

# MIGRATION

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## Internal Displacement – A Global Challenge



IOM International Organization for Migration

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# Contents

WHY FOCUS ON DISPLACEMENT? ..... 3

DISPLACEMENT IN SRI LANKA:  
Internal or Eternal? ..... 5

RACHEL'S STORY –  
Life as a Displaced Person in a Sudanese Camp ..... 7

WOMEN BEAR THE BRUNT  
among a Million Displaced Afghans .....12

IDP FACTS AND FIGURES ..... 14

WHEN THE SHORT ROAD  
Is a Long Way to Go .....16

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT –  
Displaced Dinkas Return Home .....19

DISPLACEMENT AND HIV –  
Another Vulnerability .....23

POST-EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME  
for Internally Displaced Populations, Receptor  
Communities and Other Vulnerable Groups .....26

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# Why Focus on Displacement?

By Pasquale Lupoli, Director of Operations Support, IOM

It has been two decades since the international community began to wake up to the issue of internal displacement. Following the end of the cold war with the breakdown of borders, power struggles and civil wars, the number of “visible” internally displaced persons grew. Although not a new phenomena, the humanitarian crises within countries such as Sudan, Angola and Colombia could no longer be ignored by the international community. However, despite the visibility of such internal displacement crises, responses remain under-funded and over-neglected.

Why after all these years are we, the international community, still faced with inadequate responses to internal displacement crises as Darfur and northern Uganda? Why are we still confronted with statements such as “we failed these people too long?” It certainly isn’t because those working daily on behalf of the displaced aren’t trying to do enough.

A truer answer lies in a multitude of reasons. Not least is the definition of an internally displaced person (IDP). According to the UN’s Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, a group of 30 principles to serve as an international standard on providing assistance and protection to IDPs, displaced people are:

**“persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border”.**



It is that very last part of the definition that complicates things. For groups of people who do not cross international borders, the sovereign responsibility for handling their displacement lies with their governments and not the international community. It is only when a government is unwilling or unable to protect and assist their displaced people that the international community may step in.

But before it does, there are other obstacles to overcome. The loss of control of regions within its territory or their own implication in a displacement crisis can make a government reluctant or unwilling to allow outside “intervention” by the humanitarian community.

This raises the issue of access to the displaced. Without access the humanitarian community cannot provide the assistance and protection to those affected by conflict. Resolution on this requires significant negotiation and time, a luxury not affordable to those homeless, defenceless and hungry.

Lack of funding for humanitarian operations to help displaced people is certainly another fundamental issue, if not the single biggest challenge in every IDP crisis around the world. It's not just a question of donor fatigue, but also of an unwillingness to throw what is sometimes seen as good money after bad in countries suffering chronic displacement issues or which are considered unsolvable crises. But the pinch of severe under-funding is felt in some countries more than others.

The lack of resources doesn't just mean that highly vulnerable groups of people are left to go without assistance in worst-case scenarios and at best, receive minimal help. It impacts on an effective, coherent, organized international response. The humanitarian community has been and continues to be unpredictable and patchy in how it responds to IDP crises.

This is partly due to the fact that internally displaced people do not have one agency or organization that is dedicated to helping, protecting and advocating for them. Despite a network of many humanitarian agencies agreeing to collaborate on responses to IDP crises in countries where governments could or would not intervene, conflicting institutional arrangements and a lack of understanding of the issues surrounding internal displacement

ment in addition to poor funding for programmes has led to this patchiness.

But there is some hope on the horizon. There is acknowledgement and agreement that the status quo on IDP crises can no longer continue. It is time to use the strengths of a network of organizations and agencies to pull together and provide coherent and comprehensive assistance to IDPs. The result is the “cluster” approach. By assigning lead roles to individual agencies in different sectors such as camp management, water and sanitation and shelter, there would be a more effective

**The word “persons” in IDPs must not be forgotten. Often without prior warning, people are forced to flee into the unknown. Regardless of their individual stories, survival is a common trait all forcibly displaced persons need to have. People leave behind their homes, livelihoods, community, and are often separated, sometimes violently, from their family and friends.**

and speedy response to a humanitarian crisis. Still in its infancy and experiencing growing pains after a first try out in Pakistan to help millions of people affected by last year's earthquake, the cluster approach is nevertheless developing.

One of the challenges the humanitarian world needs to address is the cause of displacement. IDPs flee as a result of various emergencies – conflict, violations of human rights and natural disasters. In the past two years, however, the number of natural disasters requiring international assistance has dominated humanitarian agendas.

Floods, tsunamis and earthquakes in various regions of the world have left millions affected and/or displaced. However, the international community focuses much more on displacement through conflict. Implementation of the cluster system also is targeted at existing emergencies in countries affected by complex emergencies rather than natural disasters. Only now are guidelines being developed to help aid workers as they seek to protect and assist those displaced by natural disaster.

Their work is hampered by a lack of adequate data on IDP numbers. The Norwegian Refugee Council's Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) estimates 23.7 million people are displaced as a result of conflict and human rights violations. However, there is no monitoring of those affected by natural disasters, environmental degradation and development projects. Although we know through the international responses in Pakistan and tsunami-affected countries that the real figure for IDPs is much higher than the 23.7 million, we do not have an estimate of all the internally displaced if the full definition of IDPs in the Guiding Principles is applied.

What is needed is for the definition of IDPs to be put into practice systematically. This would allow the humanitarian community to provide a proper response, especially in countries where people are forced to flee for different reasons in different regions.

These are all great challenges for us all. But they do not compare to the challenges faced by the displaced on a daily basis. The word “persons” in IDPs must not be forgotten. Often without prior warning, people are forced to flee into the unknown. Regardless of

their individual stories, survival is a common trait all forcibly displaced persons need to have. People leave behind their homes, livelihoods, community, and are often separated, sometimes violently, from their family and friends. Like everyone else, IDPs look for safety and security – the “right of life and liberty and security of person”. Instead, they often face physical and psychological challenges during and after the flight. Women and girl children are more susceptible to sexual gender-based violence during displacement. Disappearances, forced relocation, violence and lack of access to key services are all issues that the displaced must contend with daily.

Despite all this, human nature often prevails. Survival promotes the strongest coping mechanisms. Children still want to play, new families are born and hope is often found in the most unlikely of places.

It is for this reason that this edition of **Migration** focuses exclusively on internal displacement and IOM's own response to it. The tragedies of human displacement must no longer be neglected. **M**

# Displacement in Sri Lanka: Internal or Eternal?



▲ A homeless child living in a camp run by IOM. (Photo: Natalie Behring/ © IOM 2005)

**For thousands of Sri Lankan families, displacement has become a way of life and the term “internal displacement” has become “eternal displacement.” No sooner than a family settles in a new place, with relatives, friends or understanding neighbours, they have to move on. Constantly uprooted, they lose sight of peace and normality as the ongoing conflict pursues them from one district to the next.**

**By Christopher Gascon, IOM Sri Lanka**

For the past 20 years, Sri Lanka has suffered from an ethnic divide whose death toll hovers around 64,000. Hundreds of thousands have been forced to flee for their lives as the battle rages on. Entire communities have been evacuated when the Sri Lankan Army has appropriated land to establish defence perimeters.

At the height of the conflict in 1995/1996, caught between two warring parties, shelling and armed combat at their doorstep, thousands of families gathered their belongings and stole away in the middle of the night to become internally displaced persons or IDPs.

