



IOM International Organization for Migration

IOM

in the UK

newsletter

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Rapidly increasing number of families and children access new voluntary return programme

Since the April launch of **AVRFC** (Assisted Voluntary Return for Families and Children) IOM has received well over 600 applications. Actual departures have roughly doubled each month: May (14); June (32); July (59). The take-up of AVRFC is interesting at a time when there is a national focus on finding an alternative to the detention and compulsory removal of appeal-rights exhausted families and children.



Ms V and her two children returned to Vietnam. Thanks to the Reintegration Assistance she received she was able to attend a computer training course and then start an Internet café which provides her with sufficient income to support herself and her family.

With two children and a teenage sister to take care of the challenges of returning home to Jamaica were considerable. But Ms J applied for AVR and with IOM's support and Reintegration Assistance she was able to set up a small grocery shop.



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Reintegration Assistance Monitoring and Evaluation Field Trips

Field Trips from the UK

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of the effectiveness of Reintegration Assistance in countries of return is carried out by IOM UK in order to:

- see and interview returnees to obtain their feedback about IOM Reintegration Assistance;
- assess the effectiveness of the programme and the impact on the beneficiaries' reintegration;
- gain a better understanding of the reintegration process in the countries of origin;
- identify areas for improvement and suggest recommendations on how to improve the assistance;
- evaluate the impact of any enhanced reintegration programmes (such as Return and Rebuild and ZIM-VARRP)

From January to March 2010 three monitoring and evaluation visits were conducted in Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka.

Bangladesh 6-11 February 2010

The first M&E visit to Bangladesh took place in early February 2010 when eleven returnees were visited at their businesses.

One family (father and two daughters) was interviewed in a café near their home, and a group meeting was held with twelve returnees in a hotel in Sylhet (the main destination for VARRP returnees in Bangladesh). The father of the family group had established a small business selling PCs and computer supplies and his two daughters had been assisted with fees and materials for their education. All other returnees had also used the money to set up a small business, or were in the process of doing so.

IOM UK also visited a small number of returnees in Dhaka city, mainly in Sylhet city and the surrounding region. All the returnees who were visited had returned since the introduction of the 'New Approach' and had therefore received a cash relocation grant on departure, and up to £2,000 in-kind assistance for business set-up. In addition to meetings with IOM Dhaka and the Regional Representative, a meeting was also held with the British High Commission as an opportunity to exchange information on current AVR programmes. [\(Cont/... on page 3\)](#)

Visit to IOM Harare

by Eddy Mushayanyama, Communications Officer, IOM Bristol Office

While on my annual holiday to Zimbabwe in April I paid a courtesy visit to IOM Harare. Although IOM Harare deals with a wide range of programmes including post-disaster recovery and health programmes, my particular interest was with Assisted Voluntary Return programmes and the impact of Reintegration Assistance.

While in Harare I learned that:

- The Assisted Voluntary Return Programme was operating well in Zimbabwe with an average of 3 returnees from the UK each week.
- The majority of returnees come under the VARRP programme.
- Most VARRP returnees are able to access all their Reintegration Assistance within two weeks of contacting the IOM office, provided all preliminary paperwork has been done.
- The improving economic climate in Zimbabwe is making it much easier for returnees to source project inputs locally and to implement their preferred projects faster than was possible a couple of years ago when most items had to be sourced from outside the country.
- The most popular small businesses are poultry, milling, hair saloons, retail and take away shops.
- Project sustainability has improved tremendously with the stabilization in the economy brought about by "dollarisation."
- I met with two VARRP returnees who were doing very well in their line of business. *(See below)*

Ms S lived in the UK before she decided to go back to Zimbabwe in late 2008 after her application for asylum was unsuccessful. She lived in Wales and made her application through IOM Bristol. She says she was so pleased with the speedy and professional manner in which her application was handled. She was particularly happy to receive additional luggage assistance.

She used her Reintegration Assistance to help buy a truck which she supplies eggs to a wholesale market in the central Midlands town of Gweru. She is very grateful to IOM for helping her return home and assisting her to get into business.

The other returnee I met said she used to live in Leicester and decided to return home after her asylum application failed. She used her Reintegration Assistance to buy a car which she hires out to clients especially tourists. Her fleet has now grown to 5 cars and she is happy to have made the decision to return home.

Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) Activities of IOM Branch Offices

(cont/... from page 2)

Field Trips from the UK

India 17-26 February 2010

Following on from a successful first evaluation trip of the VARRP programme in the northern region of Punjab in 2008, it was considered timely to carry out another similar exercise in Tamil Nadu, currently the number one region of return in India.

