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MIGRATION IN THE AMERICAS

International Organization for Migration

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IOM is committed to the principle that orderly migration benefits migrants and society. IOM is an intergovernmental organization composed of 112 Member States and 24 Observer States.

Colombian Pop Star Shakira Inaugurates School for Internally Displaced Children



IOM 2005

Shakira meets school children in Quibdó

COLOMBIA

The Colombian pop star Shakira, through her Fundación Pies Descalzos (Bare Feet Foundation), recently inaugurated a new school for more than 600 students in Quibdó, the capital of Chocó, one of the poorest Departments on the border with Panama.

IOM, through its USAID-funded program Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons, Receptor Communities and other Vulnerable Groups, contributed to the rehabilitation and upgrade of the classrooms and the water and sanitation system and is providing education alternatives as part of its Open Doors School Strategy.

The Open Doors School Strategy, carried out in coordination with the Ministry of

Education, provides internally displaced children who were forced to miss school or who arrive in a new city or town in the middle of a school year, the opportunity to continue their studies until they are able to integrate into the normal school system. Also, the strategy is designed so that schools can be kept open and in operation every day of the year so that adults can continue their education and as a place for the community to gather and host cultural, sporting, entertainment and other events. The IOM Open Doors School Strategy has been so successful that the government is using it throughout the country.

Shakira told the children, "If you want to make me happy, please take advantage of the opportunity to study and learn so that each day you are a better person."

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The rehabilitation of the school is part of the IOM Matching Funds Strategy designed to gather support from the private sector, civil society, the international community, Colombians in the diaspora and the national and local government. Participants in this Matching Funds Strategy included Pies Descalzos Foundation, the Colombian Government; the President's IT Learning Program; the Mayor's Office of Quibdó; Movistar, a Spanish Telephone Company; IOM, and USAID.

The civil society initiative Conexión Colombia, created to establish links with Colombians living abroad wishing to contribute to the development of their country, sponsored 150 internally displaced children so they can continue their education through high school.

The Department of Chocó is one of the poorest areas in the country with a large Afro-Colombian and indigenous population.

Since 1996, Chocó has experienced escalating violence caused by the illegal armed groups and has been struggling to cope with an increasing number of internally displaced persons. The Colombia Government estimates that as of December 2004 Quibdó had received more than 50,000 internally displaced persons.

Rocio Sanz
IOM Colombia

Haiti Transition Initiative Building Long Lasting Bridges

HAITI

Every day the residents of Petit Goâve welcome Haitian government officials and UN soldiers as they work together on the IOM Haiti Transition Initiative (HTI) project that is preparing the Caiman River for the rains and ensuing floods.

Nearing completion, the work on the Caiman River bridge and the river's banks includes the construction of the bridge, followed by the placement of gabions to reinforce the river banks and prevent erosion.

This IOM/HTI initiative also is helping to ease tensions between the residents of Petit-Goâve and the Ministry of Public Works by building cooperation and trust.

Petit Goâve has been plagued by tensions between the residents and central government representatives.

In May 2004 some 7,000 residents were affected by the flooding of the Caiman River.

Henry Frank, a local resident, remembers those floods. "Several houses were flooded and traffic was seriously disrupted. This led to property damage and the displacement of many residents. Most of the victims remained without a place to live for a month because they didn't have the means to fix the damage to their properties. We asked the government for help, but it didn't react. Now people feel more secure thanks to the construction of the bridge and the reinforcement of the river banks."

The IOM/HTI programme is carrying out 13 projects aimed at improving community infrastructure to mitigate flood risk. Activities include mud removal (either as a result of flooding or to prevent canals/drains from overflowing), reinforcing bridges, reinforcing river banks to prevent erosion, and repairing equipment to strengthen the emergency preparedness capacity of the Ministry of Public Works.

IOM HTI began in January 2004 and has so far completed 27 community stabilization projects totaling US\$328,134 and is implementing another 41 projects totaling US\$1,224,007.

Funded by USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives, IOM/HTI projects are bridging the gap between the government and the general population by creating opportunities for dialogue around the rehabilitation of small infrastructures, including schools, health centers, water and public lighting.

Stephanie Broughton
IOM Port au Prince



Reconstruction of the Caiman River Bridge.

