



# IOM and Identity Management



IOM International Organization for Migration  
OIM Organisation internationale pour les migrations  
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

IOM is the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration, established in 1951. Today the organization counts 125 Member States and 90 Observers (16 states and 74 global and regional IGOs and NGOs). One of IOM's core responsibilities is that of assisting Member and Observer countries, and at times other States, in developing their capacity to manage migration. IOM operates some 430 field offices in over 120 countries around the world. At present, the organization has some 6,700 operational staff working around the globe on projects valued at a total of over a USD 1 billion.

IOM, through its Technical Cooperation on Migration Division (TCM), assists governments in improving identity management, including travel documents, in order to facilitate orderly movement; encourage national and regional economic cooperation and development; enhance security; and encourage and enable cross-border cooperation in migration management.

TCM provides its assistance through **assessment and planning; securing donor support in travel document reform; supporting the management of the improvement process and implementation services.**

TCM provides direct technical assistance to support States to develop or upgrade their:

- **Travel document and related issuance systems** – TCM assists governments in assessing, planning and implementing improvements to international travel documents and their issuance systems referencing the applicable travel document standards of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).
- **Travel document inspection** - TCM has a full training curriculum on inspection and use of associated equipment.

But also

- **Biometrics**
- **Visas, and visa procedures**
- **Border checkpoints**
- **Services for migrant populations**

Another crucial component of TCM technical assistance to States is **training and human resource development** for migration authorities, including the strengthening of institutional capacities for designing, conducting and continually upgrading **in-service training programmes**. To complement this emphasis on training, 2008 saw the launching by IOM of the **Regional Immigration Training Institute in Tanzania**.

## IOM Perspective

IOM looks at capacity-building from a **comprehensive and holistic perspective** and considers it essential to look beyond identity documents and consider all aspects and challenges related to identity management.

Technical assistance provided through TCM is generally designed as a **partnership**, with concerned governments and other partners working closely together to define needs, determine



"Documents: The Developers' Toolkit" was recently published with the help of IOM

priority areas and shape interventions. Some of the most recent initiatives of inter-agency cooperation have been with **International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)**, its **Implementation and Capacity Building Working Group (ICBWG)**, **UN Counter Terrorism Committee (UNCTC)**, and the **Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)**, to name a few.

IOM is **neither a normative or standard-setting agency**, but works to ensure compliance with relevant international standards (i.e. 9303).

From the IOM perspective, some of the most **pressing challenges** to be addressed in the near future remain:

- Identification of new and more effective use of existing funding sources in support of ID management reform
- Improved information sharing
- Certification/ICAO compliance
- Basket funding
- Joint identity management assessments/self-assessment guides

### TCM Selected ID Management Projects

*Afghanistan.* With support from the Australian Government, IOM is intensifying its work with key Ministries involved in passport issuance, particularly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Interior. IOM currently supports these ministries in building technical and human resource capacities to improve and expand passport issuance, including in supporting further planning of the new Afghan passport issuance system. IOM also aims to establish high security standards as the primary focus of the programme which will continue through 2009.

*Bangladesh.* In 2007, the Government of Bangladesh sought IOM assistance in order to meet the ICAO deadline for introducing a machine readable travel document issuance and personalization system by April 2010. In response to a Government request, IOM launched a project in 2008 titled "Technical Assistance to the Government of Bangladesh for the Introduction of a Machine Readable Passport and Machine Readable Visa Programme". Under this ongoing project IOM is providing technical support to the Department of Passports and Immigration under the Ministry of Home Affairs to prepare the tender document, the tender evaluation protocol and overall guidance according to ICAO guidelines.

*Costa Rica.* IOM has supported the Costa Rican Migration and Alien Affairs Office to strengthen the security of the issuance process by making improvements to building and security infrastructure. Improvements include mechanisms to restrict access to production areas, closed circuit television (CCTV) surveillance of the issuance site, procedures to control personnel accessing the production lines, and better conditions for customer service.

*In Belarus* IOM, in partnership with OSCE, is assisting the Government in improving machine-readable travel document systems in line with the latest internationally agreed standards. This EC-funded project has sought to:

- develop machine-readable travel and identification documents with biometric features and improve management capacity;
- review legislation and institutional practices related to biometric applications on machine readable travel documents with biometric data, as well as ensure that the legal and procedural framework of applying biometric applications is in accordance with standards of international law;
- review and assess IT capacity and current data storing systems deployed to incorporate biometric technology in machine readable travel document;
- bring to Belarus the best practices and technical expertise on biometric applications through study trips and exchange of experience.

The project serves as a preparatory phase for potential extensive machine readable travel document introduction programme in the future.