



The International Organization for Migration

Kenya

BACKGROUND

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) office in Nairobi, Kenya was established in 1993, following a cooperation agreement signed between IOM and the Government of Kenya in 1983, making it the first African country to join IOM in 1985.

IOM in Kenya seeks to address migration challenges in Kenya and in the region, and is dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of concerned governments and migrants within the Horn of Africa region.

ISSUES

As an inter-governmental organization, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to:

- Assist in meeting operational challenges of migration;
- Advance understanding of migration issues;
- Encourage social and economic development through migration, and;
- Uphold the dignity and well being of migrants.

IOM in Kenya aims to provide a reliable, flexible, and responsive migration management resource facility to governments, regional organizations and migrants in Eastern Africa. The organization seeks to support countries to strengthen their policy and legislative frameworks as well as facilitate humane and orderly population movements within and outside the East African region whilst addressing the challenges of irregular migration including human trafficking and border control.

IOM works in the four broad areas of migration: migration and development, regulating migration, facilitating migration and addressing forced migration. Cross cutting activities include migration health, technical cooperation and capacity building, gender dimension on migration, and protection of migrant's rights.



The Horn of Africa region and its movements can be categorized in the following areas of issue:

- Forced migration, due to conflicts and natural disasters and resulting in Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugee outflows;
- Irregular migration, due to poverty and reduction in livelihood options, and linked to human trafficking and smuggling.
- Traditional and cross-border migration linked to nomadism and cross-border movement. It is mainly a survival strategy such as pastoralists looking for pasture and cross-border trade abroad and within the region;
- Mixed migration, the use of one migration route by several different groups of migrants including asylum seekers, economic migrants, victims of trafficking and smuggling.

ACTIONS

IOM in Kenya closely works with governments, regional organizations, UN partners, civil society and migrants to:

- Deliver effective and timely assistance for refugees, IDPs, returnees, host communities, and mobile populations affected by conflict and natural disaster. IOM has, over time, gained a lot of experience in these migration areas, and has constituted several departments to effectively achieve this end. They include the Operations Department, Emergency and Post Crisis Unit, the Pre-Departure Orientation Unit, and the Migration Health Division.
- Address the challenges of irregular migration through holistic response to the needs of governments, migrants and victims of trafficking including research on new migration trends, capacity building for effective migration management, addressing mixed migration, counter trafficking and smuggling programmes while promoting regular migration.

The projects designed to achieve this include:

- Capacity Building in Migration Management (CBMM);
 - Counter Trafficking;
 - Emergency and Post Crisis (EPC);
 - Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR), and;
 - Mixed Migration.
- Assist governments to manage migration for development through the promotion of safe labour migration, linkages with the Diaspora, and remittances. IOM has, over time, facilitated migration for development through tailor-made projects such as Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) and Labour Migration.
 - Promote migration health and address HIV among mobile populations as well as assist governments to respond to health related challenges in migration for the benefit of society. The Migration Health Division is the lead department that addresses the health needs of mobile populations.
 - Facilitate regional dialogue on migration practices and share migration information and best practices in the Eastern Africa region. IOM implements programmes to facilitate Regional Cooperation and Integration, in particular for the East African Community (EAC).

RESULTS

In order to effectively meet its overall objective in the region, IOM has developed a strategy for 2010-2013 in line with the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), which also aims to contribute to achieving the overall national objectives of Kenya's national development strategy – the Kenya Vision 2030.

The UNDAF, which highlights the key priority areas of development assistance on which the UN agencies will partner with the Government of Kenya from 2009-2013, has benefitted from the active participation of IOM in the formulation process.

Within UNDAF, IOM contributes to Kenya's development through the following areas of focus:

- Emergency and disaster response;
- Migration management;
- Youth labour migration;
- Migration health, and;
- Counter trafficking.

Being a specialized agency dealing with issues of migration and mobile populations, IOM mainstreams migration and displacement themes in all its activities.

In the midst of the 2007 post election violence, IOM was among the first agencies on the ground and led in camp coordination and camp management. IOM managed to move smoothly from an emergency response to a recovery phase, and implemented both emergency and recovery programmes. IOM has been implementing various integrated programmes to assist IDPs in the North Rift Valley Province.

IOM in Kenya has been implementing a large refugee resettlement programme since the early 1990s and is the lead agency on HIV and mobility within the UN Joint Team on AIDS. The organization is working with the Government of Kenya and civil society in the creation of appropriate legislation and National Policy to address the problem of human trafficking. In 2010, the Government of Kenya passed the Counter Trafficking in Persons Act, formally addressing the issue of human trafficking and smuggling.

IOM, through its CBMM Kenya programme, has supported the drafting of a new National Immigration Policy, last drafted in the 1950s. Based on policy recommendations from the IOM, the Ministry of Labour and Human Resource Development established the Labour Migration Unit, to assist in coordination and collaboration between agencies.

IOM is part of the Climate Change, Environment and Migration Alliance and recently signed a MOU with UNEP to jointly implement projects on climate change adaptation.

PARTNERSHIPS

IOM in Kenya is a member of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) and also works closely with several Ministries in the Government of Kenya in the implementation of its programmes. It partners with several local NGOs and works closely with member states of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the East African Community (EAC) and the African Union (AU).

RESOURCES

IOM Kenya is financed by various donors (including the Governments of USA, Japan, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Finland, UK, Denmark, Italy, Canada, Australia, the Netherlands and others) the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), African Development Bank, IOM 1035 facility, European Union, Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and others in order to facilitate programme implementation in Kenya.