The visit was conducted by two members of the IOM UK Reintegration Team in conjunction with the Reintegration Officer from the IOM Hyderabad Mission. Overall, 41 cases representing 49 returnees were interviewed during the visit - 40 at their business locations and 1 was interviewed away from his business. The returnees came from the following areas: Hyderabad (2), Chennai (16), in and around Tiruchirapalli and Madurai (16).

A working session with 17 returnees was organised in Namakkal (a small town where a significant number of VARRP beneficiaries originated from), followed by 10 individual interviews in their business locations. Overall, 2 family cases were visited, in Hyderabad and in Chennai.

Sri Lanka 20-27 March 2010

During March 2010 an M&E visit was carried out in Sri Lanka. It was the second trip to the country since the last which took place in 2008.

In addition to the standard M&E objectives of the visit, there was an additional focus on learning best practice in successful, sustainable reintegration processes as the IOM mission in Colombo has established itself as one of IOM's most innovative and dynamic field offices. The return stories of those visited were documented for use in outreach in the UK.

Findings should help to ensure that Individual Return Plans, developed in the UK, take into account local conditions and potential sustainability issues, particularly in previously inaccessible northern areas such as Jaffna.

IOM Wales & South West at Refugee Week in Swindon

Refugee Week in Swindon was held this year on 19 June at the Punjabi Community Centre in the city, attracting more than 200 people from different refugee communities. Once again, IOM Wales and SW worked in partnership with the Swindon Multi-Agency Forum in organising the Refugee Week celebrations.

IOM Wales and SW had an information stall to distribute leaflets on the various Assisted Voluntary Return programmes available from IOM UK.

There was a lot of interest especially for the newly launched programme for families and children (AVRFC). People had a chance to ask questions and seek clarifications on a wide range of issues concerning Assisted Voluntary Return.

The colourful event included music, dance and multi-cultural food.

The purpose of Refugee Week up and down the country is to convey positive messages to counteract fear, ignorance and negative stereotypes of refugees in the UK through arts, cultural and educational events.

During Refugee Week, people are encouraged to do simple acts that promote understanding about people who seek sanctuary.

Some of these simple acts included:

- Cooking a dish from another country
- Telling a child a story from another country
- Watch a movie about refugees
- Do a quiz on refugees
- Read a book about exile
- Sign off an email with a note about refugees
- Visit a Refugee Week event
- Learn to say a few things in a new language
- Share a song

Extracts from IOM Press Briefing Notes

COLOMBIA- Ex-Combatants Receive Job Training in Road Safety and Business Management

IOM is supporting the social and economic reintegration of ex-combatants through employment training in road safety and business management skills.

Under an agreement signed between IOM Colombia and the "Fondo de Prevención Vial" or "Fund for Transport Safety," about USD \$763,000 will be allocated to recruiting and training demobilized members of illegal armed groups, as civilian auxiliaries for a Colombian highway safety and assistance programme.

[read more at www.iom.int](http://www.iom.int)

LIBYAN ARAB JAMAIRAYA- Voluntary Return Programme for Stranded Migrants Receives New Backing

The IOM mission in Tripoli and the Gaddafi International Charity and Development Foundation (GICDF) have signed an agreement to fund IOM's Assisted Voluntary Return Centre in the Jazour district of the Libyan capital Tripoli.

The 63,000 euros donation will cover the overall costs of running the centre until the end of the year. "For the first time, a leading Libyan international NGO is backing IOM's efforts to provide comprehensive return and reintegration assistance to stranded migrants," says Laurence Hart, IOM's Chief of Mission in Libya.

[read more at www.iom.int](http://www.iom.int)

MEXICO- IOM Signs Cooperation Agreement with the Mexican Youth Institute

IOM has signed a cooperation agreement with the Mexican Youth Institute (IMJUVE) for the provision of visa services to participants in the upcoming World Youth Conference (WYC).

The conference to be held in Leon, Guanajuato, Mexico from the 23rd to the 27th of August 2010 is an initiative of the Mexican government and includes participation from a large number of countries.

[read more at www.iom.int](http://www.iom.int)

SRI LANKA - Netherlands Backs IOM Programmes to Help Displaced Return Home, Reintegrate Former Combatants

The Netherlands has pledged EUR 2 million (LKR 277,820,000) to support two IOM programmes that are helping internally displaced people (IDPs) to return home and reintegrating former LTTE Tamil Tiger combatants into civil society.

The contribution of EUR 1 million to each programme will allow IOM to continue to help families to return to their home areas in the north and east of the country from Menik Farms and other displacement camps in Vavuniya.

