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NURTURING PEACE: IOM ELDORET BEGIN THE CONSTRUCTION OF PEACE CENTRES IN THE RIFT VALLEY



Watering the Peace tree: Hon. Margaret Kamar (in red) leads the Eldoret East community in planting trees as a sign of peace

Peace building efforts in Kenya’s Rift Valley Province continue to gain drive with the launch and subsequent construction of the first IOM supported first Peace Centre in Waonifor Location, Ainabkoi Division in Eldoret East constituency.

The launch that took place last month brought together the Eldoret Community who are increasingly supporting the peace efforts in the region, the area Member of Parliament Hon. Dr. Margaret Kamar among other dignitaries.

The groundbreaking launch was an introduction to the first out of three centres earmarked for construction in identified locations in the Rift Valley Province. The peace centre that is being constructed by the community members to sustain ownership, aims at promoting community awareness on sustainable peace in the Rift Valley, which was adversely affected during the 2007 post election crisis in Kenya.

The peace centres will serve as the central resource point for the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence for communities in the surrounding areas. They are symbolic in nature and come at a time when all stand together in unity and diversity to begin a joint project

through the construction of a positive tool and planting the seeds of peace on a shared land, thus promoting peace building and reconciliation, dialogue and deeper interaction.

The ceremony served to bring communities together while promoting ownership and sustainability of this initiative, by involving the Community Leaders, and Representatives, Spiritual Leaders, Peacemakers and Government Administration. The Waonifor Peace Centre will be launched by Eldoret East Member of Parliament, Margaret Kamar and the Eldoret DC. Mukele.

On the backdrop of the 2007 post election crisis, IOM Kenya in close collaboration with the beneficiary communities in the Rift Valley intends to construct 3 peace centres to support platforms and build tangible spaces in the communities which would in turn promote sustainable peace and development. The peace centres will offer a space where cultural diversity is celebrated and where awareness on peaceful traditional conflict copying mechanisms that have existed in this society for hundreds of years is emphasised.



IOM's Robert Odhiambo at the launch of the Peace Centers in Waonifor, Eldoret East

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IOM SHOWS HOW TO INCREASE REMITTANCES TO TANZANIA AND UGANDA



IOM Chief of Mission Pär Liljert, addressing stakeholders at the presentation of findings of the remittance study

The government and postal staff from Tanzania and Uganda are the latest beneficiaries of a knowledge transfer that is aimed at increasing remittances between the two countries, in an IOM managed project named, *Supporting an Affordable Electronic Remittance Transfer System between Tanzania and Uganda*.

The workshop sought to present the findings of a field assessment undertaken in 16 districts in Tanzania and Uganda, whose findings indicate that lack of systematic collection and report on remittances is deterring records and estimates and that there is preference of informal systems of remitting funds over legal channels among users due to restrictive requirements. The flow of money from Tanzania to Uganda is reportedly higher than from Uganda to Tanzania and a large percentage of that money is used to support studies of Tanzanian students in Uganda. The assessment also indicates that mobile phone money transfer seems to be gaining popularity although cross border money transfer using this method is still not available.

The report emphasized on the development benefits where remittances are channelled to including education, domestic support, medical aid and micro enterprises. Finally, the UPU International Financial System currently available in various districts in Uganda and only in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania needs to be marketed and made popular to users as well as support to infrastructure.

While speaking during the workshop, the Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Communications, Science and Technology of Tanzania Patrick J. Makungu said the recommendations from the findings of the study need to be integrated in the government system because remittances can be useful in various development aspects that could help develop Tanzania.

The project is being implemented in collaboration with the Governments of Uganda and Tanzania and in partnership with the Universal Postal Union (UPU). Respondents in the assessment work for post offices, postal banks, commercial banks, courier operators and migrants sending/receiving remittances in the two countries

IOM NAIROBI PLAYS HOST TO AMERICAN ACTOR, NICHOLAS CAGE

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Executive Director, Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, and Hollywood actor, Nicolas Cage, today visited the Eastleigh Community Wellness Centre, an IOM Health Facility in Nairobi, to learn first hand about IOM Kenya's activities in the fight against human trafficking as well as see the health facilities offered to Somali urban refugees and host community at the Centre.