Entire Muslim communities fled south from the Jaffna peninsula, controlled by the Liberation Tigers for Tamil Eelam (LTTE), better known as the Tamil Tigers,

to the government-controlled Mannar district. Many opted to continue to Tamil Nadu in Southern India, condemned to a life of misery in crowded refugee camps.

In February 2002, a ceasefire was signed between the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE and hostilities abated. Gradually, people began to return. But the years of war had taken their toll on both families and their communities of origin. After years of displacement, most people had nothing left. Their houses had been destroyed and their livelihoods had vanished.

With the prospect of peace beckoning, donors and international agencies began to respond to the need for resettlement assistance. Housing and livelihood were foremost on the list of needs and IOM soon began developing programmes to encourage IDPs to return to their communities and restart their lives.

It began by working hand in hand with families to construct modest temporary shelters and to provide basic sanitation facilities. Between June 2004 and April 2006 it provided 2,645 shelters and toilets, helping 4,229 families in their bid to return to normal living.

IOM livelihood support programmes also helped communities to gradually come back to life – retraining and equipping carpenters, masons, fishermen and farmers – and funding small-scale fish processing and retail kiosks. To date IOM has helped to set up some 1,700 income-generating small businesses in the Mannar, Vavunya, Trincomalee and Jaffna districts.

“For years I lived in camps and I had almost forgotten what it was like to have my own place,” says Ramanathan, who resettled in Mannar district. “Today, I have a small but good house and my wife and son can tend the garden while I go





▲ A family stays in a temporary camp provided by IOM. (Photo: Natalie Behring/ © IOM 2005)

fishing in the lagoon. Our life is so much better”.

But among Sri Lanka's thousands of displaced families, many have yet to find the means to return. Nationwide the government estimates that 330,000 people are still displaced as a result of the ever-present conflict, which continues despite the ceasefire.

It is this conflict, however, which presents the greatest challenge to organizations assisting IDPs in Sri Lanka. Insecurity means humanitarian organizations such as IOM cannot always go about their business in reaching the displaced or simply being able to routinely carry out their operations in any one area.

For the same reasons over security that IDPs left their community in the first place, they can also often find that after a period of calm following their return, new tensions arise, posing renewed security concerns.

In such an environment, finding skilled labour willing to work on programmes such as the construction of shelters becomes more difficult. The other knock-on effect is that the cost of materials increases on the local market, which means in the end that fewer people can be helped from a defined budget.

The tsunami of 26 December 2004 created other new issues surrounding the provision of assistance to displaced people.

For one, the number of displaced in Sri Lanka more than doubled overnight.

But, paradoxically, the greatest natural disaster in the island's history also brought new hope as well as despair. International donors reacted with unprecedented generosity and humanitarian agencies found themselves able to help most of the tsunami victims with new homes and new livelihoods.

But in the initial race to help the tsunami victims, people displaced by the war were astonishingly marginalized. Several months would elapse before the concept of equal treatment would resurface in the humanitarian community.

The conflict IDPs, many of them living next door to tsunami IDPs, looked on as the victims of the natural disaster got help and support that far exceeded anything that they had received.

For example, tsunami victims received temporary shelters with a 200 square foot cement base, bordered by three foot-high brick walls and roofed with tin sheets. Conflict IDPs had considered themselves fortunate to live in much more basic accommodation.

Livelihood support, once difficult to come by, was now promptly distributed to those who had lost their income-generating assets in the towering waves.

Ironically, the nature of the funding itself was a contributing factor. Under the rules of humanitarian aid, tsunami funding was only for the tsunami-affected.

But a growing awareness of the problem is now resulting in the first steps towards a more even-handed approach.

“You cannot build on a peace process without a stable population base. You can't build on the quicksand of displaced populations,” observes Dennis McNamara, head of the UN's Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) internal displacement division. “Money cannot simply be ripped from the tsunami aid programme...and given to conflict victims. But in some cases, it can be spent in a way that helps both war and tsunami victims,” he adds.

The solution, adopted by the Sri Lankan government and humanitarian agencies, has been to shift the focus onto tsunami-affected districts, rather than simply looking at tsunami-affected populations.

IOM has moved quickly to capitalize on the new approach, reaching out to conflict-affected segments of the population to include them in livelihood support and training programmes originally set up for tsunami-affected groups.

The standards and norms applied to shelters for tsunami victims are also now increasingly being applied to conflict-affected populations, who can now look forward to sturdier temporary housing with concrete floors and tin roofs.

For humanitarian agencies, adopting the principle of equal treatment has also helped to shift the focus from emergency aid and relief to longer-term development. And it is only long-term development that will generate the confidence and stability needed to end Sri Lanka's apparently endless cycle of population displacement. **M**

# Rachel's Story

Photos: © IOM, 2006

## Life as a Displaced Person in a Sudanese Camp

By Robbie Thomson, IOM Khartoum

**K**hor Omer is a camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the El De'ain county of South Darfur, a state in the western region of the Sudan. It is a hot dusty place comprising rudimentary shelters for about 20,000 people who fled the violence of Sudan's long-running civil war. It in no way resembles the neat layout of tents that most people associate with a refugee camp. IDPs are the responsibility of their own government and don't have access to the international protection afforded to refugees. Nor does assistance to IDPs attract the kind of funds that refugee programmes do.

The only tents in Khor Omer are those used by the few international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working there to support their work with the IDPs in the harsh desert climate of Sudan. The camp is inaccessible by road from the state capital, Nyala, and can only be reached by helicopter. It is also difficult for journalists to access and thus of little interest to NGOs driven by the need to raise funds through high profile operations. The World Food Programme (WFP) is present as is IOM and a limited number of NGOs.

At the far end of the camp, Rachel (not her real name) squats and pokes at the smoking fire outside her shelter in a desultory manner as if trying to find answers to difficult questions in the tiny flames. On top of



▲ A mother and child wait in line to be registered for the IOM assisted return to the south. At the Government of Sudan's request, IOM has agreed to transport a limited number of Dinka IDPs from Darfur to Northern Bahr Al Ghazal in southern Sudan.





Rachel's father had been proud of his herd of around 30 cattle and had been considered quite prosperous. But the cattle were looted by pro-government forces that overran his village and the family was left with nothing. Nevertheless, he took the decision to make the nearly 500-km walk north to relative safety in South Darfur. Rachel does not remember the walk nor the brother who died on the

◀ IDPs loading their belongings on to IOM trucks which will transport them to the River Kiir.

▼ IDPs crossing River Kiir. The river must be crossed before the onset of the rainy season, as both the river and roads in the south will become impassable.

journey. She does not know her age – she's in her mid-twenties but looks much older. And she doesn't know her birthday either. With no parents alive, there is no one to ask.

Many Dinka made some sort of a life in South Darfur after the first flight of the mid-eighties. They had a traditional relationship with the farmers and landowners of a comparatively rich South Darfur for whom they provided agricultural labour. But when violence broke out in Darfur in 2003, they had to flee again, once more losing all they owned. Whilst not directly involved in the violence, the African Christian Dinka became a target of ethnic hatred from all sides and fled from rural

areas to towns such as Nyala, which became the main concentration of Dinka in the state.

