

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is the principal international organization charged with migration. It arranges the movement of refugees and migrants to new homes and promotes migration assistance to assure orderly migration and integration. IOM's Director General is Brunson McKinley of the United States.

IOM was formed in 1951 as the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM) to help solve the post-war problems of refugees and displaced persons in Europe, and to assist in orderly trans-Atlantic migration. It adopted its current name in 1989 to reflect its progressively global outreach in terms of geographical coverage as well as program activities. Since its creation, IOM has assisted some 12 million refugees and migrants to settle in over 125 countries.

### PROGRAMS IN AFGHANISTAN

Over the past two years, IOM has focused on major humanitarian emergencies in Afghanistan and Iraq. In Afghanistan, as part of its Return and Reintegration Programme for internally displaced persons (IDPs), IOM provides free transport, medical screening, food and shelter at nine overnight transit centers, and the procurement and distribution of reintegration packages for returning Afghan families. Since December 2001 IOM has assisted over 400,000 IDPs to return home. IOM will continue to provide support to some 100,000 IDPs in 2003.



*IOM provides free transport, medical screening, food and shelter at nine overnight transit centers for returning Afghan families.*

IOM's Afghanistan Transition Initiative (ATI) is carrying out quick impact infrastructure projects throughout the country. So far, 173 projects funded by USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives are completed or underway in 25 provinces, benefiting some 500,000 Afghans. These projects include education, irrigation, urban sanitation, power, and other sectors. IOM will also build 14 women's centres that will provide women living in the provinces with projects such as literacy, political participation, and skills training.

The Return of Qualified Afghans (RQA) program is facilitating the effective participation of qualified and skilled Afghan nationals residing outside the country in the reconstruction of their home country. Since December 2001 IOM has assisted 420 Afghan experts from 24 different countries to return home. The returnees are working in 21 ministries, 15 governmental institutions and 41 other organizations. The

program provides an installation grant and a monthly salary subsidy.

### PROGRAMS IN IRAQ

In Iraq, at the outset of the crisis, IOM assisted Third Country Nationals (TCNs) fleeing Iraq into Jordan, Syria and Iran to return to their countries of origin. To date, IOM has assisted nearly 5,000 persons to return, mostly to Sudan and Egypt.

At the request of the United Nations and under the overall responsibility of the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, IOM is coordinating the efforts of NGOs and others in registering IDPs, managing camps, distributing non-food items, and eventually helping people to return to their homes.

IOM's Iraq Transition Initiative (ITI) addresses post-conflict community needs. The program, funded by USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives, identifies and finances quick impact community improvement projects. The program focuses on the ability of local institutions to improve community infrastructure, such as schools and health facilities, for the whole population. The program depends on Iraqi participation, at local and national level, to prioritize needs.

IOM's Medical Evacuation and Health Reconstruction Program for Iraq (MEHRPI), had by mid-October 2003 helped to evacuate 90 patients selected by an international panel of doctors to 11 countries for medical treatment unavailable in Iraq. The program is a dual initiative combining selective medical evacuations with help to re-build the country's dilapidated specialist health care system.

IOM is helping small numbers of Iraqis, particularly those with special humanitarian reasons, to return home from abroad via Jordan. Returnees have included a terminally ill cancer patient who wanted to return home to be with his family. By mid-October 2003, more than 200 Iraqi migrants around the world had asked IOM for help to return home.

### RESETTLEMENT

Since the early 1950s, IOM has assisted the U.S. Resettlement Program (USRP) through funding provided by the Department of State's Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration Affairs. In 2002, more than 27,000 persons were resettled to the United States by IOM. Since the year 2000, IOM has assisted over 197,000 persons to resettle to the United States.

IOM continues carrying out medical examinations and cultural orientation classes for Somali Bantu refugees currently in Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya. The group of 11,000 Somali Bantu refugees are being interviewed by US immigration officers for possible resettlement to the United States.

### POST-CONFLICT TRANSITION

In recent years, IOM has increasingly played a role in the post-conflict transition from emergency relief to long-term development. These efforts to fill the "relief to development gap" include programs in such areas as returns, health of migrants, reintegra-

## IOM'S SEVEN MAIN SERVICE AREAS

### Movements

The core of IOM's mandate is to provide resettlement, repatriation and transportation for migrants. IOM organizes the safe transfer of individual migrants for resettlement, work, or any other purpose of orderly migration. Most of its regular movement services include selection, processing, language training, orientation activities, medical examinations and various activities to facilitate integration.

### Mass Information

IOM develops public information campaigns and conducts research to improve the understanding of migration. The aim is to help governments make decisions pertaining to migration on the basis of accurate and timely information. Other programs aimed at migrants educate on the prerequisites for residence or seeking asylum. IOM also seeks to combat xenophobia by providing publics with accurate information on the implications of migration.

### Assisted Voluntary Returns

Most migrants want to return, at some point in time, to their country of origin. Others may be subject to return from a country of intended residence after having been denied the permission to stay by the authorities. IOM's assisted return activities include both assisted voluntary return programs for individuals and migration diplomacy programs aimed at the governments involved, in which IOM acts as a neutral broker and facilitator. Major voluntary return programs for unsuccessful asylum seekers and other migrants in need are implemented by IOM on behalf of a large number of host countries.

### Migration Health

IOM provides treatment and preventive health services to migrants and promotes the standardization of immigration, travel and international health legislation/guidelines. It offers support to training and education of staff involved in migration health care.

### Technical Cooperation on Migration

IOM's technical cooperation on migration helps governments to cooperate among themselves and to develop the necessary legislation, administrative structures, knowledge, and the human resources to better manage migration. IOM is especially active in this field in the CIS countries.

