

IOM Gender and Migration News



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MIGRATION FOR DOMESTIC WORK

By Nisha Varia, Human Rights Watch

In the hopes of earning money for a better life, and with few other alternatives, millions of women migrate across borders to work as live-in nannies, caretakers for the elderly, and house-cleaners. For many families around the world, there is nothing more precious than their children, parents, and homes. Yet the migrant domestic workers who care for them confront the risk of exploitation and abuse at every stage of the migration cycle, including recruitment, employment and return. In many regions, international migration is increasingly feminized. Fifty to seventy-five percent of the documented migrants leaving Indonesia, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka are women, most of them hoping to earn money as domestic workers in the Middle East and other parts of Asia. However, this work is undervalued and poorly regulated, and while domestic workers may find responsible employers who treat them well, many are trapped in situations where they are overworked, underpaid, heavily indebted, and at risk of physical and sexual

violence.

Human Rights Watch, which investigates human rights abuses in over 70 countries and campaigns to raise awareness, spur policy reform and hold perpetrators accountable, has investigated abuses against domestic workers in 16 countries since 2001. We identified this as a priority issue given the sheer scale and “invisible” nature of these abuses which often take place in private homes, the discrimination shown by most governments in excluding a female-dominated sector from key legal protections, and the need to strengthen international cooperation and standards in the context of globalization, increased migration, and the dramatic growth of a profit-minded recruitment industry operating across borders.

Abuses spurred by recruitment and immigration policies, labour recruitment practices and restrictive immigration policies leave many migrant domestic workers highly indebted, without adequate information about their rights or employment, and afraid to report abuse. These factors contribute to a wide range of

abuses, including situations of forced labour and trafficking.

Recruiting migrant domestic workers has become a profitable industry, with hundreds and sometimes thousands of licensed and unlicensed labour agencies and brokers in many countries. Local recruiters trawl through villages, painting rosy pictures of success in urban centres or rich countries abroad. These agents undergo scant monitoring, and often charge exorbitant fees, provide incomplete or misleading information about working conditions, or disappear when workers contact them later for assistance. In Singapore and Hong Kong, Indonesian migrant domestic workers often spend up to 10 months out of a two-year contract without a salary since they must turn over these wages to repay their recruitment fees. The resulting financial pressure makes it difficult for workers to report abuse for fear of losing their jobs and having no way to pay off their debt.

In many countries, including the United States, Malaysia, and Saudi Arabia, immigration policies link migrant domestic workers' employment visas to their

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employer. This means the domestic worker loses her immigration status if she leaves employment, and makes it difficult to escape abusive situations, change employers, or negotiate their work conditions. Many employers confiscate their domestic workers' passports and work permits, meaning women and girls fleeing abusive situations can face arrest and immigration detention. The consequences may be dire: in Malaysia, migrants can face up to five years' imprisonment, heavy fines, and indefinite detention for an immigration offense. Immigration policies sometimes strip migrants of fundamental civil and political rights — including the right to form associations or, as in the case of Singapore, to marry. Migrant domestic workers often face mandatory testing and discrimination based on pregnancy, HIV status, and other conditions during both recruitment and in employment.

Gaps in labour laws

Many governments and employers alike are reluctant to recognize domestic work as formal employment, reflecting the low status of women and “women's work.” Domestic workers essentially complete for wages the tasks that women and girls in the house are socially expected to perform for free. Many countries' labour laws exclude domestic workers from standard labour protections such as a minimum wage, limits to working hours, adequate rest periods, paid leave, and workers' compensation in case of workplace injury. Without legislated standards, a domestic worker's workload depends on the whim of her employer. Some enjoy decent working conditions based on relationships of mutual respect. However, the research of Human Rights Watch and many other groups show consistently that employers commonly require domestic workers to labour 14 — 20 hours a day, seven days a week,

for wages that are a fraction of prevailing minimum standards. The failure to properly regulate paid domestic work facilitates egregious abuse, and exploitation means domestic workers have little or no means for seeking redress. The most frequent complaint is non-payment of wages for months or years at a time, as well as arbitrary and illegal deductions from wages. Women and girls employed in private households also have little protection against unsafe working conditions, lack of proper health care, and job insecurity. Inadequate monitoring by any independent or government agency compounds these abuses by creating an environment of impunity for employers.

Restrictions on freedom of movement and criminal abuses

Domestic workers' isolation in private homes, their lack of protection from labour and immigration laws, and unfamiliarity with the language and laws of their host country put them at high risk of criminal abuses such as physical and sexual violence, murder, forced confinement in the workplace, and trafficking into forced labour. Employers of domestic workers in a variety of countries use remarkably similar techniques to control and confine their employees, ranging from limiting their ability to contact family and friends, confiscating passports and immigration documents, withholding wages, and threatening arrest or deportation. While there are no reliable estimates of the number of such abuse cases, countries in Asia and the Middle East often receive thousands of complaints each year. Domestic workers face many barriers to redress through the criminal justice system, including lack of accessible complaints mechanisms, limited training of police to handle such cases, and long waiting periods during which they are barred from working. Domestic



workers presenting complaints to the authorities may have to defend themselves from spurious counter-accusations of theft from their employers.

Reforms at the national and international level — extending and enforcing the protections of labour laws for domestic workers, monitoring the labour recruitment industry, and reforming immigration policies — are steps that some governments are already taking which can be usefully emulated by others. Such changes not only encourage safe migration and decent work, but help reduce human trafficking and undocumented migration. Protecting migrant domestic workers' right to form associations and raising public awareness among employers can also facilitate passage of needed reforms and generate public pressure for accountability.

Another key strategy for preventing these abuses is to promote international cooperation and oversight on the regulation, recruitment, and response to abuse of migrant workers. Multilateral agreements that establish minimum standards can avoid a “race to the bottom,” in which labour-sending countries compete for jobs by lowering their protections for their workers. The International Labour Organization and member states are also considering the creation of a specific convention to establish international standards on domestic work.

Finally, one of the most overlooked and critically important responses to promoting safe migration is offering the choice of not migrating at all. Such a response includes investment in quality education and viable employment opportunities for

women and girls.

In April 2010, Human Rights Watch published the report: "Slow Reform: Protection of Migrant Domestic Workers in Asia and the Middle East".

<http://www.hrw.org/node/90055>

This article originally appeared in the Global Eye on Human Trafficking, a quarterly bulletin published by the International Organization for Migration.

The Case of Domestic Workers in Costa Rica

By Berta Fernández-Alfaro (IOM Officer in Charge in Nicaragua) and Rosita Acosta (President of ASTRADOMES)

The global crisis is already having an impact on the economies of Costa Rica and Nicaragua with respect to elimination of jobs, as well as in terms of labour exploitation or lack of protection for domestic workers.

In the face of the lack of employment in construction and tourism in Nicaragua and current inflation, emigration to Costa Rica continues to be an attractive alternative, as there has been no reduction in the demand for domestic workers. Migrants perform a cost-benefit analysis, comparing a future with no opportunity for their children to get ahead with emigrating to provide them with such an opportunity through the sending of remittances, according to the Costa Rica-Nicaragua binational study on migration's impact on Nicaraguan women, conducted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Population Fund in 2008. On the other hand, Costa Rican families with one or two professionals heading the household cannot do without assistance in domestic tasks.

In 2001, International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Association of Domestic Workers (ASTRADOMES, Asociación de Trabajadoras Domésticas) conducted a survey on labour conditions and knowledge of current labour and social security legislation among domestic workers (69 per cent of Nicaraguan origin) and employers in the middle-class Montes de Oca District of San José, Costa Rica. The purpose of the study is to utilize the results to draft informative brochures on both parties' rights and responsibilities. The results indicated that there is widespread ignorance of labour rights or little effort made to uphold them. This lack of knowledge of labour rights heightens the objective and subjective vulnerability of migrant domestic workers. The study measured the degree of knowledge held by employers and domestic workers regarding domestic labour legislation (the existence of fines for employers failing to



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Two Nicaraguan migrant women loaded with their suitcases trying to make the long and dangerous journey hoping to avoid the Border Guards and

meet responsibilities, employer's obligation to report real wages to the Costa Rican Social Security Board); general matters (legal minimum wage, assessment services provided by the Ministry of Labour); and both groups' perception of the lack of protection for domestic workers.

In light of the possible passing of a bill to reform Chapter 8 of the Labour Code (2004), the debate on domestic labour has garnered renewed interest in Costa Rica. The background to this bill is the filing of a motion of unconstitutionality by ASTRADOMES, heard on November 24, 2005 in the Constitutional Court of the Supreme Court of Justice. This motion challenges Article 104 of the Labour Code (related to the workday, rest days and public holidays). The plaintiffs put forth that the Labour Code treats domestic workers differently from other workers, leading to discriminatory conditions in the workplace relationship. The bill aims to modify within the Labour Code a regime of exception regarding the rights of domestic workers that, according to ASTRADOMES, places them in a relationship of servitude and discrimination in comparison with other female and male work-

ers in Costa Rica.

Currently the minimum wage for a household worker is 115,435 colones (USD 210) plus food, constituting the lowest among all wage categories, despite the fact that these workers must complete the longest workday. Domestic workers are excluded from the right to health services and pension, as they are not reported in the protection and social security programs, particularly insurance against workplace risks and the plan for disability, old age and death benefits. According to the State of the Nation Report (www.estadonacion.cr), employers report less than 10 per cent of the 80,000 workers estimated by the National Association of Domestic Workers.

