



International Organization for Migration (IOM)

The Middle East and North Africa

ANNUALREPORT2015

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IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental organization, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to: assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration; advance understanding of migration issues; encourage social and economic development through migration; and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

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Cover photo: These women and fifteen of their family members are living in a temporary shelter after being displaced from their home in Rural Damascus. © IOM 2015

The Middle East and North Africa

Annual Report 2015



International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Introduction

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) was founded in 1951, in the aftermath of World War II in order to assist displaced people.

Sixty-four years later, human mobility is an essential feature of the modern world. The Middle East and North Africa region hosts one of the world's largest migrant populations, with more than 34 million migrants in 2015 according to data by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.¹ Saudi Arabia hosts the fourth largest migrant population worldwide. The majority of migrants from the Arab region stay in the region, while migration from outside the region – especially from Asia – is also on the increase.

People move to, through and from the region for a variety – and combination – of reasons. Labour migration to the Gulf States, partly from other Arab States as well as from further afield, continues to be a central component of their economic growth. North African countries have continued to host people from sub-Saharan African countries seeking employment or attempting to cross the Mediterranean to make their futures in Europe.

However, protracted crises and political and social instability have been among the top drivers of migration in, to and from the region, causing people to move on an unprecedented scale. In 2015, conflicts continued unabated in Iraq, Libya, Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, while their neighbouring countries struggled to deal with the effects on their societies and infrastructures.

The statistics of these conflicts are almost unimaginable – over 4 million Syrians are refugees and a further 7 million are internally displaced. There are over 3.2 million displaced people in Iraq as a result of insecurity. Over 80 per cent of Yemenis are in need of humanitarian assistance. One million people crossed the Mediterranean in 2015, seeking safety, sanctuary and stability.

Behind the numbers, it is too easy to forget the stories of individual men, women, and children whose lives are marked by migration and marred by displacement every day.

In 2015, IOM launched the global “**I Am a Migrant**” campaign, to battle xenophobia, humanize the statistics, and celebrate the diversity and potential among those who are collectively labelled “migrants”. In this report, too, we take a step back from statistics to focus on the people rather than the numbers. ■

¹ Based on data by the Population Commission of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, presented in www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationReport2015_Highlights.pdf



Migrants who were rescued off the coast of Tunisia come ashore. Once on land, IOM provides health assistance and provides immediate relief in the form of food and clothing. © IOM 2015

1. The Mediterranean: Sea of hope and sorrow

Dominating the headlines in 2015 was the significant shift in the scale of the movement of people, particularly from the Levant, through Turkey and into Europe via Greece. This reflected a dramatic change from previous years, when migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers had attempted to reach Europe primarily through North African countries, particularly Libya, and to a lesser extent Egypt and Tunisia. Over the course of 2015, over 1 million people crossed the Mediterranean – **3,770 migrants perished** on route.

In 2015, over **850,000** people, including Syrians (475,902) and Iraqis (86,989) used the Eastern Mediterranean route to enter Europe. Increasingly precarious living conditions in the home/host countries, an uncertain future, and dwindling hopes that the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic would improve were among the main factors prompting the movement of Syrians and Iraqis towards Europe in 2015.

This represented a shift from 2014, when the Central Mediterranean route was the most heavily used. While this change in numbers is not immediately significant, in the context of the number of people who arrived in Europe in 2015, it marks a significant decline in the overall popularity of the route. While the Eastern Mediterranean route was dominated by refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq, arrivals in Italy via the central route were more diverse, comprising

migrants from Eritrea (39,162), the Gambia (8,454), Nigeria (22,237), Somalia (12,433), Sudan (8,932), the Syrian Arab Republic (7,488) and beyond.²

Mixed migration is a recurring characteristic of migration to, through, and from the Middle East and North Africa. Research carried out by IOM and partners in 2015 underlines the complexity of mixed migration: for instance, *Migration Trends Across the Mediterranean: Connecting the Dots*, which analysed trends along the Western and Central Mediterranean routes, found that migration is driven by political and economic instability, conflict, socioeconomic aspirations and protection needs, and that these drivers often combine. Frequently, refugees and asylum-seekers among those moving along the Central and Western Mediterranean routes seek not only protection but also economic stability. Significantly, the research also confirmed that Europe is not necessarily the intended destination: many have migrated within their region first and moved on only many years later, after being unable to find the desired opportunities closer to their home countries and in North Africa, or due to insecurity in those countries.

² Figures based on IOM operational information. For more information, see <http://missingmigrants.iom.int/mediterranean> and <http://migration.iom.int/europe/>



Migrants and refugees attempting to reach Germany write graffiti messages on the walls of Hungary's Keleti train station. © IOM 2015

Exploitation, vulnerability and human rights abuses are the unfortunate hallmarks of mixed migration in North Africa. *Conditions and Risks of Mixed Migration in North East Africa*, by the *Mixed Migration Hub*, presents evidence of the risk of migrant smuggling turning into human trafficking, as well as the growing prevalence of unaccompanied children on migration routes from the Horn of Africa northwards.

