



Community awareness activity providing information about COVID-19 in Siem Reap, Cambodia.



Migrants under quarantine reading informational materials in Luang Prabang quarantine centre, Lao PDR.

## OVERVIEW

The rates of COVID-19 cases in the Asia-Pacific region continue to vary by country, with **several countries experiencing new outbreaks** after several months of well controlled cases. Daily case numbers in Afghanistan, India, Indonesia and the Philippines continue to increase, and cases in Japan, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Korea and Viet Nam have risen after months of stability. Numbers of reported confirmed cases in Australia, Bangladesh, Iran, Malaysia and Pakistan remained stable or decreased in recent weeks.

Governments in the region have been **expanding efforts to repatriate stranded migrants abroad**, organizing repatriation flights for tens of thousands of migrants and setting up quarantine centers for the returnees upon arrival. Some countries, such as Sri Lanka, have identified particularly vulnerable migrants and prioritized them for immediate return support. IOM is supporting governments to develop standard operating procedures and train frontline staff at points of entry as they prepare to open up for additional international arrivals. Many governments are additionally working to accommodate migrants stranded in their countries, including by extending previously issued visas and working permits for up to an additional year.

**The economic impacts of the pandemic and interrupted migration continue to reverberate around the region.** In Nepal, an estimated two million households have experienced between 40 and 70 per cent earning losses, and migrant worker returns have led to an estimated USD 1.2 billion in remittance loss. In Mongolia, a mining company and a major infrastructure project cite migration interruptions as primary reasons for reduced investments and delays. **Internal migration has also been affected in most countries**, as people who had previously migrated to major cities have returned to their rural homes due to an inability to find work. However, there are indications that migrants may start to return to urban centers in the coming months in search of jobs and as economies start to revive and governments prioritize job creation as a key component of their socioeconomic recovery plans.

Countries in the region are **cautiously approaching reopening of schools**. Some countries have already begun to open schools, while others plan to resume in the coming weeks. In areas that are experiencing high rates of COVID-19, there is uncertainty about when classes will be able to resume, and online or blended in-person and virtual learning are being considered.

## CONTACTS

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## IOM RESPONSE

## COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

IOM **Cambodia** met with the Battambang Provincial Health Department to discuss needs and plans for WASH interventions, including for improved WASH facilities at points of entry, quarantine centers and commune offices in the home districts of many migrant returnees.

In Tangerang, **Indonesia**, IOM met with Health Authorities about COVID-19 cases and referrals from IOM. IOM also established a coordination mechanism with the national referral hospital to provide COVID-19 tests and issue health certificates for refugees to travel internationally. The country office is also coordinating with a local *Puskesmas* (Community Health Center) and the East Jakarta District Health Office for follow up of COVID-19 response for 14 returned migrants from Republic of Korea.

In Semarang, IOM is coordinating with the COVID-19 Task Force at the sub-district level, primary health care at the village level, District Health Office, state hospitals, and quarantine facilities operated by the local government. IOM shares information, updates government policies related to COVID-19, and facilitates health services for refugees in the event of a COVID-19 case or outbreak in a refugee accommodation or shelter. In Surabaya, IOM coordinates with the Refugees/Migrants Task Force at the sub-district level to track migrants visiting *Puskesmas* with COVID-19 symptoms and ensure migrants have access to rapid/PCR tests.

IOM **Micronesia** attended risk communication and community engagement meetings at the state and national levels to identify gaps in the response and roles for each agency involved, as well as to develop a checklist for assisting the Emergency Medical and Isolation Units. IOM **Nepal** is coordinating with Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP), COVID-19 Crisis Management Center (CCMC) and Nepal Red Cross Society on the Population Mobility Mapping project. IOM also constructed a multipurpose community center in Dolakha district to be used as a 'Coordination Hub' by the local government during COVID-19 response.