Some fled to Beileil, which lies next to the railway. In recent months, the numbers in Beileil camp have fluctuated as more Dinka seek refuge from inter-tribal fighting while others move on. The fighting between government and rebel forces and between different tribes and factions of the immature Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and the consequent violence against the civilian population is the worst since the Darfur conflict first broke out in 2003.

Many like Rachel, once a resident of Beileil, have decided to return home.

Whilst they know that whatever infrastructure of their home state of Bahr el Ghazal there has been entirely shattered by the conflict they once escaped, many prefer the safety away from the increasing violence in Darfur.

Rachel's story as a single mother and head of a household comprising three children is not untypical. In the beginning, after her husband died, life was possible. She was young, strong and able to walk large distances to gather firewood to sell to charcoal burners or other IDPs.

But a year and a half ago, while gathering firewood by herself some kilometres away from Beileil, she came across three men

the fire sits a blackened aluminium pot in which bubbles a thin sorghum porridge.

The shelter is not much more than a metre high made in the local style of bent sticks driven into the ground and covered in a mixture of branches, grasses and discarded plastic bags. The discarded plastic bags which have become an icon of 21st century Africa are ripped and torn and flap in the breeze. Their red blue and yellow stripes add a macabre air of carnival to the scene of relentless poverty that is the Khor Omer IDP camp. The day is hot and windy and the plastic bags rustle insistently in the breeze.

Rachel arrived at Khor Omer almost two months ago with her three children from another camp at Beileil, about 18 km to the southeast Nyala and north from where she is now. Her recent arrival means her shelter is on the outside of the main IDP gathering and lacks the security of the more established shelters nearer the cen-

tre. The covering of the shelter provides some respite from the hot sun of the early afternoon but there will be no protection from the heavy rains between May and October.

Two of her three children take advantage of the shade having spent the morning sifting the sand in the shelter in an attempt to eradicate the local black beetles which have a mildly poisonous bite and cause painful infected swellings. Her third child, a boy of about a year, tugs at a distended breast in a listless and disinterested manner while she continues poking the fire.

Rachel was born sometime in the mid-80s in a satellite village just to the south of Mareil-Bai in Northern Bahr el Ghazal province and before she could walk, was forced to flee with her parents to avoid the inter-ethnic fighting of that time between an Islamic government, their proxies and largely Christian tribes including Rachel's own Dinka.







IDPs gather at a camp in Nyala to register for a food distribution.

## IOM IN DARFUR

IOM has been present in Sudan since the early 80s expanding its activities to Darfur in 2004. Its activities comprise the following:

**Registration.** IOM has provided technical support for the registration of more than 2 million vulnerable people in Darfur, mostly internally displaced people. Registration enables ration cards to be issued enabling vulnerable people to access food and non-food items that are essential to their survival. The registration database also provides a wealth of statistical data that will assist substantially in planning the return of displaced people to their former homes. It will also enable humanitarian agencies to provide assistance and protection during and following the return process.

**Return in Darfur.** The current situation in Darfur is not considered conducive for the return of displaced people except for the Dinka population in South Darfur who are moving from Darfur to Northern Bahr el Ghazal. IOM's current role is to support the spontaneous return of the Dinka and also to assist the formal return of a limited number in this return season (February to May). In the meantime, IOM has established itself as the lead actor for returns for North and South Darfur and leads the planning process in anticipation of the situation becoming more conducive to return within Darfur in the future.

**Preventing forced returns.** In August 2004, IOM signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Sudanese government whereby Khartoum devolved a large element of its sovereignty to IOM in the matter of returning and relocating people within Darfur. As a result of IOM's verification and monitoring activities under the MoU, forced returns of displaced people was entirely eliminated in North and South Darfur. The MoU is a unique tool for the protection of internally displaced people, nothing like it exists anywhere else in the world.

**Material assistance and capacity building.** IOM provided the majority of non-food items that were distributed in Darfur in 2005. IOM also provides capacity building to local Sudanese entities in addition to coordinating camp managers in North and South Darfur so as to avoid duplications and gaps in the provision of assistance. Other assistance includes IOM engineers carrying out substantial flood prevention work in Abu Shouk and Kalma camps as well as the building of more than 1,000 latrines.

dressed in uniforms and carrying guns. They taunted her and said she become their "wife". When she refused, they beat her. Two of the men raped her and the third sexually assaulted her with his gun, causing her to bleed extensively. Although badly hurt, Rachel managed to get back to her shelter and children in Beleil. She had no idea who the men were or who they were fighting for.

Apart from the horror of the encounter, Rachel's ability to earn money was severely depleted. She was injured but terrified to seek medical assistance as she would have to explain the encounter and thus deal with the shame once the physical injuries had healed. These included a livid scar running from her mouth across her cheek. And then she discovered she was pregnant with her younger son.

The other tragedy is Rachel's encounter wasn't unique. The women in the camp have largely stopped seeking firewood and thus lost the dollar that a day's firewood collecting could earn. The only ones to profit are the militias and other proxies who now sell firewood in the camp and employ the women on minimal wages – even by Beleil standards – in the back-breaking work of manufacturing bricks.

There have been periodic distributions of food in the camp and Rachel once received some metal pots and a plastic sheet. She also had blankets but life had become much harder. The plastic sheet

had long gone to raise cash for medicines for one of her children.

Rachel had seen people in white cars driving into the camps and the sheikhs had been talking of return to her homeland. Some said there was nothing there, but others said there would be food and maybe a small plot of land to grow things.

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**Whilst not directly involved in the violence, the African Christian Dinka became a target of ethnic hatred from all sides and fled from rural areas to towns such as Nyala, which became the main concentration of Dinka in the state.**

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It was then that Rachel decided to return to a homeland that she did not remember, did not really know where it was and with which she had very few connections.

She went to the railway station close to the camp almost everyday and this was

how she met a *nazir* (chief) of the train to El De'ain, halfway to Bahr el Ghazal, but still in South Darfur. The *nazir* had established a business by providing accommodation in the freight cars of the train for Dinka returning home. The "fare" is about 1,500 Sudanese dinars (US\$7). Rachel did not have it. But if she wanted to board the train, there was only one thing left she had to offer to obtain a favour. There was no thought as to how she was going to complete the rest of the journey. It was enough to make a start.

Once Rachel reached El De'ain, she walked with her three children to the Khor Omer camp some 10 km to the south of the small railway town. Now she is planning the second leg of her journey, which could be by truck but would cost 1,500 dinars. Or she could walk which would take between 20 and 25 days. But instead, Rachel has decided to wait after hearing that the *Hawaja* (white faces) might provide transport for her and her family and the meagre belongings scattered around the shelter, free of charge.

If Rachel does not leave Khor Omer by the beginning of May, the opportunity to return to her homeland this year will be lost. Seasonal rains make the route from South Darfur to Bahr el Ghazal over the River Kiir that flows close to the border between the two provinces impassable from mid-May to early February. It's another hurdle to overcome on the long journey home, but what choice does Rachel have? **M**



While millions of Afghans fled abroad to become refugees during the conflicts and droughts of the 1980s and 1990s, as many as a million left their homes to become internally displaced people in their own country.

By Rahilla Zafar, IOM Afghanistan

In December 2001, within two months of the fall of the Taliban, IOM began the daunting task of helping them to return home, trucking hundreds of families down from the snow-covered Panjir Valley to the Shomali plain bordering Kabul.