Many migrants seeking to travel to or through North Africa, particularly Libya, will end up in a detention centre. Migrant youth and minors are no exception, as detailed in Mixed Migration Hub research *Detained Youth: The Fate of Young Migrants, Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Libya Today*, which reveals a consistent pattern of young migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers held in arbitrary detention in squalid, cramped conditions for months at a time without any form of due process.

Responding to the needs of those in detention and in other vulnerable situations, IOM has worked to protect migrants' rights, address drivers of irregular migration, and promote safe and beneficial human mobility. IOM's *Mediterranean Response Plan*, issued in 2015, details the Organization's strategy and multiregional approach. IOM works in countries of origin, transit and destination to ensure that migrants' rights are respected, and that vulnerable migrants receive all necessary protections. Across the Middle East and North Africa, IOM works with the communities affected by migration and displacement to provide emergency and life-saving assistance, and engages in transitional recovery and resilience-building projects to create long-term stability and alternatives to irregular migration. ■

Ali

i am a migrant



“People here have to keep in mind that what happened in Paris happens in Syria. Every day.”

I was born in Libya to Palestinian parents who fled to Syria when I was young. I was a refugee there, and I am a refugee here, for the second time. I really hope this is the last time.

I left Syria with the help of smugglers. It took me three days to go from Damascus to Turkey. Then from Turkey I boarded a boat at night with 50 other people. We reached Symi Island in Greece in the first attempt after two hours. We were really lucky.

I spent two months in Thessaloniki because it was very hard to get into Macedonia. I tried three times, and the last time I was already in a small village near Serbia when the police got me and sent me back to Greece. Later, I tried to go back there and reached Serbia again. I was so afraid they would get my fingerprints that I hid for two weeks.

Eventually I made it to Hungary, then Austria, and when I crossed the border into Germany, I was caught and they took my fingerprints. They let me go but told me I should go to a camp to apply for asylum.

I was studying electronic engineering at the university in Tartus, Syria, but I could not finish my studies because of the war. I want to finish it here, but first I have to learn German. I like it here, it’s funny to see our differences. For instance, in Germany, people only ask “How are you?” and then they stop. But in Syria we say “Hi, how are you? How is your family? How is your work? Where are you going?...” we ask a lot of questions just to know if you’re ok.

I like everything here in Germany: the music, the parties, the law. And most importantly, people here know the difference between terrorists and refugees. Of course, I also liked everything in Syria before the war, but now everything has changed.

When I ask my family and friends how things are going, they tell me that every day things are getting worse and worse.

People here have to keep in mind that what happened in Paris happens in Syria. Every day.

<http://iamamigrant.org/stories/germany/ali>

2. Developing policy and strengthening partnerships

2015 was a critical year for migration governance: with the adoption of the **2030 Sustainable Development Agenda**, the global development framework contains, for the first time, explicit targets on migration. Furthermore, in 2015 IOM formulated its **Migration Governance Framework**, which outlines three main elements – adherence to international standards and migrants’ rights, evidence-based policymaking, and partnerships – and three objectives of good migration governance, namely advancing socioeconomic well-being of migrants and society, addressing the mobility dimension of crises, and striving for safe, orderly and dignified migration.

Throughout 2015, IOM in the Middle East and North Africa advanced knowledge, evidence and awareness of migration issues, supported improved migration laws and policies, and facilitated dialogue and learning among migration policymakers and practitioners.

In a number of countries, IOM contributed to the adoption of rights-based migration legislation and practices in line with international standards, in particular in the areas of human trafficking, migrant smuggling and domestic work, as well as in best practices in border management.

IOM advocated balanced and rights-based approaches to migrant smuggling, human trafficking and irregular migration

in forums such as the European Union–Horn of Africa Migration Routes Initiative (Khartoum Process), the African Union–Horn of Africa Initiative on Human Trafficking and Smuggling of Migrants, and the Valetta Summit on Migration. Joint research and advocacy on mixed migration also shaped the work of IOM and its partners in the North Africa Mixed Migration Task Force.³

In collaboration with the League of Arab States and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, IOM trained government officials on questions relating to irregular and mixed migration while lending its expertise to the Arab Initiative to Combat Human Trafficking.

In the autumn of 2015, IOM and the League of Arab States co-chaired the **Global Meeting** of Chairs and Secretariats of Regional Consultative Processes on Migration (RCPs), which brought together representatives from all of the RCPs. “RCPs play an increasingly important role in fostering mutual understanding and collaboration between countries of origin,

³ Consisting of IOM, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Danish Refugee Council, the Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (Nairobi) and Save the Children, and supported by the Mixed Migration Hub (www.mixedmigrationhub.org/).

transit and destination. They help ensure coherence in policy and practice,” said IOM’s Director General William Lacy Swing. On the occasion, the new Arab Regional Consultative Process (ARCP), which encompasses all Member States of the League of Arab States, was officially launched.

