

# MIGRATION

July 2007

## Reaping the Fruits of Migration and Development - A Special Edition



IOM International Organization for Migration

# MIGRATION

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# WHEN INVESTMENT IS NOT JUST ABOUT ECONOMICS

Migrants making a difference in the development equation

By Jemini Pandya, IOM Geneva

A noisy chatter cuts through the gloom as dusk settles on the otherwise sleepy village of Gomoa Simbrofo in Ghana's Central Region. Children are rushing to the one room with electricity in the village school to attend evening class. But it is an evening class with a difference.

Situated in the country's fourth poorest region, Gomoa Simbrofo and its inhabitants are like many other villages in rural Ghana. Subsistence farming defines life as does the absence of employment opportunities and one of the most basic utilities – electricity.

Caught up in their families' daily battle to get food on the table, the children of Gomoa Simbrofo often run from classes during the day to help parents work on the farm or to carry back the day's harvest. By the time they are free from chores, school is over and so are the daylight and the chance to catch up with their studies.

Until September 2006, their learning was limited to a few precious hours in the morning. With no electricity in the village, homework was impossible – some child's dream possibly, but not that of the children of Gomoa Simbrofo.

Today, street lamps powered by solar panels line the road that divides the village in two and along the school building.

"It's become a habit for the children to study every night and it has made a difference to their school performance. Before the electricity, they could never

do their homework and now they can," says a villager elder.

As tonight's class on human biology gets underway, younger children get together and play in and out of the dim glare of the lamps on a dirt patch that serves as the school playground, though 70-year-old Kofi Kum says their usual practice is to sit and study under the light of a lamppost, six at a time.

Soon, the electricity network will be extended to other parts of the village, much to the joy of the villagers who celebrated for two days when the solar panels were first installed and who now envisage a much greater change to their lives.

## Another way of developing

The establishment of a 250-acre pineapple farm on land lying fallow around the village in the coming weeks could initially provide employment to about 60 of the villagers and a much brighter future for their families.

Behind all this change bringing hope to a village of 600 people is Ghanacoop, a cooperative of Ghanaian migrants thousands of miles away in the Italian city of Modena with no ancestral links to the Gomoa Simbrofo, only a desire to help in the development of their country.

Created through IOM's Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) programme which supports migrant diasporas wishing to invest in their country through skills transfer and new enterprises, Ghanacoop is setting a stellar example that is already proving to be a model of diaspora initiative in Italy.



▲ Much to smile about for the children of Gomoa Simbrofo, now able to do their homework in the evenings thanks to the village's solar lamps (Photo: © Jemini Pandya/IOM, 2007)

It is showing that by combining the knowledge, passion and commitment of migrants with institutional and government backing, migrants can make a life-changing difference at both a social and economic level to the development of their country.

Ghana needs that investment of its diaspora. It ranks 136th in the human development index with 46.7 per cent of its population living on one dollar or less a day, according to official statistics. It also has an estimated 3 million of its people, representing 15 per cent of its population living abroad and the fifth highest emigration rate in Africa.

The upside of that emigration is the remittances being sent home. According to the Bank of Ghana, private transfers from migrants abroad increased from US\$680 million in 2002 to US\$1.4 billion in 2004, representing a third of the country's GDP. However, this figure does not take into account unofficial transfers, Ghanaians much preferred mode of remitting.

Since its launch in March 2006 as a cooperative importing fair trade pineapple from Ghana for sale in the supermarkets of Modena and surrounding areas, Ghanacoop has shown another way of contributing to the development of one's country.

"At first we thought we'd do some kind of social projects. But gradually we realized that it is better to construct something strong, something economic which will last long and which during years, [will] help the economy of the country. Our hope is that we create job opportunities for Ghanaians who remain in Ghana and who want to come to Europe so that we can combat the migration situation in our country," says Thomas McCarthy, president of Ghanacoop and the Ghana Nationals Association of the Province of Modena which created the cooperative.

#### Investment through partnerships

Fundamental to its success so far is a rainbow of partnerships. In addition to

IOM, the cooperative has the backing of the municipality of Modena, a local cooperative bank, AEmil Banca, and the Modena branch of the umbrella organization of Italian cooperatives, Confcooperative. By also teaming up with EmiliaFrutta, now merged into Agrintesa, Italy's largest fresh produce group with partnerships in 55 countries, Ghanacoop has also roped in private sector support and with it the possibility of accessing markets across Europe as a whole.

Revealing an instinctive knowledge of how the modern business world operates, Ghanacoop was fast off the marks on the marketing front, developing a sassy logo and identity by teaming up with Modena's Ventura Art School.

"We don't have the money for marketing, so we use all our energy and free time to make sure people know about us. It's very tiring but it's an investment in long-term relations," says a weary Thomas. It's midnight and the end of another pineapple tasting session at a community theatre some 30 kms from Modena.

Each week, a shipment of anywhere between 25 and 50 tonnes of pineapples arrive from Ghana on the outskirts of Modena for distribution among a network of supermarket chains, including the COOP, GS Carrefour and Nordi Conad. Until now, sales have been limited to nearby provinces and regions. But now, through GS Carrefour, Ghanacoop's fair trade Miss Ghananas pineapples are appearing across Italy.

"We started selling Ghanacoop pineapples last June and they are selling very well. In the first four months we sold about 60 tonnes of pineapples and sales are increasing all the time. They are even better when Ghanacoop come in person to promote them. It's a very positive experience for our shoppers who learn more about where the fruit comes from," says Isa Sala, at a COOP hypermarket on the outskirts of Modena.

In a highly competitive pineapple market, particularly fruit from Costa Rica, it is the fair trade component that has opened supermarket doors. Until their own farm is up and running and producing fruit for export, Ghanacoop has its pineapples supplied by a major fair trade producer, Bomarts. It pays its workers 27,700 cedis (US\$3) a day

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instead of the national minimum wage of 19,200 cedis and provides them with a free daily meal. Their families also benefit from improved water and health care access and education facilities with the farm planning to provide full scholarships to the children in the near future. Its belief in corporate social responsibility resonates within Ghanacoop and the two are now stakeholders in each other's businesses.

#### **Too many ideas**

Although Ghanacoop operated at a loss between March and December 2006, the forecast for its 2007 turnover is 1.5 million euros with the first quarter already overtaking figures for 2006.

Its growth isn't just a result of the expanding pineapple trade. Ghanacoop has ideas – plenty of them – for new products and new markets. In May, it imported yam from small, local producers in Ghana to sell in African shops in Italy. It was a resounding success. The contents of a 40-foot container sold out in two weeks and plans are to import more.

This trial represented more than just a new product. The yam was sold under a new trademark that will allow Gha-

nacoop to plough more money into social projects like the solar panels than the current deal with Fair Trade allows. MIDCO – Migrants for Development in their Country of Origin – was developed with the support of IOM in the second phase of its MIDA programme for Ghana, funded by the Italian government.

Ghanacoop is also exporting Italian wine such as lambrusco to Ghana and the co-operative is now working at teaming up with an organic fair trade fruit producer in Togo in order to import dried fruits such as mango, banana, pineapple and papaya in small snack size bags for the health conscious consumer in Italy.

“We have too many ideas because we see endless possibilities,” says Charles Nkuah, Ghanacoop's vice president, currently on a two-month trip to Ghana to ensure plans are followed through. Among these is the possibility of exporting papayas and mangoes as well.

What is particularly remarkable about Ghanacoop is that behind each new commercial idea is a socio-economic hardship story and an instinct to help small producers caught out by the vagaries of the global market.

The pineapple is a case in point. Ghana's producers of the Smooth Cayenne

which until a couple of years ago was the pineapple of choice in Europe, have been virtually ruined by the change in preference for the more yellow, juicy and sweet MD2 pineapple created in a laboratory.

One such producer, Sekoe Kwaku, now only has one acre of Smooth Cayenne in cultivation and is trying to make the transition to MD2 on another 12 acres with the kind support of Bomarts which is providing the otherwise prohibitively expensive plants. The rest of his 250 acre farm is lying fallow.

He would have entirely abandoned his stock of Smooth Cayenne plants if it were not for the glimmer of hope offered by Ghanacoop. Seeing the plight of so many producers like Sekoe, Ghanacoop has embarked on another ambitious project.

It is planning to buy the current Bomarts packing house and convert it into a pineapple processing plant. Here, there will be a market for the Smooth Cayenne producers whose fruits will be canned and turned into concentrate for export.

AEmil Banca has already financed a feasibility study on the factory and it, together with UniCredit, Europe's second largest bank, are now providing

▼ A positive reversal of fortune for Sekoe Kwaku who, through Ghanacoop, will again be able to find a buyer for his Smooth Cayenne pineapples (Photo: © Jemini Pandya/IOM, 2007)







Photos: © Jemini Pandya/IOM, 2007

Top row, from left to right:

- ▶ Life is hard in the village in Ghana's Central Region, the fourth poorest part of Ghana
- ▶ About 9 tonnes of pineapples will be needed per hour to feed the new Ghanacoop pineapple processing plant

Middle row, from left to right:

- ▶ Much work to be done to prepare the land for pineapple planting on the 250-acre Ghanacoop farm
- ▶ An evening class is a giant step forward in the children's education at Goma Simbrofo
- ▶ Thomas McCarthy inspects Miss ghananas pineapples upon their delivery in Italy
- ▶ All of Ghanacoop members play their role in ensuring the Italian public knows their fruit and the cooperative

Bottom row, from left to right:

- ▶ Children in the village take part in celebrations as Ghanacoop provides new furniture and materials for their school
- ▶ A worker at Bomarts plants a pineapple sucker. It will take more than a year before a fruit will be ready for harvesting
- ▶ Family members are enlisted to help spread the Ghanacoop word

an 8 million euro loan. This will allow Ghana Coop to employ 300 people at the factory due to be operational by October 2008 and will not only prevent 75 Smooth Cayenne producers from going under, but will also keep hundreds of their workers in a job. A perfect example of the cascading benefits of one investment.

This development is also a critical step forward for other fundamental reasons. It has meant a much-needed injection of funds into the Ghanacoop farm and the laying of a more secure entrepreneurial foundation on the migrants' home soil.

Thirty acres of the farm had already been tilled at the end of 2006 in anticipation of funds coming through in time for planting. They didn't and weeds have reclaimed much of the land. The delay in the start up has been excruciating for the migrants, frustrated in their desire to make a social difference quickly.

"We are moving at a very slow pace," says Charles, complaining of the difficulties Ghanacoop has had in getting capital investment for their projects. "There has been a kind of mistrust because it is not easy for a European institution to give out a loan for investment outside Europe." And equally in Ghana, "it is very very difficult to get Ghanaian institutions to collaborate because we are not local based and they have very high interest rates."

▼ Charles Nkuah says if it is in the interests of Ghanacoop and the development of his country, he is more than prepared to go back to Ghana (Photo: © Jemini Pandya/IOM, 2007)

### Leaving no stone unturned

Ghana's government has acknowledged this unwillingness and even dislike of investing in small and medium enterprises by Ghanaian banks is a problem, one which is hindering its poverty reduction strategy targeting human resource development and private sector growth. Key to both targets is the Ghanaian diaspora which the government sees as a dynamic source of potential investors.

In a bid to encourage their investment, the government began a series of homecoming summits in 2001 during which members of the diaspora and the government meet on an annual basis to discuss these and other issues. In 2002, it also changed the law to allow Ghanaians to hold dual nationality in another attempt to attract Ghanaian migrants who have been granted the nationality of their host country, such as Thomas.

Gifty Ohene Konadu, Deputy Minister for Small and Medium Enterprises and Technology at the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Private Sector Development, says the government has taken out a loan of US\$ 45 million from the World Bank to train banks and their staff on why they need to lend to small and medium enterprises. They represent after all, she says, 75-80 per cent of businesses in Ghana. Once that has taken place, money will be made available to the banks for lending and Ghanaian migrants will just

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need to follow the same procedures as resident Ghanaians.

"We are leaving no stone unturned to ensure that this sector thrives and thrives sustainably," she says, adding: "We are calling for investment day in and day out and if we have our own people coming in to invest, then they will have no inhibitions at all. They have a critical role to play."

Encouraging news then for Ghanacoop and others following not only in their footsteps in the second phase of MIDA Ghana, but outside of it too.

### Two-way benefits

In Italy also, Ghanacoop is developing apace. Through Confcooperative Modena, which believes Ghanacoop to be the best existing model for integrating migrant communities in Italy while at the same time allowing them to contribute to the socio-economic development of their home country, Ghanacoop was given some start-up costs, essential training on management, accounting and computer skills.

Confidence is now being expressed through a 75,000 euro investment in Ghanacoop from Fondo Sviluppo, a development foundation which is part of the national Confcooperative. This investment allows it to be a member of Ghanacoop while an additional 100,000 euro loan at a low rate will help the mi-



grant cooperative develop its business in Italy and take it to new heights as a national enterprise.

Although the focus of IOM's MIDA programme is on the development of the migrant's country of origin, there is no denying the significant knock-on benefits for the host country as well.

For Agrintesa, the relationship with Ghanacoop means also being able to place Italian agricultural products such as fruit juices on the Ghanaian market and a potentially big business opportunity in a country where religious faith is strong.

"We didn't know the African market. We haven't penetrated it. We thought that it was a reciprocal knowledge, helping them with their product in Europe, them helping us to access their market. We started this adventure. I call it adventure but I am sure it is going to be a sustainable project economically," says Giuseppe Termanani, in charge of foreign markets at Agrintesa.

For AEmil Banca, the support for Ghanacoop has resulted in a positive new image for the bank among the migrant community in Modena province and many more bank accounts being opened, particularly by Ghanaians. For a small provincial bank, migrant business is as important as Italian business. As a result, they are employing a Ghanaian woman to work for them with the role of attracting more migrant accounts. And by getting to know some of the migrants through Ghanacoop, the bank has also given mortgages to them. No surer sign of laying down roots than owning a home.

For the authorities in Modena, Ghanacoop has made a significant impact on the community in the province where 10



▲ A rare moment with the family for Thomas McCarthy (Photo: © Jemini Pandya/IOM, 2007)

per cent of the population is made up of migrants and where until now, engagement between the two has been limited to the provision of social services.

"The visibility of Ghanacoop products in the Modenese supermarkets has changed the way that people look at migrants. Now you don't see migrants as someone who needs services but someone who brings services and new initiatives. This experience has helped us to discover another level of cooperation with them, especially at an entrepreneurial level," says Alberto Caldana, formerly responsible for social policies at the Municipality of Modena and now working for the Province of Modena.

#### A model to follow?

Both the Modenese authorities and Confcooperative now want to apply the Ghana Coop model to other migrant communities from sub-Saharan Africa and Albania living in the province.

IOM sees Ghanacoop as a model that can be replicated all around the world if one stumbling block can be overcome.

"The problem that we find and which forces us to approach the donors is that migrants often have problems finding the start up capital to launch themselves into such ventures," says Davide Terzi, IOM's Chief of Mission in Ghana. "There is a lot of potential out there so it's important to us to find this funding. The other bonus is that the MIDA approach gives

ownership to the migrants and gives benefits to governments. It also makes the link between private enterprise, governments and migrants and is a much wiser way of investing remittances into the growth of one's country."

For Thomas, in Italy now for 19 years and at first an irregular migrant living on the fringes of society trying to find whatever work he could, key to the Ghanacoop success is that it is a community creation and investment, not just an individual's.

