has struggled since a wall of black water tore through the Pasar Aceh market on a sunny Sunday morning last December, drowning hundreds and wiping out his sole source of income.

IOM Counter Trafficking Assistant Programme Manager Fitriana Nur (Ana) works with women on income generation activities in a bid to lessen their vulnerability to trafficking.

Revitalizing Banda Aceh’s main market, has been a successful component of IOM’s efforts to restore livelihoods. (Photos: Jonathan Perugia / © IOM, 2005)



Workers on the second phase of house building at the IOM housing development at Cot Paya in Banda Aceh.

“After the tsunami it was very difficult for us, for the ordinary people,” he says. “We tried to set up shops but it was not successful. Now, with this small kiosk, I am more hopeful for the future. Our lives are starting to get better. Business is good,” he says.

The 26 December 2004 earthquake and tsunami forever changed the physical and social landscape of Aceh province. But even as its first fleets of trucks were delivering relief supplies, IOM was responding to the emerging long-term needs of the Acehnese people, signing an agreement with the Indonesian government to build 11,000 transitional homes and developing appropriate medical support programmes. Rebuilding a ruined economy is part of that commitment.

Agriculture, fisheries and micro-credit support and training programmes have reached more than 3,500 households in tsunami-affected districts, some in support of counter-trafficking initiatives, and new programmes are being implemented to bolster communities IOM is rebuilding amidst the rubble.

Today, more than 5,000 tsunami-survivors are drawing their salaries from the 16 contractors working on IOM’s shelter programme, putting money into people’s pockets and back into the local economy. IOM’s construction projects can be found in 11 tsunami-affected districts along

600 kilometres of coastline stretching from Lhokseumawe in North Aceh to the provincial capital, and from Banda Aceh to Singkil in the southwest.

The construction project has grown to include the creation of the thousands of market stalls like those in Pasar Aceh, 200 temporary schools in partnership with UNICEF, livelihood training facilities, clinics and housing for unaccompanied children.

Among the thousands of beneficiaries now living in IOM transitional shelters are a dozen families who relocated in late September. They had moved from the tent camp where they’d lived for the previous nine months to Gue Gajah, a picturesque little settlement squeezed between rice fields and a hillside *kampung* on the outskirts of Banda Aceh. The owner has agreed to provide the land rent-free for the next two years.

The three-room, 36-square metre, earthquake-resistant temporary homes are of Indonesian design and can be rapidly disassembled and rebuilt as permanent structures on deeded lands.

Eight of Gue Gajah’s households are headed by widows. They are among the first to receive livelihood assistance that is being tailored for each of the communities IOM is rebuilding.



Achenese people happy to be getting their lives back on track, thanks to IOM.



Fresh from two days of small-business training, and supplied with ovens and all the ingredients they need to start a baking cooperative, the women are confident they will find a prosperous niche beyond the holiday season.

“Of course many people will buy our products right now because it is the holidays but I am confident we will have a lot of business afterwards as well,” says 21-year-old Cut Malahayati. “We will adapt what we make and find new clients. If there are office workers who want to buy, we will be able to offer them discounts. Eventually, God willing, we will expand to other areas outside this region.”

IOM is also investing in the future of the province’s poorly equipped medical system. The organization’s emergency first responders were in Banda Aceh saving lives just two days after the tsunami. Since that time, the health team has coordinated the construction of 37 satellite health clinics staffed by the Provincial Health Office (PHO) that will serve roughly 45,000 people in government-built barracks. It has also trained roughly 250 physicians and lay-people in basic mental health diagnosis and referral skills.

In coordination with the World Health Organization and the PHO, IOM also launched a Community Health Revitalization Programme (CHRP) that is rebuilding the physical and human health infrastructure of five remote West Coast sub-districts. In addition, IOM has forged a strategic partnership with the Harvard Medical School in Boston, which provides young doctors with practical experience in the field.

“The CHRP programme is really important for the area,” explains Harvard medical anthropologist, Jesse Grayman, based in Meuraboh sub-district on the West Coast, an 11-hour drive from the capital. “We’ve been able to do a lot of structural improvements on these buildings that were affected by the earthquake and tsunami. We’ve re-equipped them and even provided equipment they didn’t have before to improve their capacity, and the trainings are really helpful for the entire medical teams that work in these communities.”

The lone doctor in the area says medical books are ten years out of date, and no one can remember the last time there was supplementary training.

“Now IOM is providing useful trainings and rebuilding the *puskesmas* (local public clinic) and *polindes* (village clinics), as well as providing mobile facilities, such as motorcycles and ambulances,” says Dr Muhammad Wukansah. “My personal feeling is that it is very beneficial. Before the tsunami, I had no experience with such facilities but thank God...we now have the ability to improve the quality of our work.”

The investment in Aceh’s future is also reflected in IOM’s counter-trafficking efforts. In addition to targeted information, radio and print information campaigns and training-of-trainer sessions conducted with the help of local women’s groups, livelihood support is found in areas that have been identified as likely targets for traffickers.

While less of an issue in devout, pre-tsunami Aceh than other parts of Indonesia, IOM has confirmed cases of Acehnese women promised jobs in offshore factories being sold into sexual slavery in Indonesian brothels.

In a tiny shop-house in Pidie district several hours south-east of Banda Aceh, four young women sew gold thread into wedding garments. A photograph on the wall shows the proprietor Ibu Wataniyah receiving an award in 1995 from former president Suharto in distant Jakarta.

“When we first arrived in this village, we discovered many young people, especially young women who made easy targets for the promises of the traffickers,” says Firiana Nur, the head of IOM’s counter-trafficking programme in Aceh. “Their families had lost everything to the tsunami. There were all these attractive young women with no skills and no knowledge of the dangers in the world beyond their *kampung*. At the same time, they are very interested in developing skills so that they can earn a revenue and support their families. That’s why we started up these kinds of programmes.”