Good data and research are critical underpinnings of inclusive, rights-based policy. The *2015 Situation Report on International Migration: Migration, Displacement and Development in a Changing Arab Region* was published by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and IOM, in collaboration with the member agencies of the Working Group on International Migration in the Arab Region. For the first time, up-to-date data and information on migration trends and patterns and developments in migration governance in the Arab region are made available in one place. The report summarizes the main migration patterns, analyses international migration trends and provides an overview of recent policy developments related to migration. At a time when migration and displacement in the Arab region have reached record numbers, a dedicated thematic chapter examines the relationship between forced migration and development, and presents innovative ideas to tackle the challenges that large-scale displacement can present for the development of individuals, communities and countries. ■



INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS' DAY





In 2015, IOM stepped up efforts to engage with the global media on the importance of presenting a more balanced, nuanced picture of migration and its effects. To this end, IOM Morocco, in collaboration with the Ministry of Moroccan

Residing Abroad and Migration Affairs and with support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, held a seminar for local and international press on the occasion of International Migrants Day 2015. Bringing together 120 journalists and other relevant actors, the seminar highlighted the need for accurate terminology and factual reporting, and the importance of increasing diversity among journalists, especially of including migrants as journalists and authors of their own stories.

IOM Tunisia, in partnership with the National Institute of Employment and Social Studies and with the financial support of the IOM Development Fund, held the **first summer school** on migration in Tunisia in September 2015. With the theme “Migration opportunities and challenges in the Tunisian context”, the summer school promoted the exchange of ideas and reflections as well as long-term research, training, and studies on migration with a focus on Tunisia and North Africa. Multidisciplinary in nature, the summer school consisted of six full days of conferences and workshops covering protection, statistics, mobility, governance, and migration and development. Participants in the summer school included civil servants, post-graduates and PhD candidates, media professionals and members of civil society.

3. Refugee resettlement from the Middle East and North Africa



IOM staff does another round of cultural orientation at the airport for refugees bound for Canada. Photo: Jennifer Sparks. © IOM 2016

IOM continues to promote orderly, humane migration through one of its oldest continuous activities – the resettlement of refugees. In 2015, refugee hosting countries and IOM in the Middle East and North Africa worked with the Government of Germany and the governments of other European countries to continue resettlement activities in the midst of a migration crisis unseen since World War II. Resettlement programmes to Canada and the United States also accelerated as both countries increased their quotas for accepting refugees.

Thirteen-year-old Abdel Rizak is from Sudan, and was resettled with his younger brother Qasai and mother Awatef in the United States at the end of 2015. When asked about what he was most looking forward to in his new home, he said that he wanted to become a physician and see the Statue of Liberty. He added, “I would like to tell America that we really hope the refugee resettlement process does not stop.”

At the end of 2015, the Government of Canada announced the country would accept 25,000 Syrian refugees for immediate resettlement. Staff was mobilized from across the globe to support IOM offices in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Egypt to carry out resettlement operations.

Khaled

i am a migrant



Photo: Muse Mohammed. © IOM 2016

“My name is Khaled, and I am from South Kordofan, Sudan.

I am a refugee who helps move refugees. I know how hard life can be for a refugee, so part of me is very glad to assist.”

I am a refugee who helps move refugees. I have worked with IOM for over 20 years, since I came to Lebanon as a refugee myself after leaving Sudan because of the war going on there.

I am here with my family, as are most of the guys who work here. We come from all over Sudan—Khartoum, Darfur, South Kordofan. Some of us have been here for a while. The person who has been here the shortest has been here for six years.

We came here via Syria back in the day, because Sudan and Syria had an agreement about visas. So we went there first and then crossed to Lebanon.

Life here has been hard, because some of the guys still have not been formally registered with UNHCR. There have been some problems and some of them had their applications rejected.

I know how hard life can be for a refugee. So part of me is very glad to be assisting other refugees. But part of me wonders why some of these people have only been registered for a couple of months and are already being resettled, when we have been waiting for so many years.

I have done many jobs over the years; driver, security, resettlement operations. My daughter is twenty years old now and is also getting ready to start working. She has to finish her studies first. She wants to be an attorney somewhere abroad.”

Khaled leads the team of porters and operational support staff for the Canadian Resettlement of 13,000 Syrian refugees from Lebanon to Canada.

<http://iamamigrant.org/stories/lebanon/khaled>



An IOM staff member clarifies some information with a migrant applying for resettlement in Canada.
Photo: Jennifer Sparks
© IOM 2016

The resettlement process requires close collaboration between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), IOM, and the governments of current and future host countries. For those going to Canada, most people registered as refugees with UNHCR and were then referred to IOM for resettlement. Others were privately sponsored by a close relative or organization in Canada.

For both UNHCR-referred and privately sponsored refugees, the Government of Canada carried out thorough interview, background check and visa issuing procedures. IOM organized the movement of the refugees from cities outside Beirut to the processing centre for the UNHCR-referred cases. It also organized the logistics of the flights to Canada for all the refugees.

“Even though our families are still in Syria, we are ready to make a life in Canada, one that will give Habib the opportunity to live in a safe, stable place. Maha and I want Canadians to know that we are like them; we can work and be productive too. All we want is a peaceful life,” said Tony, who was being resettled to Canada with his wife Maha and one-year-old son Habib.