In the spring of 2002, thousands of displaced families began to register to join IOM convoys leaving Herat's giant Maslakh displacement camp and the dozens of smaller camps bordering the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif.

In the intervening years, IOM, UNHCR and the Afghan Ministry of Refugee and Repatriation (MoRR) have worked closely together to help some 400,000 internally displaced Afghans to return home to their towns and villages all over Afghanistan.

They were also given a small reintegration package consisting of items such as blankets, sleeping mats, soap, seeds and fertilizer provided by both IOM and UNHCR.

But while male returnees can often return to work the land or find jobs associated with the country's reconstruction, uneducated women face a far more uncertain future, particularly if they are among Afghanistan's estimated 1.5 million war widows.

"Afghan women suffered tremendously due to their homes being destroyed and losing their husbands and family support.

▶ Displaced widows are given livestock as part of IOM's reintegration package, to Northern Bahr Al Ghazal in southern Sudan. (Photos: Rahilla Zafar/ © IOM 2006)



# Women Bear the Brunt among a Million Displaced Afghans



◀ Glad to be back home: Shabana together with her four children.

There is no family planning and many of these women are left with maybe ten or 11 children with no means to feed them. The government is not able to provide for them," says Nooria Banwal, Director of Women Economic Empowerment at the Afghan Ministry of Women's Affairs.

Banwal, who was the first woman to return to Afghanistan from Pakistan through IOM's Return of Qualified Afghans programme in 2002, welcomed a Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation-funded IOM shelter reconstruction project in Faryab province specifically targeting these women throughout 2004 and 2005.

"When we first returned, we were living in tents and it was very cold in the winter. Now we are not only back in our community, but living in a house," says 35-year-old Farzana, from Jalayer in Shirin Tagab district, who was one of 234 beneficiaries.

Her husband died 14 years ago during the war and she lives with her 16-year-old son. During the war, she lost everything, and the family survived through small amounts of money sent by relatives in Iran and the sale of firewood collected by her son.

"When I was displaced, the Taliban commander told me he would torture me if I was caught leaving my home. Now that I am back in my own village, I can wash clothes and clean relatives' houses in order to earn some money. I am no longer living among strangers," says Farzana.

Shabana, 38, a widowed mother of four also living in the village, agrees. "I not only lost my home and husband during the war but my entire support network. I had no income or means to return home other than through IOM," she recalls.

Village elder Khanjan, who also returned from a Herat camp with IOM, agrees that community support is essential for Afghan villagers. "In this village some people own land, some have livestock and some do not have anything. Those that have a lot are able to support families that do not by

giving them food and agricultural jobs," he says.

But wealth in impoverished Afghan villages is relative. Jalayer is located along a stream, but the water is too salty to drink. The nearest fresh water spring is located 25 km away – a six-hour donkey ride.

"Camels and donkeys drink from the same spring and there needs to be catchments installed which will protect the water from all external dirt and parasites," says Jean Nahesi, an IOM civil and water engineer. "During the winter and rainy season, families dig holes in the ground in order to collect drinking water, which is even worse, as the animals drink out of the same holes," he adds.

Typhoid, dysentery and hepatitis are widespread in Afghanistan due to lack of access to clean drinking water. But Jalayer's nearest health clinic is an IOM-built facility, funded by USAID, some seven hours away by donkey at Ghar Tapa village in Khwaja Musa district.

"If you live in one of these remote villages and you're seriously ill, the likelihood that you will die is quite high," says Sera Orzel, head of the IOM sub-office in Maimana, the capital of Faryab.

The nearest school is also in Ghar Tapa, but without transport, few Jalayer children attend. Instead, the village *mullah* holds outdoor classes for them. "God knows what will happen to my son. It all depends on the security situation and if other people can provide for him. I only have a few animals and have no means to provide him with anything more," says Farzana.

While infrastructure, access to health care, and education remain huge challenges for the Afghan authorities, the country still has not yet fully solved the problem of the remaining internally displaced population.

An estimated 153,000 remain and as many as 38,500 are expected to need help to return home in 2006. "The lack of donor funding and the ending of WFP food deliveries to the camps means that there is serious concern as to what will happen to these people," says Alex Coissac, who manages IOM's IDP programme. **M**



# IDP WORLD FIGURES







▲ A family (left) looks on as their belongings are packed for transportation (right). (Photos: Darren Boisvert/ © IOM 2006)

# When the Short Road Is a Long Way to Go

The difficulties of returning home soon after a major natural disaster can be just as daunting as returning many years to a homeland torn apart by conflict. The memories are more vivid, the destruction probably more immediate and the emotions still very raw. This is something that millions of people displaced by last year's earthquake in Pakistan are now facing.

By Darren Boisvert, IOM Pakistan

Almost six months after he left his destroyed village in the mountain, Khushal stands in the middle of controlled chaos – scattered belongings, collapsed tents and children running around yelling at the top of their lungs.

But Khushal insists he's happier than he's been in months. He's watching IOM officials pack his belongings and load them onto a waiting rugged 4x4 jeep. The road to Khushal's village of Dub Gali, a mere 14 km north of Muzaffarabad city in Pakistan-administered Kashmir, is one of the few routes unblocked by landslides, and

▼ Naseer gives instructions to the driver to help him negotiate a difficult and dangerous switchback. (Photo: Darren Boisvert/ © IOM 2006)

his family is the first one in the region to pack up and head home.

"The authorities told me that those people who still had land should go back and we should return willingly," says Khushal. "Two weeks ago, I walked home to start to rebuild my house, and now that the weather is warmer, I am taking my family back."

Since 20 March, IOM has been providing free medical screening and transportation to anyone who wishes to return home to their villages. By the end of October 2006, IOM officials estimate that they will assist over 40,000 people, thanks to funding from the UN's refugee agency, UNHCR. There is much uncertainty in the tent villages being closed down by the government from the end of March, but also the first stirrings of hope.

ter by trade, was injured when some of the rocks that formed his roof fell on his foot.

"I wanted to stay in the village after the earthquake, but my family had no food. I had no work and I was injured, so I came down the hill with my family," says Khushal. "Now we are going back. We have one month of food supplies, and I don't know what will happen after that. I don't want to go back to cutting wood because there is no one to buy my logs. I hope the government will feed us."

Khushal is slightly luckier than most. Before the earthquake struck, he had bought a buffalo and two cows on credit. All three animals survived the big tremor as well as the winter, thanks to the kindness of two families that stayed on in Dub Gali. With most of the 25,000 rupees that he received from the government housing compensa-



▲ IOM vehicles head out of the Lower Bab-e-Neelum camp in Muzaffarabad city, enroute to Dub Gali, 14 km away. (Photo: Darren Boisvert/ © IOM 2006)

Life has been tolerable for Khushal and his family of five in the Lower Bab-e-Neelum camp in Muzaffarabad city. Run by the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY) association, 113 families waited out the harsh winter with donated food and blankets. But for the past few months, Khushal's mind has been on his village that nestles between two mountain peaks at the base of the Himalayas.

The earthquake on 8 October 2005 hit Dub Gali hard. By the time the 7.6 Richter scale quake subsided, all 40 houses were destroyed. Twenty-one people died, including Khushal's brother, sister, nephew and uncle. Khushal, a woodcut-

tion scheme, Khushal paid off his debts and plans to use the milk to help feed his two boys, eight-year-old Afzal and four-year-old Bilal, as well as his toddler daughter Lubna and his wife, Saleem Jan.