In March 2007, the Constitutional Court ruled that there was cause for various points in the unconstitutionality motion filed by ASTRADOMES, establishing the right of domestic workers to one full day of rest per week and the right to enjoy public holidays. Prior to this, only a half-day per week had been allowed for rest. Furthermore, three paragraphs under Section C) were declared unconstitutional, referring to the possible division of the workday into fractions, allowing it to be extended to 15 hours per day.

Nevertheless, public debate on the bill centres primarily on the proposal to reduce the work day from 12 to 8 hours. Costa Rican female employers wonder how they will cover their 8-hour workday, and how much the difference with the current situation will cost them in terms of extra hours. If the bill does not pass, ASTRADOMES has announced its intention to file a complaint before the Inter-American Human Rights Commission. In addition, ASTRADOMES is taking its demand for legal reform for paid domestic workers to the streets. On March 25, a protest camp was set up in front of the Presidential Palace demanding changes to legislation under debate.

In conclusion, approving the bill is important to reduce the vulnerability of domestic workers, especially migrant Nicaraguan women, but can this become a reality in a

pre-electoral year and in times of economic crisis? The discussion at heart should be confined to the labour rights of this historically discriminated-against sector. To do this, it seems we must continue striving to raise awareness of the issue among civil society, the public sector and international organizations in Costa Rica.

Costa Rica's domestic sector workers demands

1. Equal pay for equal work.
2. An ordinary workday equal to that of the rest of Costa Rica's workers.
3. Payment of overtime and "13th month" year-end bonus.
4. The right to social security and insurance for risks on the job.
5. Rest days and statutory holidays.
6. In-kind payment (food and lodging).
7. Payment of legally mandated benefits (prior notice and severance pay) in case of unjustified dismissal.

8. Respect for the right to pre- and post-partum maternity leave and free time during the breastfeeding period, and the prohibition of dismissal due to pregnancy.
9. Banning of work-related sexual harassment of domestic workers
10. Written employment contract.

This article originally appeared in the FOCALPoint April 2009, Volume 8, No. 12, Special Edition on Labour Mobility published by the Canadian Foundation for the Americas

LEBANON: Fair Deal for Domestic Workers?

B EIRUT, 16 April 2009 (IRIN) - Eighty Ethiopian women have been in Tripoli Women's Prison in north Lebanon for over a year, accused of not having a passport which was either taken from them when they started as domestic workers, or which they never had in the first place.

Most were arrested on the street after running away from their employers — usually because of abuses ranging from forced confinement and starvation to physical harm and rape. Some had fled after being accused of stealing.

Having broken their work contracts, which guarantee them a flight home on completion of two years' work, and with no passports, the girls are in limbo.

"The reason these women continue to sit in detention is because the employer doesn't want to pay for the girl's ticket home, General Security [Lebanese intelligence agency] doesn't have the money, and often their embassies are unaware of their detention," said Roula Masri, coordinator for the Collective for Research and Training on Development Action, an NGO campaigning for workers' rights.



©Simba Russeau/IRIN
An Ethiopian woman arrives to meet friends after a church service in Beirut. Eighty Ethiopian women are currently in detention in Tripoli awaiting trial

Kholoud, from Sudan, has been in Lebanon for 18 years. She came with her husband and two children to escape conflict and unemployment. But when her husband was deported, she said, he took all the family's official papers with him. "Now I can't prove that I am Sudanese to obtain a new passport... so I am stuck here."

She struggles to pay US\$110 a month for a one-room apartment with no kitchen, refrigerator or running water, and relies on donations from friends to pay for her children's education.

Rights groups say an estimated 200,000 domestic workers in Lebanon — most of them women from the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Ethiopia — are not protected by labour laws.

New deal?

Last month, after a two-year effort by rights groups working with the ministries of labour and justice as well as General Security, the authorities promised to enact a new unified contract for migrant domestic workers that would improve their working conditions.

For the first time, workers will be able to read the same contract as their employer in their own language. Work terms have been extended from two to three years and the contract states the women should only work 10 hours a day for six days a week and are entitled to eight hours of continuous rest. Salaries, which Human Rights Watch (HRW) has reported can often be withheld as punishment, must now be paid and signed for each month.

The employer, however, will still have the right to break the contract for whatever reason, which means the worker is then responsible for paying for her ticket home or repaying any debts owed. Workers will still not be guaranteed the right to retain



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Originally from Sudan, Kholoud has been in Lebanon for 18 years as a freelance domestic worker. She has no official papers and relies on donations to pay for her children's education

their passports.

Despite this move, activists say a change in the law is needed to ensure the new contracts and the work of placement agencies are regulated.

"Experiences in other countries, such as Jordan, which already have a unified employment contract and a minimum salary for domestic workers, show that a contract is not sufficient in itself and that a law protecting these workers is needed," said HRW senior researcher in Lebanon, Nadim Houry.

In February, eyewitnesses reported seeing a domestic worker fall from a sixth-floor balcony to her death in Beirut's central Hamra district. HRW says domestic workers are dying at the rate of more than one per week in Lebanon, most through suicide or in risky attempts to escape.

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BOLIVIA: Women's Remittances Come at High Cost



© Franz Chávez/IPS
Bolivian migrant in the airport in El Alto, next to La Paz.

By Franz Chávez

LA PAZ, May 25, 2009 (IPS) - The income earned by Bolivian women migrants in Spain, which enables them to support the families they left behind and build a nest egg, comes at a high price: low wages, long hours, no benefits and few or no days off.

"This experience is really hard," Amparo Valda, a Bolivian woman who has been working as a caretaker for the elderly in Madrid since January 2006, told IPS. "You suffer a lot; for me it's like being in prison, but I'm doing it to be able to buy a house in Bolivia."

Spain is the fourth largest destination country for Bolivian migrants, after Argentina, the United States and Brazil. But it accounts for the largest amount of remittances sent home by workers abroad.

Annual money transfers from female Bolivian migrants working in Spain are equivalent to just under six percent of GDP, according to a study by Remesas.org, a Madrid-based research institute focusing on remittances.

That proportion is much higher than the percentage of GDP represented by remittances sent home from women migrants to Ecuador (2.13 percent) and the Do-

minican Republic (1.13 percent), says the June 2008 study.

Bolivian women send home an average of 625 dollars a month, compared to the average money transfers for all Latin American migrants in Spain, which amount to 327 dollars a month.

The researchers also found that female migrants account for 60 percent of all remittances sent home from Spain, even though there are fewer women migrants in that country than men. The study found that women send home 40 percent of their wages, compared to just 14 percent for men.

But in the case of Bolivia, women make up 56 percent of the roughly 600,000 migrants who left the country in search of opportunities between 2003 and 2007, Bruno Rojas, a researcher at the Centre for Research on Labour and Agrarian Development (CEDLA) in Bolivia, told IPS.

A 2007 study by Bolivia's ombudsman's office found that one fifth (19.4 percent) of all people born in Bolivia live outside of the country, Betty Pinto, the office's national head of human rights affairs for migrants, told IPS.

Bolivia, a country of 10.2 million people, has an economically active population of 6.6 million, comprised of 55 percent men and 45 percent women.

Valda is an example of the two million Bolivians seeking better opportunities abroad. She quit her administrative job at a public office here, where she earned the equivalent of 327 dollars a month, to emigrate to Spain, where according to CEDLA most Bolivians earn between 680 and 817 dollars a month, compared to 1,360 to 1,640 dollars a month in 2006 – a plunge caused by the global financial crisis.

Most Bolivian workers in Spain have no social protections or benefits and work more than eight hours a day, said Rojas.

"My goal, like any other immigrant, is to return to my country as soon as possible," Valda told IPS from Madrid. She forms part of the army of migrant workers who forego any sort of rest and relaxation, or non-essential expenses like eating out or buying nice clothes, in order to save up and send money back home.

She takes care of her elderly charges or is on call around the clock, and has no breaks or days off. The holidays that most Spanish workers have off tend to bring especially heavy work, she said.

Pinto's office has received reports of women facing difficult labour conditions in Spain, which prompted it to form a strategic alliance with Remesas.org to carry out specific studies on the situation faced by Bolivian migrants in Madrid, in order to better advocate for their rights.

The impact of remittances

The Remesas.org report, which outlines economic aspects of the Bolivian diaspora, clearly shows this country's heavy dependency on remittances from women migrants in Spain.

The study says Bolivia is a "unique and extremely outstanding case of macroeconomic dependence on transfers from women, whose extraordinary significance requires a detailed analysis of their effects."

Bolivia's Central Bank reported a current account surplus of 1.6 billion dollars in the first eight months of 2008 – 535 million dollars more than in the same period in 2007.

"This increase was principally the result of an increase in exports and migrant remittances," the Bank reported.

Total remittances for 2008 were estimated by the Central Bank at nearly 1.09 billion dollars, equivalent to eight percent of GDP and higher than the 1.02 billion dollars sent home in 2007, despite the global economic crisis that broke out last year.

The Central Bank reported that 40 percent of remittances came from Spain, 22 percent from the United States and 17 percent from Argentina – accounting for 79 percent of all money transfers.

But Remesas.org and financial institutions like the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) say official remittance figures underestimate the magnitude of transfers by 20 to 30 percent.

The Central Bank reported that Bolivia's exports totalled six billion dollars in 2008.

But while remittances were officially only one sixth of that amount, they are actually the country's second largest source of foreign exchange, only surpassed by natural gas, which brought in 3.13 billion dollars last year.