IOM **Philippines** conducted coordination meetings for the Prepare, Prevent, Protect COVID-19 response programme in Mindanao with provincial offices, municipality/city government, and humanitarian and development actors in earthquake-affected areas, as well as potential partners in some island provinces (BASULTA). IOM **Thailand** participated in a Migrant Working Group with representatives from businesses, migrant workers and Chulalongkorn University. IOM advised the development of COVID-19 related recommendations for governance and management of migrant worker recruitment processes and presented them to the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Labour. The discussion focused on medical testing, quarantine entry procedures and procedures for re-employment.



Officials engage in a group activity during a safe migration training, Lao PDR.

## TRACKING MOBILITY IMPACTS

IOM **Bangladesh** is supporting the Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment to develop a database of migrants returning during the pandemic. Hazrat Shajalal International Airport provided a list of 5,698 returnees, and IOM has followed up with 3,690 of them. IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Regional Evidence for Migration Analysis and Policy team in Dhaka also coordinated with the Needs and Population Monitoring team in Cox's Bazar to prepare for Round 2 of a remote, phone-based survey with internal and international Bangladeshi returnees in 12 districts of high return. IOM trained 84 enumerators on the methodology and new survey tool, which looks at the demographic and socio-economic profile of the returnees, livelihoods and employment, migration and return experiences and practices, and economic and social challenges and aspirations.

IOM **Indonesia** and District Health Offices in South Tangerang and Semarang provinces are assessing COVID-19 quarantine facilities and tracking quarantine facility location, estimated population in each facility, COVID-19 awareness, available services, protection considerations and communication and feedback mechanisms. IOM is also documenting mobility of refugees in refugee accommodations. IOM **Mongolia** met with the Acting Governor of the Municipality of Ulaanbaatar (MUB) to discuss a DTM Mobility Tracking tool to collect real-time and regular data on internal migration for improved urban planning and service delivery. Discussions also addressed how to use DTM Flow Monitoring data on inflow and outflow of mobile populations at Ulaanbaatar checkpoints for COVID-19 prevention efforts.

IOM **Nepal's** Population Mobility Mapping Team streamlined data collection tools and was trained on the KoBo Collect software for data collection. The team also held a practical simulation of the Participatory Mapping Exercise. Data collection is underway and will conclude by mid-September, and the team has also completed a Rapid Phone Survey in 753 municipalities.

## IOM RESPONSE

## RISK COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In Cox's Bazar, **Bangladesh**, IOM staff conducted 96,577 door-to-door visits to share COVID-19 messaging, as well as 65,314 awareness-raising sessions. Additionally, 81 community health workers (CHWs) were trained on enhanced community-based surveillance and risk communication and community engagement. CHWs were oriented on the COVID-19 RCCE mechanism to promote beneficiary health seeking behaviors and acceptance of home- and Isolation and Treatment Center (ITC)-based care for suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19. CHWs will engage over 770 key individuals from various community-based groups including Majhis, Mosque Committees, Women's Groups, Youth Groups and Persons with Disabilities groups.

IOM **Cambodia** worked with the relevant authorities in Kampong Thom and Siem Reap to deliver COVID-19 awareness raising information to newly returned migrants and communities, reaching more than 3,200 migrants, their families and communities with key messaging, as well as materials such as booklets on COVID-19 prevention.

IOM **Indonesia** led a video-log and poster competition for refugee children on awareness about COVID-19 prevention with the final materials posted on IOM's social media pages. Additionally, IOM leads a health promotion program using electronic messaging to refugee community on different topics including self-hygiene maintenance and managing early childhood health during the pandemic. IOM has led 10 online discussions with beneficiaries to provide updated information and respond to queries/concerns related to COVID-19. Information is translated into different languages that the refugees commonly speak, including Farsi, Arabic, Somalian, Oromo, Dari and Urdu.