"I feel good – but worried," says Khushal. "What will we do if there is another earthquake?"

Such fears are common among those returning home. There have been more than 1,800 aftershocks in the region since last October and many roads remain blocked. According to UN road assessment teams, entire valleys, such as the Leepa Valley to the east of Muzaffarabad city, will remain





▲ Newly rebuilt bridges help the IOM truck and family make it home. (Photo: Darren Boisvert/ © IOM 2006)

isolated for years to come. Kilometres of painstakingly constructed roads have simply slid off the mountainside and into the deep ravines below.

Along the road to the village of Dahkhan (north of Muzaffarabad city), farmland carved out of the mountainsides as terraces is riddled with crevasses and where once there were rows of maize, rocks and boulders sprout like deformed weeds. Tattered clothing and broken beams litter the roadside as people gathered more than valuables before fleeing the mountains.

As well as the fear of further earthquakes, those returning to destroyed homes will also have to deal with other more immediate issues such as how to stay dry during the approaching monsoon and a few months down the road, winter will bring a freezing reality. For those who have lost their land, rebuilding a home is a distant dream and all seasons bring their own hazards.

For Mariam Abdul, who is returning to her village of Dahkhan with a few precious acquisitions, having land to rebuild on is not so much of an issue. Her husband Abdul Rasheed, a local school teacher, stayed on in the village to guard their land while Mariam migrated to the Lower Bab-e-Neelum tent camp. Here, as well as looking after two of her three surviving



▲ Mariam and her new adopted daughter Alia. (Photo: Darren Boisvert/ © IOM 2006)

children, she took care of an orphaned girl and a widowed neighbour.

"They will stay with us until we can figure out what to do," says Mariam. "But I'm afraid we're going to need some help."

Over the winter, IOM had provided tents and shelter material for Dahkhan, along with those on the adjoining mountain-

sides. It was a challenging programme as the post-earthquake migration of survivors to other cities and towns in the region made it more difficult to locate families in need.

Many villagers in the region have two houses, one during the summer at upper elevations, and one for the winter much lower down the mountain. Mariam's family had already moved into their lower "winter house" when the earthquake struck, but can never return as that land is now separated from the mountain by a new 15ft crevasse. In effect, they lost half their land, and she says next winter will be cold and difficult.

Packed into a 4x4 jeep, this "new" family is jostled by the rocky road that is little more than a mountain track. The roar of the motor competes with the low rumble of the Jhelum River rapids over 5000ft below, as the vehicle inches its way back and forth to transverse tight switchbacks.

A few kilometres away from Dahkhan, the road ends abruptly, and Mariam and her family start the 1 ½-hour walk to their village. Mariam will find her husband and a few other relatives in order to return to the road's end, gather the bags of food and the tent, and begin the reconstruction of their lives next to the debris of the old ones. It's going to be far from easy. **M**

# From Darkness to Light

## Displaced Dinkas Return Home >>>

The moment of return to former homes is perhaps the only happy chapter of the displacement story. Here, Jean Philippe Chauzy accompanies a group of vulnerable Dinkas helped by IOM to return to their ancestral homes in southern Sudan. After decades of conflict, the country is host to the world's largest internally displaced population, standing at 6 million people. After so many years away, the long-anticipated return is an emotionally charged event.

Photos: Sven Torfinn/© IOM, 2006





## Preparing to Leave

There is a definite buzz in the air this morning at the Lologo way station, a few kilometres outside the town of Juba, in Sudan's Bar Al Jebel province. For months now, Lologo's residents, internally displaced Bor Dinkas, had been waiting for the moment when they could finally pack their belongings and go home.

Theirs is a story of internal displacement which saw tens of thousands of Dinkas flee the region of Bor in the province of Jonglei in 1992 to escape ethnic violence. Forced from their homes, they fled south in two large distinct groups – one trekked westwards towards the towns of Mundri and Maridi in Western Equatoria, and the other fled southeast towards Juba, Kajo Keji and Nimule, and into neighbouring Uganda.

Following the signing in January 2005 of a comprehensive peace agreement, some 12,500 Dinkas decided to leave Maridi and Mundri to trek home with about 150,000 cattle, their most prized possession. Their plan was to walk eastwards towards Juba and then follow the White Nile up to Bor.

The decision to return to their ancestral land was also motivated by tensions over land and grazing rights and by a general



feeling among host Moro and Zandi communities that the Dinkas had outstayed their welcome.

Their journey through Western Equatoria was fraught with danger every step of the way. They walked through mined areas and were repeatedly ambushed by cattle rustlers. The group scattered and many of the elderly, disabled, the young and expectant mothers were left behind at the mercy of the marauders.

In December 2005, at the request of the government of South Sudan and in coordination with the UN, IOM stepped in to provide ground transportation to help the most vulnerable reach the safety of Juba, where they stayed.

Those packing their meagre belongings today are about to begin the last leg of their long journey home. Excited children run around bundles of luggage and sleeping mats, pushing toys made of bamboo

and tin. Women holding wooden crosses close to their hearts stand in front of tents while old men sit on the polished wooden seats that symbolize their status as community elders.

The departing Dinkas have swept clean the newly vacated tents – other displaced families will soon move in from a derelict warehouse nearby. They have completed an IOM medical examination to ensure they are fit to travel, and their names have been registered on a passenger manifest. Boarding passes and luggage receipts are carefully wrapped in plastic bags to protect them during the long river journey home.

Anticipation grows as the first IOM trucks rumble into Lologo way station in a cloud of dust. Lines quickly form as IOM staff double check the identity of those climbing aboard. After several rotations, 320 vulnerable Dinkas have been transferred to an IOM chartered double-decker



ferry, moored in the shade on the west bank of the White Nile.

It has been a long day for the Dinkas. As night falls, they quietly settle in, exhausted but relieved to be on board with all their worldly possessions safely stored in the ship's hold. Before long, silence falls on the ferry, punctuated only by the occasional cries of young children.

a halt in the shallows, forcing the pusher boat to manoeuvre frantically to inch it back into deeper water.

The scenery gradually changes with an increasing number of cattle camps on both banks of the river. Groups of people from the Mundari tribe wave and cheer as the ferry passes. Despite past tensions between the Mundaris and the Dinkas, mangoes and maize are thrown onto the barge as a welcoming sign.

After nine hours, the ferry moors a few miles north of Terakeka, a medium-sized mud and thatch village. Its arrival immediately draws a crowd.

Dozens of ebullient young Mundaris, who live in a nearby cattle camp, are on the scene. Their bodies are covered in ash and their foreheads and matted hair are smothered in ox blood. In the late afternoon sun, they perform dances and brandish sticks to the sound of a drum to the amusement of the returning Dinkas. As night falls, they drift back to the cattle camp and the day ends as it started – with hymns about coming home from darkness into light.

## Arriving Home

This morning's hymns are even more fervent than last night. The Dinkas know that in a few hours they will be crossing the invisible line that marks the beginning of their territory.