[read more at www.iom.int](http://www.iom.int)

PAKISTAN

31 August 2010

- IOM Rushes Emergency Shelter to Southern Sindh to Meet Growing Needs

With an estimated one million people uprooted by the latest flooding in southern Sindh, IOM has delivered 500 emergency shelter kits to the government for distribution in Thatta district. "The needs are huge and thousands of families in Thatta are still camped out under open skies, wherever they can find a dry spot", says IOM Emergency Response Manager Brian Kelly.

IOM has already distributed 6,000 of the kits, each of which contains two 4 x 5 metre plastic sheets, rope, two blankets, a jerry can, a bucket and a kitchen set, to flood-affected families in Sindh. It is currently shipping a further 3,000 kits to Thatta district, where Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) is setting up a displacement camp for flood victims. In a single day, IOM and local NGO partners distributed 1,108 of the kits to displaced families in Sukkur district, in northern Sindh.

The latest mass displacements in Sindh follow a major breach of flood defences near the town of Sarjani, south of the Kotri barrage, last week. Advancing floodwaters also entered the district of Dadu, forcing thousands more to flee and leaving an estimated 40,000 people stranded in 40 outlying villages. They bring the total number of people directly affected by the floods to 17.6 million, with 1.2 million homes damaged or destroyed across an area of 160,000 km², according to the NDMA. The Emergency Shelter Cluster of 40 aid agencies working with the NDMA to provide emergency shelter and non-food relief items, which is coordinated by IOM, has already provided shelter for some 1.13 million flood victims. Shelter materials for another 2.5 million people are currently in the cluster's procurement pipeline.

But there are not enough tents or plastic sheets available in Pakistan to meet the vast need, and shipping them in from outside the country takes time. "IOM is now regularly acting as consignee for incoming aid flights in Islamabad, Karachi and Multan and trucking the aid to the worst hit areas of Punjab and Sindh. But the needs are huge and still growing", says IOM Regional Representative for West and Central Asia Hassan Abdel Moneim Mostafa. "IOM and our Shelter Cluster partners are racing to boost our capacity to deliver. But as the number of flood-affected families who need our help grows, so does our need for funding", he adds.

27 August 2010

- IOM Director General Visit Highlights International Solidarity as Relief Efforts Are Scaled Up

IOM Director General William Lacy Swing visited Pakistan as IOM scales up its human and financial resources towards the south of the country where many more low-lying areas are inundated by raging floodwaters causing further destruction and displacement.

During his short trip, the IOM Director General met senior government officials including the President of Pakistan and visited flood-affected areas to express solidarity with the Pakistani people.

"IOM reassures its commitment to the government and the people of Pakistan in these testing times, that we will continue our relief operations until those affected by the floods return to their normal lives", said IOM Director General William Lacy Swing.

[read more at www.iom.int](http://www.iom.int)

Child Trafficking & Child Protection Training

Best Practices for a Coordinated Approach to Assist Unaccompanied Minor Asylum Seekers & Former UAMs in EU Member States

IOM UK and Refugee Support Network are to implement a new project in the UK. IOM will carry out an assessment of unaccompanied asylum seeking children and formulate recommendations for a joint approach to address the needs and identify assistance gaps for young separated migrants in the UK.

Develop a Common Approach

The overall objective of this project is to contribute to the creation of a common approach for better addressing the needs of vulnerable asylum seekers who are unaccompanied minors (UAMs) and former UAMs. In addition, the project will target organisations and authorities which deal with UAMs, from first reception to their integration, as well as organisations and authorities offering assistance to young adults who were UAMs.

The project will seek to identify the most pressing needs among the target group, identify assistance gaps, and evaluate current assistance projects and practices as well capacities and efforts to address such gaps. It will draft and publish a report which will summarise findings and provide recommendations for a common approach. This will include the production of information leaflets targeting UAMs. Finally, it will conclude with an international conference to share the findings and recommended common approach with a wide audience.

The summarised version of the project *Separated asylum-seeking children in selected EU Member States: An examination of living conditions, provisions and decision-making procedures in EU Member States through child centred participatory research (SEPAC)* was launched in April 2010 by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency. The report was commissioned by EUFRA and implemented by IOM in 12 EU Member States including the UK. The 12 country reports will be published soon by EU FRA.



IOM Kenya Counter-Trafficking Information Campaign © IOM 2009 - MKE0285 (Photo: Lilian Matama)

Child Trafficking and Child Protection Training

In May-July 2010, the following training courses were provided by the *National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) Child Trafficking Advice and Information Line (CTAIL)* for all IOM UK caseworkers.

Child Trafficking

NSPCC CTAIL offers a service for anyone who deals with human trafficking issues. It includes social work advice and information regarding children where there may be reasons to believe they had been trafficked and offers safeguarding guidance and recommendations for trafficked children.