In 2015, IOM offices in the Middle East and North Africa resettled over 40,000 refugees to 24 countries. ■



Mohammed, Nour and their son Bilal gave a smile as they waited to catch their flight to Canada. They were among the 25,000 Syrian refugees resettled to Canada in winter 2015–2016. Photo: Jennifer Sparks. © IOM 2016

Farah & Suzy

i am a migrant



Photo: Jennifer Sparks. ©IOM 2016

“Canada will allow us to move on with our lives without fear. I can’t tell you how much it will mean to feel secure again.”

“My name is Farha, and this is my daughter Suzi. We are from the town of Hassekeh, which is famous for many things in Syria—most importantly the food! It is famous for its delicious food, particularly the kebabs.

Food brought people together in our community. Even though the town was very diverse, it had a very strong community spirit. Socializing was really important for us.

All of that changed when Daesh came. They destroyed the land and made our life one of constant fear. We were always afraid of car jackings, kidnappings and bombings.

I am a primary school teacher and Suzi studies pharmacology. Imagine, me as a teacher—having spent my day with 8 to 10 year olds—walking home with one eye on the sky and the other on the road to watch out for bombs and people who would threaten me.

We are so looking forward to the peace and security Canada offers. My sister and niece have been living in Canada for several years, and my other daughter went there four months ago. We are really looking forward to being able to move on with our lives without fear. I can’t tell you how much it will mean to feel secure again.”

Farha and Suzi are among the 25,000 Syrian refugees who were resettled under the Canadian Resettlement Operation.

<http://iamamigrant.org/stories/canada/farah-suzy>

4. Emergency, transition and recovery

Protracted conflicts spanning the region have necessitated ongoing emergency operations in Iraq, Libya, Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. Of these conflicts, three are categorized as the highest-level emergency classified within the UN system (Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen). These conflicts have long-term social, political and economic ramifications not only for the countries in which they take place but also for surrounding countries that feel the spill-over effects of their unstable neighbours. Of the eleven IOM offices in the region, in 2015, only two were not actively in crisis or carrying out crisis support – Kuwait and Morocco.

The provision of non-food items, camp coordination cluster management, cross-border relief, evacuation assistance to stranded migrants, health support, livelihood assistance and shelter relief are all critical parts of IOM's emergency response.

Women in Aleppo received warm clothing as part of winterization efforts.
© IOM 2015



Helping IOM and other aid organizations reach vulnerable, newly displaced populations with humanitarian assistance is the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM). The DTM is a system of tools developed and implemented by IOM to identify and track internally displaced people. As of the end of 2015, the DTM was in place and in use in Iraq, Libya and Sudan, with upcoming plans for implementation in Yemen.

Afrah – from Homs, Syria – suffers from a disease which has caused her muscles to weaken, leaving her wheelchair-bound. IOM was able to provide her with a wheelchair, and Afrah was excited to be able to move freely. “I can now visit relatives and take my niece to the park nearby,” she said.

“Many of the old IDP tents, including ours, have been destroyed in the heavy rains. Our food was spoiled. Families rushed and bought plastic sheets to cover their tents. We have no money, so had to borrow to buy our plastic sheets. We are happy to have received heaters from IOM as the tents are really cold now,” said one father of five who had to flee Ramadi, Iraq, with his family.

While IOM’s activities continued to focus on the provision of humanitarian support, the protracted nature of the crises in the Middle East and North Africa region has shifted the emphasis on early recovery of affected populations, creating the basis for self-sufficiency and future development interventions. Livelihood support is one example of early recovery intervention in a humanitarian space, which aims at developing self-reliance. The IOM Livelihoods Programme in the Middle East and North Africa assists displaced persons by offering vocational training, job placement, small business start-up kits and in-kind grants.



Community members participate in discussions about land and property loss as a result of displacement under the HIJRA AMINA project. © IOM 2015



Working with partners at the Syrian Red Crescent, IOM staff take advantage of a break in the fighting to deliver wheelchairs to disabled residents of Aleppo. © IOM 2015

IOM staff spoke with Khadija, a 41-year-old mother of four, in Baghdad. “I was fortunate to receive the grocery store materials. I will use the supplies to start my business. It will be difficult at the beginning but I’m sure later on things will be much better for me and my children.”

IOM’s emergency responses to assist displaced persons and others in need across the region are guided by the Organization’s humanitarian policy. Approved in November 2015 by the IOM Council, the [IOM Principles for Humanitarian Action \(PHA\)](#) underpin the Migration Crisis Operational Framework and aim to ensure that the Organization acts on the basis of robust principles and as part of the humanitarian response system. The PHA reiterates adherence to the four humanitarian principles, as well as focuses on protection and partnerships and emphasizes the criticality of context.

In connection with the PHA, IOM also adopted a mandatory system for mainstreaming protection into humanitarian action, which ensures a do-no-harm approach and that non-discrimination, meaningful access, safety, dignity, participation, empowerment and accountability measures become integral parts of every response to migration crises. In addition, IOM is developing a new framework for the progressive resolution of displacement situations and longer-term resilience strategies that promote development-driven approaches.