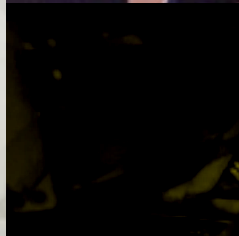
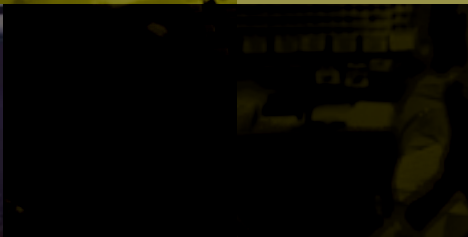
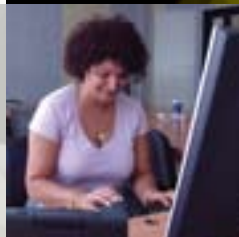
"I think we have learned a lot and other people can learn from us. You have to be very, very serious and smart and also capable and with these three things you can make it. This is what others need to learn from us otherwise it would be very very difficult to compete with the Europeans," he adds.

Working seven days a week early morning to late night with very little time for his wife and two daughters, is it worth it?

"I believe it is worth it. It has improved my life. It has improved the lives of many migrants here, not just Ghanaians. I believe in what I am doing, what I am investing, has a very good and bright future, not just for me but for the Ghanaian community and for the next generation." **M**

A video on Ghanacoop is available on the IOM website for viewing and broadcast use – [www.iom.int](http://www.iom.int)

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# Italy-Morocco: A Mosaic of Talent Receives Business Training

Eighty skilled Moroccan migrants living in Italy are currently taking part in a comprehensive training course that aims to provide them with the necessary skills and knowledge to help them successfully invest in the socio-economic development of their home country.

The course, part of IOM's MigResources programme, aims to create favourable investment conditions in Italy and Morocco for expatriates to invest at home, either through temporary or virtual returns programmes, targeted investments of remittances or through the creation of trans-national networks of firms, migrants' associations and public administrations in both countries.

IOM's Jean-Philippe Chauzy has met some of the expatriates taking part in this unique programme, which is funded by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

By Jean-Philippe Chauzy, IOM Geneva

Despite the constant rumble coming from the ancient and congested Via Nomentana, there's a quiet, studious atmosphere at the University of Malta campus in Rome.

In a couple of high-ceilinged rooms, some 40 Moroccan expatriates and budding entrepreneurs are outlining their nascent business plans to Simonetta Bormioli, a sociologist and researcher who works for CERFE, a non-profit organization that has teamed up with IOM to provide migrants

with the appropriate training to help them successfully invest at home.

"Our first task is to listen and identify some of the obstacles that could jeopardize their business plans," says Bormioli. "This is paramount to defining their training needs and to establish a realistic level of expectations for all involved. Once this is done, the programme will provide the migrants with the right technical baggage, contacts and skills to help them undertake a detailed feasibility study as part of their business plan."

The trainees, who have been selected on the basis of applications outlining their entrepreneurial goals in Morocco, are all keen to share their hopes for the future.

With a strong background as a social mediator in Italy, where he has lived and worked for more than 20 years, Malayo Abderrazak has decided to set up a financial intermediation venture.

"The idea is to build on the valuable experience I have acquired as a social mediator to set up a structure that would mobilize funds from Italian businesses and migrant communities to invest in promising, but often cash-starved start-ups in Morocco," says Abderrazak. "Businesses that are sponsoring or benefiting from this scheme would also employ, train and support young professionals in Morocco and Italy to ultimately help them come up with viable business plans to set up their own small enterprises."

Abderrazak, who also heads ATLAS, a vibrant NGO for Moroccans residing in Italy, believes twinning mechanisms between NGOs and small businesses on both sides of the Mediterranean would help promote sustainable development and reduce the incentive for many thousands of young Moroccans to emigrate at all costs.



▲ Bouhrim Said dreams of creating a clothing designer brand (Photo: © Jean-Philippe Chauzy/IOM, 2007)

"My work as a social mediator has taken me inside Italian prisons where I have helped fellow compatriots who have fallen on the wrong side of law. This has made me realize how many human tragedies and economic opportunities are wasted through irregular migration."

Abderrazak sees himself as a true transnational who intends to make the most out of his unique background to encourage a greater mobility of people, skills and capital.

"The Moroccan community in Italy is ready to invest at home but many expatriates who have business ideas do not know how to carry them out. This training is also crucial because it will allow us to confront our dreams with the harsh realities of the business world."

Also taking part in the training is Fatima Chegri who wants to develop a business plan with the active support of several family members who are currently living and working in Italy and Morocco.

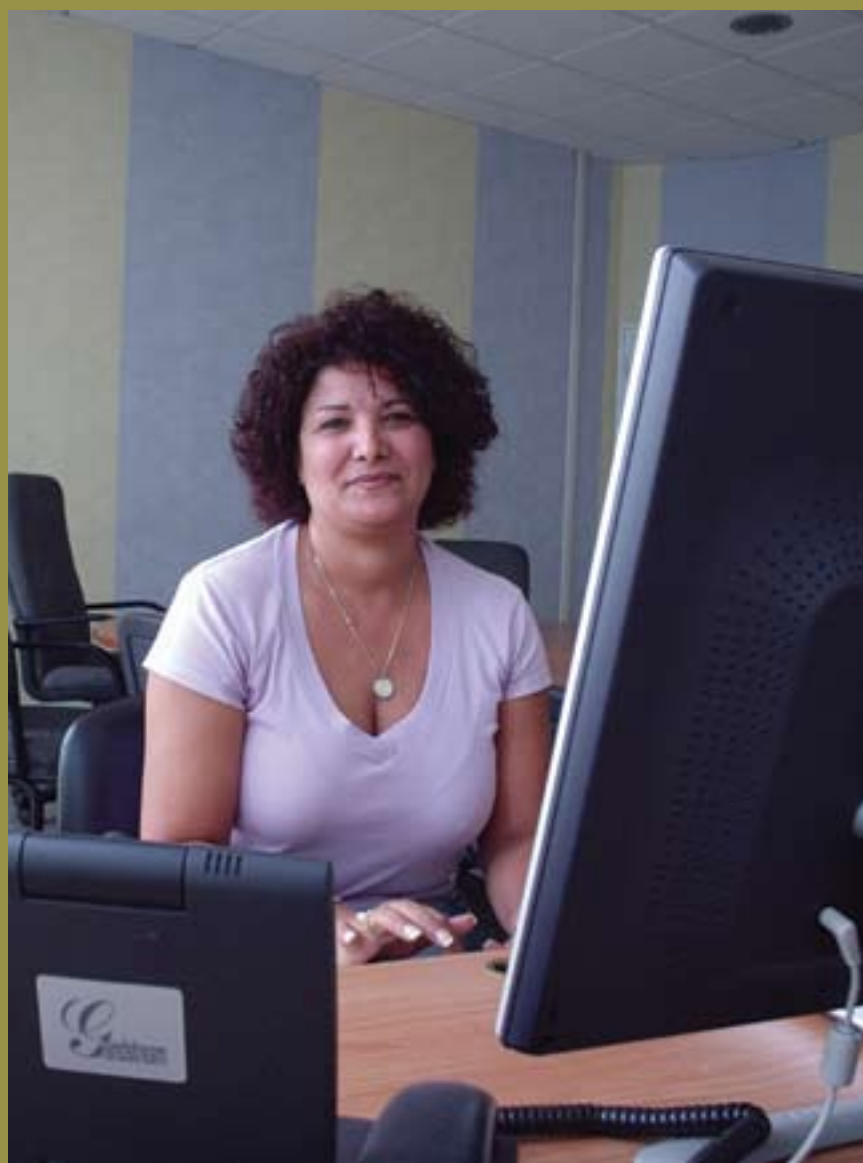
"I have two brothers who are employed as skilled technicians in a chroming plant in Venice and another brother who works as a senior accountant in Rabat," says Chegri, who adds her family is ready to mobilize some of the capital for the enterprise. "Over the past 20 years,

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Migrants will only become successful agents of development if they are provided with the necessary financial and management skills and if they benefit from strong support networks...

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▼ Fatima Chegri seeks to establish a family business in Rabat (Photo: © Jean-Philippe Chauzy/IOM, 2007)





▲ Malayo Abderrazak wants to set up a financial intermediation venture (Photo: © Jean-Philippe Chauzy/IOM, 2007)

we have bought land in and around the seaside resort of Temara, which we could sell to invest in the venture."

Chegri says her brothers have already carried out a limited feasibility survey in the region of Rabat and have identified what they believe to be a niche market. But the family also realizes they might not be able to set up this business without some strong backing.

"Ideally, we'd like to set up this business with the technical and logistical support of the Venetian firm," says Chegri. "A form of partnership would certainly kick start the venture and make it more sustainable in the short to medium term."

Chegri, who works full time for ARCI, an NGO that provides support for refugees and migrants, says she's only too familiar with the consequences of exile.

"Moroccan expatriates have a collective duty to invest in Morocco to provide our brothers and sisters with viable economic alternatives," adds Chegri who believes this training and her family's support are her best guarantees for success.

Bouhrim Said has spent most of his professional life working in the textile industry in Morocco. Last year, his wife, a consular officer, was posted in Rome, the capital of fashion in Said's eyes.

"I took a leave of absence from my Moroccan employer because I wanted to develop a business plan that would make best use of my knowledge and contacts in the textile industry to help aspiring Moroccan and Italian designers in their bid to create new brands," he explains.

Said firmly believes that the future for young designers lies in finished, high quality goods produced in small quantities. He says he wants to work with designers and textile manufacturers in Italy and Morocco to position his country's unique cultural heritage as a strong selling point for the European fashion industry.

"Fashion can be a wonderful cross-cultural mediator," says Said who believes his project could also promote new cultural synergies between young Italians and Moroccans.

IOM's Ugo Melchionda, who manages MigResources, is fully aware of the many pitfalls that lie on the way to successful entrepreneurship. "Migrants will only become successful agents of development if they are provided with the necessary financial and management skills and if they benefit from strong support networks among migrants' associations, public administrations and the private sector."

As part of the programme, a similar course was launched in May in Casablanca for 30 qualified Moroccans who wish to acquire new skills through on-the-job trainings in Italian businesses. The course, which is carried out in partnership with the Rabat-based *Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Démographiques*, provides practical guidance on how best to access the Italian job market with the aim of acquiring skills.

"Circular migration can be achieved through partnerships that promote mobility through job-training or job-matching services," explains Melchionda. "This programme is a first step to show that circular migration promotes skills transfer, investment and ultimately economic growth for all countries involved." **M**

What do a ginger-based drink, a solar cooker, a card game and a vacation camp have in common? They can help in the development of a small east African country. All four are project ideas developed by Rwandans living in Germany and Austria to improve living conditions in the country of the thousand hills.

# One Thousand Opportunities for the Land of the Thousand Hills

By Silke Oppermann

Sometimes, a flash of genius for a great development idea can strike you in the kitchen.

Providence Tuyisabe was struck by this flash three years ago when he was experimenting at home with different fruit juices and ginger, a spice that is an integral part of Rwandan dishes. "My friends and colleagues loved the drink and asked for it every time they visited me," Tuyisabe recalls.

So he decided to produce the drink, which he called *Yambusi*, in his spare time in a small brewery with the help of a professional master brewer.

Today, marketing agent Tuyisabe organizes the brewing process of 200-300 bottles a week after work. He and his partners, from Rwanda and Germany, have invested some 30,000 Euros, which they have yet to recoup. Once his consumer base grows and production becomes more cost-effective, Tuyisabe wants to import all ingredients from Rwanda. "For Rwandan farmers, who grow pineapples and other fruit, it would be a great help and we would have a great feeling to be able to help our country."

Tuyisabe's long-term perspective is to produce the drink in Rwanda for the local market. "Rwanda will join the East African Community soon, so the consumer market will be large."

Sometimes, an idea to improve the kitchen equipment can be part of a

young man's career. Ernest Nkusi and his friends are hard at work on their Masters degree in Electrical Engineering in Darmstadt. Together they are developing a solar cooker, which can be easily and cheaply produced. "We hope that the solar cooker will solve our country's energy problems," he says. "There are only two power plants in the country. That is not sufficient for 24/7-power supply and firewood is getting rare."

Tuyisabe and Nkusi are two of the 6 million Rwandans who live outside their country; that is about the same number as those living in the country.

The Genocide of 1994 sparked a mass exodus to neighbouring African countries. Today there are large Rwandan diasporas in Canada, Belgium, the country's colonial ruler, and in the United States. Although only a little more than 800 Rwandans live in Germany, the community is very active in helping in the development of their home country.

The Rwandan Diaspora in Germany (RDD by its German acronym), which was founded in 2002, is still in their early stages. But the beginning of a new era for Rwanda is on its way.

▶▶▶ Continued on page 16

▼ Diaspora gathering in Mainz (Photo: © Silke Oppermann)



# Dialogues with the Diasporas: Setting an Agenda for Development

By Mame Diene, IOM Geneva

It is now accepted that migration and development issues call upon at least two types of capital: financial capital, mainly in the form of remittances and direct investments, which remain key to

The word "diaspora" refers to any people or ethnic population forced or induced to leave their traditional and ethnic homelands and the ensuing developments in their dispersal and culture. The word originally referred in the ancient Greek world to a scattering or sowing of seeds.

This definition is particularly pertinent in the context of the brain-drain,

programme, IOM has for the past year and a half brought together via video-conference Africa's many multi-faceted professional expatriate communities to engage in a positive and constructive dialogue with home and host governments to sponsor partnerships at a grass-root level, sector by sector.

IOM's on-going dialogues between African diasporas, governments and development partners in home and host countries is based on the conviction that the pool of knowledge, skill and expertise that thrives in expatriate communities worldwide can usefully contribute to the development of their country of origin.

The dialogues have so far covered a variety of topics, including health, agriculture and private sector investment in Benin, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan and Tanzania as well as education in sub-Saharan Africa.

Each dialogue has gathered representatives from diaspora associations, governmental partners and their counterparts from international organizations in home and host countries to better define the demand side for skills in the country of origin, outline the existing pool of expertise abroad and identify some of the obstacles that prevent diasporas from investing at home.

One of the most common obstacles identified in all dialogues is the scarcity of professional opportunities for African graduates, including PhD students and health workers as well as the lack of adequate research and development opportunities at home. This partly explains why so many African professionals continue to emigrate in search of new professional challenges abroad.

A strategy to mitigate the impact of this loss of skills was clearly outlined throughout the dialogues: it implies

promoting development strategies; and a human, social and cultural capital, which until now has been overlooked by many policymakers.

Both are now increasingly perceived as being important, if not more, than natural non-renewable capitals, such as oil and minerals, when it comes to successful development.

Without the catalyst of human and social capital, there can be no comprehensive development strategy. And in today's increasingly mobile world, this essential capital has a name: the diaspora.

which continues to deprive the developing world, and Africa in particular, of its most precious qualified human resources with a disastrous impact on development efforts.

With some 70 million migrants and their families working both inside and outside of the continent, the development potential of the African diaspora is considerable, providing its scattered seeds can grow in the right policy and programmatic environment.

In the broader context of its Migration and Development in Africa (MIDA)



▲ Members of the Association of Tanzanian Community and the Foundation for Democracy in Africa meet in the IOM office in Washington, DC. (Photo: © IOM, 2007)

finding ways to facilitate the mobility of professional expatriates who all recognised the importance and value of various types of circular migration.