IOM **Lao PDR** met with Lao Women Union (LWU- National Secretariat Committee for Trafficking in Person) to hand over 43 direct assistance packs and information, education and communication (IEC) materials with information on employment, relieving mental stress during pandemic, dengue prevention, HIV/AIDS prevention, reproductive health, COVID-19 precautions, COVID-19 FAQ. These materials will be distributed to Laotians who fell victim to forced labour and are staying in a shelter. IOM translated the script for an informational video on COVID-19 for migrant workers into local languages and released a 3-minute video on IOM's COVID-19 Response in Lao PDR, reaching over 4,400 people on social media. Furthermore, 48 village chiefs who received IOM's safe migration training completed the delivery of safe migration community campaigns in 48 villages across four provinces (Champasak, Salavan, Luang Prabang, Sayabouly), reaching 4,179 villagers (2,263 female and 1,916 male).



Children participate in play and educational activities in camps for internally displaced persons, Philippines.

IOM **Micronesia** and Yap RCCE partners participated in the Akvo Flow App training to help with delivery of a household RCCE survey, including appropriate techniques in conducting surveys. In Chuuk, IOM co-led training for 14 government staff from the Department of Health and Education to facilitate the use of tracking survey data through smartphones during community surveys.

In Maungdaw, IOM **Myanmar** is helping disseminate Ministry of Health and Sports COVID-19 health messages through public announcements using loudspeakers in rural and urban areas. IOM **Nepal** initiated awareness raising messaging on social media for flood/landslide-affected people in the context of COVID-19. IOM **Pakistan** printed IEC materials for COVID-19 in Urdu and Dari for border officials to distribute amongst migrants moving between Pakistan and Afghanistan at Chaman and Torkham Border Points.

IOM **Philippines** continued remote technical assistance and mentoring of camp managers in 17 sites in North Cotabato, particularly with regards to COVID-19 messaging and community engagement. The country office also finalized a Communication Plan for IOM's COVID-19 response programme, which will target the islands of Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi, as well as the earthquake-affected areas of North Cotabato and Davao del Sur.

IOM **Thailand** has been working with the Migrant Working Group to launch an online hub for provision of updated information about government announcements related to COVID-19 with translation for Cambodia, Lao and Myanmar languages. The country office also worked with the Royal Thai Government to revise post-arrival orientation materials for migrant workers to include COVID-19 related policies and procedures.

IOM **Viet Nam** developed a leaflet and poster with safe migration messaging to raise awareness among cross-border migrants in the context of COVID-19.

## IOM RESPONSE

## DISEASE SURVEILLANCE

The IOM **Bangladesh**-managed ITC in Leda, Cox's Bazar and three temporary isolation facilities are collecting samples for laboratory testing of suspected and severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) cases. These facilities are also serving as sentinel sites for sample collection of Acute Respiratory Illness/Influenza like Illness (ARI/ILI) patients for better surveillance and case identification. During the reporting period, 351 samples were collected and transported to the laboratory in Cox's Bazar. IOM is streamlining its collection of COVID-19 information by deploying new KoBo tools for contact tracing and laboratory data.

IOM **Cambodia** continues to work closely with the Provincial Rapid Response Team in target provinces to ensure that the surveillance system is well-functioning and that accurate data about migrant returnees - segregated by age, sex and internal or external migration - is being collected at points of entry and quarantine centers.

## LOGISTICS, PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY MANAGEMENT

IOM **Bangladesh** donated personal protective equipment, medical equipment, and furniture for SARI ITCs to the Government in Ramu and Chakaria. The donations include 400 biohazard bags, 5,000 face-shields, 1,000 coveralls, 10,000 surgical masks, 1,000 N-95 masks, 20 non-contact infrared thermometers, 30 oxygen cylinders, 8 oxygen concentrators, 100 oxygen face-masks, 50 pulse oximeters, 43 patient beds, 400 bedsheets, 50 mattresses, 200 mosquito nets, 2,000 tongue depressors and 500 hand sanitizers.