It also offers awareness raising presentations and case consultancy to professionals as well as gathers information and data to gain a wider understanding of the causes and issues around trafficking.

The expected outcome of this training is firstly to sensitise caseworkers to the issue of human trafficking in children and draw their attention to the cases involving accompanied and particularly unaccompanied children they are dealing with on a daily basis, equip them with knowledge to identify signs of different forms of exploitation, gain understanding of legislation, guidance and procedures relating to child trafficking, and last but not least, provide them with practical knowledge about who to contact internally and externally to share their concerns.

Child Protection

The training on Child Protection (Tier 2) will be delivered by G4S, leading international solutions group providing specialised training on child protection.

It will be a two day training building on the basic Keeping Children Safe e-training (Tier 1) which all caseworkers completed in 2009.

The training will give a broad overview of the following: the law concerning children; the role of responsible adults, private fosterers, interpreters and children's legal representatives; trafficking, smuggling and exploitation; missing and abandoned children; interpreting children's behaviour; arrangements for working together with other agencies.

The expected outcome of this training is caseworkers' improved knowledge of all the topics listed above and overview of how the relevant Government departments and organizations operate in the UK.

Moldovan Delegation Visit to IOM London

IOM London hosted a study tour on 26-28 April for IOM Chisinau colleagues and a number of Moldovan representatives within the framework of the project “Technical Cooperation and Capacity Building for the Governments of Ukraine and Moldova for the Implementation of Readmission Agreements with the European Union (GUMIRA)”, which is implemented by IOM Chisinau and funded by the EU.

The Moldovan representatives were from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Department of Consular Affairs, Border Guards Service, Bureau for Migration and Asylum, Department for International Cooperation and European Integration, and the Institute for Penal Reforms, a Moldovan rights-based NGO.

The delegation wanted to learn about IOM UK’s AVR procedures and assistance provisions, and to tap into staff expertise. They were also particularly interested in the reintegration experiences of returnees in countries of origin.



To facilitate an understanding of UK Government policy and practices IOM UK arranged meetings in Croydon and with a Local Immigration Team (LIT) in London, and a visit to see a detention centre. The delegation also went to Luton Airport to find out about port immigration management and met NGOs in Dover to discuss integration support programmes and migrants’ rights.

The visit gave British and Moldovan authorities the opportunity to network, enhance cooperation, exchange views on, and experience of, procedures and best practices in the field of migration management and asylum.

Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) 'Stories of Return' from Sri Lanka

Mr and Mrs R and their daughter lived in Tooting, South London, until their application for asylum was rejected and they decided to return home.

The family learnt about IOM and its Assisted Voluntary Return scheme from a friend who had already gone home under the programme. Following some discussion, they decided that Mrs R would return first with their daughter, and that, when ready, Mr R would follow them.

They chose to invest their Reintegration Assistance in setting up a grocery and general store. They initially operated the store from their home address and later from a shop. The business was working very well, but unfortunately they were forced to close temporarily due a big civil engineering project which involved digging up the road right in front of their store. This work is due to finish soon and the family is looking forward to re-opening.

Meanwhile, to support his family, Mr R decided to turn the mobile phone repair section of his shop into a business that goes out to customers. He is managing to support the family through both repair work and selling new mobile phones and accessories. The family is highly motivated and despite the engineering works on their doorstep, they have kept their premises clean, neat, stocked and ready to re-open at the earliest opportunity.

Upon his return to Sri Lanka, Mr R attended a business development training course which he found to be a very useful component of the Reintegration Assistance.



Mr T came to the UK seeking asylum. When his asylum claim was refused, he chose to return to Sri Lanka. His lawyer said he could appeal, but Mr T decided to go back to be with his family.

Mr T used his IOM Reintegration Assistance to buy an existing family business: a plastic recycling factory run by his son and daughter-in-law. The work is not heavy and this means that he can take an active part in the business despite his age and make a good living from his share. He purchased two machines, which reduce plastic products into pellets which are then sold on to be converted into new plastic goods.

Collectors bring plastic from the Colombo area, which Mr T and his family buy and then manually separate into the two types of plastics to process. They are currently also thinking about diversifying and buying a machine to make thin tube for leaky pipe irrigation systems. They say that this is an environmentally sound and supportive green industry. They currently have seven employees and their new machine requires the recruitment of three more. There are four partners in the business: Mr T, his son, his wife and his brother-in-law.

Actually, it was Mr T's family in Colombo who found out first about the Assisted Voluntary Return programme from an IOM UK leaflet. This prompted them to investigate the scheme in more detail so that they could explain it to Mr T during phone conversations about his possible return home.

Under the programme, Mr T took part in business training and said he found it a practical and stimulating way to learn the fundamentals.