Participants also agreed that this could successfully be achieved through a transfer of skills to bolster capacities at home, either through temporary physical returns or by bridging the digital divide so as to promote e-learning.

The dialogues revealed that these approaches had already been adopted in an ad-hoc fashion by some individuals and migrants' associations. The main challenge remains to unite all those informal initiatives into a comprehensive migration and development policy framework in home and host countries.

Information exchanged during the dialogues also outlined further steps that need to be taken to sustain diaspora involvement in development programmes and policies.

An important step to turn the brain-drain into a brain-gain would be for governments and concerned institutions to know who migrates, where and for which reasons.

For this reason, diaspora associations in partnership with governmental stakeholders agreed on the need to establish databases listing the qualified human resources and skills available among expatriate communities throughout Europe and elsewhere.

These databases, currently being developed with the assistance of IOM, will be used to successfully match specific needs outlined by ministries in home countries with skills, knowledge and expertise available in the diaspora.

Another tangible result of the dialogues has been the direct involvement of members of the Congolese and Sudanese diaspora who have already travelled to their respective capitals to meet with ministers to discuss common strategies aimed at rebuilding shattered health systems not just in the capitals but also in rural areas, where needs are often most acute.

On one occasion, the Tanzanian Minister of Planning, Economy and Empowerment, Dr Juma Alifa Ngasongwa, met the country's diaspora in Washington, DC. All participants agreed that the di-



▲ Information exchange during the Sudanese diaspora dialogue in IOM London office (Photo: © IOM, 2007)

aspora would provide the ministry with a database of Tanzanians residing in the United States in return for the Minister pushing the diaspora's agenda forward in terms of land ownership for citizens abroad and dual citizenship.

Similar follow-up meetings are also planned between the Senegalese diaspora involved in education and agriculture later this summer.

But perhaps more importantly, the dialogues bridged crucial communication gaps between diaspora associations, home and host governments and a variety of development stakeholders.

By nurturing such dialogues, IOM has crucially opened communication channels that allow for dynamic interaction and collaboration in the field of migration and development. **M**

## DIALOGUES TO DATE

**London, March 2006:** Mobilizing the Africa Diaspora Healthcare Professionals and Resources for Capacity Building in Africa

**Brussels, October 2006:** Engaging the Diaspora in the Rebuilding the Health Sector in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

**Washington, DC, March 2007:** Business and Development: the Tanzanian Dialogue

**London, April 2007:** Mobilizing Sudanese Healthcare Professionals in the United Kingdom

**Geneva, May 2007:** Engaging the Diaspora for Sustainable Agricultural Development in the Sahel

**Geneva, May 2007:** Education in Africa: Bridging the Gap between Diasporas, Governments and Private Institutions

**Geneva, May 2007:** Mobilizing Beninese Healthcare Professionals in Switzerland

**Rome, June 2007:** Promoting Diaspora Investment in the Senegalese Private Sector



▲ Gaspard Ngarambe noting names during the election for the positions of the diaspora organization (Photo: © Silke Oppermann)

▶▶ Continued from page 13

Gaspard Ngarambe, Secretary of the RDD, is writing his dissertation at the University of Mainz about the developmental potential of the diaspora in the Great Lakes region. "Rwandans in the diaspora know best what their country needs and how to achieve those needs in the country. They are able to transfer new ideas from the industrialized world to the African reality," Ngarambe explains with certainty. The diaspora can be more effective than official development aid."

In theory, everything is very simple: Young Rwandans study in Europe or the United States and take the knowledge home. Rwandans who are well integrated in industrialized countries help through direct investment and remittances.

But the reality is not that simple, and Ngarambe knows. Many Rwandans don't study the subjects Rwanda needs because they don't want to work in those fields; for example agriculture. Others are well integrated into German society, have lost touch with Africa, and are not motivated to reach out.

Ngarambe's ambition is to bring Rwandans, scattered all over Germany, together and motivate them to use their abilities to help their home country. "If we arrange more meetings, we can exchange ideas and competences and achieve more together." He is also active in the initiative "Re-Dis-Covering

Rwanda" which aims at bringing together all who want to help Rwanda – the diaspora, non-Rwandans and cooperation partners.

The diaspora is not alone in its attempt to help. The *Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit* (GTZ), an international cooperation agency for sustainable development funded by the German government, provided funding for a meeting of some 50 Rwandans in May in Mainz and wants to provide financial support for diaspora projects. Irina Kausch, manager of the GTZ project Migration and Development, says, "Some of the projects seem very promising and I think we will find a way to work together."

The German Federal State Rhineland-Palatinate, of which Mainz is the capital, established a grassroots partnership organization 25 years ago. The government and the University of Mainz organize exchanges and the local media keeps Rwanda alive in the minds of southwest Germans.

Ngarambe says that connections with other diaspora groups can be helpful as well. One day, Ngarambe was having lunch after a lecture on migration. Across the table sat Kim Singh, who was born and raised in India but had lived in Germany for many years. Singh told him about a card game he developed to teach adults how to read and write. "The adults prefer to learn at home because many are embarrassed to sit in a school. After two months they are able to read a newspaper." Singh says he tested the game for years in Indian communities and encouraged adults to write their own little newspapers. Ngarambe believes this project can improve adult literacy in Rwanda.

All of these ideas may be the beginning of a new future for Rwanda.

▼ Providence Tuyisabe drinking his *Yambusi* (Photo: © Silke Oppermann)



Dativa Kraus is also thinking of ways to keep the Rwandan culture alive. The mother of three realized that her children had lost touch with their parents' culture. They prefer to speak German instead of Kinyarwanda and they are not familiar with our history," Kraus says. "They don't understand what happened in Rwanda, but they need to know about the Genocide to make sure this never happens again." At the same time, Kraus sees a big advantage in the children's innocence. "They don't have the problems that we had. They don't divide our people into Hutu and Tutsi anymore."

So Kraus, who lives in Austria, wants to arrange summer camps for Rwandan kids to teach them about their culture, history and language. In Belgium, she says, the diaspora arranged similar vacation activities amongst the Belgian-Rwandan community and have offered to help her. "Our kids need to continue our efforts to develop our home country. They are our future."

Gaspard Ngarambe also has a vision for the future. "We have been labeled the 'country of the thousand problems, an allusion to Rwanda's appellation *le pays des mille collines* or the land of the thousand hills," the PhD student explains. "But after the Genocide we want a new image. We want to be the country of the thousand opportunities – and the diaspora can help us achieve this goal."

Gaspard Ngarambe invites Rwandans residing in Germany and worldwide, friends of Rwanda, and development partners to cooperate with the "Re-Dis-Covering Rwanda Initiative". **M**

*Silke Oppermann is a German freelance journalist who reports for Deutsche Welle Radio, ARD Radio affiliates, and other media outlets.*

▼ Rwandan Students studying together (Photo: © Silke Oppermann)



# Republic of Serbia – Remittances from Switzerland Help Alleviate Poverty in Rural Areas

By IOM Geneva

**T**he Serbian diaspora in Switzerland is one of the largest foreign populations in the country. The migration of Serbian nationals to Switzerland is largely rooted in Swiss labour migration policies of the 1960s, 70s and 80s when short-term “guest worker” permits were offered to thousands of Serbian nationals.

Over the years, increasing economic hardship remained the key factor motivating Serbian men and women to migrate to Switzerland, and ultimately to remain there permanently. By the time the Swiss government phased out the seasonal guest-worker programme in the 1990s, a large Serbian population had established permanent residency in Switzerland, a status which allowed for family reunification, resulting in the present-day Serbian diaspora of approximately 200,000 people.

This labour migration has had both positive and negative effects on migrant-sending households and communities in Serbia, according to a recently published IOM report.

On the one hand, migration to Switzerland has contributed to a significant depletion of the working-age population in many migrant-sending communities and has left behind many households mostly composed of children and elderly people who are increasingly unable of meeting their daily economic needs through traditional agricultural activities

because of the absence of working-age relatives.

At the same time, the report clearly establishes that long-standing transnational relationships between these households and their migrant relatives in Switzerland have facilitated the flow of remittances and other forms of material support, which today play an important role in poverty alleviation, especially among older, rural households with low levels of education and an income of less than 1,000 Swiss francs per month.

Data collected by IOM among 343 households in Petrovac na Mlavi and Čuprija, two rural migrant-sending regions of Central and Eastern Serbia, finds that remittances sent by the Serbian diaspora in Switzerland contribute mainly to the acquisition of housing or are used to support recurring living costs and

basic needs such as water, electricity, gas, food, medicine, healthcare and, to a lesser extent, children’s education. About 8 per cent of respondents said they invested part of their remittances in small to medium-sized enterprises.

At the micro-economic level, the impact of remittance flows to rural Serbia is confirmed by the fact that more than 90 per cent of the surveyed households receive remittances, which on average total CHF 4,800 per year. The report shows that households also receive goods such as household equipment, mobile phones and televisions, as well as machinery for agricultural activities.

Remittances, which can account for 40 per cent of household income, are mostly sent informally on a monthly basis. They are either hand-carried by migrants, friends or acquaintances or

▼ Household use of remittances from Switzerland (numbers represent % of households reporting partial or full use of remittances for this purpose)

Consumptive Uses and Social Expenditures	Per cent	Economic Activities and Asset Creation	Per cent
Utilities (water, electricity, gas)	64	Buy/build/improve house/apartment	51
Phone	51	Expand agricultural production	27
Petrol/Transport	48	Buy land	9
Food	36	Buy/grow/start a business	8
Medicine/Health care	34	Buy animals/livestock	8
Household appliances/Furniture	34	Higher education	2
Clothing	20	Savings	1
Children’s education	11	Pay off business or home loan	<1
Leisure	6		
Housing costs (rent, minor repairs)	4		
Help/loan money to others	1		
Pay off debt/loan	<1		

sent via a vast network of bus drivers who shuttle between Switzerland and Serbia on a daily basis.

According to the report, the use of informal channels can be explained by a lack of trust in Serbian financial institutions and by high remitting costs. To increase the flow of remittances through formal channels, the report underlines the need to reduce remitting costs. This could be done by setting up new partnerships between financial service providers in Switzerland and Serbia, by improving banking provisions to bring more people into the formal banking system and by setting up special savings to encourage investments in small to medium-sized enterprises to create employment in Serbia and help the country retain its skilled young professionals.

Other measures, including new banking policies and financial legislation that allow expatriates to hold foreign currency accounts in Serbian banks could further encourage expatriates to invest remittances in enterprises that would benefit Serbia's poorer regions.

The report notes that the impact of collective donations from migrant associations in Switzerland remains limited. At a local level, donations can make a big difference, as illustrated by the

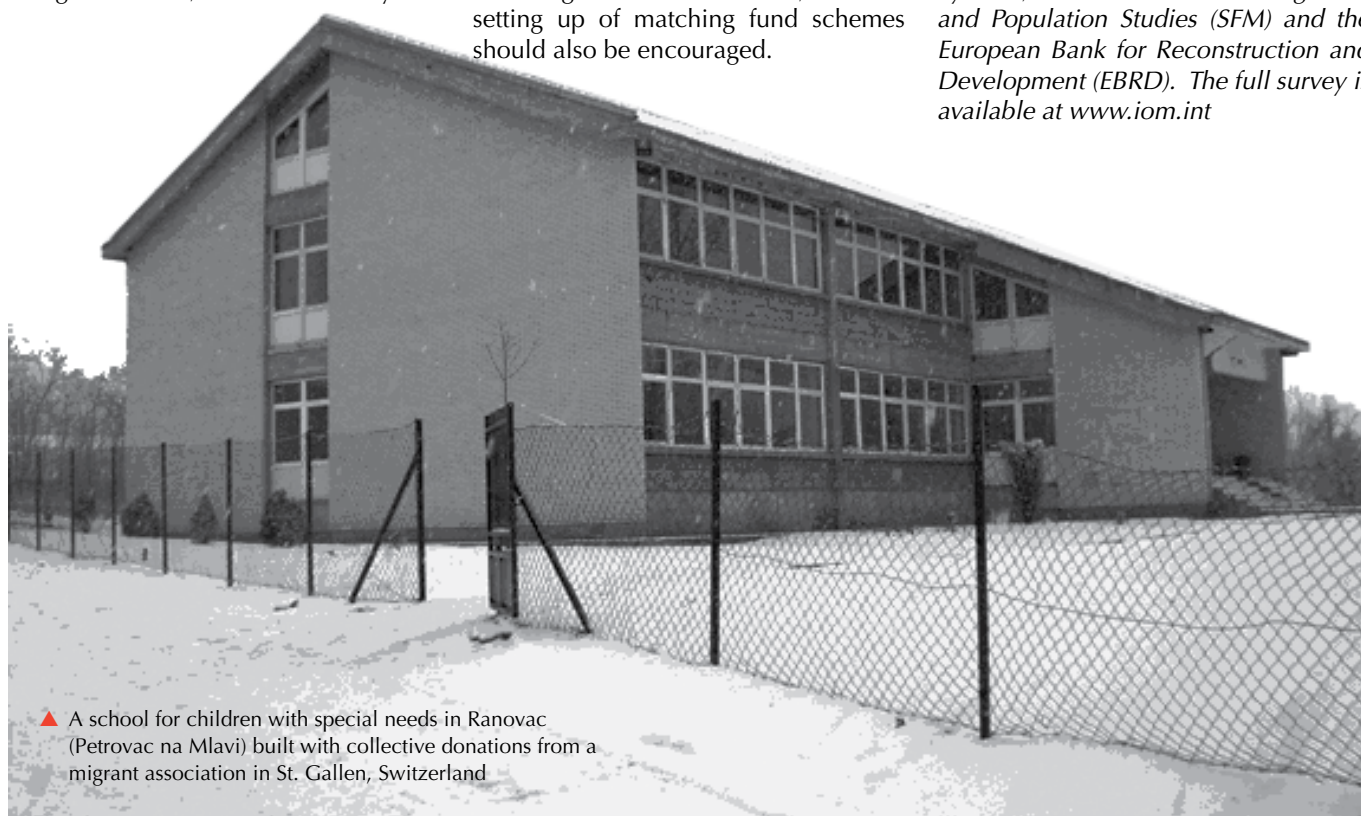
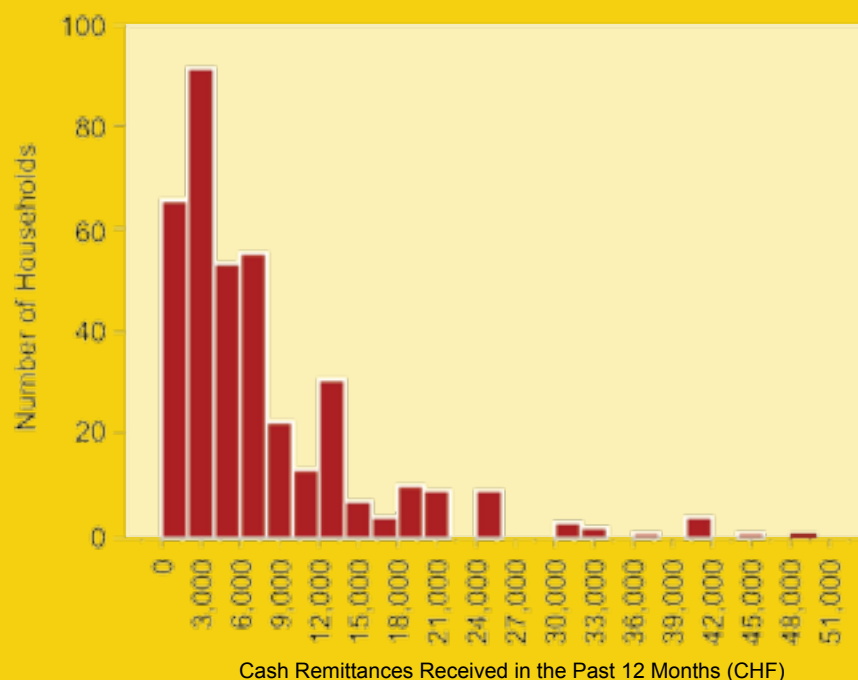
building of a school for special needs children in the municipality of Petrovac na Mlavi, which was funded by Serbian expatriates living in the north-eastern city of St. Gallen.