The IOM Wellness Centre, located in Eastleigh, a section of Nairobi where thousands of Somali and Ethiopian urban refugees live, offers free Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) services to both migrants and host communities. Dr Alexander Galev, IOM's Regional Migration Health Assessment Coordinator, briefed the visitors of the overall situation with migrants in Eastleigh as deprived population, their need for extended medical services and the trust IOM Clinic and IOM as an Organization developed with the Eastleigh migrant population during the 8 years of medical activities in Eastleigh.

Mr. Cage and Mr. Costa were particularly interested in IOM's awareness raising initiatives on CT. The visitors also had a chance to speak with patients visiting the clinic who are refugees and migrants from Ethiopia and Somalia.

Human trafficking has evolved into one of the most tragic features of contemporary global migration. Kenya has been identified as a country of origin, transit, and destination for victims of human trafficking. Internal trafficking is wide spread as well as international trafficking and occurs for purposes of domestic labour and sexual exploitation, and forced labour. Women and children are the main victims. The refugee population in Kenya, mainly Somalis, as well as economic migrants has been identified as particularly vulnerable to trafficking. Other vulnerable populations include those Kenyans affected by internal conflict and protracted drought in selected parts of the country. Cases of trafficking have been identified from all parts of the country.



The Eastleigh Community Wellness Center hosted Nicolas Cage when he visited IOM in Nairobi

TANZANIA INAUGURATES A BOYS CENTRE FOR VICTIMS OF RAFFICKING

DEVELOPING LABOUR MIGRATION FRAMEWORK FOR KENYA: IOM TAKES THE LEAD



Memento donated by the children of CIS and the Rector, Bishop Kilaini, to the Ambassador of Japan, Hiroshi Nakagawa

IOM Tanzania last month participated in the inauguration of the enlarged and renovated drop in centre for vulnerable boys and boy victims of trafficking run by the IOM’s partner NGO CIS (Child in the Sun) in Manzese area in Dar es Salaam.

The centre was originally opened in 2007 when CIS entered into cooperation with IOM and started delivering assistance to boy victims of trafficking.

The 2009 renovation was supported by IOM as part of its assistance to victims of trafficking and funded by the Japanese Development Cooperation. The Manzese drop in centre, which originally was a basic one floor, one bedroom house, where children had to use the only existing room for sleeping, dining and playing, is now a two floor building with a spacious living room, kitchen, bathrooms and toilets, changing room and well furnished bedrooms which can host up to 24 children.

The official opening of the drop in centre saw the participation of the Japanese Ambassador to Tanzania Mr. Hiroshi Nakagawa, the Bishop of Dar es Salaam Method Kilaini, the CIS Rector, Father Antony Mutu and the IOM Chief of Mission, Mr. Pär Liljert. Children and youth from CIS, together with CIS staff, enlivened the event with songs and dances.

The renovation of the drop in centre has been made possible by the good cooperation and coordination between CIS, IOM and the Government of Japan. *“Thanks to this cooperation, boy victims of trafficking assisted by CIS have now a real house, which is first and foremost a concrete mean to restore their self-confidence and make them feel they also are important”*, said as Bishop Kilaini

The Government of Kenya, on realizing the importance of regulating labour migration and promoting the placement of youth labour into the international job market to contribute to development and nation building through remittances and skills transfers, requested IOM’s technical assistance to establish legal and institutional frameworks for regulating labour migration.

With funding from the 1035 facility, a project was designed to assist the government of Kenya through policy review and drafting of recommendations for institutional and legal reforms to regulate labour migration; establishment of a skills inventory and database to determine labour surpluses and deficits in the country; a pilot survey of Kenyan diaspora in the UK and development of an online tool capturing information on the Kenyan diaspora; validation of proposed reforms and outcomes of the project at a high policy level to ensure political will and government support.

In the course of implementation the project, a technical working group consisting of Ministry of Labour Officials and IOM, noted that there was need for the government to adopt a holistic approach to labour migration. As such it was agreed a stakeholder workshop needed to be held to bring together all the relevant government actors to build consensus on the way forward.