In the neighbouring district of Bireuen, the sun is setting over another livelihood investment. Most of the tiny village of Matang Pase vanished beneath the December waves. The soil was infused with salt, rendering traditional agricultural lands unusable. At the request of community leaders intent on rebuilding, IOM has provided lime, training in the use of organic fertilizer, and a new threshing machine. Forty hectares of new lands were cleared and today, these new paddies are yielding a staggering 30 per cent larger harvest than before.

Her face and head protected against the heat, Ainiyah Abdullah sits atop a metre-high sheaf of rice husks. “We lost everything in the tsunami, all my cloth, my shop,” she says. “Now I’m back in the field but at least we can start planning for the future now.”

Farmer Marzuki Abdullah is more blunt in his assessment. “Dari ujung oek ke ujung engaki,” the weather-beaten 50-year-old says, bowing as if to pray.

“From my toes to the tips of my fingernails, we thank you all.” ●



Planning for the future – Ainiyah Abdullah back working in the fields, harvesting rice. (Photos: Jonathan Perugia/© IOM, 2005)



MAROONED IN MOROCCO:

Stranded Migrants in Distress
Receive IOM Assistance

On 13 October, 220 Malian irregular migrants voluntarily returned home on an IOM charter flight from the north-eastern Moroccan town of Oujda. The flight had been organized after requests from both the Moroccan and Malian governments for IOM to assist in the voluntary return of stranded migrants.

With none of the migrants having travel documents, a collective laissez-passer was signed by a Malian consular official from Rabat. The official had met the migrants a few days before to assess if people were really Malians before names were put on the list and the document was signed and sealed. In addition, each of the 220 migrants signed a declaration of voluntary return with many of them using a fingerprint.

IOM's Jean-Philippe Chauzy travelled to Oujda to interview some of the stranded migrants to try and understand what had pushed them to take so many risks to chase an elusive dream.

Thirty-eight year old Bourama looks gaunt and exhausted. Wearing a threadbare oversized jacket, baggy pants and worn out trainers patched up with duct tape, he sits on a thin colourful mattress in a sports hall in the eastern Moroccan town of Oujda, reflecting upon his six-month ordeal through some of Africa's most inhospitable regions.

"In the desert, we were abandoned by smugglers and robbed of all our belongings. We only survived thanks to the generosity of local shepherds who provided us with food and water," says Bourama whilst he fiddles nervously with his *gri-gri*, or lucky charm given to him by a local *Marabou* before he left his home in the suburbs of Bamako.

"Not only did thieves find the savings I had stitched in the lining of my jacket, but they also took the

only mobile phone we had," laments Bourama. For many migrants trying to reach Europe, having a mobile phone is vital to stay in touch with the family back home, if only to ask them to send more money to pay smugglers to complete another leg of their perilous northbound journey.

"I'm going home to Bamako empty handed but at least I'm safe."

Like Bourama, migrants from sub-Saharan Africa who embark upon this 2,000-mile odyssey are unaware of the risks they will have to take and believe they can rely on their resilience and resourcefulness once their money has ran out. Asked how he managed to charge a mobile phone in the vast emptiness of the desert, Bourama's eyes light up as he explains how it can be done with AA batteries and electrical wires.

But his savings, resilience, resourcefulness and optimism have run out and the only thing Bourama now wants is to go home.

Nineteen-year-old Nouhoum, who only a few days before, was trying to climb over the fences that separate the Spanish enclave of Melilla from Morocco, agrees. "We've all suffered too much. At the fences, we were violently pushed back. It was chaos and some of my brothers were trampled. I'm going home to Bamako empty handed but at least I'm safe."

Asked if he knew of the risks involved beforehand, he shrugs his shoulders and says: "I have no work in Bamako. I decided to leave when an older brother sent me 500,000 CFA francs (US\$ 900) from France so I could join him to work on a construction site. I really want to work in France so I can save and send money to my family."

Like all the other migrants in Oujda's sports hall, the only thing he will bring back home is a warm acrylic blanket given by the Moroccan authorities, bad memories and debt.

Saibou, who comes from the impoverished region of Kayes in western Mali, clutches his blanket and an orange IOM boarding card with a number on it. "I'm going back with five francs in my pocket and I'm very sad. I used to sell second-hand clothes on the streets and managed to save a few francs every day for more than three years. One day, I met someone who said he could help me get to Spain and then to France, so I decided to take a chance. I gave him some of my money and as soon as I left Mali, things started to go badly wrong. I had to pay for each leg of the journey and soon I ran out of money."

Saibou is wary when it comes to talking of smugglers and of the routes he and others used to get to Morocco, but eventually, he explains.

He says he first travelled to Gao in eastern Mali and then embarked on a beaten up truck for a three-day journey to the remote border region with Algeria. After having crossed into Algeria, he travelled some 500 kilometres to Tamanrasset and then onto Ghardaia in the dry M'zab valley before crossing into Morocco.

Others say they travelled to neighbouring Mauritania, aiming to reach the border town of Nouadhibou or transited through Libya before travelling to Algeria or Tunisia.

All speak of the endless treks with changing destinations. "When we finally managed to cross the Algerian border east of Oujda, we walked for 12 days to get to Rabat," says Saibou. "We were told we would be taken to the Spanish enclave of Ceuta but in the end we went to Melilla because the chances of getting across were apparently better."

But Melilla and Ceuta remained inaccessible. "You need to be a strong man to cross the fences," says Bourama. "This is why in the Peul language, we've given them a special name: *Gorko* or "strong man". You need to be really strong to get across."