Measures to back efforts by the Serbian Ministry for Diaspora to encourage collective donations from migrant associations in Switzerland that wish to support community infrastructures, such as roads, water systems or schools for special needs children should be encouraged. Other measures, such as setting up of matching fund schemes should also be encouraged.

Remittances from Switzerland are part of larger flows estimated by the International Monetary Fund in 2004 to have reached US\$ 4.1 billion, or 17 per cent of Serbia's GDP, placing Serbia in the top 11 remittance-receiving countries in the world. **M**

*This survey, which was funded by the Swiss Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) is one of a three-part investigation of migration and remittances linking Switzerland to Serbia carried out by IOM, the Swiss Forum for Migration and Population Studies (SFM) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). The full survey is available at [www.iom.int](http://www.iom.int)*

▼ Distribution of annual remittance inflow at the household level



▲ A school for children with special needs in Ranovac (Petrovac na Mlavi) built with collective donations from a migrant association in St. Gallen, Switzerland

# Short-term Temporary Labour Migration Yields Long-term Results

By Sonia Pellecer, IOM Guatemala

In 2003, IOM kicked off a two-year pilot project that involved 125 Guatemalan workers selected for temporary agricultural work in Canada. Four years later the programme has gained momentum and more than 2,000 men and women will travel this year to Canada.

"It was so difficult for me to become a temporary migrant worker. When I told my husband that there was an IOM programme that would allow me to go to Canada for a few months to work on a farm, he did not want me to go. But after I explained the benefits this would bring to our family, he reluctantly gave me permission to go," recalls Santa Pic de Ticú.

For the past three years Santa has traveled to Canada to harvest strawberries. Her sons, nine-year-old William and five-year-old Pablo, stay at home with their father and grandmother. "Leaving my sons and my husband for four months every year is hard; the months turn into what seems an eternity. But I do it because the sacrifice is worthwhile; it allows me to provide a better life for my family today and a bright future for my children."

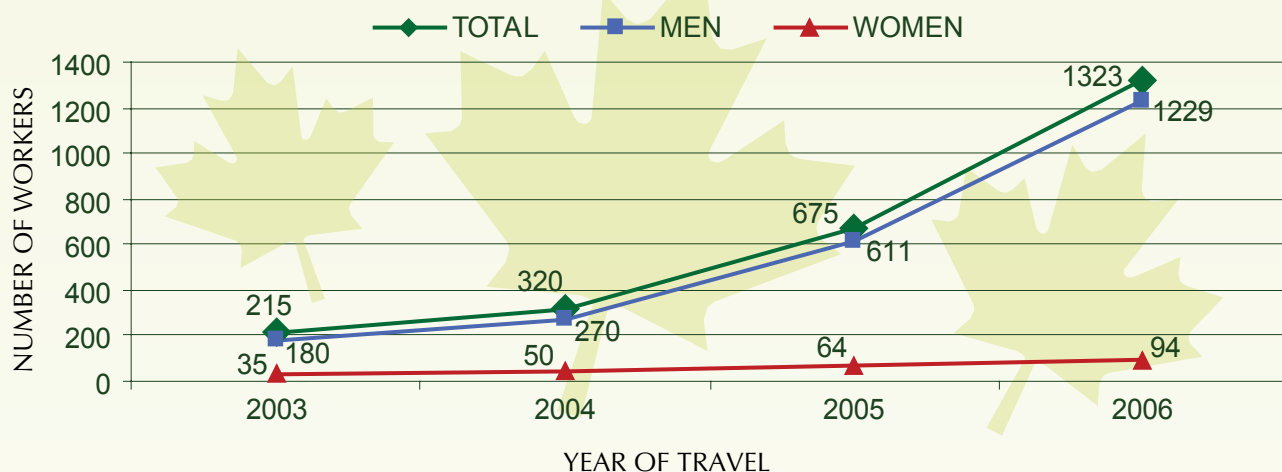
The project "Temporary Agricultural Workers to Canada" was created by IOM and the Guatemalan Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Labour and Social Affairs, following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding

between IOM and the *Fondation des entreprises en recrutement de main-d'œuvre agricole étrangère* or FERME, a Canadian Foundation based in Quebec that deals with the recruitment of foreign agricultural labour. FERME represents more than 350 employers and coordinates the seasonal hiring of some 4,000 temporary migrant workers, of which 1,600 are Guatemalans who have been hired by 160 Canadian farms.

Although the agreement was carried out with the approval of the Department of Human Resources and Social Development of Canada, it is not a bilateral agreement but one that works directly between the employers represented by FERME and the workers.



▼ Guatemalan women harvesting strawberries in Quebec, Canada (Photo: © IOM, 2006)



Günther Müssig, IOM Chief of Mission in Guatemala, says the project has become a successful model for temporary labour migration and that it is the only solution offered to avoid irregular migration. "The past four years have proven that it is possible to carry out a safe, dignified and orderly flow of migrant workers, thereby contributing to better management of migration flows. The project provides benefits all around – to the countries of origin and destination and to the migrants and their families."

IOM provides technical assistance to the Guatemalan government, participates in the selection of workers, advises those selected on travel documents and other

requirements for travel to Canada, and arranges their flights.

The agreement stipulates that all migrants must return to their country of origin at the end of their contracts, which range between four and six months, and provide coverage under Canadian labour laws.

Carlos Enrique López also has participated in the past three seasons. "Going to work in Canada has changed many things in my life. Now my children have corn flakes and milk before they go to school in the morning. We can afford to eat meat every day, while before we did not have money for bread, let alone corn flakes."

His Canadian earnings have allowed Mr López to send his six children to school, to build a home for his family, and to purchase land where he plans to grow potatoes, cauliflower and avocados.

"It's very difficult to be without my family, but I have to do it because it is the only way to forge ahead," López adds. "I focus on the benefits and this gives me the energy I need. And I tell my wife and children, 'don't be sad because I'll be gone for a while, this is a great opportunity for our family to prosper'."

The wages received by temporary migrant workers are higher than the minimum salary in Canada. Additional

▼ Carlos Enrique López says this project is a blessing for the families of small farmers (Photo: © IOM, 2007)

▼ Santa Pic de Ticú at home in Guatemala. (Photo: © IOM, 2006)

▼ Carlos Humberto García says he will continue to participate in the programme to provide a better life for his family (Photo: © IOM, 2007)



benefits for the migrants include the new skills they learn, which range from new planting and harvesting techniques to classifying and packing the produce, and which are transferred to Guatemala when they return.

A recent household survey on expenditures confirmed that the earnings these temporary migrant workers are bringing back to their places of origin are having a positive impact on their quality of life.

How earnings are spent	Percentage
Total	100.0
Construction of Home	45.3
Debt Repayment	10.8
Basic Needs (food, beverages, etc.)	9.8
Home Improvement	7.8
Clothing and Shoes	5.5
Furniture and other Equipment	4.5
Education	3.8
Land Purchase	3.4
Savings	3.1
Health Care	3.1
Purchase of Agricultural Tools	0.1
Other	2.8

"Thanks to this job we have no debts," says Santa. "The first year we managed to pay back the loan for the land we had bought, and installed proper floors in my home. With the earnings from my second season in Canada we added a second floor to the house, and the third year we put money into a savings account so we can buy more land."

Carlos Humberto García also says it was difficult to be away from his wife and children. "But when I received my first salary I felt energized; I had never earned that much money in a week."

Like the vast majority of the project's participants, Mr García has managed to build a home for his family. "I thank God because I have made new friends and I have a good boss in Canada who even speaks a little Spanish, so I have no problem following her instructions."

And Santa adds a woman's perspective, "This project is a great opportunity for women to contribute to the future of their families. Although it requires immense sacrifices, seeing your children and family prosper is the best reward." **M**

## Maple Leaf Foods of Canada to Hire Colombians for their Manitoba Plant

IOM Colombia is working with Maple Leaf Foods of Canada to recruit workers for its pork processing plant in Manitoba, Canada.

Maple Leaf Foods is a leading global food processing company that employs more than 24,000 persons at its operations in Canada, the United States, Europe and Asia.

Under the new labour migration scheme, those selected will travel to Canada in late summer and early autumn.

IOM worked with the employer, the Embassy of Canada, Colombia's *Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje* (National Training Service), and three local mayors. And in just three weeks, 172 workers were selected to participate in the programme.

IOM Colombia also administered tests to all applicants, carried out medical examinations and has set up a 120-hour English course that the selected candidates must take before traveling to Canada. IOM will also obtain visas and provide logistical support for the workers' trip to Manitoba.

Maple Leaf Foods also recruits workers from El Salvador, Ukraine, Germany and China, amongst others, and has contacted IOM missions in Mauritius, Armenia and Georgia.



▲ One of the applicants being interviewed by a Maple Leaf representative (Photo: © IOM Colombia, 2007)



▲ Applicants getting induction/training on labour conditions by an IOM officer (Photo: © IOM Colombia, 2007)



▲ Applicants performing the meat cut proof (Photo: © IOM Colombia, 2007)



▲ Applicants in meat cutting test (Photo: © IOM Colombia, 2007)

The migrant workers will receive support from Maple Leaf Foods for family reunification and the possibility of obtaining permanent residence after two years of employment with the company.

Maple Leaf Foods is considering IOM as its main partner on a worldwide level for similar labour migration schemes. **M**

# Abbie Aryan

## Returns to Afghanistan

By Katsui Kaya, IOM Kabul

**A**bbie Aryan, a UK civil servant of Afghan origin, was overwhelmed to see his motherland after 20 years. "When I started to see the mud houses from the plane, tears started falling from my eyes. I knew it was a poor country, but I couldn't help weeping when I finally saw it myself," he says.

Abbie is one of the Afghan experts contributing to Afghanistan's development under the Professional Afghan Expatriate Programme – EU (PAEP-EU), which IOM implements in close coordination with the Afghan Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission.

Funded by the European Commission, the project aims to contribute to the long-term stability and development of the country through the deployment of 17 highly qualified Afghan expatriates living in EU member states who will share their skills and expertise in various ministries and public institutions during their assignments of up to one year in Afghanistan.

Abbie assumed his new post as Senior Advisor at the Ministry of Counter-Narcotics in April 2007. His primary responsibility is to advise the Minister on a variety of policies and coordination issues to achieve the ultimate goal of eradicating narcotics production in Afghanistan.

Abbie argues that the government needs to follow three steps – security, development and law enforcement – to stamp out the country's thriving narcotics industry.

In Helmand province, classified as an Extreme Risk/Hostile Environment by UN security officials, for example, 110,000 hectares of opium poppies are currently under cultivation – equivalent to roughly 40 per cent of the world's opium production. The reason is lack of security, he observes.

After improving general security, development issues need to be addressed.

"We have to implement alternative livelihood projects and build bridges, roads, irrigation channels and so on to give farmers a chance to switch from an illicit crop to something legal," says Abbie.

Poppy producers also need to understand that life will be better without the poppy and that those who stop the illicit production will receive a lot of support from the central government, he argues.

The Ministry of Counter-Narcotics has already created such a mechanism called the Good Performance Initiative, which awards development grants to provinces that stay narcotics free. The mechanism is closely observed and coordinated through Abbie's office.

Abbie was 14 when his family immigrated to the UK during the Russian invasion of Afghanistan in the late 1980s. After completing a law degree in London, Abbie worked as a civil servant with the Immigration and Nationality Directorate of the Home Office.

His life was blessed with everything one can hope for – a good job, four children, a home – but something was still missing, he says.

"About 90 per cent of heroin in the UK comes from Afghanistan. I know how it affects people's lives and I thought per-

haps I could explore this and do something about it," he observes.

Driven by this urge to help, Abbie returned to Afghanistan by himself. He still feels difficulty living in an environment with so many security restrictions and misses his family.

But he is committed to his work and one of his ambitions is to mainstream Afghanistan's National Drug Control Strategy into the country's National Development Strategy.

Counter-narcotics is a cross-cutting issue across the Afghan government and therefore it is important for the government to build a counter-narcotics component within each national programme, he says.

"One ministry working by itself cannot be successful. It requires the whole machine of the government to work on this issue. This is the only way it can succeed and this is my main priority for now," says Abbie.

"I think I owe this to Afghanistan. This is the country where I was born. Whatever I do in the UK, it cannot be much because there are plenty of people there with better qualifications and experience. But in a country like this, even if I make a small contribution, it will be big," he smiles. **M**



◀ Abbie Aryan at his desk at the Ministry of Counter-Narcotics (Photo: © Katsui Kaya/IOM, 2007)

# Manila's Old City Hosts New Migration Library and Centre for Returning Migrants

By Ricardo R. Casco, IOM Manila

**O**n a beautiful, sunny day in March, two long-neglected nooks in Manila's old, Spanish-walled Intramuros quarter became home to a critical new resource for tens of thousands of Filipino migrants.

A throng of spectators attended the unveiling of the Migration Information Resource Center (MIRC) and the National Reintegration Center for Overseas Filipino Workers (NRC) by Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and IOM Director General Brunson McKinley.

Filipino Department Labor and Employment (DOLE) Secretary Arturo Brion, the man behind the idea, addressed

the crowd, explaining the Philippines' migration governance model and the development role of reintegration and migration information systems.

After cutting the ribbon, President Arroyo experimented with the user-friendly touch screens at an information kiosk at the NRC, posing as a returning nurse. "If I were a nurse returning to my country, what can this computer do for me?" she asked.

The NRC is envisioned as a one-stop centre for reintegration counselling, training, information and venture project facilitation to create socio-economic reintegration that benefits the individual, the family, the community and the country as a whole.

The MIRC, will function as a resource centre for potential and returning migrants, and will host a central migration library.

Secretary Brion expects the two bodies to develop into a forum for coordination between government, industry and civil society, supported by a wide range of public and private sector bodies.

In its initial stage, the NRC will be a first port of call for Filipino Labour Attachés and Welfare Officers returning home from overseas posts. As reintegration counselors, they will be able to share their wealth of experience with Filipino migrant workers.

▼ Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo cutting the ribbon with DOLE Secretary Arturo Brion and IOM Director General Brunson McKinley with IOM Manila Regional Representative Bruce Reed looking on (Photo: © IOM, 2007)





▲ DOLE building facade where MIRC is located (Photo: © IOM, 2007)

The government's reintegration goals include the productive and development-oriented use of migrants' foreign earnings and the skills that they learnt abroad. A National Reintegration Summit to discuss these issues is planned for later this year.

Filipino migration has been a hot topic for decades among politicians, the media, academia and experts, not just in the Philippines, but worldwide. But the mass of data has always been difficult to track down from widely dispersed libraries and internet sources.