Crisis accentuates feminisation of migration

A study of the labour market in Spain carried out by Rojas shows that women migrants have an easier time finding work, because of the lower skill levels that are required in jobs that typically go to women migrants, and the lower wages they are paid.

Bolivian women in Spain work mainly as caretakers for the elderly or children, or as domestics – jobs that do not require special training or skills; "demand that offers opportunities for women, not men," Rojas explained.

Since 2008, male migrants have been hit hard by massive dismissals in Spain caused by the crisis, while women have generally held on to their jobs.

As a result, men are returning in greater

numbers from that country, expelled by the global economic crisis, said Rojas.

Valda said she had seen that her countrywomen have generally kept their jobs.

But it is also true, she said, that "women who do not have documents to work legally can only get work in caretaking, cleaning or similar jobs," which are almost always far below their level of training and education.

Pinto reported that as a result of the reports of poor working conditions of Bolivians in Spain, the ombudsman's office had pressed successfully for the signing of inter-institutional agreements with non-governmental entities in Spain, to offer advice and assistance on legal and labour issues and on gender violence in Madrid.

The disproportionate number of Bolivian women going abroad takes on even greater magnitude in the central department (province) of Cochabamba, which is the largest source of migrants in the country. In Cochabamba, 67 percent of those who leave are women, according to the ombudsman's office.

There is also a country that is a case study in feminisation of immigration: Italy, where 70 percent of Bolivian workers are women, said Pinto.

One problem in the Bolivian "exodus," said Rojas, is the "improvisation" that characterises the phenomenon. A survey carried out by CEDLA in 2006 showed that most of those who planned to emigrate decided to do so before they actually had a job contract lined up abroad.

"They preferred to go and test their luck, perhaps drawn by reports from acquaintances and relatives that it was easy to find work," he said.

The researcher mentioned an even more disturbing effect of migration: when they go abroad, women often leave behind children, in the care of their fathers or other family members.

The result, he said "is a very serious breakdown of the family."

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BANGLADESH: Examining the Impact of the Global Economic Crisis on Female Migrants

By Asif Munier

With large-scale recession-induced job cuts affecting many Asian and Middle East countries, experts believed female migrant workers were even more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.

Not so true for every migrant labour-sending country, as evidence shows.

At a high-level policy dialogue in Dhaka, Bangladesh in May 2009, there was a broad consensus that the current trend in women migration from Bangladesh was unlikely to be affected greatly by the global economic crisis, as they are predominantly limited to sectors such as housekeeping and caregiving. The decrease in demand for such sectors is less likely to be as pronounced as other sectors such as construction, finance, export manufacturing, travel and tourism.

One year on, this prediction holds very much true. The overall women migration flow from South Asia was actually at a rise during the recession. In 2009, 22,224 women workers went abroad, out of the

total number of 475,278 registered outgoing Bangladeshi migrants in 2009. This is the average number of outgoing women migrant workers in recent years. And these do not reflect the number of undocumented female migrants, which is believed to be much higher in number.

In order to generate discussion and come up with concrete recommendations for gender-sensitive policy and programmatic response to the global economic crisis, IOM and UNIFEM jointly held a high-level policy dialogue in Dhaka, Bangladesh back in May 2009.

The policy dialogue was attended by all key stakeholders representing the government, the national Parliament, civil society, women's organizations, women activists and migrant associations. Participants emphasized the need to consider gender dimensions in all migration-related debate and discourse. They also talked about mobilizing lawmakers to bring about legislative and policy changes.

Bangladesh is one of the highest labour-sending countries and is among the top ten remittance-receiving countries in the



world. In the Middle East, female migrants from Bangladesh continue to occupy a major share in the domestic service sector.

Official estimates show 5 per cent of women among the total migrant labour

population migrate to different destinations from Bangladesh. But unofficial figures from different research says the figure ranges from 12 per cent to 15 per cent, which includes both documented and undocumented women migrant workers.

The government in 2002 had lifted ban on overseas employment for female workers, to allow them to work in some particular sectors, including caregiving, medical care and garments industry. The ban on female workers abroad was first imposed in 1976 in the wake of allegations of exploitation. It was relaxed in 1988 and re-imposed again in 1997 as the situation did not improve.

"The aim of our policy dialogue was to find practical solutions to address the many challenges that Bangladeshi female migrant workers continue to face abroad" said Rabab Fatima, IOM's Regional Representative in Bangladesh.

But even though Bangladeshi women migrants were not affected by the global economic crisis, this does not mean they are not exposed to other kinds of vulnerabilities. Ms. Rabab Fatima reminds: "Since migrant women tend to work in the informal, low-skilled and unregulated sectors of the economy, they tend to be more vulnerable to exploitation than men."

The Government has reportedly initiated a process of providing women welfare officers in 12 major destination countries for Bangladeshi women workers, where there are also labour attachés. Analysts say it would be important to build their capacity and orient them on their role properly, so that they can assist well the distressed women in the destination country.

The primary concerns usually raised, as was in the policy dialogue, are related to the human rights of women migrant workers, as also highlighted at the policy dialogue last year. There is negative perception in the patriarchal society about women going to work abroad without a male guardian who stigmatize and demoralize women migrant workers. At the policy dialogue, there was broad consensus on formulating a reintegration strategy to assist returnee women migrant workers.

Some good examples from the South Asia region include introduction of a stimulus

package in Sri Lanka; provision of partial compensation to retrenched returnees by the Government of Nepal and recruitment agencies; setting up of shelters for distressed emigrants; etc. One of the recommendations from the policy dialogue was to encourage the private sector in establishing 24-hour hotline services and help desks.

But, as Ms. Fatima pointed out, as a majority of the women workers going abroad work in the informal, low-skilled and unregulated sectors, it is essential to have good training programmes with good coverage. The government had a two-week training programme for women migrants in 2009, which has been expanded to three weeks by 2010. There are plans to make it even longer and residential. IOM is supporting the development of the training centres and curriculum. Other international organizations are supporting information services and specialized training programmes for women migrant workers.

The government is also reportedly shifting its focus from domestic work to more diverse sectors including caregivers, nurses, garment factory workers, as there seems to be a huge demand in these sectors in the industrialized/developed countries. Discussants at the policy dialogue last year further mentioned that Bangladesh should explore sending women to countries where there was a large ageing population, such as Japan and Western Europe. It was also felt that the labour protection laws were stronger and more effective in those countries.

Having said that, participants at the policy dialogue last year, and in many other occasions have stressed that capacity building and empowerment of women has to begin from their childhood within the sphere of their family and community. A mere three-week or month-long training cannot equip them enough to deal with the hardship and possible exploitation abroad and the stigma and exploitation at home. They would need to have vocational training and understanding of their rights early on in life, whether at school or in the family.

With a tradition of male dominance in the society for ages, this is not yet easy, even though Bangladesh boasts of making much progress in women's advancement and

empowerment.

One of the key recommendations from the policy dialogue was to set up more help desks and information centres at the grassroots level to create awareness amongst women migrants about legal opportunities and procedures, including through the mass media.

But in the end, the root causes of the challenges on women migration needs to be addressed at the policy level. Participants at the policy dialogue stressed the urgent need for reviewing the existing (weak) policy regarding female labour migration, strengthening monitoring and enforcement of rules and regulations in the country, reduce their migration cost, improve and decentralize women's training, raise greater awareness of the contribution made by women migrant workers and increase the allocation in the national budget to support the migration sector. Most of these are the responsibility of the government, but the civil society and even the private sector must also join hands, the speakers said.

One year later, many of the challenges still remain, but the government and other actors continue to work together in addressing the challenges on female labour migration. IOM is supporting the government in improving its women training facilities and programmes. New information campaigns and materials are being promoted to inform women migrants better. The Honourable Minister for the Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment openly acknowledges the advocacy and support of organizations like IOM in promoting and supporting the better management of female labour migration.

The road ahead is long, but still we march on.

For more information, please contact Asif Munier at IOM Dhaka: +880.1.714.114.659 / amunier@iom.int or Tanya Huq Shahriar: +880.1.713.01.1705 / tshahriar@iom.int.

HONDURAS: IOM Study Recommends Greater Focus on Adult Female Victims of Trafficking

New IOM research on human trafficking in Honduras recommends increased support from the political and judicial sectors in fighting the phenomenon and a greater focus on the prevention and protection of adult female victims.

The research, one of a series of studies carried out in Central America and the Dominican Republic, confirms that although the Honduran government has taken strong and decisive steps to combat human trafficking, particularly that of minors for sexual exploitation, the trafficking of adult women is not a priority in the country. The research suggests that specific policies and approaches are needed.

“The approach to combat human trafficking needs to be broadened so that other parts of the population, especially adult women, are protected and assisted. There is also a need to acknowledge that human trafficking in Honduras is not only characterized by the sexual exploitation of minors, but also by the trafficking of women for sexual and labour exploitation and for domestic servitude,” says Ana Hidalgo, IOM Regional Counter Trafficking Coordinator.

The study states: “The trafficking of

women in Honduras is linked to a culture of violence against women, which affects their physical, mental and sexual integrity. It is a gross violation of human rights which takes place in a systematic and silent way, with total impunity and devoid of policies to provide support to these victims.”

The study recommends building the capacity of service providers, including law enforcement and the judiciary; increasing public awareness; more concerted efforts to collect solid data; the standardization of the anti-trafficking law in order to close any potential loop holes; and the strengthening of witness and victim protection programmes which are understaffed and underresourced.