Mamadou Diakite works for AIDE, a non-governmental organization

(NGO) based in Bamako, which provides counselling and assistance to some of the returnees.

He confirms some migrants have spent up to two years on the road and paid more than 2 million francs CFA (US\$ 2,000) to smugglers and other intermediaries.

"All have been wounded, either in the flesh or in their soul by this experience," says Mamadou. "They're ashamed to return home with nothing and the stigma simply won't go away."

He says many suffer from depression and need regular support and assistance, which his small NGO struggles to deliver.

Despite recent media coverage suggesting an increase in migratory pressure in Ceuta and Melilla, the Spanish authorities say the number of attempts to cross into the enclaves has decreased significantly from 55,000 in 2004, to 12,000 in 2005.

"Numbers might be down in Ceuta and Melilla," adds Mamadou, "but the problem persists as long as young Malians are not convinced they have a future at home. One way of reducing migratory pressures is to invest in poorer regions, to offer microcredits to young people who are desperate to start their own small businesses and get on with their lives. They are courageous and hard working and will do well if they are given the opportunity to achieve their dreams of a better life." ●

"In the desert, we were abandoned by smugglers and robbed of all our belongings. We only survived thanks to the generosity of local shepherds."



SECOND CHANCE for Trafficked Women

Set against the spectacular backdrop of Ha Long bay in Viet Nam, Ha Long City's high-rise luxury hotels, apartment blocks and bright lights draw tourists from around the world.

By day visitors flock to take boat trips to the extraordinary rock outcrops that dot the bay. By night they head for the city's flourishing night spots, discotheques and karaoke bars.

With China's Quang Xi province only three hours away by car and even closer by boat, trade and migration between the two countries is flourishing. A new highway now links Ha Long to the border.

But in the newly liberalized Vietnamese economy, Ha Long's wealthy tourists are just one side of the coin. On the other are poor migrants from Viet Nam's rural hinterland, many of whom eke out a living as fruit sellers outside the luxury hotels and entertainment venues.

To uneducated women migrating from villages in rural Viet Nam, employment in Ha Long's booming entertainment industry or across the border in China holds out the promise of un-

By Noortje Verhart, IOM Hanoi

told wealth. But in reality, their dream jobs often turn out to be slave labour or prostitution.

Human traffickers have been quick to realize the profit potential in the cross-border flesh trade. Once in China illegally, Vietnamese women are highly vulnerable, cut off by language and culture. Some are forced into sex work or forced marriage, others into forced labour.

Ms X was trafficked to a brothel in China by an acquaintance from her hometown near the border. "I did not realize that we had crossed the border. I only knew when we arrived and heard people speaking Chinese," she says.

On arrival she was sold to the brothel and had to work to pay back the money that the owner claimed to have paid to her trafficker.

"They didn't tell me why I owed them money, but they told me I had to work



Their faces hidden to protect their identity, trafficking victims learn new skills to help start a new life. The tourist industry in Ha Long needs cooks desperately.

long hours to be able to pay the debt. After that I would be able to earn money for myself," she recalls.

Ms X subsequently managed to escape, but claims there were other Vietnamese girls in the same situation who are still at the same brothel.

Ms Y was trafficked across the border and forced to marry a Chinese man. She was forced to work on his family farm, but eventually escaped and managed to return to Viet Nam with her six-year-old son.

Vietnamese trafficking victims who return home often face a bleak future, particularly in rural communities. Frequently regarded as prostitutes and social outcasts, employment and marriage are difficult and they often have no option but to continue as sex workers.

In July 2005, IOM began to tackle the problem by opening a vocational training centre in Ha Long to provide

returnees from China and other vulnerable women with alternative employment options.

"We looked at the labour market in Ha Long and realized that the city's tourist industry desperately needs cooks and people who can speak English and Chinese," says IOM Hanoi Chief of Mission, Andy Bruce.

The residential centre, which provides training in these fields, also provides life skills courses that focus on decision-making, empowerment strategies and health.

The centre opened its doors to a first group of 25 young women selected by the Quang Ninh provincial women's union and IOM. The group, which included X and Y, also included jobless single mothers with no other means of support who wanted to work in the tourist industry.

During their six-month stay in the centre, the women also have the sup-

port of a resident UNICEF-trained social worker and are provided with access to free healthcare.

The centre meets the challenge of reintegration head on, but programme participants seem increasingly positive and optimistic about their future, despite their often horrific experiences.

"The centre provides us with a lot of opportunities, which is a wonderful feeling," says Ms Z, another woman helped by the IOM programme.

Andy Bruce agrees that, above all, the project aims to offer the women a second chance. "It's about increasing their employment options, giving them the skills to migrate safely for work and reducing the likelihood of them being trafficked or re-trafficked," he concludes. ●

Elena with some of her new friends in the US where she received treatment. Her face is hidden to protect her identity. (2005)



ELENA'S ORDEAL — The Story of a Trafficked Victim

By Lilia Cojocaru, IOM Chisinau

“It was five o'clock in the morning. They got drunk and fell asleep. I went to the balcony and there I saw my chance for escape,” recalls Elena, a 19-year-old Moldovan girl. She had risked her life to escape from a high-rise building in Turkey where she had been imprisoned and forced into prostitution. “Between the sixth and fifth floor I lost my grip and fell. Suddenly, everything around me was like a white light.”

Like many other Moldovan girls, Elena had been driven to leave the country in search of a better life. “My father died when I was 12 and my mother is retired. Her pension is so small that we could not survive. I found a job in a neighbour-

ing town, but the two dollars I got a day was not enough to earn a living. One day, a relative who was living in Turkey came up to me and suggested that I go to work in Istanbul. I agreed,” she explains.