El retorno de profesionales es vital para un país que renace luego de una guerra

NICARAGUA

Entre noviembre de 1991 y enero de 1996, la OIM ejecutó un programa de retorno de personal calificado nicaragüense. El proyecto llamado "Programa Retorno y Reintegración de Personal Calificado para Promover la Reconstrucción Económica y el Desarrollo de Nicaragua" fue financiado por la Unión Europea.

Los requisitos eran haber residido fuera de Nicaragua por un mínimo de tres años, poseer una calificación académica mínima de licenciatura, tener experiencia laboral, y un empleador ya fuese estatal o privado dispuesto a contratarlo en Nicaragua. Bajo estas condiciones retornaron un total de 440 profesionales.

La entrevista que presentamos a continuación corresponde al caso de un médico urólogo pediatra que al momento de su retorno contaba mas de 27 años de formación médica y práctica y que desafortunadamente este profesional no podía ejercer en el país al que había emigrado a pesar de haber permanecido allí por mas de 10 años, y que aunque podía ejercer solamente como asistente quirúrgico logró que sus ingresos pasaran de US \$20.000 en el primer año a US \$180.000 en el último.

Sin embargo, como el mismo nos cuenta, el lugar ideal para ejercer su conocimiento y beneficiar a las personas que mas lo necesitan es su país, Nicaragua.

Raúl Rivas
OIM Nicaragua



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Doctor Estradapaniagua Rivera performing surgery.

Doctor Felipe Estradapaniagua Rivera

Antes de mi retorno a Nicaragua a través del Programa de la OIM yo tenía acumulada la siguiente formación: Médico 7 años, Cirujano General 3 años, Urólogo 3 años, Urólogo Pediatra 1 año, Laparoscopia y Endourología 13 años correspondientes al trabajo como asistente quirúrgico desempeñado hasta mi regreso a Nicaragua.

Decidí regresar a Nicaragua por la frustración de no poder ejercer o poner en practica al 100% mis conocimientos en el país en donde residía, solamente podía trabajar como asistente.

No fue difícil regresar pues yo planifiqué y me preparé cinco años antes de la fecha del retorno. Pero si hubo mucha ansiedad al principio desde el punto de vista económico, pues la diferencia en relación a los ingresos es abismal.

Cómo veo el futuro del país? Este es un país que con mucho optimismo podríamos llamarlo el paraíso terrenal, en la medida en que todos los nicaragüenses queramos a Nicaragua, el futuro no tiene limites. Nicaragua y los nicaragüenses quieren salir adelante a

pesar de todos los lastres que se le presentan, y espero que esos lastres se vayan al fondo del mar, dejándonos libres.

Pero es importante para Nicaragua implementar educación, alimentación, y educación obligatoria y optima para los seis primeros grados de primaria. Creo que las universidades tienen que ser mas selectivas intelectualmente y se debe aumentar y fomentar las carreras técnicas y tecnológicas.

Creo que estos programas de retorno son una excelente idea, yo agradezco la oportunidad y la ayuda que me facilitaron y espero que estos programas prosigan.

Creo aun mas importante que en la medida en que Nicaragua mejore, las generaciones nuevas de nicaragüenses formados en cualquier parte del mundo con otras visiones, puntos de vista y educación tendrán un aliciente para regresar a la tierra de sus antepasados porque ellos son principalmente los que pueden hacer cambiar nuestros países.

Editorial Counter-Trafficking Activities

Caribbean Programs

NEW RESEARCH!!

Exploratory Assessment of Trafficking in Persons in the Caribbean Region

IOM launched the publication, "An Exploratory Assessment of Trafficking in Persons in the Caribbean Region" (including the Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, the Netherlands Antilles, St. Lucia, and Suriname).

This report finds that trafficking in persons does exist at some level in all of the countries included in this research. The potential for it to grow makes a strong pro-active approach in addressing the issue of trafficking in persons important for the Caribbean region.

Victims of human trafficking in the Caribbean include men, women, boys, and girls from the region as well as extra-regional countries. The victims suffer sexual exploitation, forced labor, and domestic servitude.

The study also found that while women and girls were found to be vulnerable due to gender based violence, discrimination, and sexual exploitation, boys were increasingly found to be at risk. Some boys were already living on the streets and were exposed to drug traffickers, while others were forced into sexual relationships with older men as a means of survival for themselves or their families.

"While this research was not meant to provide statistical information on the number of victims found in the region, it does indicate some level of trafficking in persons in each of the seven countries. Hopefully this report will be beneficial to each country as they address the issue of



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Participants at the Miami counter-trafficking training.

human trafficking," says Amy Mahoney IOM Counter Trafficking Project Assistant and editor of the Caribbean research.

