

NEWSLETTER

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AMIDST THE GLOBAL COVID-19 OUTBREAK, IOM SUPPORTS RETURN OF VULNERABLE STRANDED MIGRANTS TO MADAGASCAR

IOM Returns Stranded Vulnerable Malagasy Migrant Women to Madagascar

In June 2020, IOM contributed to the efforts of the Government of Madagascar to ensure human and dignified conditions upon the return of 177 vulnerable migrant worker women repatriated from Kuwait on June 8, and through the quarantine period of 15 days mandated under the National Health Emergency of the COVID-19 pandemic. IOM worked in close coordination with national stakeholders, particularly with the Malagasy national COVID-19 taskforce, providing transportation services from Ivato International Airport, and guaranteeing, together with ILO, a safe and secure accommodation.

During their stay at the facilities, IOM registered all migrants while assessing and referring vulnerable cases to partners, including cases in need of psychological and medical assistance. IOM also organized Non-Food-Items (NFI) distribution, in collaboration with UNFPA and the Ministry of Social Affairs (MSA) to provide migrants with dignity kits. Following COVID-19 testing conducted by the Ministry of Health, migrants left the facilities on June 22 for their regions of origin. Sixty-five per cent of attended migrants returned to the Sava region, a well-known region of origin for the recruitment of women as domestic workers in the Gulf countries.

[Read more at this link!](#)

IOM Works to Improve TIP Referral Outcome in Comoros and Mauritius

In April 2020, IOM launched the 24-month regional project "Improving Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Referral Outcome in Comoros and Mauritius", funded by the US State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat TIP. While the contexts of the two countries differ in terms of past and ongoing engagement on Counter-Trafficking (CT) and law enforcement environments – they also present common challenges with regards to institutionalizing and implementing national referral mechanisms with effective victim and witness protection measures. As a result, in both Comoros and Mauritius, the number of Victims of Trafficking (VoTs) identified and assisted and the number of traffickers investigated, prosecuted and convicted remains low.

The project is formulated around the objective of improving the referral outcome – and is informed by the 3P paradigm of prosecuting traffickers; protecting VoTs through identification and comprehensive care services; and preventing TIP. The proposed approach focuses on durable transfer of knowledge and skills by investing in in-depth and repeated training, capacity building, and mentoring ; on developing sustainable tools adapted to the local work environment; and on stirring advancement of CT responses through improved in-country coordination and review of practice amongst national TIP stakeholders.

Migration and Inclusive Urban Development



In June 2020, IOM Madagascar has initiated engagement with the Municipal authorities of the city of Antananarivo to conceptualize an innovative and pilot project on migration and urban development. Migration is a key driver of the rapid urbanization trend, and while it carries opportunities and benefits, when not addressed properly, it can lead to negative outcomes for migrants and resident urban communities.

National Data Hub on TIP



Since April 2020, Madagascar has a functioning national data hub on trafficking in persons administrated by the National Coordination Office for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (BNLTEH). The setting up of this national dashboard tool aimed at supporting evidence-based decision making to advance the fight against TIP has been supported by IOM.

[Read more at this link!](#)

IOM, Japan Support the Malagasy Customs in Setting up the First K9 Brigade in Madagascar



Over the last years, Madagascar has increasingly been used as a transit hub for drug trafficking in the Western Indian Ocean. Heroin and cocaine are no longer solely transited through ports and airports but are stored and repackaged in Madagascar. In this context, IOM, with funding from the Government of Japan, launched at the end of March 2020 a targeted intervention focusing on operational capacity building of the Customs through support in the setting up of a canine brigade to be active at the Antananarivo airport.

After the first three months of implementation, and despite of ongoing challenges due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the Malagasy Customs is finalising the construction of the host and care facilities for the canine brigade in Antananarivo, and a service agreement with VetClinic has been established in order to ensure compliance to international standards on hygiene and dogs care. Six detection dogs are expected to arrive in Madagascar by the month of September 2020, trained for detection of narcotics and other illegal drugs.

[Read more at this link!](#)

Young and Determined to Start Again

Seeking a better life for himself, Gerard (fictitious name) left the shores of Mauritius in 2016, with the hope to pursue his studies abroad. However, after spending 2 years at his sister's place abroad, he received a letter informing that his application to extend his stay, had been rejected. Having no resources left, he benefitted from the reintegration assistance from IOM back in Mauritius.

Despite the upsetting feeling of leaving his sister and the life he envisioned abroad, Gerard was very grateful of the assistance he received to return to Mauritius, where he was warmly welcomed by his parents. It never seemed as a failure for him, but as an opportunity to start anew. 'Sometimes life plans may change, but it might be for the best' says Gerard. Upon his arrival, IOM supported him through his social reintegration process with the purchase of essential goods. But as a young man, filled with enthusiasm, hope, positivity and a supportive family, he was able to swiftly secure a job at a freight company, and he is now financially independent – slowly but surely building a life for himself.

AVRR in Mauritius

On 29 June 2020, IOM Mauritius and the French Office of Immigration and Integration (OFII) held a selection committee with 'Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration' beneficiaries to evaluate the feasibility of their entrepreneurial projects.

Internal Migration and Social Cohesion



Biotope Madagasikara was hired by IOM to conduct a rapid migration assessment in the Menabe region as part of the REAP project, funded by the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). A parallel evaluation conducted by UNDP is ongoing in the Androy region. The combined results will allow the framing of two pilot operational programs for migrant and local populations, to reduce natural resource-based conflicts in the protected area of Antimena Menabe.

[Read more at this link!](#)

Fighting Security Threats in Southern Madagascar



IOM and the Gendarmerie have identified the construction sites and facilities that will be built in four strategic communes in the South-East of Madagascar, surrounding the "Andriy massif". IOM will construct 20 buildings that will enable the Gendarmerie to deploy more personnel and intervene against the prevailing banditry that induces security-related displacements and threatens peace in the area.

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