In April, a month after the inauguration of the MIRC and following an agreement signed with the DOLE, IOM sent experts from Geneva, Bangkok and Manila to



▲ Director General Brunson McKinley and DOLE Secretary Arturo Brion unveiling the NRC marker (Photo: © IOM, 2007)

the centre to conduct a basic orientation course on Library, Web, Publication and Communication Management on Migration.

This seminar was attended by librarians, website managers, publication and communication specialists of six government agencies under the DOLE.

"Sensitization is the first step needed to pursue an ambitious project to build a central migration library in the country. Training is scarce and librarians are part of the brain drain," says the publication chief of the Institute of Labor Studies, Katherine Brimon.

Workshop participants conceded that the creation of a migration library is in many ways an experimental venture that will force stakeholders to think outside their customary boxes in order to create a shared framework.

"I don't want them to turf (war); the Philippines has led in migration management and must show a lead in establishing a central (migration) library system," says Secretary Brion.

The workshop proposed the development of a central library, including the establishment of electronic linkages for websites, joint cataloguing systems and customer-driven satellite facilities.

IOM librarians attending the workshop noted that libraries in the Philippines have struggled with limited resources, a shortage of expertise and ever changing terms of reference. Traditional libraries continue to house much of the relevant migration material, much of it gleaned from countless conferences and workshops.

But there is a growing awareness of the need to start converting material to digital format, particularly photographs and images. "It is our 25th year anniversary and we are hunting for images to tell our institutional history," says Salome Mendoza, Planning Director of the Philippines Overseas Employment Agency (POEA).

The MIRC and the NRC will also be free to draw on the experience of IOM Migrant Resource Centres established in several countries, which also use libraries and websites to promote knowledge of migration.

Conversely, a European Commission-funded IOM project on Regional Dialogue and Facilitating Legal and Managed Migration from Asia to Europe is also interested in using the MIRC as a means to disseminate information modules and materials on irregular migration in the European Union.

Synergies between the objectives of the new DOLE centres and IOM's global migration management objectives offer a variety of avenues for constructive collaboration. And that is good news for the tens of thousands of Filipino migrants expected to benefit from the centres in the coming months and years. **M**



▼ President Arroyo tries the information kiosk at NRC (Photo: © IOM, 2007)

# WORLD MIGRATION

## Managing Labour Mobility in the Evolving Global Economy

### A brief introduction

The task of formulating a workable global approach to the management of international migration remains a formidable challenge for the community, one that will require both time and effort over the coming years. In what terms are we to develop a comprehensive migration management strategy, one that will help us achieve coherence of action? What organizing principles should be adopted? Is there, in conceptual terms, a point of leverage to move the debate forward?

Part of the problem lies in the difficulty of coming to a consensus about the fundamental nature of migration and its outcomes. Underlying the current and welcome inclination to acknowledge the potentially beneficial outcomes of migratory phenomena there is a discourse that is still laden with doubt, with inconsistencies and outright contradictions.

In the midst of that uncertainty there are suggestions worth exploring perhaps that contemporary migration – as opposed to whatever its historical antecedents may have been – is uniquely related to and defined by those processes of economic and social integration collectively known as globalization. The argument is that, whether by design or not, these developments are largely responsible for the creation of an unprecedented context in which human mobility seeks to find expression on a genuinely global scale.

The *World Migration Report 2007* tackles this issue directly and seeks to identify

policy options that might contribute to the development of a broad and coherent global strategy to better match demand for migrant workers with supply in safe, humane and orderly ways.

Part A of the Report explores the nature and magnitude of this need for a global strategy through the observation and analysis of a wide range of contemporary migratory patterns linked to economic purposes while Part B discusses the contours of possible policy responses.

- Should migration be considered entirely “natural”, seen as a constituent part of human behaviour, and occurring throughout human history, or profoundly “unnatural” since it is about the (painful) uprooting of individuals from their places of birth and their (equally difficult) relocation in other countries?
- Is it a process through which nations are built and strengthened or weakened and torn apart?
- Does it lead to the enrichment of countries of origin through the flow of remittances and the transfer of skills and technology, or to their impoverishment through loss of talent?
- Would migration management be more effective if priority of attention were given to the maintenance of national sovereignty in migration or to the free play of market interests?
- Are migratory flows sustained essentially by a complex interplay of economic push and pull factors, or by social communication networks?

The *World Migration Report 2007* will be the fourth in IOM's series of biennial reports on international migration.

### ***World Migration Report 2007: Managing Labour Mobility in the Evolving Global Economy***

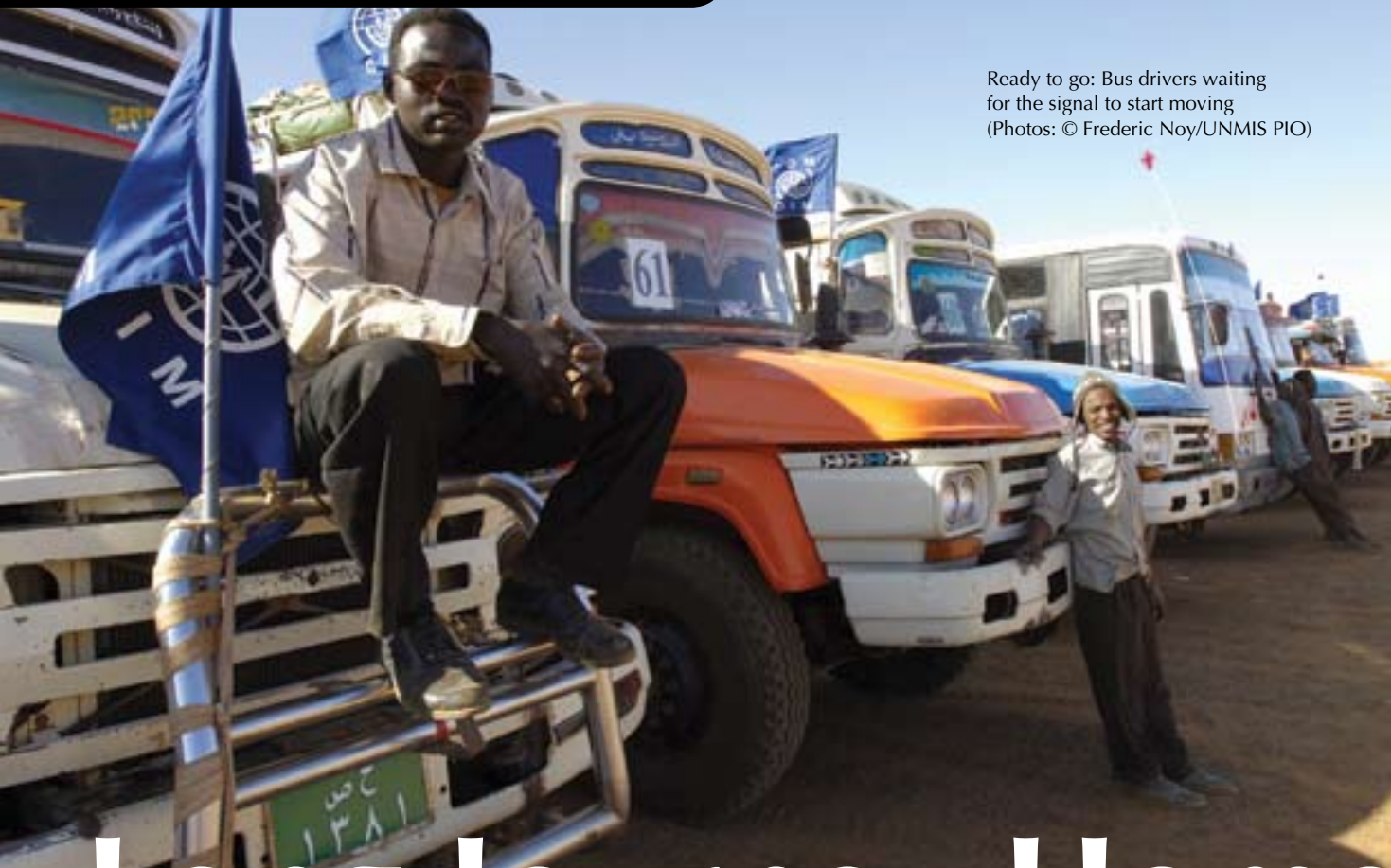
*WMR 2007* will focus primarily on the labour mobility of people in today's evolving global economy, providing policy findings and practical options with a view to making labour migration more effective and equitable and to maximize the benefits of labour migration for all stakeholders concerned.

These findings and options will be drawn from IOM's policy and programme experience, the most recent work of leading scholars and researchers, Government immigration policy and practice, the private sector, and civil society. The report will also update data and analyse migration flows, stocks and trends since the last *World Migration Report* (2005) and survey current migration developments in the major regions of the world.

### ***The World Migration Report series***

The aim of the IOM's *World Migration Report* series is to contribute to:

- A more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of international migration;
- Enhanced, longer-term capacity for the collection, analysis, use and sharing of migration information and experiences;
- Better informed dialogue, cooperation and coordination in regions and countries of origin, transit and destination; and
- The development of effective, pragmatic approaches and solutions to migration challenges.



Ready to go: Bus drivers waiting for the signal to start moving  
(Photos: © Frederic Noy/UNMIS PIO)

# Long Journey Home For Sudan's Displaced

By Birgit Hussfeld, IOM Khartoum

Water is boiling for the morning tea on small charcoal stoves set out on the ground. Women and children are squatting around them in the cool morning hours before the sun has fully come up and the heat gets too oppressive. The men are still asleep in the tents at an IOM temporary departure centre in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum. Only a few are up, watching the trucks that were loaded the night before. Two cubic metres of space for each family – prized possessions representing a life left behind after close to two decades of displacement.

"It is time to go. I want to be among the first back in southern Kordofan. I hear there are many international organizations. Hopefully I find a job with them to feed my family," says Omar Moussar Kora, handing out his mobile phone number. "Think of me when you hear of a job, any kind of job. Promise!"

Omar, his wife and five small children, are among the first group of 200 South Sudanese leaving the camps and squatter areas that are still home to more than a million internally displaced persons (IDPs) around greater Khartoum. More than 2 million South Sudanese are estimated to have fled to the northern states seeking refuge from the civil war that ravaged South Sudan until a peace agreement was signed in January 2005.

Two thirds of the displaced population is longing to return to the *payams* (districts) and counties in the south they still call home after so many years and rebuild their lives, IOM discovered when carrying out a survey among the displaced. But it is the lack of transportation, fear of sickness and worry over food and water for the trip that hold many back from taking that first step for the long journey home.

## Joint effort

Under the peace agreement, every Sudanese citizen has the right to choose where he or she wants to live. However, the states that form South Sudan are encouraging their people to return now in time for a national census. The census is being seen as a first step towards a referendum planned for 2011 that will decide the future of South Sudan.

Taking all these factors on board, the two governments of Sudan – the Government of National Unity (GoNU) based in Khartoum, and the Government of South Sudan (GoSS) based in Juba – together with the UN and IOM, have pledged to assist up to 198,000 IDPs to return home in 2007.

However, organizing mass returns is a complex and challenging task further complicated by the fact that movements

by road can only take place during the second half of the dry season and stop before the onset of the first rains. The time frame is narrow, a mere five months each year.

Registration for voluntary return began in November 2006 after IOM was charged with all operational aspects of the returns, including data management. Together with the Fellowship for African Relief (FAR) as implementing partner, more than 100,000 IDP households were registered by 35 fixed and five mobile registration points in Khartoum.

Collected data was then processed and analysed in the Joint Operations Centre housed by the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC), the humanitarian arm of the GoNU. Among that information is where people come from and where they want to go back to, and using such data, authorities in various states deemed safe for return such as south Kordofan, northern Bahr el Ghazal, Unity, Warrap, Jonglei, Upper Nile and central Equatoria, identified *payams* with sufficient infrastructure and capacity to absorb returnees. It is the responsibility of local authorities to receive returnees until they move onto their final destinations and to help them and host villages and towns to knit together into new communities.

### Plans for the future

Hua Gaily Kaafi has an advantage over many others who return with little and rely on local authorities for assistance. Land is a key issue as almost all prospective returnees said they were going to depend on farming for their livelihood. Hua, his two wives and five children signed up for voluntary return in order to claim the fields and the property his father left him as an

inheritance. Unlike Omar, who worked as a shop assistant, Hua also managed to start up his own business while displaced in the north.

"I am not only a farmer, but also a trader. I will use my experience and my business connections up north to start something new back home. My brothers and sister are all there and will help me. They encouraged me to come back. They already got the land back that has been in our family for a long time," he says.

teenager. Almost 14 years later, the 30-year-old mechanic says: "I see potential for me and my family back there but if the circumstances are too dire, I come back to Khartoum. Besides, the school year is not finished and I do not want to take my son out of school without a certificate."

### Lack of infrastructure

Joseph has a point. South Sudan is one of the world's least-developed areas. Since independence from British colonial



Day of the departure: Omar carrying his family's hand luggage with all that is needed throughout the four-day journey to the IOM bus at the departure centre in El Salaam, Omdurman Khartoum

Joseph, on the other hand, is playing it safe. He has left his wife and two small children in Khartoum for the time being. He had heard rumours that the government was allocating land around Khartoum to people regardless of their status as IDPs or local residents. He wants his family to remain there should this really happen. In the meantime, he is returning to the village he left as a

rule in 1956, it has mainly experienced conflict.

"The South of Sudan has a seen a prolonged period of war lasting half a century, with only a decade of peace and relative stability between the 1970s and 1980s," explains Louis Hoffmann, IOM Head of Office for South Sudan. "Little development would have been achieved in so short a time frame and not likely to have survived the war that followed."

The consequence? Sudan ranks 141st out of 177 in terms of Human Development Indicators mainly due to the lack of development in the south. North Sudan is far more developed.

According to the New Sudan Centre for Statistics and Evaluation established in Juba by the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM) shortly before the civil war ended, there is widespread

▼ Last farewell: reaching over the fence of the temporary departure centre for final well wishes



food insecurity, inadequate access to potable water, a virtually non-existent health and education sector and military insecurity in some areas.

The war and a high fertility rate means South Sudan has the youngest population in the world. Infant mortality of under five-year-olds is among the highest globally (with 250 per 1,000), and children in the south are three times more likely to die than in the rest of the country. By the time the peace agreement was signed, there was, on average, one doctor for every 100,000 people and one primary health care centre for every 80,000 people.

Access to education is another important issue. Formal school education is highly prized and valued among southerners who for the most part had been deprived of even the most basic schooling due to the war. The majority are illiterate so education for the children is a clear priority.

However, most IDP families have to pay burdensome school fees in the north and the language of instruction is North Sudanese Arabic, unpopular among Juba Arabic or tribal language-speaking displaced people. Instruction in most schools in the south, on the other hand, is in English.

"In Khartoum I do not see how I can afford to send all my children to school. I know that in my village near Kadugli, there is a school that teaches children in English at a fraction of the fees I pay here," explains Omar, a father of five.

The main difference with the north on this issue is that the education sector in the south is just starting to be developed. A major challenge at hand is to find qualified teachers since many fled across borders or to the north during the civil war.

In a bid to help improve the situation, IOM is identifying qualified teachers among the IDP and refugee population and then liaising with education ministries in the southern states to place candidates into employment.

It's part of a Danish government-funded programme aimed at returning and reintegrating qualified Sudanese to the south to help in the reconstruction of their society and economy. Since November 2006, IOM has helped

return 75 teachers and their families to the south. But the programme has a wider reach.