As the ferry zigzags along the river, more and more Dinkas throng the decks. Michael Garang, a tall and lanky 60-year-old stands on the foredeck with a small group of elders. With hands cupped to shade their eyes, they scrutinize the land. Elderly Dinkas, like pilgrims arriving in the Promised Land, hold wooden crosses at arms length as "From the Darkness to the Daylight" echoes across the Nile.

"Our blessing is peace," says 18-year-old Michael Wai, who fled Bor as a child. "We thank God for this peace, because it allows us to finally come home."

The town of Bor is now clearly visible, dominated by hangars and rubhalls set up by aid agencies. On the eastern bank of the river, hundreds of anxious inhabitants are now waiting for the ferry to anchor. Time seems to stop as the ferry slowly glides to a standstill.

A wooden gangway is pulled onto the ferry and the first Dinkas disembark to an emotional welcome.

"Baba! Baba!" shouts a young woman as she rushes into the arms of her father, 65-year-old Lual Alier Ajuoi. They embrace and hug and then, with eyes closed, raise their hands to the sky and pray in silence.

Minutes later, two young girls shriek with delight as they meet after years of separation. They hug, kiss and walk away hand-in-hand. Children run to meet friends and relatives brought to Bor by IOM in a previous ferry trip.

"I am so happy, I could fly," says Martha Nyanwut Wal, who plans to return with her three children to her home village of Baidi, after stocking up at a UNHCR-run way station. At the facility, she will receive food from the World Food Programme, and medical assistance, plastic sheeting, jerry cans, mosquito nets and other non-food items from UNICEF and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency International (ADRA).

"Their reintegration prospects are excellent, mainly because the group returned with its cattle – the mainstay of their economy," says IOM Operations Officer, Louis Hoffmann. "The Dinkas showed great courage and determination in coming home. IOM and its partners just stepped in at the right time to help the most vulnerable return. One of the very few happy stories out of South Sudan – we certainly hope there will be many more to come." **M**



▲ Photo: Christophe Calais/© IOM, 2006

## The Journey

As day breaks, the sound of hymns comes from the decks, accompanied by rhythmical drumming. It is Sunday and the Dinkas want to express their gratitude for their imminent homecoming. The Bible verses tell the story of

a people coming from the darkness into the light.

"I'm so happy to go home," says 28-year-old Samuel Chol. "My father died in 1992, but I hope to find my mother in Bor. She must be very old now, at least fifty."

Excitement grows as the ferry, pushed by a powerful motorboat, begins its 150-km, 18-hour journey up the White Nile. On the decks, the Dinkas have huddled together to say goodbye to Juba, but apart from IOM staff, there is no one to send them on their way.

Travelling north from Juba, the White Nile meanders through lush marshlands. Then wide stretches of grassland open up, dotted with herds of scrawny, hump-backed, long-horned cattle – a welcome sign for the Dinkas, who hold them in great esteem.

Midday under a scorching sun and the ferry bounces off the soft sandbanks as the river narrows to a width of just 20 metres. Despite the expertise of the pilot, who has navigated the channel for more than 30 years, the ferry occasionally grinds to







An IDP gathers water at the River Kiir.

# Displacement and HIV

## Another Vulnerability

**Imagine you're a woman with children who's had to flee your home because soldiers or militia are attacking your village. Imagine that in the panic of running into the forest to stay alive, you have no possessions, no food and no money. But there are several hungry mouths to feed and bodies to shelter as you move from place to place, looking for somewhere safe to stay. Imagine that when at last you cobble some shelter together at an impromptu camp where others like you have gathered for protection but you find in fact that some women and girls get raped, and that there is no way to earn money to buy food or medicines for a sick child. What would you do?**

Photos: © IOM, 2006

By IOM Geneva and IOM Uganda

In northern Uganda, these questions are not hypothetical, but a daily reality for many of the 1.7 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) spread out in various districts in the north and north-east of the country.

The answer for some is the need to sell sex in order to buy food or protection just to stay alive.

There is general awareness of HIV and AIDS, which in Uganda have affected nearly a million people and currently affect 40 million worldwide. But among Uganda's IDPs, contraception is not easily available and its use is limited. Fertility rates are high as is the likelihood of mother-to-child transmission of HIV. People don't just have few options for HIV prevention but also limited possibilities for assistance.

Uganda, formerly one of the world's most affected countries, is often seen as a success story in terms of fighting HIV and AIDS. By 2003, national HIV prevalence rates had fallen according to the Ministry of Health. The trend continues today when seen at the national level, but with exceptions. One such exception is the north, the region worst affected by the conflict between government soldiers and militia affiliated to the Lords Resistance Army (LRA). Some districts such as Gulu

▼ Ugandan women in Masindi district.







▲ In Zimbabwe, awareness-raising campaigns are communicated through dramas to provide education on HIV and AIDS prevention.



of food, clean water or proper sanitation. These more immediate ills may push HIV to the back burner and little thought or concern will be given to the possibility of contracting a disease people may know little about, and in any case whose symptoms may not even show for five to ten years down the road. The problem is another lifetime away when the struggle to survive is being fought on a daily basis.

Small chance then under these circumstances of being voluntarily tested for the virus. Even if there is an opportunity to be tested and basic health services and information is available to those with the virus on how to take good care of them-

selves, the stigma and discrimination that both displacement and the disease carry means people may hesitate to take up any services that are offered. Because of that stigma, nine out of ten people in the world with HIV don't know they have the virus.

Although internal displacement worldwide is now slowly starting to gain recognition among the international community, resources to address the issues surrounding it aren't matching needs. And even if there are funds, HIV and AIDS prevention and care services are often pushed aside in favour of the more immediately pressing needs of shelter,

food, clean water and sanitation. It's a short-sighted approach.

Among mobile and displaced populations operating outside their usual behaviour norms and who are very vulnerable to violence and abuse from many sides, the consequences of contracting HIV and AIDS are additional tragedies they have to bear. What little social fabric that remains among the displaced is lost as parents, children and siblings are lost to a disease that is entirely avoidable. As a displaced person, you have to hold on to the few things in life you still have – family and a few meagre possessions. If you lose that, what is left? **M**

▼ HIV and AIDS are not the only health issues affecting IDPs.

with significant numbers of IDPs, also have higher rates of HIV.

But why are the conflict-affected areas in Uganda and displaced people the world over vulnerable to HIV and AIDS?

Displacement itself – being away from the normal home environment – can lead to people having to adopt more risky behaviour to survive. A recent IOM study funded by UNAIDS among IDP populations in four districts in northern Uganda assessed their perceptions of vulnerability to sexually transmitted infections and HIV and AIDS. The study found issues such as poverty, hunger, lack of income generating opportunities and idleness as reasons why some women and girls engage in transactional sex. Worryingly, only one in five people in the IOM study had ever used a condom.

Displaced children who've lost parents and who've been left to care for younger siblings are even more vulnerable to HIV. Lacking in protection or guidance, they may have few other choices than to resort to transactional sex as a strategy for survival. An IOM programme that provided educational support to orphans and vulnerable children affected by HIV and AIDS in IDP camps in northern Uganda helped to minimize their vulnerability. But the programme ended last December and is awaiting new funds to ensure such support can be extended to other children.