### Counter-trafficking

IOM contributes to the prevention of migrant trafficking, to the protection of migrants' rights and provides assistance to victims of trafficking. Its programs include research on the issue, providing information to potential victims, and assistance to governments to enhance their capacity to counter trafficking. IOM also provides opportunities for voluntary return and reintegration assistance.

### Labor Migration

IOM's labor migration activities focus on the regulation of labor movements and programs to assist governments and migrants in the selection, recruitment, cultural orientation, training, travel, reception, integration and return of labour migrants.

tion of refugees and displaced persons, civilianization of former combatants, registration for elections, community improvement projects and grass roots governance.

In Colombia, IOM programs are providing support to IDPs that were forced to leave their homes because of the on-going armed conflict. The same IOM programs are also assisting local communities hosting the IDPs. Also in Colombia, an IOM program is providing support and reintegration assistance to ex-combatant children. In northern Ecuador, IOM also implements U.S.-funded community development programs that are providing vital basic services to Colombian refugees and the host communities.

### COUNTER-TRAFFICKING

Migrant trafficking and smuggling has become a global business generating huge profits for traffickers and organized crime syndicates. A recent IOM study revealed that at any one time there are an estimated 15 to 30 million irregular migrants worldwide. Of this total, the United States Department of Justice estimates that 700,000 women and children are trafficked yearly across borders.

*In 2001, IOM set up the Global Assistance Program to help individual migrant women and children who are victims of trafficking.*

In 2002, as part of its direct assistance projects, IOM came to the aid of more than 3,000 victims of trafficking. They were assisted to return home, and once in their country of origin, IOM and partner NGOs provided reintegration assistance.

At present IOM has more than 90 active projects on all continents in the field of Counter Trafficking – these projects cover the full spectrum of IOM activities in the field of counter trafficking: prevention, direct assistance, and law enforcement cooperation.

The Global Assistance Program to help victims of trafficking was put in place in 2001. It is the first global referral, assessment and rapid assistance mechanism for individual migrant women and children who are victims of trafficking and are not eligible for assistance under current voluntary return assistance programs. Individuals in need of protection and return assistance can contact a local IOM office or one of its partners. Cases are also identified and referred to IOM by the local police or NGOs when the victim contacts these agencies or is rescued and/or placed in custody as a result of police actions.

### COMPENSATION PROGRAMS

As one of the partner organizations of the Foundation “Remembrance, Responsibility and Future,” IOM was designated by the German government to make financial compensation available to former forced labourers and other victims of the Nazi regime. As of the end of 2001, IOM had received more than 308,000 claims for slave labour, forced labor, personal injury or death of a child and more than 48,000 claims for property loss. IOM has made first payments to almost half of its eligible slave and

forced labour claimants. In several Eastern European countries IOM has launched humanitarian and social programs for Roma and members of other groups persecuted by the Nazi regime.

### MIGRATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

IOM's Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) program aims to enhance African capacity-building through the transfer of knowledge, know-how or expertise principally for the development in Africa. The purpose of MIDA is to match the assessed skill needs of African countries with available skills and other resources of Africans in the diaspora and to facilitate the utilization of these capacities for the development efforts of participating African countries. So far, MIDA has enabled 159 professionals to return to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi and Rwanda and more than 500 have volunteered to join the program.

In its efforts to facilitate planned and orderly migration, IOM is increasingly coordinating its emergency response with the United Nations. IOM has been represented at the UN General Assembly as an observer since 1992. In December 1993, the UN General Assembly gave IOM the right to draw on the resources available in the Central Emergency Revolving Fund (CERF). It is the only non-UN organization authorized to do so.



*An IOM convoy travels through Dragon Pass in Afghanistan in 2002 to return IDPs to their homes in the Bamyan district.*

For many years, IOM's principal role was helping refugees from the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe make their way to new homes in the West. As political changes occurred in Eastern Europe, IOM began implementing migration-related programs in that region. It provides technical assistance to strengthen governmental structures and capacity to deal with migration management and other related issues.

IOM has helped refugees in large-scale mass movements whether caused by conflict or by natural disasters. During the Gulf Crisis, IOM was heavily involved in moving back to their countries of origin some 250,000 foreign workers and their families who were forced to flee Kuwait and Iraq. In 1991-92, in the wake of the Gulf War, IOM coordinated the return of the displaced Kurdish population in Iraq (over 600,000 people) back to their home villages, mainly from the border areas of Turkey and Iran.

### U.S. POLICY

The United States, which has accepted millions of refugees from many countries since

1945, receives thousands of IOM-assisted refugees every month. It also lends financial and other support to IOM programs elsewhere.

### STAFF

IOM has a staff of some 3,200, of whom some 300 are assigned to its Geneva headquarters and the others in more than 160 offices throughout the world. In the U.S. IOM has offices in Washington D.C., New York, Miami, Chicago, San Francisco, Seattle and Los Angeles.

### MEMBERSHIP

In mid-2003, 101 governments (including the United States) were members of IOM, and 30 others had observer status; the latter may also benefit from IOM's services to refugees and migrants. More than 50 inter and non-governmental organizations also hold observer status with the organization. IOM's main governing body, the Council, usually meets once a year, in November.

### BUDGET

IOM's 2003 administrative budget is 36.6 million Swiss francs. Financing is through contributions from member states according to a scale of assessment. With almost 10 million Swiss francs (26.3 percent), the United States is the largest contributor to the administrative budget. In addition, IOM has an operational budget that is based on voluntary contributions from governments and multilateral donors. In 2003, IOM operations total about \$538 million. The United States is also the largest contributor to this part of the budget and it is anticipated that its voluntary contributions in 2003 will reach \$104 million.



### INTERNET

*www.iom.org*

Site provides updated information on IOM and its programs, statistics and country analysis of migration, national migration policies and legislation.

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