This research was made possible through the support of the U.S. State Department, Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration and the Ministry of Justice of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

IOM has also completed research in the Dominican Republic and Haiti on migrant populations, trafficking and HIV/AIDS and in the Americas (including Peru, Argentina, Colombia, and Mexico) as part of the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM - www.rcmvs.org).

Caribbean Regional Counter-Trafficking Training

In addition to the research carried out in the Caribbean, IOM Washington organized a regional counter-trafficking training 13-16 June 2005 in Miami, Florida.

Caribbean government officials and non-governmental organizations participated in the three-day counter-trafficking training to develop victim assistance networks and outreach responses.

The training provided participants with tools to strengthen victim assistance networks, enhance current service networks, understand and assess security issues related to identifying and protecting victims, build relationships with law enforcement, and provide victims-centered return and reintegration services.

Participants included officials from various government agencies and NGO's in the Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, the Netherlands Antilles, St. Lucia, and Suriname.

The fourth day was devoted to strategic planning for participants from Guyana, Jamaica, and Suriname.

In 2004 more than 500 officials and civil society members participated in 15 counter trafficking training seminars that were held in the seven countries.

Support for this project comes from the U.S. State Department, Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration and the Ministry of Justice of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

NEW TRAININGS!!!

United States Program

U.S. Return, Reintegration and Family Reunification Program

In the United States, those persons identified as victims of trafficking are eligible for various types of assistance. IOM has a new comprehensive program for the return, reintegration, and reunification of victims of human trafficking identified in the U.S.

In partnership with U.S. NGOs, law enforcement, faith based organizations, refugee and migrant groups, and U.S. government agencies this pilot program offers return, reception/referral, and reintegration assistance.

Additionally, those victims who have

a T-Visa, and will stay in the United States, may qualify for family reunification assistance.

This program has been developed to complement and fill gaps to the already established victim assistance programs in the United States.

Support for this program is provided by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.

Global Program

Counter-Trafficking Training Modules

IOM has been involved in providing counter-trafficking training in many parts of the world to strengthen the ability and tools of governments and civil society.

Now, for the first time, IOM has consoli-

dated its experience into to practical “how to” training on key counter-trafficking topics, and is making this training available to partners. The first four Modules in the series include – Information Campaigns, Return and Reintegration, Capacity Building, and Cooperation and Networking.

These new IOM Counter-Trafficking Training Modules provide a practical introduction to topics essential to a comprehensive, rights-based approach to counter-trafficking. The Modules series is made possible with the support from the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.

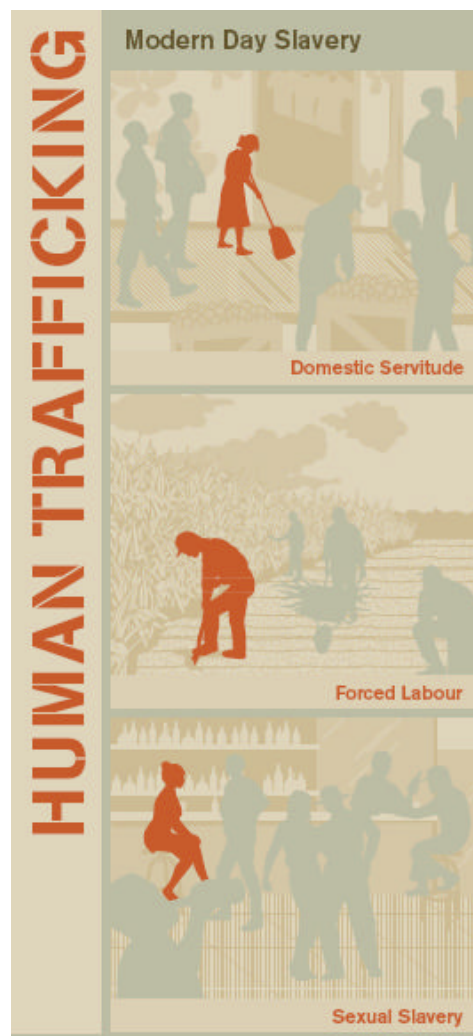
If you would like to request training please contact the IOM Washington office at: mrfwashington@iom.int