In the Middle East and North Africa region, the PHA was field-tested in Libya and Iraq, ensuring geographical diversity as well as different operating contexts such as human-induced disasters, protracted crises and migrants in crisis. The field testing demonstrated the added value of the PHA and contributed to the fine-tuning of the PHA provisions and development of tools for its implementation. ■

5. Working towards the protection of migrants' rights and States' borders

Migrants and refugees benefit from the IOM Immigration and Border Management (IBM) system programming when relevant national authorities are capacitated in adopting a rights-based approach when dealing with cross-border movements and in managing foreign residents. The ultimate goal of a well-functioning IBM system is to coordinate the relevant national and international agencies to facilitate mobility and ensure open but well-controlled borders. This goal is achieved through an integrated approach, which harmonizes policies and procedures.



Vulnerable migrants from West Africa are evacuated from Libya.
© IOM 2015

Vast, unmanned borders running through the deserts of North Africa as well as the scale of movements of refugees and migrants through the Levant and across the Mediterranean pose significant challenges to the border management systems in the Middle East and North Africa region.

The story of one migrant, Yusuf, demonstrates the current challenges to migrants as well as to governments monitoring their borders:

“I left Syria seven months ago because of the war. I spent seven days at sea. When I first arrived, I crossed Europe; my goal was to reach England. I was in Calais for almost two months but I didn’t manage to enter the UK, so I went to Sweden because winter had come in Calais and it seemed too cold to stay there. Then, I came to Italy where I currently work as a cultural mediator.”

Yusuf is one of over 1 million people who irregularly entered Europe in 2015. From a border management perspective, such movement poses humanitarian, logistical, security and other challenges that require a prompt coordinated response, which

Yusef

i am a migrant



“I love Italy. I love it because of the culture, which is very famous in Syria, for its history but especially for its football.”

I left Syria a few months ago because of the war. I spent seven days at sea. When I first arrived, I crossed Europe; my goal was to reach England. I was in Calais for almost two months but I didn't manage to enter the UK, so I went to Sweden because winter had come in Calais and it seemed too cold to stay there. I stayed in Sweden. Then I came to Italy, where I currently work as a cultural mediator.

Arriving in a new country is always more difficult than you could possibly imagine. You need to go back to school as if you are 6 years old again. You come here alone, without friends, without a family. You have nothing, you have to start from scratch. You can even feel bored as a migrant, because you cannot see your kids and you cannot even speak to them over the phone. You miss all of it: your family, friend and your habits, those little things that you never thought you could miss that much.

Compared to France and Sweden, Italy feel closer to my culture. People are warm, they have this Mediterranean culture similar to ours. I feel less like a stranger, as if I was not in a foreign country somehow. I love Italy. I always did, since I was a kid. I love it because of the culture, which is very famous where I'm from, for its history and for its football. But to feel fully at home I would need all the small things I had back home.

When I arrived I thought I had had an awful journey, but by talking to others who crossed the Mediterranean too, I found out that my journey was five star compared to that of others. Nevertheless, it was a really traumatic journey... No, starting from scratch is definitely not easy.

<http://iamamigrant.org/stories/italy/yusef>



Passport examination training is carried out for Egyptian border officials. © IOM 2015

IOM provided through technical and capacity-building support to relevant border agencies.

Humanitarian border management is designed to facilitate large-scale migration in an orderly manner, ensuring that

migrants' rights are protected and border security is ensured in case of sudden mass movements across borders. The training and capacitation of border guards include the topical areas of fundamental human rights, contingency planning and case management, as well as exercises regarding coordinating and

monitoring convoys. In addition to purely humanitarian border management activities, IOM experts trained on a wide range of IBM topics, including:

- national and international legal frameworks on migration;
- countering transnational organized crime involved in smuggling of migrants;
- document examination procedures;
- links between migration and terrorism; and
- International Migration Law and best practices.

In order to support efforts undertaken by governments to manage their borders, IBM programmes within the region have also contributed to local stability through community policing initiatives. By promoting the participation of the communities in the Security Sector Reform⁴ process, IOM significantly contributed to resiliency efforts. Community policing is also being implemented to support the stabilization of border areas by supporting governmental initiatives against extremism and radicalization.



An ambulance is provided to the Jordanian Border Guard to ensure that arriving migrants and refugees have access to health care. © IOM 2015

These projects, carried out largely in Iraq, facilitated the development of a community-based policing approach to support law enforcement institutions and agencies working in partnership with the local people building on rule of law and mutual trust, in full respect of international conventions and best practices. ■

⁴ See www.osce.org/what/security-sector-reform



Ethiopian migrants receive reintegration assistance upon their return home after being evacuated from Yemen. © IOM 2015

6. Ensuring protection of vulnerable migrants

IOM's migrant assistance programming works on behalf of migrants in perilous situations, including stranded and vulnerable migrants, those who have been trafficked or smuggled, and young people migrating by themselves.

Amina, a mother of four from Nigeria who had attempted migration to the Gulf, fell into the hands of one of the smuggling rings operating along the Red Sea.



IOM Kuwait carried out an anti-trafficking awareness raising campaign for the general public and government officials. © IOM 2015

“The smugglers started beating us,” she recounted. “They chained men and women together, beating us horribly. Even my children were badly beaten.”

She is one of among an untold number of people who face violence and exploitation during migration.