HIV and AIDS are also not the only health issues facing IDPs. Depending on the circumstances that made them flee their homes, they often have other urgent health concerns such as the physical effects of violence and sickness from lack



**COLOMBIA** The country's 50-year conflict has created the world's second largest internally displaced population of at least 1.7 million, according to government figures, though some sources put the figure much higher at more than 3 million. The IOM office in the country is currently working on a two-year programme funded by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, which provides HIV prevention information and assistance to displaced adolescents and young people. This is achieved through the development of a sexual and reproductive health tool kit and other community outreach strategies and the strengthening of the health sector. Working together with government partners, non-governmental organizations, international agencies and academic institutions, more than 1,200 health and education workers have been trained to use the tool kit in order to pass on their knowledge to young IDPs. At the end of the first phase of the programme this month, more than 200,000 young IDPs will have been given access to sexual and reproductive health information and services including HIV prevention. The greenlight for a second phase has been given which means that by the end of March 2008, IOM will have reached many more hundreds of thousands of young IDPs.

**ZIMBABWE** With access to HIV and AIDS prevention, care and treatment not readily available to mobile and vulnerable populations in Zimbabwe, IOM's mission in Zimbabwe established a Migration Health Unit in 2004. It was to ensure such groups would receive comprehensive information on HIV prevention, as well as care and support services for those amongst them living with HIV/AIDS.

Based on the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Guidelines on working in emergency situations against HIV and AIDS and gender-based violence, IOM, in collaboration with UNFPA and Population Services International (PSI), is working through the Migration Health Unit to improve access to and availability of male and female condoms; to increase knowledge on HIV; to produce and disseminate information materials targeted at affected populations and to facilitate access to voluntary counselling and testing, gender-based violence referrals, post-exposure prophylaxis and emergency contraception.

As IOM carries out food distributions and other humanitarian assistance to Zimbabwe's displaced, HIV and AIDS prevention and care assistance is given at distribution sites. Such assistance includes awareness-raising through dramas and the distribution of condoms and information, education and communication materials on HIV and AIDS.

For those chronically ill from AIDS, workshops on nutrition and gender issues are held at distribution sites and at health clinics. Supplementary food packs are also provided. So far, nearly 120,000 displaced people have benefited from IOM's Migration Health Unit's programmes addressing displacement and HIV and AIDS.



# Post-Emergency Assistance Programme

## for Internally Displaced Populations, Receptor Communities and Other Vulnerable Groups

By Emma Kamau and Fernando Calado, IOM Colombia

Official statistics published by the Colombian government confirm a total of 1,784,626 internally displaced persons (IDPs) at the end of March 2006. This figure represents nearly 5 per cent of Colombia's population of 43 million. Colombia has the world's largest internal displacement crisis after Sudan. But those displaced in Colombia are perhaps less visible than those in Africa or Asia because, rather than living in refugee camps, they melt into slums or shanty towns on the fringes of cities and of society.

Forced displacement is both a tactic and a strategy adopted by the illegal armed groups, mainly for territorial control. The displacement pattern in Colombia continues to be from rural areas to larger villages, then to departmental capitals and finally, if IDPs have not found resettlement opportunities, they arrive in large cities such as Bogotá, Medellín or Cali, where they join the already vulnerable populations of the shanty towns. In some cases, armed actors continue to threaten the displaced in these areas causing intra-urban displacement.

The Guiding Principles for Internal Displacement call on states to safeguard the liberty and personal security of IDPs, guarantee equal treatment, ensure free primary education for children and offer necessary humanitarian assistance, among other safeguards. States should promote the return of IDPs to their home communities only when such returns are voluntary and can be accomplished in safety and dignity. Colombia's Law 387 is meant to guarantee many of these safeguards.

IOM's mission in Colombia has been to bring together and coordinate institutional efforts in order to implement and

develop solutions for Colombia's mobile population by engaging all actors including international cooperation, the private sector, civil organizations and the Colombian government. With this approach, the IOM programme has sought to build sustainable development strategies, framed in market opportunities that generate social and economic profitability for the entities related as well as for the beneficiaries.

### The Programme

The main objective of IOM's Post-Emergency Assistance to Displaced, Host and Vulnerable Populations Programme has been to restore the rights of victims of forced migration, providing assistance to the government on activities to prevent further displacement and measures to protect affected populations.

The IOM programme, which began in October 2000 and is due to end in June 2006, has carried out more than 700 projects in nine departments with a budget of nearly US\$ 50 million fully funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Working in the areas of health, education and co-habitation, infrastructure and housing, institutional capacity building and income generation, the programme has provided support to the Colombian government and civil society to strengthen the assistance provided to IDPs, especially as they arrived in new communities and needed to settle.

In 2005, a new alliance between IOM and the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF), also funded by USAID, allowed these efforts to continue for the next five years. Lessons learnt from the past six years will help the Colombian government and civil society, particularly the IDPs, in this new endeavour that aims to provide assistance to more than 1 million persons.

### Programme Results

**Health.** As reported by *Acción Social*,<sup>1</sup> in mid-2005 half of the registered IDPs were af-

<sup>1</sup>*Acción Social* is the presidential programme tasked to assist internally displaced persons.

filiated to the General Health and Social Security System, and the government was working on providing access to public services for the remainder. But according to the Colombia's Constitutional Court, in sentence T/025, some 80 per cent of IDP homes were not receiving health care because of, amongst other reasons, a lack of an up-to-date assistance plan, low political will at the regional level and the lack of information and awareness on the part of IDPs.

Through four project areas: family health, sexual and reproductive health, psychosocial assistance and institutional capacity building, IOM has been supporting additional prevention activities to promote health, nutrition, and vaccination, and to extend coverage of the basic assistance plan and provide access to the services offered by the National Health System to more IDPs. As of March 2006, IOM was assisting 322,568 persons under this component, while at the same time working on consolidating a strategic partnership with the Ministry of Social Protection and strengthening the coordination with government institutions and United Nations agencies working with internally displaced communities.

**Education.** Acquiring basic skills is a priority for the social reintegration of displaced populations. The education component of the IOM programme was key in the process of integrating the newly displaced who oftentimes find themselves in alien environments without the necessary tools for social, economical, political and cultural integration. Also, as the majority of the IDPs hailed from rural areas, they had to learn to function in a modern urban environment, where reading, writing, basic math skills, and knowing their rights and duties were vital to their survival and successful integration.

IOM has tried to consolidate a unique model for comprehensive education to strengthen institutions working with displaced populations and host communities, which oftentimes are the poorest sectors.

Also, the IOM Open Doors Strategy, developed by the programme, aimed at providing alternative models that promote education in the family, schools and communities and to facilitate integration into a new community. The strategy not only offered conventional education but also provided evening and weekend education alternatives for youth and adults.

The programme has provided direct assistance to 128,986 people.

**Infrastructure and Housing.** This part of the IOM programme has focused on assisted return and prevention in areas considered as priority for the government. The projects developed aimed at finding solutions to overcrowding in small communities where IDPs had settled and lack of housing and infrastructure in the cities. It provided assistance to populations who wanted and were able to return to their places of origin and to those who did not have the option or the desire to return.

This segment also concentrated on the development of schools, school cafeterias, community libraries, etc. A total of 170,482 beneficiaries were able to access housing loans, including for water installation, basic sanitation and construction or improvement of waste water disposal systems. The programme encouraged the participation of local and national authorities and included a component for obtaining government co-financing for the projects and for the beneficiaries to contribute with their labour.