This workshop that was held last month came out with an action plan with priority areas that need to be addressed in the short, medium and long term in order to harmonize approaches to regulating labour migration. The stakeholder workshop identified the key priority areas in developing a legal and institutional framework for regulating labour migration as follows: improved coordination; resource mobilization; establishment of an enabling legal framework; integrated data management; and public awareness raising on labour migration issues.



**Seated L to R: Edith Okoki, Helen Apiyo, Sammy Nyambari, Tal Raviv, Josiah Musili
Standing L to R: Paul Okoth, Isaac Munyae, Milliam Wahaba, Eunice Ndonga, Festus Mutuse, Maurice Amisi**

TO WHOM MUCH IS GIVEN, MUCH IS EXPECTED

This is the time to go back,” explains Somali diaspora member Dr. Abdiweli M. Ali, “There is a huge brain-drain in Somalia and the country is suffering from a lack of human capital.

It is for this very reason that Dr. Ali, an Associate Professor of Economics at Niagara University in New York, will take a year sabbatical beginning August 2010 to return to Somalia with QUESTS-MIDA. While in Somalia, Dr. Ali plans to work with the Ministry of Finance on public finance management and with the Ministry of Planning on development related issues including data analysis. He is also in conversation with East Africa University and other universities in Puntland to explore teaching opportunities.

Forty-four year old Dr. Ali, originally from Central Somalia, lives in New York with his four children and his wife, who is a professor of economics at New York State University in Buffalo. Dr. Ali came to the United States for the first time in 1986 to obtain his Master’s Degree in Economics from Vanderbilt University in Tennessee. Dr. Ali had completed his undergraduate studies in Mogadishu and won a scholarship to study in the United States through the African Graduate Fellowship Program. Upon arrival, Dr. Ali had no trouble adjusting to life in the U.S., “I was a student, I just had fun!” he says.

After receiving his Master’s Degree, Dr. Ali returned to Somalia as a government employee, only to return to the U.S. within a year. He explains, “Unfortunately, Somalia was going through a very hard time, so I left in June of 1989 and came back here.” Dr. Ali then earned a Master’s Degree in Public Administration from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in Cambridge, MA, a Certificate in Taxation from Harvard University Law School and a Ph.D. in Economics from George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. After completing his studies, he worked for the Virginia State Government before returning to academia as a professor at Niagara University in 2003.

In addition to his vibrant life in the U.S., Dr. Ali states, “I am always engaged with Somalia.” The majority of Dr. Ali’s family members still reside in Somalia and he has been back many times to visit as well as to contribute to the country’s development. In 2005 and 2006 Dr. Ali worked as a consultant on the World Bank/United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Joint Needs Assessment for Somalia. He returned again in 2008 with UNDP QUESTS and taught at Puntland State University.

“My intention is to help and to give back,” says Dr. Ali. He encourages other members of the Somali diaspora to do the same. He explains, “You can have a good life in the U.S. and never leave, but the question in life is how you make a difference. If I can change just one life for the better, then I have done my work on Earth. What is it they say? To whom much is given much is expected!”

For more information on QUESTS-MIDA, please visit <http://www.quests-mida.org>

IOM LAUNCHES A RWANDAN DIASPORA WEBSITE

December marked the peak of one year of hard work and an intense cooperation between MRF Nairobi/ Brussels/ Kigali and the Diaspora General Directorate in the Rwandan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation to implement the 1035 Facility funded project to *Enhance the Linkages between the Government of Rwanda and the Diaspora for the promotion of Development and Investment*.

The project aimed at profiling the Rwandan Diaspora in Belgium through a survey to establish their skills, needs and interest in the development of Rwanda. The survey results led to the establishment of a Rwandan diaspora website (www.rwandandiaspora.gov.rw) which will serve as an interface for better communication between the Government of Rwanda and the Rwandan Diaspora worldwide.

The website was launched during the presentation of the survey report findings, to an audience of about 150 diaspora representatives from 28 countries at the 4th Diaspora Global Convention in Kigali on the 13th of December 2009.