A report on migrant domestic workers carried out by the Action to Protect and Assist Vulnerable and Exploited Migrant Workers in Middle East and North Africa (PAVE) project found alarming conditions of abuse. Based on data compiled from 162 migrants, the report, *The Other Migrant Crisis: Protecting Migrant Workers against Exploitation in the Middle East and North Africa*, exposes trends in the abuses faced by migrant workers who are trafficked and exploited:

- 100 per cent of workers had their passports withheld;
- 87 per cent were confined to their workplace;
- 76 per cent had wages withheld;
- 73 per cent suffered psychological abuse; and
- 61 per cent endured physical abuse.

People living in crisis-affected countries are in particularly vulnerable situations, as discussed in IOM's call for action assessment, *Addressing Human Trafficking and Exploitation in Times of Crisis*. This briefing document provides contemporary, evidence-based findings indicating that trafficking in persons is not a side effect of crises but that trafficking and crises are often directly related. Nonetheless, all too often human trafficking remains a neglected protection concern within humanitarian response.

In addition to being at particular risk of smuggling and trafficking, migrants living in Libya find themselves facing

arbitrary detention and rising anti-migrant attitudes. "I was detained twice and I managed to leave detention after paying LD 600 (USD 450) each time," said Muse, a Malian migrant in Libya. Libya has experienced varying intensities of crisis since the political turmoil in 2011, and the country saw renewed conflict and a deepening political instability throughout 2015.

Across the region, ongoing voluntary returns and humanitarian repatriations were carried out as part of IOM's work to respond to stranded migrants in crisis and non-crisis contexts while protecting migrants' rights and ensuring humane, dignified migration.



Assisted voluntary return and reintegration is another critical component of providing durable solutions for migrants. Emad, a Sudanese man who had attempted to make a life in Europe, said:

“My journey started in Turkey and took me across Europe until I finally reached France. It consumed a lot of time and money and I had to face quite a few obstacles. Unfortunately, I didn’t manage to get a job in France because of visa issues, so I decided to return home. The Embassy of Sudan in Paris referred me to IOM that has a return and reintegration programme for migrants.”

Migrants in vulnerable situations will often be in need of assistance that goes beyond immediate relief. Psychosocial support is a critical component in ensuring migrants’ mental health and well-being. A psychosocial assistance training was carried out in Morocco to contribute to the development of

rights-based responses by the Government of Morocco and civil society as well as in countries of origin. In addition, psychosocial support remains a key service provided to migrants across the region as part of individualized case management.

Psychosocial support is particularly important for unaccompanied migrant children, who undertake difficult migratory journeys at the behest of their families or in order to escape untenable situations in their home countries. IOM Egypt undertook an assessment of **unaccompanied Egyptian children** who had arrived in Greece. All of the children had left Egypt by boat across the Mediterranean with the intention of arriving in Italy, but they found themselves stranded in Greece. IOM worked in coordination with Egyptian and Greek authorities to ensure that the best interest of the minors was the primary focus of the intervention. Of the original 25 identified unaccompanied migrant children, 16 were returned to Egypt, where IOM met them and arranged for initial counselling and reintegration procedures. ■

Emad

i am a migrant



“After my journey to Europe, I decided to go back to my family in Sudan and have a new start.”

Emad was living in Sudan with his family and was the only bread winner. As it was getting more and more difficult for him to make ends meet, he decided to move outside the country to look for better work opportunities.

“My adventure started in Turkey and took me across Europe until I finally reached France. It was often time and money consuming and I had to face quite a few obstacles. Unfortunately, I didn’t manage to get a job in France for visa issues, so I decided to return home. The Sudanese Embassy in Paris referred me to IOM that has a return and reintegration programme for migrants.”

Migration is not always about leaving home but also returning home. Emad came back from his experience in Europe, willing to build his future in his country.

“IOM was extremely supportive. They helped me get back to my family in Khartoum, where I was able to establish a local grocery store.”

Emad expanded his business by opening a second branch in a remote area of Sudan.

“My business became a success and got very profitable, which enabled me to purchase land and build a house for my family and I where we live happily now.”

<http://iamamigrant.org/stories/sudan/emad>

7. Engaging with migrants for development

The Middle East and North Africa region continues to be an important source and destination for migrant workers. Growth in the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), with its promise of job opportunities with higher wages, has continued to attract a significant number of migrant workers, particularly from the Levant and Egypt as well as South and South-East Asia.

Working with governments and the private sector to see to it that appropriate regulations and robust mechanisms are in place to ensure ethical and fair treatment of foreign workers during the recruitment and employment processes continued to be a key area of engagement in 2015 particularly as a number of GCC countries have become more engaged on the topic, with the United Arab Emirates issuing two new laws to support the protection of workers and Bahrain opening its first government shelter for foreign workers in distress. IOM also collaborated with Bahrain's Labour Market Regulatory Authority on their first conference on fair recruitment practices in November 2015.

IOM launched two major research projects in the GCC in 2015 in order to fill knowledge gaps and support the development of effective policy on labour mobility that better meets labour market objectives and protects the rights of prospective workers: one project looks at the role of social networks in recruitment from Nepal and India to Kuwait; while the second project, under the framework of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, investigates labour supply chains between Nepal, Kerala and the United Arab Emirates.