Although most of the more than 400 displaced people who have registered with IOM in Khartoum for job placement in the south are teachers, other professions are also showing interest. Among them, much needed health and vocational workers.

"The challenge is getting employers in the south to commit to issuing an offer of employment to a qualified candidate prior to the candidate's return," explains Lindsay McMahon, IOM's advisor on the programme. "We only facilitate the return of those who have received a firm job offer. By bringing back their know-how, these professionals will be instrumental in the rebuilding of South Sudan."

Given that South Sudan has a very long way to go before it can boast of an adequate infrastructure for the people there, IOM and the UN are providing vital information to IDPs to help them decide whether they really want to go back or not, whether it's now or later.

IOM-run information centres in IDP camps have material supplied by a variety of UN agencies and NGOs on the facilities and services to be found on the ground back home. They are also informed on safety issues including how to identify and avoid landmines, unexploded bombs or endemic diseases in certain areas. IOM also organizes Go-and-See visits allowing community representatives to travel back home to see for themselves what the conditions are like and to question local authorities and humanitarian actors there before reporting back to their people.

The key to success of any return is how local communities and authorities will receive and assist the returnees. To support them in that effort, IOM has already started work on some quick-impact community programmes by providing 25,000 people in two areas in northern Bahr el Ghazal with safe drinking water. With more funds, the Organization could do much more to develop basic infrastructure in the main areas of return as it is the development of that infrastructure that will finally determine the ability of authorities and host communities to accommodate large scale returns.



## First leg of the journey – from Khartoum to Kosti waystation



## Long journey – new beginning

After a two-day journey that took the convoy headed for southern Kordofan to way-stations in Kosti and Kadugli where returnees rested for the night, the IDPs embark on the final leg to their home *payams*. Road conditions from Kadugli mean everyone has to change from bus to heavy-duty trucks. Vulnerable people, such as pregnant women, sit in



communities and returnees face many challenges in the coming years.

"We knew it would not be easy," says Omar. "But here is our home and our future." How he will get to his village is still uncertain. There is no public transport. Private transport is a donkey cart, but even that is not as readily available as it was in Khartoum. Omar needs practical help, sound advice and some cash to reach his village where he will have to erect a makeshift shelter and later get the land and some material for a proper home. Only then can he think and worry about the longer term for him and his family.

Omar and others nevertheless receive food rations from the World Food Programme (WFP) and Care International to tide them over until harvest time. Then, the organizations will be back to assess the needs of all those who did not manage to plant their fields in time. They also receive mats, blankets, mosquito nets, plastic sheeting and other basic items to help them get started by the UN's Joint Logistics Centre (UNJLC).

### Returns in full swing

About 64,000 people like Omar, Joseph, Hua and their families will be directly assisted by IOM by the end of this year through a process that begins with pre-departure information and continues with registration, medical screening and care, escorted transportation to home destinations and reintegration assistance upon arrival. People of southern origin currently displaced in south Darfur and within South Sudan are being helped as well.

But IOM's involvement doesn't stop there. Working with the UN's High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), IOM is helping tens of thousands of Sudanese refugees return home from neighbouring countries such as Ethiopia, Kenya, the Central African Republic and Democratic Republic of Congo.

Although the onset of the rainy season in May brings an end to all road movements, it won't stop IOM taking people home. Air and river transport will be used to get IDPs and refugees home where possible. It's been a long wait and people are impatient to embrace their future – even if it may be a challenging one. **M**



the driver's cabin or in the four-wheel IOM vehicles escorting the convoy. An IOM doctor with a nurse or midwife stays with the returnees until all drop-off points in Kadugli County are reached.

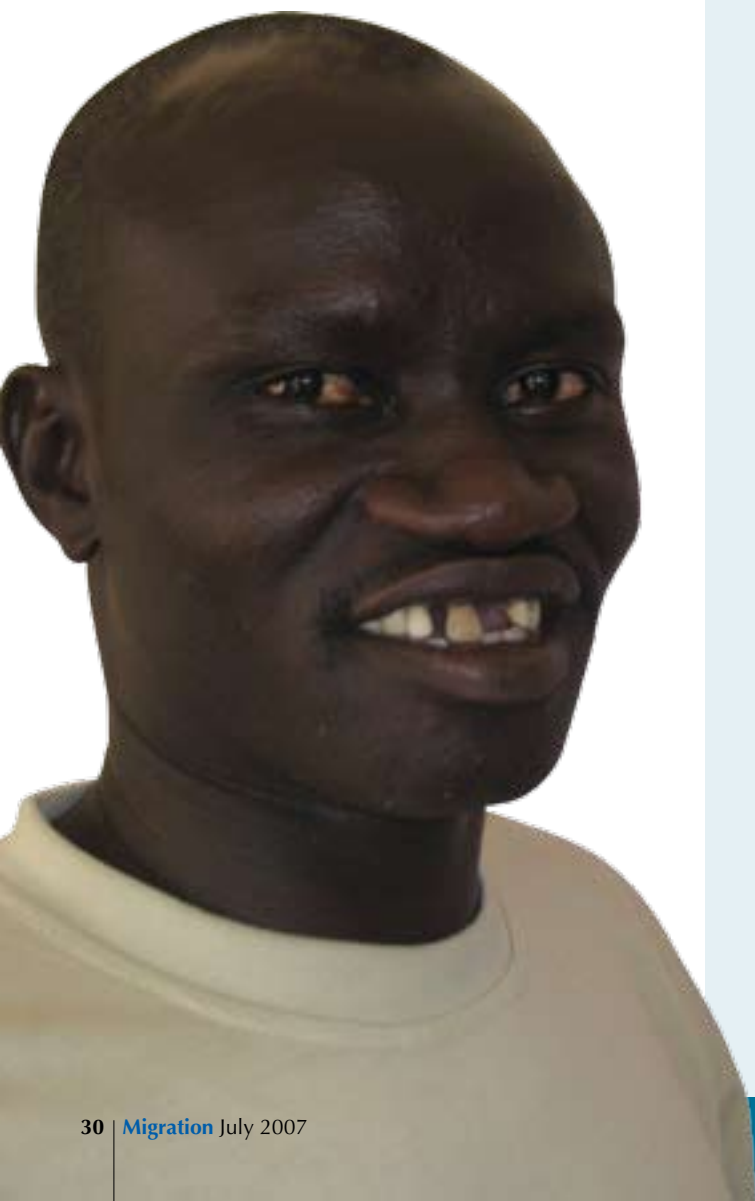
The trip takes longer than expected. Everyone is covered in dust. Tired, they finally arrive at the first drop-off point. Some receive a warm welcome from relatives and friends they had not seen in more than a decade.

Others, such as Omar and his family, stand alone amidst their belongings, discussing with the local reception committee where to spend the night and how to transport their possessions to their home villages nearby. A school building is opened to provide shelter for the night. Someone brings water. Everything else will have to wait until the next morning. It's clear – both receiving



# Return and Reintegration of Qualified Sudanese Programme (RQS) A Teacher's Interview

**The Return and Reintegration of Qualified Sudanese Programme (RQS) aims to meet some of the critical gaps in knowledge and skills that the Government of South Sudan (GoSS) Ministries and other employing institutions face as they rebuild and develop South Sudan. Luca George Kidi is an IDP and a teacher who wants to return home. Here is his story.**



**“**I am from eastern Equatoria, from Lopaw Payam in Torit county, South Sudan. A long way from here... I came to Khartoum in 1996, after fleeing from my village in 1993. I was eleven years old at the time. I had the chance to go to school in Khartoum and later studied to become a pre-school teacher. I also did teacher training courses in community development, physical education, child protection, early childhood development, music and movement and a variety of other subjects. My aim is to bring this knowledge to the Torit area where my family comes from but first of all I hope to be offered a job as a pre-school teacher there. I lodged my application with IOM to join the Return of Qualified Sudanese Programme and they forwarded the list to the Ministry of Education in eastern Equatoria. I understand, that the ministry has indicated that they will offer jobs to all of us who meet the qualification requirements. So, I am going to fly back to Torit via Juba with members of my family.

Apart from teaching, I see myself assisting in improving pre-school education in the Torit area, because early childhood learning is very important. I have experience. I have already been involved in setting up a school in the El Salaam camp for internally displaced persons near Khartoum, where we live. The Episcopal Church of Sudan together with the Sudan Development and Relief Agency (SUDRA) have assisted us. Non-governmental organizations such as World Vision and CARE Sudan are giving some funds. I receive a small financial incentive for my work as a teacher at that school.

SUDRA sent me on an assessment mission to the Torit area in November last year, to see what is to be done there and where non-governmental organizations could help. There had been a fierce attack on the area by the Lord Resistance's Army just shortly before the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005. Since then school buildings have not been properly repaired, there is hardly any teaching material and... there are very few teachers. I can help. I have the teaching material and the know-how and also the experience with getting funds from non-governmental organizations. I can do my share to improve the situation in Torit. I keep telling my colleagues in the camps in Khartoum. 'What are you still doing here? Let's go and build up something for future generations in our home areas in the south'."

# Support for Economic Stabilization for Vulnerable Populations

Two stories show how income generation is a key tool for overcoming the vulnerable situation in which thousands of Colombians live.

By Juliana Quintero, IOM Colombia

It is difficult to believe that not long ago, Raúl Fernando and his employees were forcibly displaced from their places of origin, as has happened to more than 2 million Colombians over the last 11 years, according to the latest government figures.

Raúl founded the RAFERLO company six years ago after being displaced from the city of Florencia (department of Caquetá). Since then, and with great effort, he has given all of his time to the company. "With little money but lots of drive," he says. He and his employees, also internally displaced, make hand-crafted tables, chairs, coat racks and vases in native woods such as *guadua* and bamboo.

RAFERLO became a reality thanks to a micro-credit that he received in 2001 through the Post-Emergency Programme for Displaced, Vulnerable and Host Populations implemented by IOM with

funding from USAID. Since then, Raúl has tried to improve the quality of life and income of those who have knocked on his door in search of opportunity after being forcibly displaced. "I try never to give up when it comes to my company because I have to work and provide employment to these people who need it so badly," says Raúl.

But Raúl's successes do not end there. He recently received some of the best news he had ever gotten in his life: the products he makes with his six employees will not only be sold at small Colombian handicrafts fairs but will also be commercialized in Europe. Thanks to support from IOM's Social Marketing Strategy, RAFERLO began exporting 49 products to Holland at the end of April. The RAFERLO products were bought by Hedi Meubelen, a Dutch home furnishings and accessories company.

IOM implemented the Social Marketing Strategy in response to the need to improve the economic sustainability levels

of productive initiatives that are part of income-generation projects carried out within the framework of diverse IOM programmes in Colombia. These include Assistance for Displaced Persons and Vulnerable Groups, Human Trafficking, and Minors Demobilized from the Illegal Armed Groups, among others. Projects benefiting from this initiative have received economic support from USAID, Italian Cooperation and the Dutch and Canadian embassies in Colombia.

RAFERLO's exports to Holland accounted for 12 per cent of the company's total annual sales. "Exporting is our biggest achievement; it means fulfilling our goal while working side-by-side with my people, because it is an achievement that came out of the effort they have put into this," adds Raúl.

## From a rifle to a sewing machine

In Soacha, just south of Bogotá, a 25-year-old man works intently on his

▼ An employee at RAFERLO workshop (Photo: © IOM, 2007)





▲ RAFERLO owner Raúl at work (Photo: © IOM, 2007)



sewing machine. His hands caress the cloth with such delicacy that it is difficult to believe that just a few months ago those same hands held a rifle.

Gabriel Torres is one of 75 persons taking part in an income-generation project that is providing training in the textile sector to ex-combatants. The programme is supported by IOM with funding from USAID, and implemented in partnership with the Colombian foundation Compartir.

"I was encouraged by the great demand for employees in this sector," says Gabriel. "I know that not everyone gets an opportunity like this."

From the time he was 15, Gabriel had been a member of the *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* – AUC (United Self-defense Forces of Colombia), and he now acknowledges the importance of this change in his life. At the same time that he receives training that will help him earn a living without the need of a weapon; he also gets a transportation subsidy, food stamps and daily snacks. This enables him to use economic assistance from the Colombian government as part of the demobilization process to help support his mother and three younger sisters.

With projects such as this, and with financial support from the Governments of the United States, Canada, Holland and Spain, IOM supplements the efforts of the Presidential Counsellor for the Reintegration of Ex-combatants, to successfully complete the process of reintegration into civil life of some 35,000 ex-combatants who have been individually or collectively demobilized from different illegal armed groups as part of the peace processes being implemented by the Colombian government.

Thanks to the training and support that he receives, Gabriel's self-esteem is constantly on the rise and he has become aware of his many talents and abilities, that will open doors in the near future. "I would like to have my own textile business, to have my own machinery and create jobs," Gabriel says with conviction.

Speaking of his personal goals, Gabriel cannot forget the many people who are working to provide him with this opportunity. "My colleagues and I are very grateful to IOM and its donors. What we are learning is exactly what we need to help us make our own way in the world in the future." **M**

◀ RAFERLO employee at work (Photo: © IOM, 2007)

# IOM Eye Camps

## Restore Sight

### for Young and Old

By Passanna Gunasekera, IOM Sri Lanka

Janaki Fernando, a grade eight student from a tsunami-battered village in the Kalutara north district south of Colombo, was distraught when she realized that her vision was blurred and that she could not properly study for her year-end school exams. A visit to a nearby eye clinic confirmed that she needed to wear spectacles.



▲ Distribution of spectacles (Photo: © IOM, 2007)

Her mother, a single parent, provides for both Janaki and her 8-year-old brother Gayan Pushpakumara from a meagre income earned working as a domestic. "I knew that my mother could not afford a pair of spectacles for me. She has more important priorities like feeding and clothing us," says Janaki.

Then her 72-year-old grandfather who lives with the family, heard from fellow fishermen about an IOM eye camp to be held in the village temple. "I was screened at the camp and then a few weeks later asked to come for my spectacles," explains Janaki.

"I can now read the small print in the school text books and that is such a blessing... my school marks are also much better than previously. My family and I are grateful to IOM for all what they have done. More than anything they helped me to continue my studies successfully... I can now work towards my ambition of becoming a teacher," she beams, preparing to do her homework.

Janaki is one of the many beneficiaries of an IOM Eye Camp programme funded by the Australian Red Cross. Under the programme, over 100,000 people were screened for sight problems. More than 80,000 beneficiaries were provided with spectacles and around 6,000 were referred to the national eye hospitals for further evaluation and management, including cataract surgery and implants.

Clara Perera, a 76-year-old from Katukurunda in the western province of Sri Lanka, was worried when an ophthalmologist told her that she had to undergo cataract surgery. "I had already undergone a cataract operation in one eye ten years ago. But that was when I was working, accompanying children to school in one of the school buses in the neighbourhood."

"Even then, it was expensive, especially the intraocular lenses. But now I have to depend on my three married daughters and I see how they struggle to cope, to rebuild what they lost during the tsunami. How could I ask them to pay for the operation and replace the spectacles I am already wearing?" she asks.

She then heard about IOM's eye camps from a neighbour who had just undergone a cataract surgery. "The IOM people were very helpful. They helped me right along, from sight screening, to making an appointment with the hospital for the surgery and making sure that the implant was done right. They

even provided my medicine after the operation, which would have been too expensive for me," she adds.

Clara is now happy to be able to help her daughter and her family, with whom she is living, with their daily chores. Her daughter and son-in-law both work until late in the evening. Before her operation she could not be of much help. "I hated to sit by while everybody else worked hard. I did not want to be a burden to them," she says.