IOM **Indonesia** is supporting the Government of Indonesia with procurement and distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE) to the Regional Disaster Management Agency in Tangerang and the District Health Office in Jakarta.

In **Nepal**, IOM has distributed more than 2,500 sets of masks, hand sanitizer and mosquito nets in Province 1. These distributions have been conducted in coordination with the Provincial Ministries, Provincial Health Emergency Operation Centre and Districts Administration Offices.

## POINTS OF ENTRY (POE)

During the first two weeks of August, IOM **Cambodia** distributed emergency meal packages, as well as COVID-19 key messages to 773 migrant returnees at the O'Bei Choin POE, 1,875 at the O'Smach POE, and 419 at the Chan Kiri POE. Furthermore, the country office organized Tuberculosis (TB) screening for 657 of the migrants returning through the O'Bei Choin POE at the Poi Pet Transit Center, together with health education sessions on signs and symptoms of TB and COVID-19 and methods for preventing transmission.



General Authority for Border Protection and General Agency for Specialized Inspection discuss the situation and needs at the Zamin-Uud POE, Mongolia.

IOM **Micronesia** partnered with the Department of Health and Social Affairs to build capacity of 59 POE officials in Pohnpei on IOM's tool, "Standard Operating Procedures for Frontline Officials in the context of COVID-19." The training included conducting risk assessments, safe examination of passports and other travel documents, safe interaction with non-compliant passengers, countering discrimination and other human rights and gender considerations in border management in the context of COVID-19.

IOM also coordinated with Pohnpei Port Authority to develop visual guidance materials for passengers at Pohnpei Airport on physical distancing and other COVID-19 prevention measures, as well as to guide the flow of passengers in the airport. IOM partnered with WHO and the Government to assess the readiness of Pohnpei Airport and quarantine facilities to handle returning medical referrals. In coordination with the Chuuk State Task Force Team, IOM led 27 staff through two simulations for managing arrival of international passengers in the airport.

IOM **Mongolia** organized a field mission to Zamiin-Uud, Dornogovi aimag POE between Mongolia and China and consulted with the General Authority for Border Protection, the General Agency for Specialized Inspection and the Mongolia Immigration Agency about preparedness for re-opening international borders in the context of COVID-19. IOM **Myanmar** is coordinating with the Karen Department of Health and Welfare at the POE in Kayin State to provide protective materials and health messages to migrants returning from Thailand.

IOM **Nepal** has drafted a tool to conduct assessments at POEs as per the International Health Regulation and is seeking approval from MoHP to conduct the assessment. The team also presented on POE activities and the draft assessment tool to the COVID-19 Crisis Management Center. Additionally, the team provided the Damak and Mechinagar Municipalities with WASH items for POEs and holding centers to better support returnee migrants/travelers.

## IOM RESPONSE

## POINTS OF ENTRY (CONT.)

IOM **Pakistan** is strengthening pandemic preparedness efforts at health care facilities at Chaman and Torkham POEs by procuring PPE, improving infrastructure for quarantine of travelers, and providing ambulances to transport ill migrants at POEs to health care facilities. IOM **Philippines** deployed 44 buses to support 911 returnee overseas foreign workers with transportation and also provided the Philippines Coast Guard with 71 vans to be used by COVID-19 testing teams. IOM **Viet Nam** is conducting a needs assessment at four POE (all land borders) with Lao PDR and Cambodia in coordination with the Vietnamese Border Guard.

## NATIONAL LABORATORY SYSTEMS

IOM **Myanmar** renovated Rapid Response Team rooms for COVID-19 emergency response in Myawaddy and Hpa-An townships in Kayin State. IOM also helped renovate a Gene X-pert laboratory for COVID-19 testing and installed electricity and water systems for a COVID-19 diagnosis laboratory in Hpa-An Township. The Mawlamyine team is now supporting the COVID-19 related data recording and reporting system in close collaboration with the Mawlamyine Hospital laboratory unit in Mon State.

## INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL (IPC)

Due to rising COVID-19 cases in Cox's Bazar, **Bangladesh**, IOM Site Management and WASH teams have intensified disinfection of communal spaces. IOM also installed 16 handwashing devices at the ITC in Camp 20 Extension, and provided nearly 10,000 soap kits in Camps 12, 13, 23, 24 and 25. IOM also distributed 5,000 cloth face masks and 3,000 latex rubber gloves to Union Disaster Management Committees, Cyclone Preparedness Committees, and Upazila Nirbahi Officers in host communities.

IOM **Cambodia** donated two permanent hand-washing stations to the Prey Veng Operational District Health Office for migrants and communities to wash their hands before accessing out-patient health services at Prey Veng Referral Hospital and Health Centre. 23 mobile handwashing stations were delivered in Kampong Thom for nine quarantine centers located at school facilities. IOM also assessed WASH needs in six quarantine centers in Svay Antor and Pearang districts. IOM **Malaysia** donated hand sanitizer and 2,000 cloth masks to Alternative Learning Centres and Community Learning Centres for undocumented migrant children across Sabah.

IOM **Micronesia** began excavation works for the water catchment foundations at U, Sokehs, and Wone dispensaries in Pohnpei and completed a similar excavation at Pohnlangas dispensary. These water system improvements support the decentralization of clinical care by ensuring that dispensaries have adequate water supply to implement minimum WASH standards. IOM in Chuuk also designed and constructed two hands-free handwashing stations; additional units are being installed.



COVID-19 community awareness session on infection prevention and control in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

IOM **Myanmar** supported several HIV clinics – including those supporting sex workers – to develop and follow infection prevention and control guidelines in line with WHO and national Government recommendations.

In the **Philippines**, IOM identified and assessed nine *barangays* (communities) with a high number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to prepare for installation of handwashing stations. IOM is leading a BAWASA (*barangay* WASH teams) training on WASH and operations and maintenance of handwashing stations for community members in North Cotabato. IOM will provide toolkits and a demonstration on operations and maintenance of handwashing stations in 20 *barangays* of North Cotabato.

## CASE MANAGEMENT AND CONTINUITY OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES

IOM **Bangladesh** operates two Severe Acute Respiratory Illness (SARI) ITCs in Cox's Bazar Camps 2W and 24 with capacity to manage the treatment of cases, featuring 10 and 56 beds, respectively. A total of 21 suspected and 8 confirmed COVID-19 cases were admitted to the ITCs in the last two weeks. IOM trained 33 SARI ITC clinical staff on case management and IPC. Furthermore, the 35 IOM-supported primary health care facilities conducted 23,205 consultations, including delivering 77 babies.

IOM **Cambodia** is providing referrals for migrants who have tested positive for tuberculosis and continues to provide monitoring and follow up support. IOM staff regularly visits migrants in quarantine facilities to ensure that their basic needs are met and that they receive adequate information about COVID-19 prevention. IOM **Myanmar** supported several COVID-19 patients with meal allowances, hygiene kits and covered transportation fees from facility quarantine sites to hospitals. IOM TB and Malaria Projects in Mon and Kayin State are in the process of establishing guidelines and protocols to guide field staff vis-à-vis COVID-19 risk mitigation and engage the clients effectively.

## IOM RESPONSE

**CAMP COORDINATION AND CAMP MANAGEMENT**

In Cox's Bazar, **Bangladesh**, IOM Site Management teams conducted nine orientation sessions on Safe and Dignified Burials for 73 volunteers and members of Dead Body Management Committees, religious leaders, youth groups and Women's Committees. In the past six weeks, 1,691 participants have taken part in these sessions.