She got a job as a shop assistant. After several months she went home to Moldova to see her mother. But when she returned, her job had gone and it was not easy finding another one. As she wasn't working, when two women she knew invited her one day to join them and their boyfriends on a trip to the Turkish capital resort of Antalya for a few days, she agreed.

“When we arrived, they said they would go shopping and left me

with two men in the apartment. They took my passport and sold me like a piece of merchandise to some other man,” she said, with tears in her eyes at the memory.

For the next 15 days, Elena was forced to work as a prostitute with three to four clients a day. Desperate to escape her imprisonment, she decided to climb down from the seventh floor balcony where she was. She got as far as the window below before literally slipping to freedom. The escape attempt left her with numerous life-threatening injuries, including a crushed spinal cord and pelvis.

Luckily for Elena, the people who found her took her to a hospital.

She was eventually referred to IOM whose missions in Turkey and Moldova organized for her return to Moldova with a medical escort.

“Elena was brought to the IOM rehabilitation shelter in Chisinau. She was in a bad physical and psychological state. She couldn't move at all. At 19 years old, she looked like a child. She was very thin. She weighed only 35 kg but she is 170 cm tall,” recalls Viorel Gorceag, medical officer at IOM Chisinau.

Her case is unfortunately not uncommon. Victims of trafficking typically suffer a series of abuse – the dismal conditions at home that push them into the hands of traffickers, the abuse by pimps and clients alike, the wounds and accidents they often suffer when trying to free themselves and finally, the stigmatization when they return home.

“For me the most heart-wrenching suffering is what they endure when they are ready to risk everything to escape. I have seen many women with broken limbs and knife wounds after trying to escape their personal hell,” says Martin Andreas Wyss, IOM's Chief of Mission to Moldova.

When Elena arrived at the rehabilitation centre, she was depressed and no longer had a desire to live. The only person she wanted to see was her mother. But six weeks on at the IOM centre, her psychological state, if not her physical state, had improved significantly. Enough for her to regain the will to live.

It was this fighting spirit that impressed a group of US Congresswomen visiting the IOM centre.

“When our Congressional delegation on sex trafficking saw Elena and heard her story, we were very moved. We knew...that medical treatment in her home country offered little prospect of improving her physical health, so we decided to help. I didn't know where to start,

“She feels like she can take on the world now, and I believe she can.”

so I called my good friend, Dr Pedro Nosnik, who led me to the physicians at the Texas Back Institute,” Kay Granger of Fort Worth, Texas said. “I was haunted by her story.”

Now the Texas Back Institute Research Foundation in the US, which agreed not to charge Elena for treatment, report incredible results. Elena can move all her extremities and appears to have full strength and ability in her legs.

For physical therapy, Elena was moved to a senior citizen care facility near the hospital. It was the only place where the Foundation could house her but they were worried about her living with older people. However, the residents welcomed her with open arms.

“I feel so grateful that we have gotten to meet Elena. She is such an amazing person,” said Britney Chambers, spokesperson for the Texas Back Institute. “I can't imagine going through what she has been through and coming out smiling and positive like Elena. She feels like she can take on the world now, and I believe she can.”

Congresswoman Granger also sees the change. “When I first saw Elena in the Moldovan shelter, she was a young lady without much hope. Today, Elena can walk well with the aid of a cane...and has hope for the future, for living life to its fullest. Her eyes are alive with excitement, something that was not there a few short months ago,” she explains.

“I have seen many women with broken limbs and knife wounds.”



Elena on a slow path to full recovery. (2005)

TODAY ELENA

Can walk well with the aid of a cane...

“Before being trafficked I knew about this danger, but it didn’t help. I just couldn’t identify myself as a potential victim of trafficking. I couldn’t believe this could ever happen to me and yet this happened. What can I say? What could I advise other women? Home is home even if it’s not perfect.”

Elena is happy in the US and would love to stay there, but she is missing her mother too much. She plans to go back to Moldova and start a new life back home after one final operation in April next year.

“I know how difficult it is to survive in Moldova because of the economic situation. But despite that, I want to return home. Although I managed to make many friends here, I am missing my family. In the beginning it will not be so easy to find a job because of my physical state, but I remain optimistic,” she says.

IOM will help Elena rehabilitate and reintegrate back into Moldova. Although a trained chef before, her injuries mean she won’t be able to follow that career. Nevertheless, IOM’s support will allow Elena to go on vocational courses and to find a job.

If she wants to set up a business, she could even apply for a start-up grant through other existing IOM programmes in Moldova.

But Elena may have another obstacle to overcome upon return home. If people in her village find out what happened to her, she will be ostracized.

Blame and stigma is usually attached to victims and not traffickers and although Elena wanted to talk openly about her story, her real identity here has been withheld. Nevertheless, she hopes her story will make other women be more risk conscious. ●



Elena in a happy moment at a birthday party thrown at the the senior citizen care facility. (2005)

The IOM Moldova Rehabilitation Centre opened its doors in Chisinau in September 2001. Today, it is the only facility of its kind in Moldova. Its mission is the recovery, shelter, rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of trafficking. Beneficiaries are offered safe accommodation, medical care, psychological counselling and legal assistance on a voluntary basis. So far, the centre has assisted 1,600 victims of trafficking.

A TRAFFICKING OVERVIEW of Eastern Europe

By Wendy Lu McGill, IOM Kiev

Since 2000, IOM has provided assistance to more than 4,000 victims of trafficking in Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus. Exact figures of the scale of trafficking are unknown. However, IOM estimates that only a fraction of all victims have actually been assisted.