REGIONAL INFORMATION CAMPAIGN AND AWARENESS RAISING SMALL GRANTS

As part of a joint regional counter-trafficking program, IOM and the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM/OAS) have launched a regional information campaign, which provides posters, brochures and radio public service announcements at no cost to countries in the Caribbean. To augment these materials, small grants are available to support:

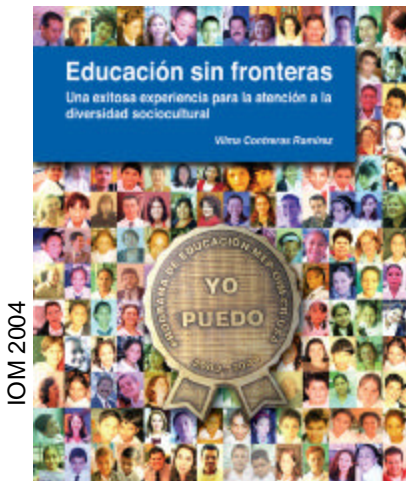
- the customization of the regional campaign tools by modifying posters or brochures;
- local hotlines, including training of local hotline staff to serve as a source of information on human trafficking in your community; and/or
- hosting activities and meetings to conduct targeted outreach and awareness-raising among key government officials, law enforcement officials, vulnerable populations and community-based organizations.

In 2005/2006, resources for Regional Information Campaign and Awareness Raising small grants are available to: the Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, the Netherlands Antilles, St. Lucia, and Suriname.



Upcoming IOM Information Campaign in the Caribbean

MIGRACIÓN y EDUCACIÓN: Una Experiencia en Costa Rica



Escuela Los Sitios, Alajuela, Costa Rica

COSTA RICA

Hace cinco años el Programa de Educación dio inicio a una exitosa experiencia para la atención a la diversidad sociocultural. El programa fue producto de una alianza estratégica entre la OIM, el Ministerio de Educación Pública de Costa Rica (MEP) y la USAID que donó US\$5 millones.

En 1998, después del huracán Mitch, el programa se convirtió en una esperanza al dar a Costa Rica la oportunidad de emprender la tarea de atender de la manera más digna a los niños y las niñas de miles de familias nicaragüenses que se vieron obligadas a cruzar la frontera, impulsadas por su deseo de lograr una mejor calidad de vida. Por su parte la misión de la OIM era velar por el respeto de la dignidad humana y el bienestar de los migrantes, particularmente la niñez que es altamente vulnerable a los efectos negativos de la migración, tales como discriminación, maltrato, irrespeto de sus derechos, falta de acceso a seguridad, salud y educación.

En el ámbito educativo, el fenómeno migratorio suele generar bajo rendimiento, fracaso y deserción

escolar, no por falta de capacidades de la niñez, sino por inadaptabilidad social y deterioro de la autoestima. Por esta razón, la OIM desarrolla este Programa de Educación basado en la mediación/interacción entre niños, niñas, adolescentes y la comunidad para favorecer la integración social no solo de la población escolar proveniente de una cultura distinta que ha vivido el trauma de un desastre natural y el desarraigo de su tierra, sino ampliando los beneficios a la niñez escolar nacional en condiciones de pobreza y de riesgo social.

El éxito de este modelo, que las escuelas ejecutan con ayuda voluntaria de las comunidades, lo ha convertido en fortaleza del programa y motor que impulsa su institucionalización, la sostenibilidad y la optimización de los recursos invertidos.

La Fundación CR-USA para la Cooperación, otorgó el financiamiento para la Segunda Fase (2002-2004). Y, además, como reconocimiento al impacto obtenido y con el fin de transferir los conocimientos y experiencias de la educación primaria a la secundaria, financió también la Tercera Fase del Programa de Educación (2004 - 2006).

Entre las lecciones aprendidas se destacan: una mejor actitud de respeto y tolerancia hacia la diversidad sociocultural en

escuelas, colegios y comunidad; la apropiación del modelo de la mediación; una experiencia probada con resultados de mejor rendimiento escolar; el fortalecimiento de la autoestima de los niños y, una transferencia del modelo a otros proyectos educativos.

En la primera fase, el Programa atendió 330 escuelas, en la segunda fase se llevó a cabo en 86 escuelas y en la tercera fase, se están atendiendo 30 escuelas y 30 colegios con alta incidencia migratoria, elevados índices de pobreza y riesgo social.