"According to my religion giving somebody back their eyesight is a meritorious deed. I hope IOM can continue this kind of work for many more years. Now, I feel as if I am doing something worthwhile... as if I am contributing in my own little way," she says.

To ensure the sustainability of the programme, IOM trained over 600 local health personnel including primary eye care workers, ophthalmologic nurses and operating theatre personnel in the early detection and handling of eye ailments, maintaining and sterilizing surgical equipment and assisting in cataract surgery.

Since January 2006 IOM has also donated medical equipment for eye care valued at US\$125,500 to the eye care units of hospitals in six tsunami-affected districts in southern and eastern Sri Lanka, including Kalutara, Galle, Matara, Hambantota, Ampara and Batticaloa. **M**

▼ Sight screening in Kalutara (Photo: © IOM, 2007)



# An Irishman in New York: Irregular Irish Migrants in the United States

By Silke Oppermann

**D**ermot is an Irish businessman in New York. The 36-year-old runs a construction company and employs five workers. Dermot, his wife Eileen, their five-year-old son Brian and two cats, live on the first floor of a three-storey multi-family house in Yonkers, a city located two miles north of Manhattan.

At first sight, they seem like an ordinary happy, peaceful family. But there is something that few would think of when talking to an English native speaker in the US – Dermot and Eileen are irregular migrants. Their son Brian was born in the US and is thus automatically an American citizen.

"I didn't think of myself as an irregular migrant until my driver's license expired in April of 2006," says Dermot. After 9/11, a Social Security Number is required to acquire or renew a driver's license. In the State of New York, a driver's license is used as proof of identification since that state does not issue identity cards. A driver's license is sufficient identification to open a bank account, rent an apartment and establish utility services. For irregular migrants, the loss of a driver's license has been the most important and life-changing event change after 9/11.

Dermot is now forced to drive without a license to visit his customers, like

all of his employees who are irregular migrants from Latin America.

Dermot completed high school in Ireland and although he did not continue any formal education, he taught himself how to lay tiles and do electrical work. Four years ago, when his former boss announced he was going back to Ireland, Dermot took over the construction business. He applied for and received a tax number and a business license. And he pays his taxes like every American, but as an irregular migrant he does not have access to all the benefits of a citizen or a permanent resident.

When Eileen was pregnant she worried about the day of her son's birth. "When we went to the emergency room I was scared that they might ask for some sort of document that I could not provide," Eileen remembers. At the hospital she showed her bank account to prove that she would be able to pay for the medical expenses without insurance, and was admitted. In the US, irregular migrants receive medical treatment in case of an emergency; childbirth is considered an emergency.

Little Brian received full health care for one year. Dermot and his wife cannot buy private health insurance because they have no documents, but they decided to buy health insurance

for Brian and pay US\$ 20 per month. "At the very least, I want my son to be covered," says Dermot.

Brian has one big wish: "I want to play with my cousins and my grandparents." But even though he could travel freely all over the world, his parents do not want to accompany him. If they leave the US, they will be banned from reentry for ten years. This practice has been in place for decades but wasn't entirely enforced until increased security concerns following 9/11.

"Brian knows his grandparents only over the telephone," says Eileen. "They would love to see him, but they are too old to travel overseas." Even though they speak to relatives in Ireland every week over the telephone and the Internet, the ties loosen, but Dermot and Eileen are scared to go back. "People say it's hard to fit into a society after being away for so long," Eileen worries.

They say Ireland has changed tremendously since they left 11 years ago. At that time, Dermot and most of his friends were unemployed and living off the dole. But in recent years Ireland's economy has boomed. Now, eastern European migrants flock to the "Celtic Tiger" to try their luck.

A recent IOM report, *Managing Migration in Ireland: A Social and Economic*

▼ Irish immigrants Dermot and Eileen (Photo: © Silke Oppermann, 2007)



▼ Irregular Irish in front of the US Capitol





▲ Irregular Irish march on Capitol Hill

*Analysis*, compiled on behalf of Ireland's National Economic and Social Council, confirms that although Ireland was traditionally a country of emigration, it has become a country of immigration in less than ten years.

The report found that migrants helped increase economic growth, eased labour market shortages, improved output and contributed to reducing earnings inequality.

Between April 2004 and April 2005, Ireland recorded its highest level of immigration – 70,000 persons, and the lowest level of emigration – 16,600 since current records began. This net migration made Ireland the country most affected by migration in relation to size than any other European Union member state since the EU enlargement of May 2004.

Notwithstanding the economic boom in their home country, Dermot and Eileen would do almost anything to stay in the US. So they joined the Irish Lobby for Immigration Reform (ILIR), an advocacy group that meets every Wednesday in New York City.

Mary Brennan organizes the weekly meetings. "We write letters to senators and congressmen, and we've held rallies in San Francisco and Washington, DC," she says.

The last rally took place in March 2007 in a hotel on Capitol Hill, with several senators present, among them Hillary Rodham Clinton and Edward Kennedy.

As the 3,000 Irish assembled in front of the US Capitol wearing green and white



▲ Senator Kennedy at March 7 rally

T-shirts emblazoned with the message "Legalize the Irish.org" many passers-by thought it was a joke. "Illegal Irish in America? That's funny."

The Irish are well-liked in the US because many Americans are able to trace back their roots to Irish immigrants. St. Patrick's Day is an important part of the American cultural heritage, and every year parades take place in large cities to celebrate this Irish tradition.

In the second half of the 19th century, hundreds of thousands of Irish fleeing crop failures and famine migrated to the US. And in late 20th century the Irish continued to migrate to the US.

"It was a tradition for many years for Irish to come to the United States to work when they were young," says Neil O'Dowd, founder of ILIR. "We estimate there are about 50,000 illegal Irish in the US."

In recent years, migration in the opposite direction has begun: As the economy improves, Ireland becomes a more attractive destination for young Americans.



▲ Senator Clinton with T-shirt with the message "Legalize the Irish.org"

Diana Pardue, Chief of Museum Services at Ellis Island, noticed that in recent years an increasing number of Americans are asking for copies of their Irish ancestors' passports which the families had donated to the museum. "They need them to apply for Irish citizenship," she explains.

Anyone who can prove that at least one of their grandparents or great-grandparents was Irish is eligible to apply for Irish citizenship. This is attractive for Americans of Irish descent for many reasons; one of them is that Irish citizens are allowed to live and work in all 27 countries of the European Union.

Mary Brennan knows for sure that she would never build a life in the underground again: "Last year one of my little brothers, who is still in college, came to visit me. He wanted to stay but I urged him not to. I'm glad he went back to Ireland." **M**

*Silke Oppermann is a freelance journalist who reports for Deutsche Welle Radio, ARD Radio affiliates, and other media outlets.*



Photos: © Programa Salud y Trabajo en América Central (SALTRA by its Spanish acronym) of the Universidad Nacional of Costa Rica, 2007.

# Indigenous Migrant Workers Begin Literacy Classes

By Rosilyne Borland, IOM San José

It's coffee-picking season in the lush green valley of San Marcos de Tarrazú. Although the rich smell of roasted coffee beans coming from the local cooperative is the olfactory sign that the coffee harvest has begun, the arrival of migrant workers is another sure sign.

Every year the estimated 12,000 men, women, and children of the indigenous Ngäbe-Buglé tribe who travel from Panama to Costa Rica start working the coffee harvests in southern Costa Rica around the month of August.

The Ngäbe-Buglé live on the farms in cement rooms in widely varied conditions – some have rows of sinks, showers and latrines, others only one faucet and one outhouse for all of the workers.

Years ago the coffee was harvested by local residents, but recently it is only

migrants who are willing to do this difficult work. They know their hard work will allow them to take home some US\$ 500 at the end of the season.

IOM joined representatives of the migrant population, the National University and two local coffee cooperatives (CoopeTarrazú and Coopedota), to celebrate a small effort to improve the lives of migrant workers through literacy.

IOM is providing support to the Building Bridges project, part of an ongoing programme managed by the National University aimed at improving the health of temporary migrant workers in Los Santos.

Rosilyne Borland of IOM San José said, "At the inauguration, one of the migrants gave a very moving speech about how many of them can't even sign their name, and that after these classes, they will be able to do so. That will be a huge change in their lives. The goal is

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►  
Ngäbe-Buglé migrant workers at the recent inauguration of the Building Bridges project.

to empower people and begin to give them some literacy skills.”

The classes, which ended in early March, when the migrants headed back to Panama, included a handbook in Ngäbe-Buglé, created by a professor who has been working with the population for years. The classes also included information on health and human rights.

According to Panama’s 2000 census, 110,080 Ngäbe-Buglé live in Panama,



making up 63.6 per cent of the national indigenous population. Ngäbe-Buglé representatives lauded the literacy effort but said much more must be done.

IOM is lending its support, with funding from the US Department of State Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration.

IOM signed a memorandum of understanding with Costa Rica’s National University to support this project and for future cooperation. One of the results of this new partnership was the joint development of an innovative proposal to build health capacity within the migrant Ngäbe-Buglé population in Costa Rica.

Following several visits to the Health Area of Coto Brus, near the southern border with Panama, IOM, SALTRA and the regional health authorities designed the *Finca Sana* (Healthy Farm) project, which was recently awarded US\$199,842 by the World Bank’s Development Marketplace.

*Finca Sana* is based on building the capacity of *curanderos* and *parteras* (healers and midwives) within the highly mobile population. Through targeted training and the establishment of a telehealth communication system linking the new health promoters with the local clinic, the programme will improve the health of members of the Ngäbe-Buglé indigenous tribe whose health is among the worst in the hemisphere. Local farm owners have already expressed interest in this project, which will get underway later this year. **M**

# Time to Act and Stop the Modern Slave Trade

By Rebecca Wynn, IOM Pretoria

For Letty – a young woman in her twenties from Gauteng – the offer was irresistible. Forced to drop out of college because of financial constraints at home and struggling to find paid work in South Africa, her friend Angela's call seemed a lifeline.

Effusive and convincing, Angela told Letty that in Ireland she could complete her studies in less than a year and – better still – would not necessarily have to pay. There was a tradition in Ireland, her friend claimed, of wealthy families offering to pay for the education of people from disadvantaged backgrounds, and plenty of opportunities to work part-time to earn extra cash. She'd see whether she could find Letty such a family.

Angela contacted Letty again some weeks later. She was told to meet Danny, a Nigerian national who lived in Pretoria, and whom Angela claimed was her boyfriend. He would make all the travel arrangements. A family had been found.

But what awaited Letty in Dublin was neither education nor employment, but something much more sinister. She had fallen victim to a human trafficking syndicate. Her so-called benefactors had no intention of assisting her in obtaining an education, but had brought her over from South Africa to provide cheap domestic labour. She found herself locked up in a family home by day and forced to work as a caregiver for the family's children. Her passport was taken.

Letty managed to escape and is now back in South Africa and recovering from her ordeal with support from the International Organization for Migration's Southern African Counter-Trafficking

Assistance Programme (SACTAP). But her story is a poignant reminder that, as the world marks the 200th anniversary of the abolition of transatlantic slave trade, a modern form of slavery – human trafficking – is happening in our midst.

Human trafficking is one of the most tragic aspects of contemporary migration, with 1 million people estimated to have been trafficked across borders annually. The trade is now considered the third largest source of profits for transnational criminal organizations, with only drug trafficking and weapons smuggling more lucrative.

Lured by false promises of well-paying jobs and other opportunities, many victims willingly accept the services offered by human traffickers without realizing the full nature of their future employment or the conditions in which they will work. Once firmly trapped in an

alien environment, they are most often forced into prostitution or bonded labour to earn profits for their traffickers.

Violence, threats of violence, and confiscation of identity documents and passports are used to prevent escape. The fact that trafficked persons find themselves in an unfamiliar environment compounds their plight. Away from their families and social networks, it is difficult to know who to turn to for help.

Having carried out research in the region since 2002, IOM believes that trafficking in persons is flourishing in Southern Africa, with South Africa and its expanding sex industry the main destination for trafficked women in the region.

IOM estimates that at least 1,000 women are trafficked from Mozambique each year into South Africa, with poverty a huge factor in their susceptibility



SACTAP streamer at Park Station, Johannesburg (Photo: © IOM, 2007)



She was trafficked into another country  
and sold into prostitution.

# SHE CAN'T ASK FOR HELP

But you can.

Report Human Trafficking: **0800-555-999**

Parents and a lack of economic opportunities in other countries make people vulnerable to false promises of jobs in South Africa. Many of those who accept these offers find themselves enslaved in situations where their documents are confiscated, where they are held against their will, where they often suffer sexual abuse, where their families are threatened with harm, and where they are bonded by a debt that they have little or no chance of ever repaying. But something can be done. Human trafficking can be stopped. For more information visit [www.sakweng.co.za](http://www.sakweng.co.za)

**IOM | SACTAP**  
Southern African Counter-Trafficking Assistance Program

▲ SACTAP poster

ity. After being promised jobs as waitresses, they commonly find themselves working in Johannesburg's sex industry or sold in mining areas as "wives" and forced to act as domestic servants and sex slaves.

IOM is also aware of women trafficked to South Africa from Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe and other African countries. And as Letty's experience reveals,

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**But, to truly combat human trafficking, individuals and communities need to be actively aware of the phenomenon and what they can do to tackle it.**

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trafficking can also personally affect the lives of individual South Africans.

Letty returned to South Africa with two other young women who were also forced to undertake domestic work in Ireland and claims to have met several other South African women in a similar predicament at a church in Ireland attended by her employers. IOM has also assisted two South Africans trafficked to the Middle East.

South Africa is waking up to the threat of human trafficking. In 2004, South Africa signed the UN protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons. This committed South Africa to criminalize trafficking and develop legislation against it.

Trafficking thrives in part because it offers traffickers high profits with relatively low risks. South Africa's anti-trafficking legislation will help change this opportunity structure as it will add to the arsenal that law enforcement can use to prosecute traffickers.

But, to truly combat human trafficking, individuals and communities need to be actively aware of the phenomenon and what they can do to tackle it.

But recent IOM research reveals that only 31 per cent of South Africans con-

sider human trafficking a problem in South Africa, and that only 9 per cent of people feel that trafficking is a problem in their own community or suburb.

When asked why they thought trafficking was a problem in South Africa, respondents' answers ranged from worries about illegal migration to concern about trafficking victims' human rights. No one identified trafficking as a threat to them or their family.

IOM is responding to this by mounting public information campaigns to raise awareness of human trafficking. It is also embarking on a project to train civil society activists in South Africa to raise awareness of trafficking in their communities from the ground up.

Human trafficking is happening. We need to wake up, as individuals and as communities, to the reality of the threat. Only then can we suppress – and ultimately eradicate – this modern slave trade altogether. **M**

*Readers can call IOM's Human Trafficking Help Line – 0800 555 999 – for information and assistance on combating trafficking.*

•Names have been changed to protect identities.

# Building Capacity and Raising Awareness on Human Trafficking in the Caribbean Region

By Chissey Mueller, IOM Washington

Participants from governments and civil society expressed a need to know more about how to prevent and combat human trafficking at IOM's seminar on "Mixed Migratory Flows in the Caribbean" in 2003.

Channeling this momentum, IOM's regional office in Washington designed the Caribbean Counter-Trafficking Initiative (CCTI) to provide the technical tools to better understand and respond at the local, national, and regional levels.