IOM **Philippines** finalized a CCCM training module focused on Operational Guidelines for COVID-19 and accompanying tools and has set a training schedule for all 45 sites of North Cotabato and Dav Sur. IOM has also conducted site assessments for a cash-for-work scheme across earthquake-affected areas and defined the activities, including repair of existing WASH facilities, rearranging of tents, establishment of registration and screening at entries into sites and improvement of distribution areas.

**PROTECTION**

IOM **Bangladesh**, in coordination with the Anti Trafficking Working Group (ATWG) in Cox's Bazar, conducted training sessions for 133 ATWG members (58 men, 75 women), Protection actors, and Site Management actors. IOM also worked with ATWG and BBC Media Action to develop and broadcast audio messages on the risks of human trafficking and irregular migration and how to report trafficking cases. Additionally, six teachers were trained on the risks of child trafficking during the COVID-19 outbreak.

IOM Bangladesh also works with Handicap International and the Women's Committee in Leda to identify and refer community members with disabilities; 12 women were referred for support and six beneficiaries with physical disabilities received assistive devices. Protection teams reached 21,892 individuals with messages on COVID-19, Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and other Protection-related issues. IOM also trained 15 clinical and non-clinical staff on Protection and GBV core concepts, Child Protection, safe referrals and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA).

IOM's Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) staff assisted 102 beneficiaries (79 men and 23 women) through over-the-phone counselling, and 11 beneficiaries received intensive, individualized psychological consultations on COVID-19-related stress and anxiety. Staff were also sent to Primary Healthcare Facilities to lead group counselling for pregnant women.

IOM **Indonesia** and an MHPSS service provider compiled a video on psychoeducation and self-care during COVID-19. The country office also operates a helpline to provide migrants with MHPSS support during the pandemic. Migrants with protection concerns, such as harassment or abuse, are also supported both through an online modality and with limited in person support (e.g., for filing a report at a police station or securing documentation at hospitals).



Women participate in a Safe Migration Campaign meeting to raise awareness about regular migration channels, Sri Lanka.

IOM **Mongolia** is working with the Training and Research Center of the Municipality of Ulaanbaatar and the Asia Foundation to train social workers from Ulaanbaatar *khoroos* (smallest administrative units) on delivering psychosocial support, especially to internal migrants, during the pandemic and other emergencies. Additionally, IOM country offices in Prague and Ulaanbaatar, in cooperation with the governments of Mongolia and Czechia, organized a special return flight for 250 Mongolians stranded in Czechia and other Eastern European countries after borders were closed due to the pandemic. This includes 185 assisted voluntary return and reintegration beneficiaries; more details are available [here](#).

IOM **Nepal** supported 147 vulnerable migrants (133 females; 14 males) with cash assistance (equivalent to one month's salary/NPR 13,500) to cover basic needs and travel costs to home districts. These migrants were interviewed to identify their needs and vulnerabilities and provide necessary referrals and protection services. IOM is also developing a socio-economic protection assessment aligned with the Government's Repatriation Guidelines for Stranded Nepali Migrant workers. Preliminary findings show that migrants face psychosocial distress due to loss of jobs and challenges accessing income generating opportunities, as well as discriminatory behavior and stigmatization by the community.

IOM **Philippines** closely coordinated and monitored the arrivals of locally stranded individuals (LSIs) from BARMM to Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi provinces and provided meals and transportation support. IOM is also monitoring returns of migrants from Sabah, Malaysia and provided 200 sleeping kits to BARMM Ministry of Social Services and Development for the arrivals. Also, 650 modular tents for the returnees have been made available. As part of its COVID-19 response program, IOM supported 300 children aged 3-4 across 12 sites in Magsaysay, Davao del Sur with MHPSS services, using structured play and handwashing promotion activities as part of psychological first aid for kids affected by earthquakes and the strains of COVID-19.