An IOM counter-trafficking information campaign in Belarus in 2003 warns of the potential dangers of uninformed migration.



In Moldova and Ukraine alone, an estimated 10 per cent of the population may be working abroad without legal work status. Labour migrants such as these face the highest risk of being trafficked.

Victims assisted by IOM in this region have returned to their homes from 52 countries, representing all continents and the truly global nature of this cross-border crime.

However, Russia and Turkey are the main trouble spots – 33 per cent of all victims that IOM assisted in Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus returned from one of the two countries. Trafficking to Russia in particular, is rising at a dramatic pace. In 2004, victims trafficked to Russia made up 20 per cent of all caseloads. But this year, that figure has already risen to 80 per cent – an incredible change from the previous top destinations in the Balkan states.

Sexual exploitation of girls and younger women is increasing and more victims are experiencing mixed forms of slavery, particularly labour and sexual abuse. Another new trend is the increase in male victims. Approximately 14 per cent of IOM Kiev’s and 10 per cent of IOM Minsk’s 2004 caseloads were men, though only 1 per cent of IOM Chisinau’s.

The IOM counter-trafficking programmes in Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus focus on three interrelated areas to tackle this phenomenon: prevention, prosecution and protection.

Prevention – Is All About Educating and Increasing Awareness
Counter-trafficking hotlines help people make safe migration decisions – the reason why IOM supports them in Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus.

But in addition to this, IOM implements mass and micro-information campaigns in all three countries and strives to find new and innovative ways to raise awareness of the problem of trafficking and so prevent it.

Prosecution and Criminalization
Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus have operational law enforcement responses to this international crime. Ukraine was one of the first countries in the world to ratify a law criminalizing the trafficking of human beings while all three countries have recently made efforts to improve existing laws and increase their capacity to better respond to trafficking.

In March this year, the Counter-Trafficking Unit in Ukraine expanded to a Ministry of Interior department, doubling the number of officers to 400. In May 2005, Belarus Ministry of Interior representatives were assigned to embassies in Lithuania, Poland, Russian Federation and Ukraine to improve responses to trafficking crimes in those countries.

IOM’s role has been to assist law enforcement and judicial bodies through training, supporting networking visits to other countries and providing technical assistance and hosting international conferences.

One of the most significant regional initiatives is the international cooperation law enforcement conference series held in Minsk, Kiev and Chisinau in 2003, 2004 and 2005 respectively. They assembled law enforcement officers from over 40 countries to confer on practical initiatives, operational and judicial cooperation problems and to develop recommendations addressing many aspects of trafficking, including non-sexual forms of exploitation and organ trafficking.

Protection and Reintegration

IOM’s reintegration assistance programmes to trafficked victims in Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus are among the most comprehensive in the world. Assistance includes medical, psychological and legal help, family and housing allowances as well as educational grants.

In Ukraine and Moldova, IOM operates medical rehabilitation centres and will open one in Belarus next year. IOM also finances and provides medical and psychological assistance at the place of residence if needed. In addition, IOM funds a number of shelter facilities across the region.

In response to the needs of the significant number of trafficked victims who have children or whose children are trafficked with them – 37 per cent of IOM-assisted victims in Ukraine have children – a playground and day care facility will open at the rehabilitation centre in Kiev early next year. In Moldova, the IOM centre already has a wing devoted to caring for children.

The referral, reintegration and monitoring system implemented by IOM and its partner NGOs is particularly well developed in Ukraine and has shown significant success to date. In Ukraine, 65 per cent of the 2002 caseload assisted victims were employed and 8 per cent began higher education studies. For the 2003 caseload, the employment rate increased to 81 per cent while 7 per cent returned to college or university.

In Ukraine and Moldova, IOM also provides micro-enterprise training and grants. Over 60 women, men and their families have started businesses as disparate as a hair salon, homemade dumplings stand and maths tutoring. ●

One of the CMA info line operators speaks to clients on a busy Friday afternoon. (Photo: © Wendy Lu McGill / IOM, 2005)

“An estimated 2 to 7 million Ukrainians are currently living and presumably working abroad out of a population of more than 47 million. With so many people leaving their homes in search of work or to study, accurate information is crucial in making the right decision when considering that life-changing move abroad.”



MIGRATING Safely and Legally from Ukraine

By Wendy Lu McGill, IOM Kiev

The consequences of not doing one's homework properly can be dire. People can either end up as victims of human trafficking, lured by false promises of jobs or end up in poorly paid jobs with similar working conditions.

Human trafficking is an issue here. Ukrainian men, women and children are trafficked to Europe, Russia and the Middle East for sexual exploitation or forced labour while internal trafficking is on the increase. An estimated one in ten Ukrainians knows someone in their community who has been affected by human trafficking.

“How can I know that this offer is legitimate and if there really are construction jobs in Spain that pay well?” asks unemployed university graduate, Sergey, a consultant in a European Union-funded Centre for Migrant

Advice (CMA) in the Ukrainian capital, Kiev. The CMA is one of five that IOM has set up across the country in partnership with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to help Ukrainians make safe and informed choices about going abroad.

Sergey had come to the CMA, located on a busy street in central Kiev, to seek advice about an employment agency that offered to arrange a construction job for him in Spain.

Oleg, one of two consultants employed by the non-governmental organization, Regional Initiatives Fund, that runs the centre and who provide face-to-face advice, explains to Sergey that firms offering to arrange work abroad must be registered with the Ukrainian Ministry of Labour (MoL). Sergey must also have a labour visa in order to work abroad

and Oleg recommends Sergey to contact the Spanish embassy to get more information on getting the visa and to check whether the 500 euros per month salary advertised by the employment firm is realistic.