Diaspora engagement also continued to play an important role in IOM's work in 2015, especially as the Organization looks ahead to a post-crisis phase of development for the region.

Programmes carried out include the temporary return of qualified nationals, where expatriates share skills that they have gained abroad for development in their home countries. One of the migrants who participated in the temporary return programme was Salma, a Dutch-Sudanese water management specialist who returned to Sudan to train a group of 22 individuals in resource management skills. She was featured in the *Arab Expatriate Exchange* newsletter where she shared:

“As a migrant to the Netherlands, I was obsessed with the development of my country of origin, Sudan. The Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals programme launched by IOM came at the right moment and gave me the opportunity to leverage my passion for my country of origin into something tangible. I am very enthusiastic about its mantra that diaspora can make a difference.”



Salma looks on as a trainee presents to other water management specialists during her training. © IOM 2015



ARAB EXPATRIATE EXCHANGE **AUTUMN 2015**

JLSOOK—GIVING STUDENTS IN SYRIA AND ABROAD THE CHANCE TO AN EDUCATION

JLSOOK is a non-profit organization that provides educational opportunities for Syrian students in Syria and abroad. The organization has been instrumental in the survival of education in Syria, through its global network of schools and its commitment to providing quality education to all children, regardless of their background or financial situation. JLSOOK has a long history of providing educational opportunities to Syrian children, and its commitment to education is a testament to the power of education to transform lives.

2015 **100** **100** **100**

- 100 schools, 100,000 students
- 100 years of education
- 100 years of commitment
- 100 years of excellence
- 100 years of innovation
- 100 years of leadership
- 100 years of vision
- 100 years of passion
- 100 years of dedication
- 100 years of hard work
- 100 years of success

ARAB EXPATRIATE EXCHANGE **AUTUMN 2015**

HAND IN HAND FOR SYRIA—DIASPORA ORGANIZATION ENGAGES WITH HARD-HIT AREAS

Hand in Hand for Syria is a diaspora organization that provides humanitarian aid to Syrian refugees in Syria and abroad. The organization has been instrumental in providing relief to Syrian children, through its global network of schools and its commitment to providing quality education to all children, regardless of their background or financial situation. Hand in Hand has a long history of providing humanitarian aid to Syrian children, and its commitment to education is a testament to the power of education to transform lives.

in Hand

2015 **100** **100** **100**

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ARAB EXPATRIATE EXCHANGE **AUTUMN 2015**

LEAVING THE WAR IN SYRIA, LOOKING FOR OPPORTUNITIES IN EGYPT

LEAVING THE WAR IN SYRIA, LOOKING FOR OPPORTUNITIES IN EGYPT is a feature that highlights the experiences of Syrian refugees in Egypt. The feature includes a photograph of a young girl sitting on a red chair, looking thoughtful. The text discusses the challenges of leaving Syria and the search for a better life in Egypt. It also mentions the role of organizations like IOM in providing support and assistance to Syrian refugees in Egypt.

CONTRIBUTOR

2015 **100** **100** **100**

- 100 schools, 100,000 students
- 100 years of education
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- 100 years of excellence
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ARAB EXPATRIATE EXCHANGE **AUTUMN 2015 VOL 11**

FOCUS ON SYRIA

FOCUS ON SYRIA is a feature that highlights the experiences of Syrian refugees in Syria and abroad. The feature includes a photograph of a young boy looking out over a city. The text discusses the challenges of living in Syria and the search for a better life abroad. It also mentions the role of organizations like IOM in providing support and assistance to Syrian refugees in Syria and abroad.

2015 **100** **100** **100**

- 100 schools, 100,000 students
- 100 years of education
- 100 years of commitment
- 100 years of excellence
- 100 years of innovation
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The *Arab Expatriate Exchange*, first issued in 2015, is a quarterly publication that serves as IOM’s institutional communication with Arab diaspora groups globally. Each edition highlights a notable expatriate organization, individual, and project in order to facilitate sharing of ideas and experiences.

8. Publications



Detained Youth: The Fate of Young Migrants, Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Libya Today (MHub)

The study explores the experiences of detention of young migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees in Libya between November 2012 and November 2014, revealing a consistent pattern of arbitrary detention; of people held for months at a time without any form of due process in squalid, cramped conditions. Serious rights violations, including allegations of violence and brutality, are said to be commonplace, including in some of Libya's most well-known detention centres.



Conditions and Risks of Mixed Migration in North East Africa (MHub)

This report reveals four major human rights protection risks facing individuals on the move in this region, or at least circumstances that leave individuals more vulnerable to human rights violations and protection concerns. This report focuses on the conditions and risks of complex migration within and from Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan.



MHub Trend Bulletins

MHub regularly compiles and publishes up-to-date knowledge on mixed migration flows and issues in, to, from and through North Africa. The monthly dashboard map, also used in the bulletin, shows recent trends and movements.



Migration Policy Practice (MENA Edition)

This issue (Volume V, Number 3) focuses on the migration challenges facing the countries in the Middle East and North Africa.



