DID YOU MISS OUR LAST NEWSLETTER? READ IT HERE!!

VOTs Assistance in SAVA Region

With support of the IOM Emergency Funds (EF), IOM conducted two missions to the SAVA region, assisting on site 19 victims of transnational trafficking (VoTs) that received medical and psychological assistance; underwent a 10-days sustainable business plan development training; and received in-kind grants to implement income generating activities.

National Urban Forum

Under its project on Mainstreaming Migration into Development Policies, IOM sponsored and attended the first National Urban Forum organized by the Ministry of Territorial Planning from 7 to 9 of October in Antananarivo, as a panellist to the Forum, and presenting IOM’s work in the exhibition booths. Read more about it!

Malagasy Diaspora Engagement

In December, stakeholders from the LOHARANO’s pilot youth diaspora volunteering program’s steering committee organized a consultation workshop gathering LOHARANO’s partners to draw lessons learned from the pilot program in preparation of a possible phase II of the program in 2020.

Trust between Defence and Security Forces and Local Population in Southern Madagascar Improves

In the framework of the RAES project (Strengthening State’s Authority in South Madagascar) financed by the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), IOM worked hand-in-hand with UNDP in 5 communes of the Anosy and Ihorombe regions to secure areas deeply affected by rural banditry. At the close of 2 years of implementation, 5 advanced gendarmerie posts have been built and handed over to the Gendarmerie. IOM also worked International NGO Search For Common Ground (SFCG) to improve the trust between the local population and the Gendarmerie. In areas where the presence of the Gendarmerie was not constant, and where bandits are also sometimes part of the local population, fostering a relationship of trust between Defence and Security Forces and the local population is difficult. To facilitate this process, SFCG led the organization of sports tournaments, peace rituals, dance competitions, and the construction of 5 cultural centres, equipped with board games, books and music for the youth.

IOM Celebrates Migrants Throughout Sub-region with the Global Migration Film Festival

Throughout December, several events have taken place in Madagascar, Mauritius and Comoros to honour and celebrate migrants and to engage a varied audience on a discussion of migration. In Mauritius, IOM held on 5 December its first screening of the Global Migration Film Festival (GMFF) – an event occurring every year in more than 150 countries – in collaboration with the Institut Français de Maurice (IFM). The event gathered about 20 participants and was followed by a discussion on integration of migrants in Mauritius. To celebrate the International Migrants Day (IMD) on 18 December, IOM held a second screening with “La Confédération des Travailleurs des Secteurs Privé et Public”, raising awareness of migrant workers’ rights. The celebration was held in collaboration with the High Commission of Bangladesh and was punctuated by the presence of the Attorney General of Mauritius and the diplomatic corps as well as by Bangladeshi workers and their families. On 15 December, IOM screened eight GMFF movies, documentaries and animated films at the Museum of Photography of Antananarivo, Madagascar to an audience of 150 participants that took part in a journey through space and time fostering a more nuanced understanding of migrants’ experiences. In Comoros, IOM held a screening on the occasion of IMD, at the Alliance Française of Moroni on 18 December. IOM screened a selection of GMFF short films and a locally produced documentary on the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) program implemented by IOM in Comoros. The screening was followed by a discussion with the IOM Chief of Mission to Madagascar and Comoros, and the Commissioner in charge of Comorians living abroad at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Read more about it!
**Community Support in Comoros**

Through the community-based component of IOM’s AVRR pilot program in Comoros, IOM provided support to three communities with significant numbers of returns in 2019. This support aims to alleviate the pressure that the return of migrants to the community can generate and to prevent risky migration.

**Diaspora Communication Workshop**

In October, IOM Mauritius in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade organized a workshop with various stakeholders on developing a Communication and Outreach Strategy to engage the Mauritian Diaspora.

**Promoting Ethical Recruitment in Mauritius**

Representatives from private recruitment agencies from Bangladesh, accompanied by IOM Bangladesh, participated in a two-days study visit to Mauritius in November. The objective was to expose the agencies to the Mauritian labour market and to promote ethical recruitment through meetings with the government and the business associations.

**International Rights Day**

On 10 December, to mark the International Human Rights Day, Ms. Céline Lemmel, Head of Office for IOM Mauritius and Seychelles participated in a radio show with the EU Transparency Mauritius. On 10 December, to mark the International Human Rights Day, Ms. Céline Lemmel, Head of Office for IOM Mauritius and Seychelles participated in a radio show with the EU Transparency Mauritius.

**Border Assessment and Conference for Consultation and Identification of Training Needs**

In the framework of the project “Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Building of Frontline Entities and Staff in Charge of Border Management in Comoros” IOM, in collaboration with the Comorian Ministry of Interior and the IOM African Capacity Building Centre, conducted a rapid border assessment to evaluate border management practices and systems at international points of entry. Following this assessment, IOM held a conference from 16 to 17 December 2019 in Moroni to consult and identify training needs with senior stakeholders from entities with a responsibility in border management. This conference was an opportunity for IOM to present the preliminary findings and report resulting from the rapid assessment conducted and to exchange views with stakeholders on training and institutional capacity-building needs in border management.

**A Tailor-Made Return: Mr. George and the Benefits of AVRR**

As a professional tailor, Mr. Georges decided to embark on a journey abroad with the hope of having a new beginning. He moved to a new country and began working in maintenance. He enjoyed his country of adoption, the people he met and the culture. However, his existing medical conditions worsened. Unable to work, Mr. Georges could no longer afford his apartment. Being sick and without any family support, he found himself in a vulnerable situation. His friends advised him to contact the authorities for assistance. Through the AVRR project, Mr. Georges returned to Mauritius in March 2019 with IOM support. Upon his return, his family provided him with great support and his health improved. As he was passionate to resume his tailor business activities, IOM assisted with his reintegration by setting up his business. With his positive attitude and dedication to his business idea, Mr. Georges’ business was launched in October 2019 and has been thriving since then. While he has been actively looking for new customers to expand his business, former clients celebrate his return.

**Uplifting the Business Opportunities of Seychelles through Labour Migration and Ethical Recruitment**

The involvement of the private sector in public-private dialogues is of key importance. For this reason, IOM organized a one-day consultative workshop on 9 October 2019, together with the General Employer Trade Union of Seychelles (GETUS) and the Seychelles Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) and supported by the Ministry of Employment, Immigration and Civil Status. The objective was to maximize the benefits of labour migration for Seychelles, migrants and businesses. More than thirty guests attended this activity, including representatives from the private sector and Government Officials, as well as the Honourable Vice-President of Seychelles, Mr. Vincent Meriton. The role of the private sector in labour mobility strategies was discussed, as well as the modern slavery landscape, global due diligence trends and business opportunities as a result of promoting responsible labour practices.

**For more information please reach out to us at IOMMadagascar@iom.int or IOMMauritius@iom.int**

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