Given that Ukraine is a source country for victims of human trafficking, there is also advice on the dangers of being taken advantage of, especially if working without legal status. The vast majority of trafficked victims, including men, are irregular migrants who are especially vulnerable to intimidation by traffickers.

Oleg also asks Sergey if he has any prior experience of working in construction and if he was prepared for the difficult physical nature of the work.

Sergey had already mentioned in his work history that he had mainly been employed in white collar office jobs. He replied that it was something he would have to get used to.

“I need to earn money for my family. If I could find a job with a similar salary here at home, I would not go anywhere,” Sergey explained.

“A majority of clients so far have been men in their 30s, men who want to earn more money to help their families. Many have already been abroad to work, especially to other former Soviet Union countries,” says Oleg.

The centre, which opened its doors in September 2005 with just some initial newspaper advertisements and word of mouth recommendations, is by October already getting four to five people a day who drop in to consult the staff and approximately another ten people calling the hotline operated by two other members of staff.

The other CMAs in Lviv, Kharkiv, Ternopil and Odessa and run by the NGOs Western-Ukrainian Resource Centre, Caritas Kharkiv, Revival of the Nation and the Southern Ukrainian Centre of Young Lawyers, respectively, follow the same lines. Staff at all five centres have been trained by IOM in cooperation with embassies from the USA, Canada and European Union Member States as well as the Ukrainian Foreign Affairs Ministry, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the State Committee on Nationalities and Migration and State Employment Service.

“If I can't answer questions within five minutes, if a caller has a more complicated question or we need to do any research to answer their question, we ask them to come into our office for an in-person consultation,” says Lena, a CMA consultant with an international law degree.

Every time someone comes into the CMA, they fill out a questionnaire with personal information, such as gender, age and type of advice needed. Such information helps the CMAs know their target audience better, as well as helping IOM gauge potential migrants.

On the same day that Sergey visited the centre in Kiev, there was also a 22-year-old woman called Ana

“If I could find a job with a similar salary here at home, I would not go anywhere.”



Lena meets with a male client. (Photo: © Wendy Lu McGill / IOM, 2005)

looking for advice about a company offering to help her get a job in the USA as an au pair.

A recently graduated university student, Ana wants to improve her English and live in the USA for a while. Working as an au pair there would allow her to do that and earn some money at the same time.

But she tells Lena that she knew of people who had gone abroad but had been tricked or forced to work in poor conditions for little or no salary. “I want to make sure that this doesn't happen to me,” Ana adds.

Like Sergey, Ana is advised to go to the US embassy in Kiev to verify any offer made by the employment agency and to make sure she would have legal status to work.

The advice is sound as far as Ana is concerned. She says she will go to the US embassy and perhaps return to the CMA with more information about a potential job offer before she made any final decision.

It's what IOM and the CMAs want to hear. The centres are not only an important resource for Ukrainians considering a move abroad, but they also bridge an information gap. The centres provide unbiased, reliable information on migration. As more Ukrainians avail themselves of the opportunity to access such kind of information, more and more people will know how to legally and safely take advantage of opportunities abroad.

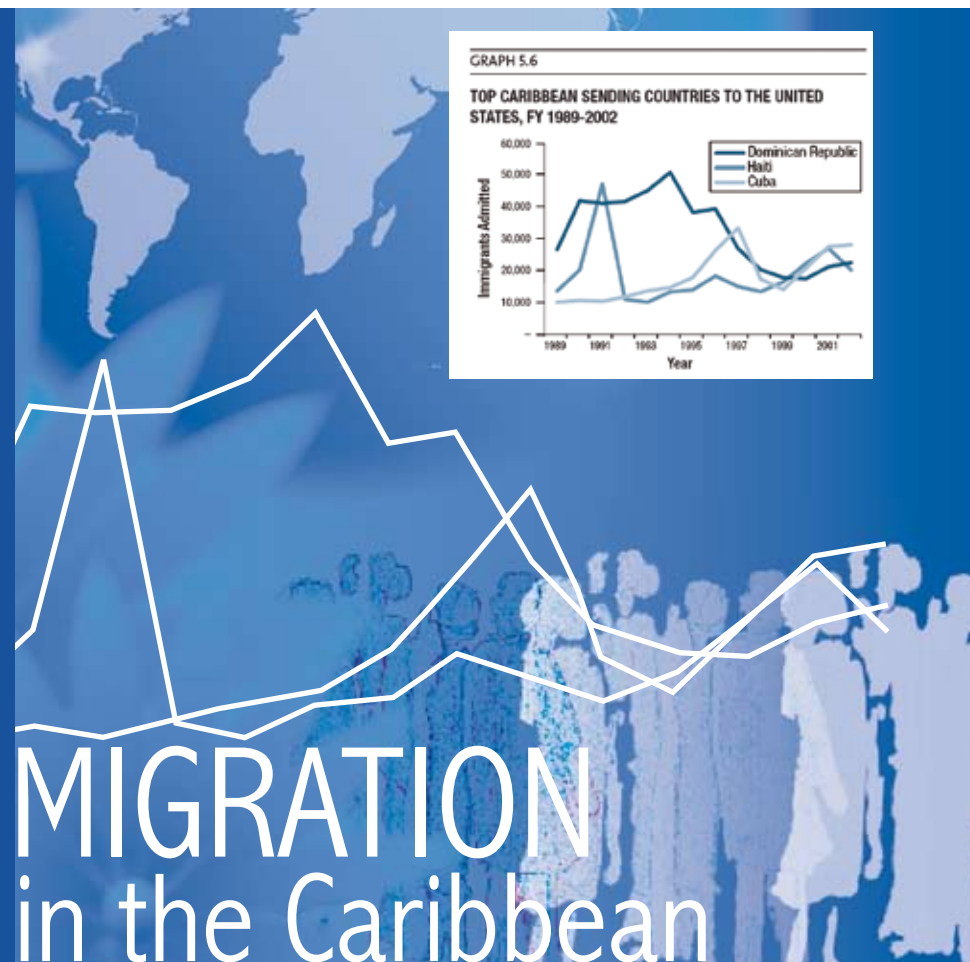
The potential of the CMAs has not gone unnoticed. The Czech Republic has chosen IOM's Centres for Migrant Advice to distribute information about the programme to attract and recruit qualified workers, offering eligible Ukrainians the possibility to receive permanent residence permits after working in the Czech Republic for more than two and half years.