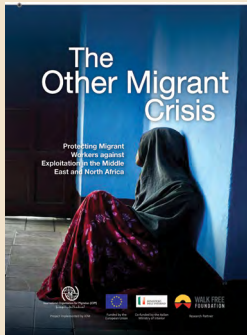
Migration Trends Across the Mediterranean: Connecting the Dots (Altai Consulting for the International Organization for Migration)

This study creates a fresh and updated understanding of the dynamics of migration flows across the Mediterranean. Fieldwork was conducted between November 2014 and February 2015 across seven countries in the Middle East and North Africa region and Europe, and involved in-depth interviews with more than 130 migrants and key informants across all locations. The study focuses on two routes in particular: the Western Mediterranean route from Morocco to Spain, and the Central Mediterranean route from North Africa (typically, Libya or Egypt) to Italy or Malta.



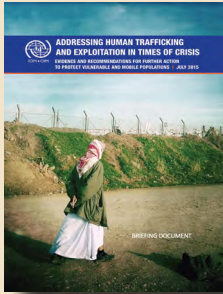
2015 Situation Report on International Migration: Migration, Displacement and Development in a Changing Arab World

This report was published by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the International Organization for Migration in collaboration with member agencies of the Working Group on International Migration in the Arab Region. The study aims to address a deficit in knowledge about migration issues in the Middle East and North Africa by providing a multidisciplinary and comprehensive overview of migration trends and their economic and social consequences in the Arab region.



The Other Migrant Crisis: Protecting Migrant Workers Against Exploitation in the Middle East and North Africa

This report is the result of a policy research project and summarizes findings from a literature review, analysis of case data of the vulnerable, exploited and trafficked migrant workers who are being assisted through the project, focus groups with vulnerable migrants, and round-table discussions with governments and non-governmental organizations and international organizations in two sending countries (Ethiopia and Philippines) and two receiving countries (Jordan and Lebanon).



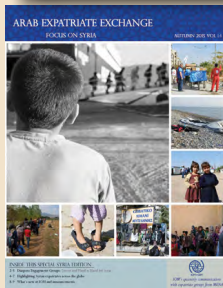
Addressing Human Trafficking and Exploitation in Times of Crisis

Trafficking in persons and other forms of exploitation occur in times of crisis yet remain largely overlooked in the context of humanitarian response. This briefing document provides contemporary, evidence-based findings indicating that trafficking in persons is not a side effect of crises but is often directly interrelated. It offers a number of recommendations for States and humanitarian and donor communities to ensure that the protection of vulnerable migrants no longer remains at the margins of humanitarian response efforts.



IOM Response Plan for the Mediterranean and Beyond

The plan presents IOM's proposed interventions and reaffirms the collective responsibility of States, institutions and organizations to respond to the situation that the international community is facing in Europe and beyond, in a manner that is centred on the protection of migrants' rights, as well as enhanced partnership between all concerned stakeholders.



Arab Expatriate Exchange

Instituted in January 2015, IOM in the Middle East and North Africa issues a quarterly newsletter for distribution among Arab diaspora groups. The newsletter is distributed to officials from international and regional organizations, government officials, donor groups and diaspora associations. It is a way of building communication and learning of best practices between groups as well as raising awareness about the very good work many diaspora associations are doing in the region.

Bissan

i am a migrant



“I live in a part of Amman where there are lots of migrants from all over the world, just like me. I am inspired by our conversations.”

“My mother’s family is from Syria and my father’s from Iraq and Palestine. Now, I live in Jordan. The borders don’t seem real to someone like me in this part of the world. Many families are as regionally diverse as mine. I feel very connected to everything that’s

going on in the region. The language is almost the same. I see all the war and difficulties we face and take it to heart, especially what’s going on in Syria. I still have family there, and some of them have died. My uncle died as an aid worker in Damascus. I haven’t been back since 2011.

I grew up in Damascus but migrated to Jordan when I was a teenager. I live in a part of Amman where there are lots of migrants from all over the world, just like me. There’s a good arts scene, nice cafes, and good opportunities to ask people about where they’re from. I was inspired by these conversations. I went to school to become an industrial engineer but decided to take a break in my education to become a flight attendant.

My mother is very encouraging. She says I should see as much of the world as I can while I am still young. I do about fifteen flights per month and have been able to visit many places. My favorite cities to visit are in Europe – I especially love Vienna and Berlin.

I feel like I want to keep going and explore the world while I still can. Being a flight attendant is a great way to see the world and save money, but I still want to become an engineer. I hope when I have saved enough money, I can resume my education in Vienna.”

<http://iamamigrant.org/stories/jordan/bissan>



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



MHub www.mixedmigrationhub.org

Global Sites

Headquarters www.iom.int

Missing Migrants <http://missingmigrants.iom.int/>

Migrant Footprints www.migrantfootprints.info/

European Migration Portal <http://migration.iom.int/europe/>

I am migrant www.iamamigrant.org

 www.facebook.com/IOM.MENA/

 [@IOM_MENA](https://twitter.com/IOM_MENA)

 www.menamigration.com

Thanks to our partners

These are just some of the many partners and donors of IOM in the Middle East and North Africa. We express our gratitude to all for their cooperation and support.

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