Honduras is a country of origin for human trafficking. There is evidence that many female victims are transported by land to Guatemala and Mexico, while internal trafficking takes place from rural areas and small towns to cities. The majority of these victims are trafficked for sexual exploitation.

Trafficking for forced marriage is another occurrence. Young women are lured into marrying older men from other communities or with foreigners who travel to Hon-

duras to find wives. The study confirmed the presence of trafficking networks operating in the country and using the Internet to market the women.

Human trafficking for labour exploitation in the agricultural sector and in the *maquila* industry (assembly plants) has also been reported.

IOM carried out 14 national studies in Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama, working with the Council of Women Ministers of Central America (COMMCA) and the Central American Integration System (SICA), and with funding from the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development (AECID). One set of studies focused on legislation and its application and the others compiled the horrific experiences recounted by adult women victims of trafficking.

The reports are available in Spanish at www.iom.int

For more information, please contact Mirna Rodriguez, IOM Honduras, Email: mrodriguez@iom.int Tel: +504.220.1100

Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Boys and Male Adolescents in Central America

By José Manuel Cepellín, Casa Alianza Honduras

Through its extensive presence in Central America, Casa Alianza, an international NGO dedicated to assisting abandoned children, has been able to recognize the gravity of Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation of boys, girls and adolescents in the region. Although women and girls are usually regarded as the “typical” victims of this type of abuse, research conducted by Casa Alianza in 20 Honduran cities found that, from a sample of 1,019 minors who are victims of sexual exploitation, 42 of them (4 per cent) were male. Amongst the victims who have been screened by Casa Alianza, there are also a significant number of persons who either identify themselves as gay or transsexual.

The business of sexual exploitation in Central America

At Casa Alianza Honduras, we have been able to document a clear link between migration of minors and trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation and CSE. Indeed, our experience shows that the majority of migrant boys and girls who travel alone are exploited sexually and many are vulnerable to becoming victims of trafficking. Young migrants are forced into these situations not only because of economic necessity, but also because traffickers, pimps and other intermediaries also coerce them into sexually exploitative situations.

The exploiters of boys and male adolescents are most often middle-aged men. These men search for boys in lodging establishments, bus stations, and fast-food restaurants, among other places, and pay anywhere from 15 to 100 USD. However, in the Central America-Mexico migration circuit Casa Alianza has documented a case where there was an effort to “buy” a boy for at least 3,000 USD. The most frequent type of CSE in this context is



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remunerated sexual relations, paid either in cash or in kind with clothes, shoes, mobile telephones, food and entertainment. Certain forms of sexual exploitation such as pornography, sexual tourism or using young males in public/private erotic shows are not easily documented as they

usually occur clandestinely. While there are some institutional responses in Central America for female victims of trafficking and CSE, the state response to sexual exploitation of boys and male adolescents is almost non-existent. We believe that in order to address the particular vulnerabilities of young male victims of trafficking and CSE, the following key elements must be taken into account when creating a strategy for protection and service provision targeted at this particular group: a) masculinity and adolescence, b) humiliation suffered, c) drug abuse, d) STDs and HIV/AIDS, e) street violence and street survival, f) the inalienability of the human rights of the victim, and g) sexuality.

When dealing with gay and transsexual boys and male adolescent victims of trafficking and CSE, it is important to respect the sexual identity of minors, and we would advise that assistance targeting this particularly vulnerable group must not try to repress the sexuality of the victim. In-

deed, individuality must be at the core of any intervention strategy. Service providers must also remember that adolescents have the same inalienable rights as adults. Homosexuality and transgender are not illnesses or pathologies; therefore, their presence does not in and of itself require psychological, much less psychiatric, intervention. In this context, all victims of trafficking and of CSE, including boys and male adolescent victims, must be given information related to their sexual rights.

The provision of services for boys and male adolescents do not vary greatly from the attention that should be given to all minors who have been victims of trafficking and CSE. Psychological assistance, for example, should be used to minimize the consequences sexual victimization can have on boys, girls and adolescents. The reconstruction of emotional family links must also be taken into consideration in order to guarantee full reintegration of the victims into their communities, while taking into consideration that in many

instances the family can play role in the exploitation process of the minor.

However, there are specific aspects and conditions that are unique to boys and male adolescents. For Casa Alianza, it remains a formidable challenge to communicate the particular conditions and vulnerabilities of this population to the authorities and society at large. Until these issues are understood, a comprehensive social protection scheme which aims to restore this population with their fundamental rights is not feasible. In the meantime, Casa Alianza will continue fighting to integrate the particular needs of this population into the implementation and development of its service programmes.

For more information on the work of Casa Alianza, please contact the author at honduras@casa-alianza.org.hn

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Forced Marriage in the Sierra Leone Civil War: Beyond Sexual Exploitation

By James Cook

Since its inception in 2002, the Special Court for Sierra Leone has set a number of important jurisprudential precedents. These include being the first international Court to enter convictions for the conscription or enlistment of children under the age of 15 to participate in hostilities and also to enter the first convictions for the specific war crime of “attacks on UN peacekeepers.”¹ On 22 February 2008, this United Nations-backed war crimes tribunal that was established to try those who bear the “greatest responsibility” for the crimes and human rights abuses resulting from the 11-year civil war in Sierra Leone, handed down an important ruling on the issue of forced marriage.² The judgement recognised and declared that forced marriage constitutes a Crime Against Humanity,³ that is a separate and distinct crime from that of sexual slavery.⁴

The Appeals Chamber of the Special Court stated that whilst forced marriage “share[s] certain elements with sexual slavery such as non-consensual sex and deprivation of liberty, there are distinguishing factors [such as] forced conjugal association and an implied relationship of exclusivity” while also noting that “forced marriage is not predominantly a sexual crime.”⁵ Forced marriage in the Sierra

Leone civil war involved the imposition of the status of marriage and a conjugal association by force, or threat of force. “Bush wives” were typically abducted in circumstances of extreme violence and compelled to move along with the fighting forces from place to place, coerced to perform a variety of conjugal duties including regular sexual intercourse, but also forced domestic labour such as cleaning and cooking for the “husband,” endure forced pregnancy, and to care for and bring up children of the “marriage.”

In return, the rebel “husband” was expected to provide food, clothing and protection to his “wife,” including protection from rape by other men. The gravamen of the crime is the assertion of a claim of right and ownership by the “husband” over the “wife”, rather than any sexual element of exploitation. The civil war in Sierra Leone started with a veneer of revolution and the promise of political change, however, the conflict quickly descended into a war of greed with the aim of controlling the diamond mines in the South East of the country. The “bush wives,” and the forced domestic labour gained from the victims, were integral to the various fighting factions and used as a tool of war in order to fuel the conflict. The experiences of the victims of forced marriage in Sierra Leone, and the utiliza-

tion of the “bush wives” by the warring factions, demonstrates that they were subjected to treatment that is comparable to the conditions that define trafficking. These conditions are set forth in the Trafficking Protocol and include the imposition of forced labour or service, slavery or practices similar to slavery and servitude. Indeed, in her 2007 report to the Human Rights Council, the United Nations’ Special Rapporteur on human trafficking, Sigma Huda, stated that in situations of armed conflict “women and girls are subjected to, inter alia, ongoing rape and domestic servitude.” In this same report, Ms. Huda links trafficking in persons and forced marriage by stating that “Forced marriage can be used as a method of recruitment for the purpose of trafficking in persons, and may be a result of trafficking in persons”.

The crime of forced marriage is currently widely perpetrated within both the conflict in Northern Uganda and amongst almost all of the rebel groups in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Both of these situations are currently under investigation by the International Criminal Court; however, thus far forced marriage is not included in the indictments for these situations. Forced marriage must be recognized and charged as a distinct and separate crime from that of

sexual slavery where appropriate, if there is to be no lacuna apparent in law. Doing so will also acknowledge that victims of this crime are subject to many non-sexual forms of exploitation.

James Cooke is employed as a consultant for the Special Court for Sierra Leone. The opin-

ions expressed within this article are his own and do not represent the views of the Special Court.

- 1 *Prosecutor v. Brima, Kamara and Kanu, Case No SCSL-2004-16-T (AFRC The Trial Judgement)*
- 2 *Prosecutor v. Sesay, Kallon and Gbao, Case No SCSL-04-15-T (The RUF Trial Judgement)*
- 3 *Prosecutor v. Brima, Kamara and Kanu, Case No SCSL-2004-16-A (The AFRC Appeals Judgement)*

- 4 *Prosecutor v. Brima, Kamara and Kanu, Case No SCSL-2004-16-A at Para 202 (The AFRC Appeals Judgement)*
- 5 *Prosecutor v. Brima, Kamara and Kanu, Case No SCSL-2004-16-A at Para 195 (The AFRC Appeals Judgement)*

This article originally appeared in the *Global Eye on Human Trafficking* (July 2009), a quarterly bulletin published by the International Organization for Migration.

Skilled Female Migrant Care Workers Negotiating the 4th Shift: Paperwork, Preparation, and Personal Expressiveness

By Sondra Cuban, Senior Lecturer, Educational Research, Lancaster University

Migrants comprise approximately 18% of all paid care workers in England and most of them are women. Public discourses on migrant care workers focus on their filling “occupational gaps” in the labour market rather than on their expertise. When they are praised, their respectfulness to the elderly and their capacities are attributed to their cultural and ethnic attitudes. Rarely are their former degrees and qualifications mentioned as contributing factors for the high quality of care that the elderly receive from them.