But for those who come to the centre not hearing what they wanted, the centres will perhaps help them find ways to earn money they need to support themselves and their families – but without leaving home. ●

The IOM Regional Office in Washington covers North America and the Caribbean. IOM has offices or a presence in The Bahamas, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Jamaica.

In September 2005, IOM Regional Representative, Frances Sullivan, travelled to Port of Spain for meetings with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, including the Ministry of National Security, the Office of the Attorney General, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to discuss the possibility of establishing a presence in the country and to support the government in its efforts to better manage migration. The government has since responded positively and an IOM office will open in Trinidad and Tobago in early 2006 to implement technical cooperation programmes for migration management and border security.

By Niurka Piñero, IOM Washington



The Caribbean islands lie in a sweeping arc stretching east of the US State of Florida to the northern coast of South America. They vary in size from 44,178 square miles (Cuba) to small islets of just a few acres. In its most encompassing definition, the Caribbean includes 16 independent nations and 12 dependencies, territories or possessions, with populations ranging from 12,000 in Anguilla to 11 million in Cuba.

The region is characterized by a very fluid internal movement of persons, as well as by a significant flow-through of non-Caribbean migrants in transit. Lack of economic opportunity, coupled with historic patterns of movement and in some cases devalued human rights observance and unstable governance serve as powerful stimuli influencing migration of the Caribbean peoples both within and outside the region. In addition, geographic proximity to the United States and often, weak institutional capacity on the part of host governments to reduce irregular migration, also contribute to use of the Caribbean as a transit area for northbound migrants from outside the region.¹

IOM's *World Migration 2005* reports that the Caribbean region has one of the highest net emigration rates in the world (some 72,000 persons emigrated annually between 1995 and 2000). While there is considerable intra-regional migration, such as between Haiti and the Dominican Republic, Caribbean migrants in the United States totalled 2,879,000 or 9.6 per cent of the foreign-born population according to the 2000 US Census. These inflows into the US continue to be significant, even though in 2002, the numbers had fallen to 96,380 from 103,550 in 2001.

Intra-regional movements are the smallest, estimated at 10 per cent of overall migration. Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Guyana and Jamaica are the main sending countries to other Caribbean destinations, whilst The Bahamas, the British and US Virgin Islands, and the Turks and Caicos are the main receiving countries and territories.

The Bahamas and Turks and Caicos Islands are useful cases in point when talking about the challenges presented by migration flows. There

are between 40,000-50,000 Haitians or Haitian-descended people in The Bahamas and some 10,000 in the Turks and Caicos.

"Out of all of the Caribbean countries, The Bahamas, because it is an archipelagic nation with a total land mass of 5,400 square miles spread out over an area of 100,000 square miles of ocean, faces the most daunting challenge with respect to managing migration – particularly as it has been impacted over the centuries with migration flows from Haiti," says Gerry Pascua, until recently the IOM project manager in The Bahamas.

"As far as certain parts of the Caribbean are concerned, the little research that is available confirms that the primary motivating factor is economic, people seeking a better life. As is the case in The Bahamas, migrants from Haiti have provided a ready source of labour but at the same time, they have prompted the government to evaluate its migration policies and strategies for dealing with migration populations of significant size. But Haitian migrants over the years also have made outstanding contributions to the traditions

and the development of the country," he adds.

Positive contributions from migrants notwithstanding, the presence of even relatively small numbers of migrants – especially those with a distinct linguistic and cultural tradition – can have disproportionate impact on host countries which often operate with limited resources and capacities.

Elizabeth Thomas-Hope of the University of the West Indies says: "Migration continues to be identified by most Caribbean societies as the only alternative to existing conditions in one's home country. These conditions range from minor frustrations or insecurities to major hardships and breaches of human rights. In addition, 'migrant' communities have already been established at the destinations of earlier movements and these provide the means for reunification."²

At a recent IOM/UNHCR Seminar on Mixed Migratory Flows in the Caribbean held in Tobago, Carol Charlton, Senior Director of Immigration Citizenship and Passport Division of Jamaica, told participants: "As an island state, border protection is a matter of great concern. While the travel industry plays an important role in the Jamaican economy and as the tourism industry seeks to maximize the number of visitors, the challenge to border control operations is the balance between facilitating the genuine traveller from those with less than honest intentions, and protecting the vulnerable."

Jamaica's new automated entry/exit system, installed at international airports and seaports in partnership with IOM, is facilitating information sharing and networking as well as providing the necessary monitoring mechanisms.

Nafeesa Mohammed, Legal Consultant with the Ministry of the Attorney General of Trinidad and Tobago, explained at the IOM/UNHCR seminar: "The Caribbean needs to address border control management, social stability and national security and the costs associated with retaining or deporting persons. Efforts in border management and control of irregular movements must be handled with due regard for the human rights of the individuals concerned."