Para divulgar sus principales acciones la OIM publicó el libro: "Educación Sin Fronteras: Una exitosa experiencia para la atención a la diversidad sociocultural", con temas sobre migración, pobreza, interculturalidad y, en forma especial, el modelo de la mediación.

El Programa emprendió esta nueva iniciativa con la esperanza de contribuir con el cumplimiento de los derechos de la niñez a la no discriminación y al acceso a una educación de calidad con equidad, tratando así de impulsar una verdadera educación sin fronteras.

Vilma Contreras,
OIM San Jose

Ex-combatant minors develop a hand made greeting card business

COLOMBIA

"I want to be your partner," says 19 year-old Martha to the Manager of Imaginación, as she enters the office.

Imaginación (Imagination) is a micro enterprise that produces hand-made crafts and greeting cards. But it is much more than a business, because all those hard at work are ex-combatant minors.

This small but growing business, is part of an IOM initiative implemented through its USAID funded program that supports ex-combatant children, through income-generating activities for those who have left the illegal armed groups after finishing the government's reintegration program. The program also receives support from the governments of Italy and Canada, and seeks to support the Colombian Government, particularly the Colombian Institute for Family Welfare (ICBF), in charge of the assistance to minors, and the Office of the Ombudsperson, in order to improve and promote public policies that guarantee the rights of children

at risk of being recruited, and to of those that are returning to society.

But to Martha, and to the 2,212* minors that left the illegal armed groups between 1999 and March 2005, the reintegration program has not been an easy process. She became part of an illegal armed group when she was 14 and decided on her own to leave the group three years later and joined the ICBF program.

After two years in the program, Martha was desperately looking for a job. It was at that time that she heard of Imaginación. Now, Martha is one of the best producers, and not only because she is fast with crafts, or that she takes pride in making every single card, but because she has become an example to those who have recently left the illegal armed groups.

Martha receives a salary for her work at Imaginación, but is also a teacher for the newly arrived. "We make all kind of cards," says Martha. "For special occasions, such as Father's and Mother's day, for christenings, birthdays, Christmas. And we even make cards, calendars and other crafts as special orders for companies."

So far, Imaginación has touched the lives of 119 youngsters between 17 and 24 years old. Forty of them have a contract. And all of them have a new goal in life: to build their craft business and make it grow, and to eventually export them to other countries.

Since Imaginación got underway in February 2004, their enterprise has made US \$60,000. They have even managed to sell some to clients in the United States, and they are now discussing the possibility of creating another business so that more ex-combatant children can join in the success.

To these youngsters, Imaginación is something more than a business - on the back of every card they write a message that reads, "Made with love by ex-combatant children; hands that are building peace".

Rocio Sanz
IOM Colombia

* According to UNICEF and Human Rights Watch, there are between 6,000 y 11,000 Colombian minors somehow linked to illegal armed groups.



The creation of a greeting card.

The Modernization of Ecuador's Passport System

ECUADOR

IOM Quito, at the request of the Government of Ecuador is implementing the modernization of their passport system.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ecuador -MOFA- wants to ensure a safe system for the issuance of passports and travel documents. This is part of the overall modernization strategy put forward by the Government.

Currently, in Phase I of the project, three printing centers and seven data collection centers in the provinces, have been installed and are in operation.

IOM is implementing this project in partnership with MOFA, the Canadian Commercial Corporation (CCC), and local government offices.

In addition to the passport project, IOM also provides assistance for the



New passport technology in use.

IOM 2005

modernization of the Passport Office, including: training, purchase of goods and equipment, and other technical advice.

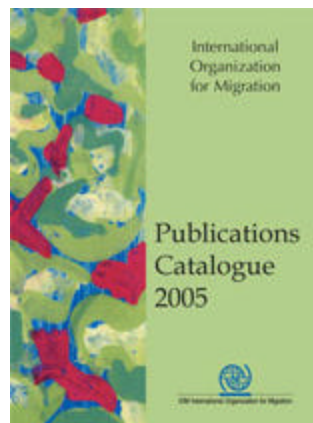
Future activities related to the modernization of Ecuador's Passport System will include technical assistance for machine readable passports and migration management at airports and land border crossing; as well as the installation of

twelve new data collection centers.

With a secure passport, the Ecuadorian Government aims to reduce the smuggling of people traveling abroad and to adhere to the regulations established by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

Rosa de los REYES
IOM Quito

NEW IOM 2005 PUBLICATIONS CATALOGUE!!!



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