Thus, this article aims to take a closer look at skilled migrant care workers in the care labour market in England providing personal care assistance (dressing, bathing, chatting, feeding, cooking, helping to walk and move) to the elderly in their private homes, in private residential care homes, or in private nursing homes. It analyses how women who worked as nurses, midwives, and physical therapists in their countries of origin effectively balance the labour demanded by the modernized care industry in the occupation of ‘care worker’.

The 4th shift: new labour demands in the care industry

New tasks include filling out paperwork like writing reports on clients, preparation of their work through attending trainings and personal expressiveness such as dealing with clients’ emotional needs through chatting with them and listening. The care workers abilities and willingness to fulfil these new tasks make them valuable human resources in England’s modernized commercial care industry. Their juggling of care activities with other duties can be called the 4th shift of labour building on the concept of 2nd shift, coined by Arlie Hochschild, which explains how women do paid work during the day while cleaning and caring at night and Sharon Bolton’s

3rd shift recognizing women’s emotional labour of maintaining harmony and orderliness in the household as well as in paid employment.

Female migrant care workers are underrecognized skilled professionals who make the best out of their situation

Many of the care workers who were working as medical and health care professionals in their countries of origin before migrating are wondering if they have missed opportunities by not stepping directly into the nursing field in England. Their contracts, which are determined by their recruitment agencies, make it difficult for them to leave this part of the care sector. While their identities as health care professionals are often acknowledged by clients, their medical expertise is downgraded by the management of the private care home companies or agencies that employ them. The conditions of their labour (unsociable and on-call hours, low pay, no sick leave or over-time, and few promotional opportunities) do not match their high-level aptitudes, specializations, and care ethic.

At the same time, the migrant care workers adapt their expectations and attitudes so as to adjust to their new occupations, without being frustrated and angry on a constant basis. In doing so, they focus on their commitment to working in the field of care for elderly people, who they often see as abandoned by their families and marginalized in society. Also, since many of these health professionals have not previously worked with the elderly, they often find this population to be of interest medically, become interested in gerontology, and aspire to work in nursing homes in the future.

Care work is emotional work

Paid care work is time- and labour-intensive, and involves emotional work. Clients have a range of demands that the carers are expected to fulfil by their companies, from chatting and comforting to

feeding, toileting, and bathing, in addition to using medical equipment such as hoists for lifting them. The carer is like a surrogate family member who is expected to take on all of these roles, while also anticipating more needs on a constant basis and guarding them against possible safety and health dangers. Much of this work is subsumed under the gender contract (care work as ‘women’s work’) and migrants’ expertise is often seen as inherently female as well as shaped by their ethnicity or race. Many of the carers embrace this supposition, but they also see themselves as competent health care professionals. There are many hidden skills and behaviours that are required for this position, while wages hover at the minimum. Skilled migrants are able to provide emotional labour under time constraints without complaint, and withstand complex encounters with clients.

Migrants’ skills need to be recognized

The social care industry demands complex conditions from workers. These conditions are interconnected, and imply an overload of responsibilities. Skilled female migrants, with their professional health care knowledge and identities, skills and expertise, and their participation in skilled migration care chains, can fulfil these new requirements of the 4th shift.

Systematic interventions are needed to assist this group to advance. Firstly, work conditions need to change, including salaries and recognition. Although unions have tried to penetrate the private care industry and have made some changes, progress is still slow. Secondly, professional and adaptation opportunities need to be available so that this group can aspire towards their goals as health care professionals. Thirdly, advocacy efforts should be increased to draw more attention to the deskilling phenomenon affecting migrant women globally.

ITALY: Overturning Negative Perceptions of Migrants

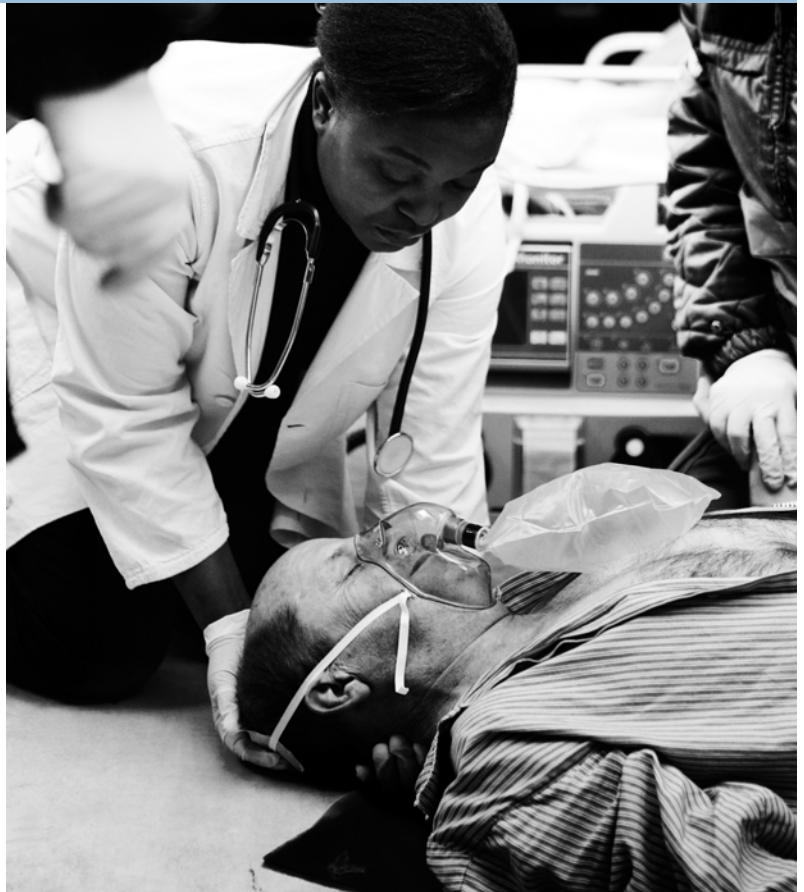
June 2010

An African-born doctor photographed by the press while saving the life of an Italian man with the slogan: “The typical migrant in the news.” is the subject of a sensitization campaign launched by IOM in Italy in April 2009 and targeting public and media alike.

Produced in cooperation with the advertising agency Publicis, the campaign aims to overturn a common perception that migrants are often criminals.

“Polls in Italy show that migrants are increasingly being perceived negatively, mainly because they are often reported in the media in stories about crime and criminal activities. By focusing migrants’ public representation to this impedes not just effective integration but also mutual knowledge and respect between migrants and the host community. It also perpetuates discrimination and xenophobia,” says former IOM’s Regional Representative for the Mediterranean, Peter Schatzer. “This is an issue of great concern to IOM and we feel the public’s attention should be drawn to the key and positive role that migrants actually have on the Italian economy and society.”

Kyenge Kshetu, a doctor of Congolese origin working in Italy for several years, features in the campaign. Part of African diaspora organizations in northern Italy, she is a keen supporter of the aims of the cam-



paign.

“She represents the silent majority of migrants who work hard and who contribute enormously to Italy’s development. This is the real news about migration that everybody should know,” says Schatzer.

The production of the campaign has seen the proactive cooperation of many volunteers — photographers, actors and crew — who spontaneously decided to work together with the Publicis Agency on a pro bono basis.

“We decided to work with IOM on this initiative because migration at this moment is a

very delicate and sensitive issue. We wanted to find a way to contribute to improving the perception of migrant communities in Italy,” says Patrizio Marini, Creative Director of the Publicis bureau in Rome.

The campaign was published by several newspapers and featured in national and local media in Italy. A second phase has started in July 2010. Material from the campaign can be downloaded at: www.italy.iom.int.

For further information, please contact Flavio Di Giacomo, IOM Rome: + 39 06 44 186 207 Email: fdigiaco@iom.int

AFGHANISTAN – IOM Constructs Three Midwife Training Centres

IOM has begun the construction of a 100-bed hospital in Gardez (Paktia Province), a 20-bed hospital in Khair Kot (Paktika) and three midwife training centres in Fayzabad (Badakshan), Bamyan (Bamyān) and Khost (Khost) in Afghanistan.

The projects, funded by USAID through its Construction of Health and Education Facilities (CHEF) programme, aim to raise standards of health care in Afghanistan, which has some of the world’s worst infant, childhood and maternal mortality rates.

According to a recent Oxfam study, the country has only one hospital bed per 2,400 people and only one doctor for 15,000. One child in four does not survive beyond its fifth birthday and only 16 per cent of women are attended by trained personnel during pregnancy, particu-

HIGHLIGHTS ON IOM GENDER ACTIVITIES

Italy: Overturning Negative Perceptions of Migrants

Afghanistan: IOM Constructs Three Midwife Training Centres

Liberia: Reintegrating Conflict-Affected Women and Girls

Cambodia: A Success Story of Holistic Approach Strategy in Combating Human Trafficking

Egypt: Migrant Health Volunteers Transform Migrant Communities

Sri Lanka: IOM Backs Government Efforts to Improve Skills of Migrant Housekeepers and Caregivers

Ecuador: IOM Medical Teams Help Women in Isolated Communities along Ecuador’s Northern Border

South Africa: Survey Highlights Migrant Women’s Needs and Vulnerabilities



larly in rural areas.

The hospitals will provide urgently needed health services, including in-patient and out-patient referral and treatment, to communities within their respective provinces and those in outlying areas/adjacent provinces.

The midwife training centre will also serve as a training facility for health professionals and a venue for medical conferences and workshops.

In Afghanistan, IOM works closely with the government

counterparts, in line with the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS), focusing on technical cooperation and capacity-building.