The data gathered from over 1100 respondents in Belgium during seven months of research showed that the Rwandan diaspora in Belgium is highly divided, with 49% of known associations belonging to the so-called ‘opposition groups’. Diaspora members overwhelmingly use informal channels of communications to get news about their country of origin as well as to remit money to their families in Rwanda. The study also shows that investment levels in Rwanda are still low and that there is inadequate information and communication flow between the Rwandan Government and the diaspora.



Emmanuel Mugarura (IT Consultant), Valeska Onken (IOM project coordinator), Robert Masozera (Director General of the Diaspora Directorate) and Gaston Rwasamanzi (International Research Consultant).

This gap can now be bridged with the newly established website that will be maintained by the Diaspora General Directorate. It offers numerous opportunities to Rwandan diaspora members to address questions to the Rwandan government, comment on news from Rwanda or to register for job opportunities in Rwanda.

IN SEARCH OF A BETTER TOMORROW: IOM FOLLOWS ONE REFUGEE ON THE JOURNEY FROM DADAAB REFUGEE CAMP TO KAKUMA REFUGEE CAMP



Zahra Hassan Photo: IOM (Asha Maalim)

When Zahra Hassan fled the Somali city of Galgadud, she hoped to obtain a better life for her and her children, wherever that would be. She describes her arrival at the Dagahaley camp in the Dadaab refugee complex as overwhelming and claims her basic needs were not met to her satisfaction. “I received a ration card, but I did not have access to basic amenities such as medical, education, and proper shelter”, recalls Zahra as she explains the situation that met her at the Dadaab Refugee Camp.

Zahra was one of the refugees who were relocated from Dadaab to Kakuma Refugee Camp in an exercise that was carried out by IOM in close collaboration with UNHCR, the Kenyan Department for Refugees Affairs, and NGO partners.

“What I expected to receive in the Dadaab refugee camps isn’t what I finally got in terms of better standard of living. The camp is overcrowded because of the continuous influx of refugees from Somalia and is unbearable! Moving to Kakuma is the best thing for me and my children.

Forty-five year old Zahra fled the conflict and drought in Somalia in 2008 with three of her five children. She however does not know the whereabouts of two of her children or the rest of her family.

“My livelihood in Somalia was very bad and I thought we would be better off somewhere other than Somalia,” she says.

Zahra hopes to receive education, security, shelter, and a better standard of living in Kakuma for her and her children. “I have also heard that the gap between people is smaller in Kakuma”, she says. Zahra’s journey to Kakuma takes 3 days, with sleepovers in Thika and Kitale. IOM provides her with food and shelter for the journey.

Upon arrival in Kakuma, she and the other refugees are handed over to UNCHR by IOM, where they are provided information pertaining to their temporary shelter.

We follow Zahra as she is taken to her shelter in Kakuma, where she settles in for what we hope is a better life for her and her family.

“The trip was long but it was good. I fell ill but received medical attention from the medical escorts. I wish to thank IOM and UNHCR for their assistance and for making this journey possible for me and my children”, she says.

Zahra’s friend, Anab Abdulle, is also relocating to Kakuma. Anab is a mother of three who fled Somalia in 2008 and sought refuge in the Dadaab refugee camps for her and her children. “I was living in Mogadishu with my husband and children but when my husband disappeared, I decided it wasn’t safe for us so we fled. I don’t know whether he is alive or not”, she says.

Having lost everything to the war, including her extended family, she fled Somalia and came to the Ifo camp in Dadaab in June of 2008,” she says. However she claims her life wasn’t great at the camps due to various reasons such as congestion, lack of proper standard of living, and segregation in the camps. Also raising her three young children along in the camps has been difficult for her and hopes for a better life in Kakuma.

“Relocating to Kakuma is my decision and wish. I have heard that Kakuma doesn’t just have Somalis living there but there are a mixture of people like the Sudanese and Turkanas so it is my expectation that life there won’t be segregated”, she says.



Anab Abdulle Photo: IOM (Camille Bielt)