**Income Generation.** Income generating activities are vital to the successful settlement of displaced populations. IOM has been working with its partners to find sustainable employment for the displaced and vulnerable heads of households, to provide support to those involved in farming and raising livestock and in the creation of micro-enterprises.

One of the main objectives has been to recover the work skills of the displaced by supporting sustainable projects, designing and implementing small non-reimbursable loans and promoting food security projects. The programme has created alliances with the private sector for the creation of productive projects and also pro-

vides job training. A total of 101,900 persons participated in these schemes.

**Institutional Capacity Building.** The main objective of the capacity building component has been to provide better responses and assistance to communities affected by internal displacement. IOM works with *Acción Social*, the National Civil Registry and other state institutions, in addition to community councils that are the frontline of assistance for the internally displaced and host communities. Special emphasis has been made on providing financial and technical support to develop the institutional capacity of government institutions that are key partners in assisting displaced populations.

**Cross-cutting Activities.** The programme has implemented cross-cutting activities, focusing mainly on promoting the participation of the private sector with the objective of engaging them in migration and development issues.

### Afro-Colombian and Indigenous People

These groups remain the most marginalized and vulnerable populations in Colombia and are also severely impacted by the country's violence. Their land is usually of strategic interest to illegal armed groups for the cultivation of African palm and illicit crops. IOM focus has been on strengthening the cultural identity and rights of these groups.

### Youth

Throughout the life of the programme, IOM has continuously invested in projects geared towards empowering and integrating rural

and displaced youth as a prevention strategy. Rural youth threatened by illegal armed groups and displaced urban youth can be discouraged from violence, crime and high risk/self destructive behaviours if they are presented with alternatives that meet their educational, creative and recreational needs.

### Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

These are essential prerequisites for sustainable human development. IOM works to correct inequalities within its programmes and the country as a whole – such as unequal pay or access to credit – and also emphasizes equal rights, obligations, benefits and opportunities for all, particularly female heads of households.

### Land

IOM's key objective is to strengthen the social fabric and thereby empower displaced and at-risk populations. The strategy centered on strengthening government institutions so that they can efficiently and effectively protect the land rights of rural communities and guarantee the participation of the population.

### Assisted Return

An important role of IOM's office in Colombia is to support the respect of the rights of victims of forced migration and provide assistance to the government on activities to prevent displacement and protect affected populations. IOM provided assisted return to displaced persons willing and able to return to their places of origin. **M**

## Orlanda, a woman full of light and hope

By Rocío Sanz, IOM Colombia

**L**uz y Vida, or Light and Hope, is the name of the Artisan Women's Association created by internally displaced Colombian women. And that is just what their successful business endeavour has given them.

At 46, Orlanda says her life experiences have provided a lot of stories that she is eager to share. In 1994, an illegal armed group arrived in her home town and she was forced to flee with her family, and ever since they have been living in Bucaramanga, the capital of Santander, some 18 km from there.

Four years later, Orlanda met the coordinator of *Luz y Vida*, who invited her to join the association and encouraged her to learn to make leather goods. Orlanda accepted the offer and began to learn the



▲ Photo: IOM, 2006

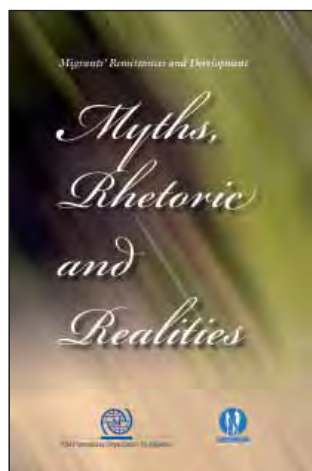
art of making items in leather and paper. Eight years have gone by and she has never looked back.

All 57 members of *Luz y Vida* are internally displaced women heads of house-

holds. *Luz y Vida* was created in 1998 in the settlement now known as Ciudadela Café Madrid. Its mission is to provide skills training for displaced and/or homeless women, encourage women to start and manage small businesses, and improve children's living conditions and education. *Luz y Vida* receives technical support from IOM and financial support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The Association also teaches the member's children to work on leather and paper, to operate the machines, and provides management and marketing training. "I am very happy with my life. My husband and I hope to continue to provide for our children so that they can have a better future. We're far away from our home town but perhaps one day we can go back and tell everyone about this part of our lives."





## Migrants' Remittances and Development: Myths, Rhetoric and Realities

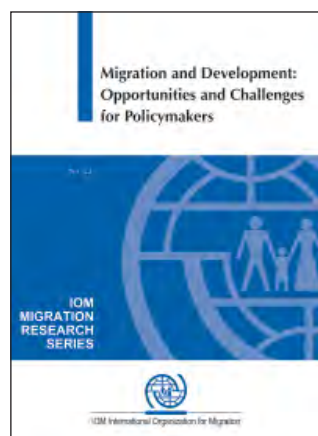
The close relationship between economic development and migration has been recognized for some time. In recent years, however, there has been a shift in thinking about the relationship between migration and development. One of the factors which contributed to this change in thinking is the growing recognition of the importance of remittances. Given the importance of this topic, IOM has co-sponsored the publication of this study by Bimal Ghosh with The Hague Process on Refugees and Migration.

2006/softcover – 118 pages  
ISBN 978 92 9068 294 3  
US\$ 26.00

## Migration and Development: Opportunities and Challenges for Policymakers (No. 22)

There is growing consensus that international migration can have important impacts on development, and that it is important to develop appropriate and effective policy interventions that will help realize its full potential. This paper is intended to be an accessible guide to the policy implications drawn from the burgeoning literature on migration and development. It aims to further the important and timely process of mapping out the policy options in this area, especially across the spectrum of channels that form the migration-development nexus.

2006/softcover – 54 pages  
ISSN 1607-338X  
US\$ 16.00



## International Migration (Vol. 44, No. 2)

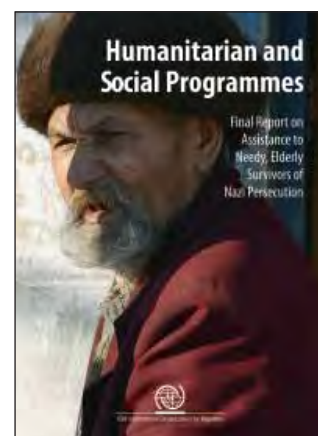
*International Migration* is a peer-reviewed social science journal, interdisciplinary in scope, seeking broad geographical coverage of international migrations throughout the world, with an emphasis on contemporary policy issues in international migration. This issue includes two papers on the riots in Paris, followed by a paper on partisanship and views about immigration in southern California. It also includes four papers on different dimensions of migration in Sweden, and a Notes and Commentary piece which summarizes a meeting held in Oxford on 6-7 March 2005 on the causes, consequences, and best practices of international health worker mobility.

2006/softcover – 208 pages  
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## Humanitarian and Social Programmes: Final Report on Assistance to Needy, Elderly Survivors of Nazi Persecution

In four years, IOM's Humanitarian and Social Programmes reached over 73,800 victims of Nazi persecution, most of whom lived in isolation and extreme poverty in Central and Eastern Europe. IOM delivered assistance worth over US\$ 32 million to 17 countries. For many survivors the assistance received represented the first recognition of their suffering in nearly 60 years. While HSP may have brought long-awaited recognition, it also exposed a variety of survivor and community needs, many of which are likely to remain unaddressed for years to come.

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