IOM programmes provide emergency relief to vulnerable displaced families, facilitate long-term return and reintegration to and within Afghanistan and stabilize migrant communities for sustainable development and consequently combat irregular migration.

For further information, please contact Bogdan Danila, IOM Kabul, Tel + 93 (0) 700 224 863, Email: bdanila@iom.int or Ahmad Shah Haied, Tel +93 (0) 700 185 961, Email: ahaied@iom.int

LIBERIA: Reintegrating Conflict-Affected Women and Girls

IOM has signed a comprehensive agreement with the German government to provide sustainable socio-economic reintegration assistance to conflict-affected women and girls who live in the northern Lofa County, which borders Guinea and Sierra Leone.

The programme promotes sustainable livelihood opportunities for female victims of the conflict who continue to bear the mental and physical scars of war and who often struggle to make a living in the districts of Voinjama, Kolahun and Foya. The 14-year conflict has taken a heavy toll on Liberian women, many of whom continue to suffer from long-term physical and mental ailments. A recent survey of conflict-affected women and girls showed that 63 per cent of them suffered from rape and other forms of physical and mental abuse.

Working with the National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration and Resettlement (NCDDRR), the Liberian Government, UN and non-governmental partners, as well as the Ministry of Gender and Development, IOM provides beneficiaries with on-the-job vocational training, small business start-up grants, reinsertion kits and livelihood tools such as hand tractors, sewing machines, and starter kits for bakery or trading supplies for kiosks.

Priority is given to beneficiaries who choose to work together on common income-generating projects, particularly in

the agriculture sector.

“Providing sustainable reintegration assistance to vulnerable women and girls who have not received the full attention and assistance they deserve is essential to anchor peace and promote development in Liberia,” says Ferdinand Paredes, IOM’s Head of Office in Monrovia.

On 10 March 2010, German Ambassador Ilse Lindemann-Macha visited a number of sites benefiting from the livelihood support project for women and girls implemented by IOM in Lofa County.

During the Ambassador’s visit to four project sites in Foya District, agriculture and weaving groups established by the project demonstrated skills learned and presented to the Ambassador samples of their harvests and products. The Ambassador has expressed admiration for the women’s work, saying “I am happy and impressed with the motivation and industriousness shown by the women and pleased with how they have applied their learning to achieve good results”. She informed the beneficiaries that: “I will inform my government of your hard work and tell them that our support was well spent”.

Ambassador Lindemann-Macha also urged the women to go beyond demonstration and enhance their marketing skills to be able to sell their products. She encouraged them to always strive for success and pledged her government’s continuous

support for the empowerment needs of Liberians as the country moves to recovery and national renewal. The beneficiaries also expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to benefit from the project that provided them the knowledge, skills and materials to engage in livelihoods and contribute to the local economy and their country’s rebuilding process. The women stated that the skills acquired will allow them to generate incomes and hopefully lead better lives. Proudly showing off their harvest, the farming groups presented to the Ambassador a variety of vegetables harvested and showed her the farming plots that were recently planted with rice.

When the Ambassador visited Kpelloe village, two weaving groups from Kpelloe



Kumba Nathaniel shows the Ambassador the many uses of the woven fabric



Damawah demonstrates her weaving skills

and Ngprkuma demonstrated their weaving skills and also presented a few of their woven fabrics, using colourful designs. IOM Liberia Head Ferdinand Paredes, Lofa Field Office Head Yoko Fujimura, Lofa-based IOM staff, community leaders and villagers, and representatives from the Sustainable Agriculture Services Union (SASU), and UNPOL accompanied the Ambassador during the visit.

Project beneficiaries who opted to learn how to weave completed their three-month training on traditional weaving in Lawalazu, Voinjama District. The women decided to engage in weaving, mostly associated with men in the past, hoping to learn new skills and engage in a profitable activity. Ms. Weedor Lovo and Tarnue Baysah, known locally for their expertise in weaving, were contracted by IOM to provide skills training on traditional weaving to the women. Tarnue said: "Weaving is quite new in Liberia and when it was first introduced in the country, only men learned how to weave. But now women are starting to learn and I am confident that if they put their minds and hearts to it, the women will profit from it as well."

The women said they have seen others weave but admitted that it was their first time to actually weave by themselves. Their training started with understanding the structure of the weaving instrument, including learning how to assemble and disassemble them. The women also learned how to properly prepare and insert threads into the instrument and through constant practice, were able to weave colourful fabrics. "Not all of them were fast learners but given more time to practice, I am sure that all of them will be able to weave professionally" said Wee-

dor Lovo. After the hands-on training, the group produced ten rolls of multi-purpose fabric which can be used as sash, scarves, blouses or even as table runners. The first rolls produced were sold, augmenting the women's incomes. They are now learning new designs and are looking at producing other products using the woven fabric, such as bags and shawls.

To further support the group, a palava hut was constructed through the German-financed project which they will use as their business centre in the future. The palava huts constructed in all project sites will eventually serve as community meeting areas.

Damawah Zomah (30), chosen by her weaving group members to be their leader has expressed enthusiasm and is hopeful about her new skills.

"I chose traditional weaving because I want to make money. I have two children and I want to send them to school. I am going to produce good products to be sold to enable me to send my children to school. I really hope I will be able to give my children better lives with the new skills I have gained through the project", Damawah said.

The Daalei Agricultural Group based in Vezala, Voinjama District was the first among 26 farming groups supported by the German-funded livelihood project to harvest a variety of vegetables six weeks after their hands-on training. Other groups based in Zorzor, Sembehaye in

Kolahun and Hieworlachio in Foya harvested shortly thereafter.

The farming groups were trained and mentored by the Sustainable Agriculture Services Union (SASU), a local training service provider. The farming groups' training focused mainly on nursery maintenance and vegetable production but also provided rice production training in February, as soon as weather conditions allowed. SASU taught the groups the importance of crop rotation to keep the soil healthy and productive.

The groups recently constructed water reservoirs and installed water pumps distributed by the project to help irrigate the farming plots. This will lessen the women's burden of having to collect water from water sources which are located far from their farms.

*For further information, please contact:
Ferdinand C. Paredes, Head of IOM Liberia:
fparedes@iom.int*



Smiles of joy despite the hard work: Women from Lawalazu, Voinjama District



By Kanha Chan, IOM Project Officer

Counter-trafficking IOM Cambodia has been actively involved in tackling issues of vulnerability and developing programmes that offer livelihood options to people in their own communities / within Cambodia. Thanks to careful participatory research, it was acknowledged that addressing human trafficking would require a comprehensive response in terms of raising awareness, mobilizing communities, engaging in advocacy, ensuring rigorous enforcement of the law and providing real assistance to the poor. Growing investments as well as the development of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) provided an opportunity to meet the demand for (local) labour and the establishment of the K'Set Commune Vocational Skills training centre in Svay Rieng Province. It represents a win-win situation for foreign investors, poor local communities and the government, which all desire to facilitate socio-economic development and consequently reduce cross-border trafficking and irregular migration.

Funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, the K'Set centre opened in January 2006 in K'Set Commune, Kampong Ro District, where a large number of villagers cross the border regularly to Viet Nam to do seasonal work, mostly in farming. However, local traffickers have also recruited children and villagers for exploitation, often through organized begging networks set up in Ho Chi Minh City in Viet Nam. The Centre is a significant

achievement of partnerships between IOM, the Royal Government of Cambodia and the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) to prevent human trafficking. It has successfully brought together a range of stakeholders from both the private and public sectors.

This partnership has so far provided 569 young women from local vulnerable communities with sewing-skills training. Following a 30-day course on basic sewing skills (as well as training in life skills and safe migration), trainees take a practical exam and get an official certificate, as well as an Application Employment Card to work from the Department of Labor and Vocational Training (DoLVT). These documents facilitate employment with a garment factory. The Provincial Department of Women's Affairs (PDWA) estimates that 70 per cent to 80 per cent of the graduates have landed full-time jobs.

The gender focus of the programmes means that they also strive to cater to the needs of men and boys in vulnerable communities. This translated into an extension of training centre activities to offer livelihood options to young men. In 2009, 56 young men successfully completed a mechanic and motorcycle repair course.

Acknowledging that there are many challenges to alleviate poverty and to improve the prospects of the poor, especially in light of the absence of credit and working capital, the K'Set centre organizes a range of other poverty-alleviation activities, in-

cluding a successful and sustainable family support fund (FSF) that has been piloted in ten vulnerable villages. Through the FSF, villagers have been able to get small loans for family businesses and agricultural investments. The main goal is to provide some capital from an emergency fund to the poorest of the poor.

“Before I got married I worked in a garment factory in Phnom Penh. After I got pregnant, I quit my job to stay at home taking care of my baby. Now, I have two children. I have no rice farm. I rely on my husband, who sends me some money. However, I do not have enough to support my children. I got a loan from the programme to buy raw material for mat weaving. The money I earn from mat weaving can help me in daily expenses for my family, such as food seasoning, giving 200 Riels to my children while they go to school and sometimes buying medicine for the children from the shop nearby.

All these activities have made a significant difference for the poor in their communities and have facilitated a significant decrease of irregular migration and trafficking to Viet Nam. In 2006, the Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (DOLISA) recorded a 40 per cent reduction in returns from Viet Nam. Moreover, the number of families who migrated to Viet Nam for begging from January 2004 to September 2009 dramatically decreased by 87 per cent from 125 families to 16 families.

With its success in linking vocational skills to employment opportunities, the K'Set centre has become a national model of best practice, drawing the attention of other ministries and actors interested in learning about developing their own market-driven, sustainable models of local economic development to alleviate poverty and prevent unsafe migration and human trafficking.