With support from the US State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) and the Dutch Ministry of Justice, activities have ranged from trainings and research to small grants and awareness-raising initiatives.

Since 2004, IOM has worked through the CCTI to partner with governments and civil society throughout the region and, most closely, with the Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, the Netherlands Antilles, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

To build national capacity, IOM conducts a one-day seminar to first introduce the issue and then conducts IOM's Counter-Trafficking Training Modules, developed with PRM support. So far more than 500 persons representing government, NGOs, and law enforcement have been trained, ranging from the modules' topic on information campaigns to direct assistance. In turn, these partners have lead sensitization sessions for their colleagues locally.

"In addition to the difference between human trafficking and smuggling, services available to victims and how certain pieces of legislation, such as the Sexual Offences Act and Immigration Act, are available to authorities for prosecuting traffickers were explained at the sensitization workshops," said Patricia Seale, Chair of the Counter-

Trafficking Coalition in Barbados and a member of the Business and Professional Women's Club, a local NGO providing services to women and intervening in crises.

IOM's Exploratory Assessment on Trafficking in Persons in the Caribbean Region identified some level of human trafficking in the areas of forced labour, sexual exploitation, and domestic servitude. The victims – men, women, boys, and girls – were found to be trafficked through legal methods, such as work permits and visas, and illegal methods, such as smuggling or fraudulent documents.

IOM's research findings also detected a lack of awareness about the crime locally, prompting the need to conduct a regional information campaign that reaches the general public. Informal sources such as taxi drivers, clients, shopkeepers, and neighbours can identify potential victims in the community.

Ongoing since fall 2005 in nine countries, local coalitions used IOM's small grants to customize campaign posters and brochures and organize events.

In Barbados, for example, a series of open air, public rallies that had multimedia presentations, poetry readings,

drama performances, and distribution of IOM's materials advertising the local hotline number were held to reach a wide cross section of the community. "In all the locations, persons were coming and going, although some people stayed for the duration. Considerable interest was shown in the topic, a situation new to many," remarked Patricia Seale.

At the IOM Caribbean Regional Meeting on Counter-Trafficking Strategies in 2006, participants had a lively discussion about tactics to expand the campaign in 2007. Seizing opportunities to increase understanding and awareness of human trafficking can have tremendous impact; the Cricket World Cup held in the Caribbean during March and April 2007 seemed opportune.

Kelly Ryan, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State PRM said, "The Caribbean Regional Information Campaign is an effective, preventative tool to combat trafficking. For the Cricket World Cup, it would be beneficial to raise awareness regionally in a collaborative manner."

To reach a wider audience, IOM developed new campaign materials – public service announcements (PSAs) for television and radio, and a new version of

▼ Special closed-door session for Caribbean embassies in Washington, DC (Photo: © IOM, 2007)



its Caribbean regional poster for airlines' in-flight magazines.

The PSA series addresses the region's three primary forms of trafficking present. Some partners began broadcasting the PSAs on TV and radio in March. The Caribbean Airlines' *Caribbean Beat* and Air Jamaica's *SkyWritings* in-flight magazines are featuring the newest version of IOM's poster, targeting regional and international travelers during the height of summer. In preparation for an expected increase in calls to hotlines advertised on the PSAs and poster, IOM created a guide for hotline management in the trafficking context for its Caribbean partners.

IOM's partners were an essential part of the campaign's creative process, from conceptualization to the final product. Partners in the Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, the Netherlands Antilles, and St. Lucia also devised their own strategy to broadcast the PSAs and to ensure that their local hotline operations were equipped to handle calls. Much of the logistical work partners undertake is done "in-kind," and outside of the scope of their regular duties.

"The awareness-raising programmes that our Counter-Trafficking Unit has carried out, coupled with the IOM TV and radio spots, have made people much more aware. They're encouraging us to con-

tinue towards our final goal of eliminating this scourge from our society."

Javed Shadick is the Technical Officer for the Counter-Trafficking Unit within Guyana's Ministry of Human Services and Social Security and one of IOM's partners who have been combating human trafficking in the Caribbean for the past four years.

Shadick says the campaign in Guyana is already yielding results, "Although there is no real way of measuring the impact of the campaign's messages, I can say that in 2006 between January and April we received 25 calls, and in the same period in 2007, we received at least 50 calls."

To fortify the link between partners in-country and their embassies abroad, IOM convened a special closed-door session for Caribbean embassies in Washington, DC in April. Embassy officials can serve multiple roles, as they transfer from post to post, such as identifying and assisting potential victims who may be their citizens, as well as spreading the word about the issue. Representatives from 12 countries received a programme update, viewed the PSAs, and discussed collaborative options for the future.

Richard E. Scott, IOM Regional Representative said, "Counter-trafficking efforts in the region have progressed in

the last four years. National coalitions have been formed in seven countries; victim assistance networks are being established; and an anti-trafficking legislation is being enacted nationally. Working with our partners, we have built a strong foundation that we will continue to expand."

As the project approaches its fifth year, IOM and its partners are eager to achieve the next steps, including directly assisting identified victims of trafficking, establishing national referral mechanisms, prosecuting the traffickers, and developing Regional Model Anti-Trafficking Legislation.

Shadick says Guyana's national anti-trafficking legislation may soon be used to prosecute a case that came in through the hotline, "A female caller told our operators that her employers were not paying her what they had promised. They said she would work as a baby-sitter, but was forced to work in a bar. Then they told her money was missing, so she felt that she was in a debt bondage situation. And she knew this because she had seen the TV PSAs. We determined she was a victim, got her out of the situation and now she is in a shelter. When she spoke to the authorities she said three other girls were in the same situation. So the authorities are planning a rescue operation and will determine if legal action is warranted." **M**

▼ IOM Human Trafficking advertisement for in-flight magazines (Photo: © IOM, 2007)

**HUMAN TRAFFICKING**  
**Modern Day Slavery**

**Modern day slaves.** You wouldn't know it, but many live among us. Poor children are "adopted" by rich households, then forced into domestic slavery or sexual exploitation. Men are deceived by promises of good jobs, only to have their documents taken away and forced into backbreaking labour. Women are promised work as waitresses or maids, then forced into prostitution.

If you know someone who has been lured, trapped, tricked, threatened or imprisoned by an employer or family member, they could be a victim of human trafficking—modern day slavery. You can help them.

**Together, we can end slavery... again.**

COUNTRY	HOTLINE NUMBER
The Bahamas	(242) 328 0922
Barbados	(246) 435 8222
Guyana	(592) 227 4062/3
Jamaica	(1 888) PROTECT (1 888 776 8328)
Netherlands Antilles Curacao St. Maarten	(599) 675 8200 (599) 586 2680
St. Lucia	(758) 453 0557

**DOMESTIC SERVITUDE**  
Victims may be forced into taking care of children, house cleaning, laundry or other domestic tasks, sometimes accompanied by sexual exploitation.

**FORCED LABOUR**  
Victims are forced to work for little or no pay, often under brutal conditions, in agriculture, mining, construction, fishing, stores, markets and restaurants.

**SEXUAL SLAVERY**  
Victims are forced into various forms of sexual exploitation, including exotic dancing, strip tease, pornography and prostitution.

**National hotlines for information or help about trafficking in persons:**

**www.iom.int/unitedstates**

# From the Burma Border to a NEW DAY in FINLAND

**By Saed Guled and Raqib Wahabzada,  
IOM Helsinki**

The sun was setting behind the mountains when IOM Helsinki's cultural orientation trainers Saed Guled and Raqib Wahabzada, arrived in the Thai town of Mae Hong Son, some two kilometres from the Myanmar border.

The pair had traveled from Helsinki to provide cultural orientation training for refugees from Myanmar selected for resettlement in Finland. Since 2005, IOM has provided around 200 refugees in Thailand with practical information and skills to help facilitate their smooth integration into Finnish society.

The training is part of IOM's Comprehensive Cultural Orientation (CO) Programme for Finland-Bound Refugees, funded by the Finnish Ministry of Labour. This year, Finland will receive

378 Myanmar quota refugees, including minors.

Ban Mai Nai Soi refugee camp opened in 1996 and accommodates almost 17,538 refugees. Guled and Wahabzada are met at the front gate of the camp by the first group of refugees. Training begins the next morning, amid the noise of motorcycles and generators and laughing barefoot children playing outside.

"Are there any Burmese or Thai shops in Finland?" Starting a new life in a country where the culture, traditions and practices are different from your own is always difficult. It is even more challenging for refugees who have been living in camp for so long, that they can hardly imagine life outside of the perimeter, let alone life in a new country that many have never heard of.

Many of the refugees in the Ban Mai Nai Soi refugee camp have never seen snow and some do not even know what

it is. In Helsinki, the Finnish capital, the temperature can drop to minus 40 degrees celcius in winter, causing the sea to freeze. In Thailand and Myanmar, the temperature rarely drops below 20 degrees.

Cultural orientation training helps prepare refugees for life in Finland, in particular by dispelling some of their unrealistic or inaccurate expectations about the country.

Kyaw Kyaw Oo and his wife Ms Day Meh have spent 18 years in Mae Hong Son refugee camp. He was involved in human rights work in Myanmar, providing support to an ethnic minority group.

When the village he was working in burned down, he was forced to flee to Ban Pang Tractor camp. There he met his wife and her family for the first time and helped them. A year later the couple married and they now have five children.

Kyaw Kyaw Oo feels that after all the hardships he has faced, he is very lucky to have a wife and family. He continued his human rights activities and set up a system in the camp to ensure that all minorities have equal rights and representation in camp committees.

He heard about Finland's education system from the media and decided to apply for Finland's 2006 resettlement programme. His decision was based on his children's future. He knew that there would be little chance for them to get a good education in the camp. But the deciding factor was the issue of citizenship. If his children stayed in the camp, they would always be stateless.

When Kyaw Kyaw Oo received the news that he and his family had been selected

▼ Cultural orientation is just one aspect of the complex process of interviews, medical screening and travel arrangements leading to resettlement abroad (Photo: © Chris Lom/IOM)



for resettlement in Finland in February 2007, he was very happy and excited but, at the same time, anxious about the climate, the time it would take to become a Finnish citizen, and his children's educational opportunities.

He was reassured by the cultural orientation training session shown by the Finnish CO trainers. They showed a video following the daily routine of a former refugee from Myanmar who was resettled in Finland in 2006.

The man can be seen walking along a snowy street wearing a heavy winter coat, hat, gloves and scarf. He explains about winter in Finland in his own language. The trainers also highlight other important information about life in Finland, the law, the right to vote, access to education and the principle of equality.

After taking part in the training, Kyaw Kyaw Oo had a clearer picture of life in Finland and was more confident that opting for a new life in Scandinavia was the right decision.

When he received his cultural orientation training certificate, he told the IOM trainers about his hopes for himself and his family.

He wants to obtain computer skills. His wife, who has been teaching Karenni language for more than 20 years, wants to continue her profession and work as a teacher in Finland where she hopes to encourage Burmese children to retain their identity through their language and culture. He is also convinced that his children will eventually become Finnish citizens. **M**

▼ Children born in the camps usually adapt easily to life in resettlement countries (Photo: © Chris Lom/IOM)



◀ Apples are one of the novelty fruits introduced in a cultural orientation class (Photo: © Chris Lom/IOM)

▼ For many of the refugees, who lead a hand-to-mouth existence in the border camps, strange foods in resettlement countries are a fascinating topic (Photo: Chris Lom/IOM)





**MRS N° 27 – Migration, and Poverty Alleviation in China**

China has achieved remarkable progress in poverty alleviation since the start of the reforms. Calculated according to the official poverty line, rural poverty has dropped dramatically from 30.7 per cent in 1978 to 2.6 per cent in 2005. Empirical evidence shows that while the vast rural to urban migration does not significantly increase urban income poverty, labour market discrimination and social exclusion expose rural migrants to many risks and vulnerabilities in the cities, where the poor are becoming increasingly marginalized.

Softcover/English  
ISSN 1607-338X  
2007 – 44 pages  
US\$ 16.00



**MRS N° 29 – Trafficking in Human Beings and the 2006 World Cup in Germany**

The trafficking of women for the purpose of sexual exploitation received considerable attention prior to the 2006 World Cup in Germany. It was widely suggested that this sporting event would contribute to a sharp increase in the number of women trafficked to Germany for sexual exploitation. This report investigates whether there is any evidence to suggest an increase in the number of women trafficked to Germany for the purpose of sexual exploitation during the 2006 World Cup. It further examines the measures taken by the authorities and non-governmental organizations to counter trafficking in Germany during the event.

Softcover/English  
ISSN 1607-338X  
2007 – 54 pages  
US\$ 16.00



**MRS N° 28 – A Study of Migrant-Sending Households in Serbia Receiving Remittances from Switzerland**

Recognizing the important impact that these remittance flows can have on poverty alleviation and economic development in Serbia at the household, regional and national level, the Swiss Secretariat for Economic Affairs of the Government of Switzerland (SECO) commissioned an investigation of this migration and remittances corridor. This work was carried out by IOM and two other institutional partners – the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the Swiss Forum for Migration (SFM). IOM's contribution focused on measuring the flows, transfer patterns, use and impact of remittances from Switzerland on migrant-sending households in Serbia.

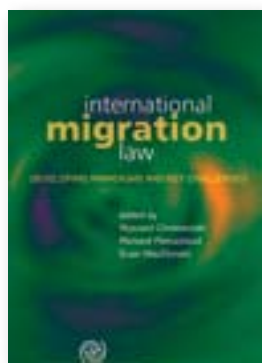
Softcover/English  
ISSN 1607-338X  
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US\$ 16.00



**MRS N° 30 – Migration, Development and Natural Disasters: Insights from the Indian Ocean Tsunami**

When natural disasters strike populated areas, the toll in human lives, infrastructure and economic activities can be devastating and long-lasting. But, adversity also brings forth the strongest and best in human beings, and reveals initiatives, capacities and courage not perceived before. How is development undermined by natural disasters, what is the effect on migrants and migratory flows and what is the role of migration in mitigating some of the worst effects of natural calamities? This paper explores how the advent of a natural disaster interplays with the migration-development nexus by reviewing the impact of the Indian Ocean Tsunami on migration issues in three affected countries; Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.

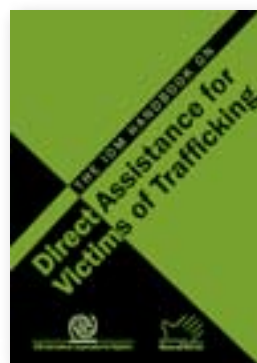
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**International Migration Law**

This book encapsulates the law of international migration by examining developments first addressed in the volume on Migration and International Legal Norms and by discussing wholly new themes. In this regard, the book considers emerging issues, such as the challenges posed by migration to State sovereignty and the protection of human rights as a result of the increasing tensions between anti-terrorism or security legislation and immigration measures, the impact of the use of biometrics technology, and enhanced cooperation on the European Union external border.

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**The IOM Handbook – Direct Assistance for Victims of Trafficking**

With a growing number of organizations, especially local NGOs, now providing or intending to provide assistance to victims of trafficking, IOM would like to share its experience and lessons learned. This Handbook summarizes and systematizes this experience. IOM recognizes that each victim is unique and requires and desires different assistance. As well, the nature of trafficking is different around the world and is ever evolving, requiring changing responses. Therefore this Handbook is not meant to provide a single methodology for the provision of assistance to victims of trafficking, but to offer suggestions and guidance, based on IOM's many years of experience.

Softcover/English  
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