## IOM RESPONSE

## PROTECTION (CONT.)

Given the rise in suicide attempts among IDPs in the **Philippines**, IOM is providing psychological first aid and working with the local government and specialized MHPSS service providers to support affected families, including with cash support and in-kind items. To address mental health issues in IDP sites, IOM and the Makilala local government will conduct a Suicide Awareness Symposium for 90 participants from the government, youth representatives, and IDP leaders, covering depression, suicide and referral pathways. Together with the Philippine Red Cross, IOM recently trained 51 frontline personnel on GBV, PSEA and protection mainstreaming.

IOM **Sri Lanka** launched a socio-economic assistance program to support 200 vulnerable families, including returnee migrants and low-income households affected by the pandemic. IOM will also provide eight shelters that house almost 300 persons (children, orphans, survivors of GBV, elders, and differently abled people), with dry rations, hygiene kits and child-support kits.

## ADDRESSING SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT

IOM **Bangladesh** staff were seconded to the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology to help formulate a post-COVID Information and Communications Technology Roadmap for digital service delivery and local business creation. IOM **Cambodia** launched the UN MPTF program focused on improving access to COVID-19 information and prevention measures for returnees at POE, essential healthcare services (MHPSS, maternal care, GBV) for returnees and host communities at quarantine facilities and areas of return, and mitigating impacts of COVID-19 on vulnerable migrants through economic reintegration packages.

IOM **Indonesia** has helped enroll 583 children in public and private schools, advocated for access to online lessons during the pandemic and engaged on-call teachers to provide additional classes and assistance. IOM **Malaysia** provided food aid and hygiene supplies to 200 Filipino and Indonesian migrant families (428 adults; 500 children) and provided similar assistance to 20 Filipino migrants affected by COVID-19 on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur.

IOM **Mongolia** is working with The Independent Research Institute of Mongolia, National University of Mongolia, and Maastricht University on two research studies, "Internal migration and Employment" and "Effectiveness and Impacts of Registration Restriction in Ulaanbaatar city." 2,400 migrant households were interviewed in six major districts across Ulaanbaatar regarding employment challenges, vulnerabilities, impacts of migration restrictions, and socio-economic impacts of COVID-19. In the **Philippines**, IOM coordinated with Action Against Hunger, Care, and ACCORD to identify 800 IDP households in 16 *barangays* for multi-purpose cash assistance and also identified approximately 200 beneficiaries for cash-for-work initiatives.



Preparing for distribution of direct assistance packs to returning migrants at Luang Prabang quarantine centre, Lao PDR.

## SUCCESS STORY

International travel to the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) was suspended in March 2020 to prevent the spread of COVID-19. While this measure protected FSM from importing COVID-19, the government is now pursuing more sustainable solutions to safely return citizens stranded abroad and resume border operations. **IOM worked with the Pohnpei Port Authority (PPA) to develop SOPs for Pohnpei International Airport** staff and management to safely carry out their responsibilities.

IOM developed a contextualized training on the SOPs, including how to properly handle travelers' documents during immigration procedures, safely handle non-compliant passengers, and protect human rights in the context of COVID-19, as well as a demonstration from the Department of Health and Social Affairs on how to safely don and doff PPE. IOM trained 75 POE officials (64 males, 11 females) from PPA, the Department of Justice, the Department of Public Safety, United Airlines, and the Department of Transportation, Communications & Infrastructure.

Overall, **91% of surveyed participants agreed or strongly agreed that they felt more confident** working or handling a COVID-19 situation after the training, and **94% said that they agreed or strongly agreed that the trainings made them more confident to correctly use PPE**. In the coming weeks, IOM Micronesia will seek to cascade the trainings across the states of Chuuk, Yap and Kosrae, as well as offer support to further develop the SOPs of Government partners in respective states.

## FURTHER RESOURCES

IOM and the International Chamber of Commerce jointly released "[Guidance on Protection for Migrant Workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)," which provides guidance on physical and mental health, living and working conditions, economic support, ethical recruitment and supply chain commitments.