EGYPT: Migrant Health Volunteers Transform Migrant Communities



By Ginette Kidd, IOM Project Manager

According to an Egyptian Ministry of Health decree, everyone is granted access to primary and emergency health care services, irrespective of the country of origin or legal status. Unfortunately, the majority of migrants in Egypt are unaware of such laws that enable them to exercise their right to health care, and they continue to encounter challenges that endanger not only their health, but that also of their families.

A significant number of Iraqi migrants fall prey to this trend and do not access public health care services for a variety of reasons: they live in isolated areas, have legal status issues or they fear discrimination from health care providers. Because so many are unacquainted with the services provided by NGOs, they wind up spending money on high-cost private services. To help overcome some of these barriers, IOM has trained more than 30 Iraqi women as Community Health Volunteers (CHVs) and given them the necessary skills to help raise awareness of the available health services and to contribute to the overall well-being of the Iraqi com-

munity residing in the Greater Cairo area.

Following the August 2009 adaptation of the *Egyptian Ministry of Health Community Health Worker* training modules to take into account the migrant reality, IOM conducted a core training course for a group of 18 enthusiastic Iraqi women living in the Sixth of October governorate of Greater Cairo. Most of the CHVs are university graduates who have resided in Egypt for more than four years, and almost all are dependent on either their savings, which are rapidly dwindling, on the support of their family members in Iraq or elsewhere.

This first group of volunteers currently reaches out to some 200 Iraqi families. Through their work, they dispel common myths, share information on available governmental, NGO and private health care services and manage clients' broader expectations. They also provide basic health advice, which focuses on child, youth and reproductive health issues, as well as communicable, non-communicable and chronic diseases. IOM regularly meets with the CHVs to provide additional training on relevant health issues and in-

formation exchange. With a particular focus on child and reproductive health, the peer-to-peer outreach has been particularly successful, with the Iraqi CHVs meeting with Iraqi women in their homes in a culturally accepted approach. For a variety of reasons, many Iraqi women do not often leave their homes, which limits their access to information and services, as well as their opportunities for social interaction.

Since the start of the project, IOM has expanded the network to train an additional 18 Iraqi CHVs from another suburb of Cairo. These women are equally committed to supporting Iraqi families in their community, and within the first month of outreach, the second group of trainees had met close to 300 Iraqi families. With some 26 per cent of women of reproductive age and 20 per cent children under the age of ten, the training focus is directly relevant to the needs of the beneficiaries. According to the CHVs, 38 per cent of home visits are conducted to respond to requests for information on reproductive or child health.

"This programme is improving the health and psychological conditions of Iraqis through the home visits that enable families to share their concerns and worries with others," one of the volunteers explained. "It also directs families to the relevant health services to address basic health problems."

This initiative is part of a wider project that IOM is currently implementing to enhance access to primary health care for Iraqi migrants temporarily residing in Egypt, which is financed by the United States Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration. Other components of this project include: capacity building of NGO and government health care providers, the provision of direct assistance to promote access to primary health care and awareness-raising initiatives on relevant health issues and available health services.

SRI LANKA - IOM Backs Government Efforts to Improve Skills of Migrant Housekeepers and Caregivers

IOM is backing efforts by the Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare (MFEPW) to improve housekeeper/domestic help and caregiver training courses to upgrade the skills of

migrant workers and enhance their earning potential abroad.

The majority of Sri Lankan migrant workers are women, many of whom work as

housemaids, primarily in the Arabian Gulf. The remittances that they send home are critical to Sri Lanka's economy and in 2008 reached an estimated US\$ 2.9 billion.

“Housekeeping and caregiving are two of the ten fastest growing occupations worldwide and there is growing demand for people with these skills in rich countries. The government recognizes that comprehensive pre-departure training will increase demand for Sri Lankan workers in this field, says IOM Sri Lanka’s Chief of Mission, Mohammed Abdiker.

The training, which IOM has helped the MFEPW to develop following an extensive consultative process with government and the private sector, includes the development of job profiles, the entry requirements for courses, vocational training standards, curriculum and training of trainer modules.

“The enhanced training will not only send better-prepared migrants. Their newly acquired knowledge will also improve their understanding of their rights and protect them from abuses”, says Shantha Kulase-

kera, IOM Sri Lanka’s Head of Migration Management.

The MFEPW plans to streamline the pre-departure training of migrant workers by asking all training providers to adopt the new standards and curriculum. It also intends to introduce a credible testing and evaluation system to ensure that any worker leaving Sri Lanka to work in the two sectors has successfully completed the relevant training and received a certificate.

“The contribution and efforts of IOM Sri Lanka in improving the vocational skills of migrants have been timely and is a significant step forward in the right direction for the betterment of our migrant workers,” says Dr. Keheliya Rambukwella, Minister of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare.

In addition to the two training courses, IOM has also helped to develop 25 Sri

Lankan Worker Profiles for occupations in high demand abroad. The profiles are useful tools for the promotion of Sri Lankan workers abroad, outlining the knowledge, skills and attitudes expected in occupations in the hospitality, construction and janitorial sectors.

In addition to improving pre-departure training, IOM also helps the government in assessing labour migration challenges and opportunities in Sri Lanka, and conducts labour market research on opportunities for skilled and semi-skilled Sri Lankans abroad.

For more information please contact Shantha Kulasekara, Tel. +94.1.532.5300 (Ext:356), +94.777 727 796 (mobile), Email: skulasekara@iom.int; Stacey Winston, Tel. +94.1.532.5300 (Ext:340) +94.7723662 (mobile), Email: swinston@iom.int; or Passanna Gunasekera, Tel. +94.1. 532.5300 (Ext 341), Email: pgunasekera@iom.int

ECUADOR: IOM Medical Teams Help Women in Isolated Communities along Ecuador’s Northern Border

IOM’s Emergency Assistance Programme for Persons in Search of International Protection, which covers Colombia’s borders with Ecuador, Panama, and Venezuela, dispatched five 10-person medical teams to work with Colombians who have crossed international borders in search of protection and the local residents in the receiving communities.

The IOM-led medical teams, equipped with portable testing equipment, are carrying out tests including pap smears and other histopathology evaluations.

In the Ecuadorian border town of San Lorenzo, the teams have so far tested and treated 370 women (50% Ecuadorians and 50% Colombians). The medical personnel also provide training on treatment and prevention of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STIs) and HIV/AIDS, which motivated some 80 per cent of the patients to be tested for HIV. The results of the tests will be used to determine the prevalence of STIs in each community and to implement better treatment and prevention mechanisms.

“These communities are poor and isolated, so the women do not have easy access to these tests. Some women have up to 15 children, so these tests are vital for the health of the women and the entire community,” explains Juan Fernando Borja,

IOM Programme Officer.

One of the main objectives of this project is to strengthen the local capacity to manage STIs by training local Ministry of Health staff, which is part of the IOM medical teams.”

A Colombian patient told IOM staff: “I am happy to have this opportunity; there are many diseases in San Lorenzo. This treatment and training is vital for women to take better care of our health.”

Since October 2005, this IOM programme has been addressing the emergency needs faced by Colombians who flee their country due to conflict and the local population of the impoverished border communities.

A survey conducted in February 2008 by UNHCR reported an estimated 85,000

Colombians living in communities along Ecuador’s northern border. Some 35,000 persons confirmed that they had applied for asylum, but only 70 per cent were found to have special protection needs.

The programme, funded by the US Department of State’s Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM), covers Colombia’s border areas with Ecuador, Panama and Venezuela.

For more information, contact IOM Ecuador, Ana Guzman, Tel: (593-2)-225-3948 Email: aguzman@iom.int



SOUTH AFRICA: Survey Highlights Migrant Women's Needs and Vulnerabilities



© Patrick Cocakynne 2007 - MZA0046 HIV Awareness Campaign and Distribution of IEC Materials in Hoedspruit, an agricultural town in South Africa's Limpopo province.

A new IOM survey on the needs and vulnerabilities of undocumented migrants in South Africa's northernmost Limpopo Province calls for urgent humanitarian assistance for particularly vulnerable groups, such as unaccompanied minors, women and victims of sexual and gender-based violence and other crimes.

This survey, based on field assessments conducted by IOM between February and March 2009 in and around the northern town of Musina, finds that economic desperation and lack of options at home are forcing tens of thousands of people to engage in perilous journeys through treacherous border areas, to jump or crawl under border fences or wade across the Limpopo River using unscrupulous intermediaries who regularly abuse them.

It underlines that many migrants, especially unaccompanied minors and women, face brutalities and gender-based violence at the hands of their smugglers, who act with impunity and with little or no fear of prosecution from the authorities.

As part of the survey, IOM interviewed 214 unaccompanied minors, 75 per cent of whom were boys. The research suggests that one of the major motivating factors for children to migrate is family reunification or family breakdown. Eighteen per cent said they experienced violence or robbery along their journey and showed signs of deep psychological trauma from the horrendous experiences they went through during the migration process.

The report details the story of migrants who sustained injuries from crawling under razor wire fences to enter South Africa and of woman who experienced multiple sexual assaults. In most cases, victims said they were not aware of existing health facilities or that they simply wanted to continue their journey to Johannesburg without interruption.

The survey finds that 84 per cent of the 1,128 respondents cited economic reasons or lack of employment opportunities as reasons for leaving their homes, while 6 per cent said they had left their homes out of fear of political, religious or ethnic persecution.