In her paper, Thomas-Hope argues: "It is evident that there is an urgent need for the formulation of policies that focus not only on short-term management of irregular migration through increased restrictions and policing but also focus as a priority on policies that face the challenge of finding enduring long-term solutions."

According to Mohammed, the most pressing migration-related issues faced by her government are: "The archaic laws that are in effect, particularly the Immigration Act. With globalization, migration issues are certainly coming into the forefront. Very weak border controls, human trafficking and the brain drain are just some aspects of migration that we are confronted with. The emphasis in our legal system is more focused on punishing victims so the need to modernize the laws and immigration systems seem to be most pressing. IOM can be of tremendous assistance through programmes that can assist with researching the nature and extent of the migration flows – in, out and within; sensitizing the authorities and indeed the population on migration issues; training the relevant authorities and helping to develop modern systems to cope with the migration challenges."

Recurrent natural disasters caused by hurricanes, floods, and volcanic eruptions also pose significant challenges for governments already operating with limited resources.

HIV/AIDS is also of serious concern in the Caribbean, the second most affected region in the world. Although national rates vary dramatically, the average prevalence rate for the region as a whole is 2.3 per cent. As is the case globally, young women and girls are increasingly at higher risk of HIV exposure in the Caribbean. According to UNAIDS, 49 per cent of adults living with HIV/AIDS in the region are women and young women between 15-24 years of age are almost twice as likely to be infected than young men.

Pascua adds yet another factor: "Depending on the citizenship laws, another challenge of managing migration in the region is how to accommodate and integrate the children who are born outside the country of their parent's nationality, but are not

recognized as nationals in the country where they are born. Each country is sovereign in establishing criteria for citizenship. But at the same time, questions of human rights, self identification and statelessness, and how these individuals ultimately integrate into society, need to be addressed."

IOM's Regional Representative for North America and the Caribbean, Frances Sullivan, says seminars such as the IOM/UNHCR held yearly since 2002 are necessary to bring governments together to discuss such vital migration issues. "More cooperation between states on migration management, including the collection of accurate data, information sharing, and bilateral and multilateral agreements are necessary. The Caribbean Single Market Economy, with the free movement of goods, services and people, will make it necessary for governments to work together to design and put in place policies to manage the migration realities of the 21st century."

Rhonda Maingot, one of the founders of Living Water Community, a Catholic Charismatic Lay Community in Trinidad, and honorary liaison for UNHCR, shared stories of migrants either in detention or struggling to build new lives with the Caribbean officials who attended the IOM/UNHCR seminar.

In her moving account of one of the migrants assisted by her Community, she said: "This morning as I awoke and looked out the window to the sun rising on this beautiful island of Tobago, I couldn't help but think about Christine and wondered how she is this morning. If it was raining, she and her little baby of a few months would be getting wet in the little one-room accommodation... But then if it was very hot today, she would have to leave the place because with the galvanized zinc roof so low, the heat would be unbearable."

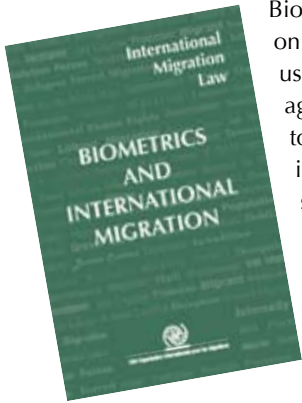
Maingot stressed the need for implementation following the seminar, adding: "We sit behind desks all day, we're good at doing the talk." She made a plea to policymakers to "walk the walk" and have "compassion." ●

¹ "Migration management challenges in the Caribbean" by IOM's Berta Fernández and Gerry Pascua, a chapter in the upcoming publication: *Intra-Regional Migration and Preventing Conflict in the Greater Caribbean*.

² *Irregular Migration and Asylum Seekers in the Caribbean*, Elizabeth Thomas-Hope, University of the West Indies, June 2003.

NEW TITLES!

International Migration Law N°5 – Biometrics and International Migration



Biometrics and International Migration focuses on the impact of the rapid expansion in the use of biometric systems in migration management on the rights of individuals; it seeks to highlight legal issues for consideration in implementing such systems, taking as the starting point that the security interests of the state and the rights of the individual are not, and should not be, mutually exclusive.

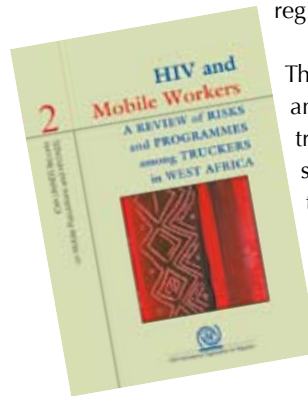
Part 1 describes the type of biometric applications available, those used in migration management, and how biometric systems function. Part 2 examines the potential biometrics provide for greater security in migration management and focuses on developments in the use of biometrics as a result of September 11. Part 3 discusses the impact of the use of biometrics in the management of migration on the individual's right to privacy and ability to move freely and lawfully.

The paper highlights the increasing need for domestic, and international, frameworks to govern the use of biometric applications in the migration/security context, and proposes a number of issues that such frameworks could address.

2005/Softcover – 34 pages
ISSN 1813-2278
US\$ 10.00

A Review of Risks and Programmes among Truckers in West Africa

This second volume, jointly produced by IOM and the Joint United National Programme on HIV/AIDS, reviews HIV-related risks and programmes for a category of worker who moves from place to place for professional reasons, truckers. It focuses on West Africa, with references to South Asia to highlight similarities when the profession is the same, but the region is different.



The document identifies the living and working conditions that put truckers at risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, then gives examples of programmes aimed at promoting behaviour change among truckers, and formulates recommendations for research and for programme strategies.

2005/Softcover – 48 pages
ISSN 1728-0788

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