Many respondents said they regularly travelled back and forth between Zimbabwe and South Africa, particularly cross-border traders and farm workers.

According to the survey, migrants continue to have difficulties in finding meaningful and well-paid employment in South Africa. In total, 55 per cent of respondents said they had some form of income and the majority were earning less than 1,000 rand (US\$ 130) per month.

Remittances continue to be a major driving force behind migrants' decision to travel to South Africa, with a majority of respondents saying four or more people depended on the money they sent back home. Overwhelmingly, remittances are used to buy food.

Of all the respondents, farm workers reported the highest earning and remittance levels, with 94 per cent in possession of a work permit. However, many continued to travel clandestinely to and from the country; with 45 per cent entering South Africa through the same border post.

"There is little social perspective for people

entering South Africa as undocumented migrants," says IOM's Yukiko Kumashiro. "Many are literally living from hand to mouth, often depending on help from well-wishers and NGOs to sustain their livelihoods."

Musina, which is located some 11 kilometres from the Zimbabwean border, has experienced an influx of mostly Zimbabwean migrants and asylum-seekers who transit the Limpopo Province to travel to cities such as Johannesburg.

The survey recommends setting up counselling and support services for migrants who have experienced violence and trauma during the migration process, especially for women and unaccompanied minors. Such services should be extended beyond the town of Musina to Makhado and to private farms where significant numbers of migrants are employed.

Similarly, family tracing and/or reunification of unaccompanied minors within South Africa and Zimbabwe should be strengthened.

IOM is providing humanitarian assistance to Zimbabwean migrants in the Limpopo Province, with a focus on vulnerable undocumented migrants, informal cross-border traders, unaccompanied minors, victims of human trafficking, of sexual and gender-based violence and migrant workers on commercial farms and mines.

This includes providing food and non-food assistance, legal counselling and family tracing and reunification services. IOM also carries out awareness-raising activities on safe migration and supports migrants' shelters.

This survey was funded by the US State Department's Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM).

For further information, please contact, Nde Ndifonka at IOM Pretoria, Tel: +27 71 689 9966, Email ndifonka@iom.int

A CRUSADER AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

By Michael Oriedo, Standard Newspaper, Nairobi, 21st April 2010

Every day, the media is awash with stories of people who have been trafficked within and outside the country.

Whereas some of these people are fortunate to relive their tales after being rescued, others end up suffering for long in the hands of their cruel hosts.

Working for International Organization for Migration (IOM), a counter trafficking body, Tal Raviv says human trafficking is gradually becoming a major problem in the country.

“The vice is on the increase in Kenya. People are trafficked for sexual exploitation, domestic and agricultural labour,” she says.

Sadly, she notes that women and children are the most vulnerable groups. “They are promised better lives but end up in slavery where they work for little or no pay.”

As the Regional Program Development Officer for IOM, Tal has assisted many victims of human trafficking. Through her organisation, she works on trafficking and smuggling in Kenya, Somalia, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda, Burundi and Rwanda.

“Most of these countries are a source, transit points and destinations for victims of human trafficking. Traffickers use them to ship people regionally as well as to Europe, Gulf States and US,” she says.

Born in Israel, Tal began her international career in Angola in 1998. “I was then working with United Nations Children’s Fund



Ms Tal Raviv during the interview. Photo/Michael Oriedo

(UNICEF) as a mine action consultant and then with the peace-keeping mission as a human rights officer. The country was in great turmoil because of war. I witnessed different kinds of human suffering which we worked hard to eliminate,” she says.

Few years later, she joined IOM and moved to Kosovo as a counter-trafficking officer. “Human trafficking was rampant in the country because of war,” recalls Tal. “Traffickers were taking advantage of chaos to traffic people to Europe,” she adds.

Tal thereafter worked in several other countries, among them US, Albania, Israel, RSA and Tanzania before coming to Kenya in 2006 to manage IOM’s

counter-trafficking programs and to serve as a regional program development officer, overseeing the development of new programs in all IOM areas of work related to migration.

“When I arrived in the country, I did not expect cases of human trafficking to be high as they are,” she says.

However, according to Tal, human trafficking has no boundaries. Even the most developed and peaceful countries are affected.

On the other hand, the local form involves going upcountry, taking a child and promising to enrol them in a school but they end up to work as a house help. “This form is a very exploitative since it happens in the confines

INSIDE IOM:
WHAT’S NEW?

A CRUSADER
AGAINST
HUMAN
TRAFFICKING



© IOM 2009 - MKE0276 - Tal Raviv, with Hollywood actor Nicolas Cage and Antonio Mario Costa, UNODC's Executive Director, speaks with Somali and Ethiopian urban migrants at the IOM Eastleigh Wellness Centre.

of peoples' houses," observes Tal.

Besides that, Tal says IOM has noted others kinds of trafficking where Kenyans are taken to South Africa, Zambia, Tanzania and Southern Sudan to work.

"Mostly they are adults and have genuine documents but are recruited through dubious agencies. Some of them, with the help of IOM, are now returning voluntarily after finding life in these countries unbearable."

When such people return, Tal says the organisation assists them with medical care, food, accommodation and reintegration support.

While doing this, "they prepare ground for their reunion and reintegration in their families," she says.

Tal identifies poverty, gender inequalities, lack of opportunities, failure to understand risks involved and lack of proper legislation to counter trafficking as the major causes of human trafficking in the country.

"These factors make people extremely vulnerable. They will grab any opportunity that comes hoping to better their lives but they end up being exploited," she says. Not all is gloom however. Soon, the country may have specific laws to counter human trafficking. "With the help of the government and other organisations, we drafted an anti-human trafficking bill that would help combat the crime," says Tal.

The draft bill has passed first and second readings in parliament. The bill provides legislations to protect vulnerable people, for instance, refugees, women and children and proposes severe punishment for offenders.

Tal believes that passing and enactment of the law would be a crown to IOM's efforts to counter human trafficking. She advises that we should discard the belief that grass is always greener in foreign countries. "Recruitment agencies give deceptive information that lure people to foreign countries. When you find that your passport is being confiscated, know you are in trouble," she says.

For the 12 years she has worked in international human rights works, Tal has lived

her dream. "As I grew up in Tel Aviv, Israel, I always wanted to do international humanitarian work. I am happy that I have managed to do that," she says.

She urges women to grab any legitimate opportunity that comes their way. "Follow your dream but do not compromise or risk your life to the extent that you give it to a trafficker," she says.

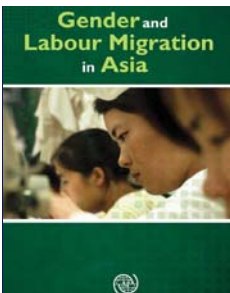
Tal says victims of human trafficking often suffer isolation, malnutrition, sexually transmitted diseases and psychological trauma.

However, she says most Kenyan victims suffer from shame because of the high expectations their families put on them. "They fear to return home because they will be seen as failures," say Raviv.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimates about one million people are trafficked annually across international borders.

Tal holds a law degree from Israel and a Masters Degree in International Human Rights from the US.

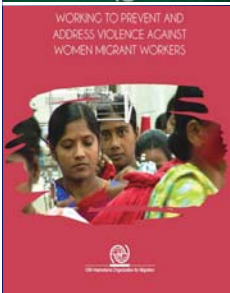
Recommended reading



Gender and Labour Migration in Asia International Organization for Migration

Gender and Labour Migration in Asia, which contains country chapters on Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, and China, aims to place gender on the labour migration and development agenda in Asia.

http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/index.php?main_page=product_info&products_id=537



Working to Prevent and Address Violence against Women Migrant Workers International Organization for Migration

This publication presents the approach IOM takes toward the protection and empowerment of women migrant workers. By displaying key IOM activities in that area, the report seeks to better inform policymakers, practitioners and the public of the vulnerability of these women and of good practices for the protection of their human rights throughout the labour migration cycle.

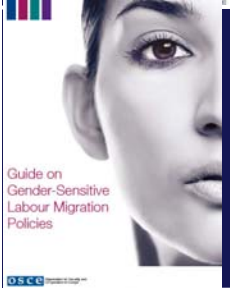
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Taking Action against Violence and Discrimination Affecting Migrant Women and Girls International Organization for Migration

This information sheet aims to highlight the specificities of violence against women in the context of migration focusing on risk factors, private and public spheres, economic violence, cost and consequences, obstacles to reporting, international legal framework.

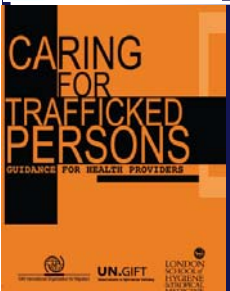
http://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/published_docs/brochures_and_info_sheets/



Guide on Gender-Sensitive Labour Migration Policies Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

The Guide aims at presenting good practices and providing tools on how to shape gender-sensitive labour migration processes.

http://www.osce.org/publications/eea/2009/05/37689_1289_en.pdf



Caring for Trafficked Persons International Organization for Migration

Provides practical, non-clinical guidance to help concerned health providers understand the phenomenon of human trafficking, recognize some of the health problems associated with trafficking and consider safe and appropriate approaches to providing health care for trafficked persons.

http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/index.php?main_page=product_info&products_id=510

Gender Issues Coordination (GIC)

17 route des Morillons
CH-1211 Geneva 19 — Switzerland
Internet: <http://www.iom.int/gender>

Editor: Sylvia Lopez-Ekra
E-mail: sekra@iom.int
Tel: +41 22 717 94 78