



## IOM Tajikistan Newsletter - September 2012

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## Foreword from the Chief of Mission

Dear Readers,

As the new Chief of Mission for IOM Tajikistan, it is my pleasure to welcome you to this quarterly newsletter. I am excited for the opportunity to work in Tajikistan and look forward to further advance and strengthen the efforts of international community, the Government of Tajikistan and civil society to promote healthy and sustainable development. I am bringing to IOM Tajikistan my extensive experience and long term commitment to IOM, having worked for IOM missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, and hope to continue important efforts of the organization here in Tajikistan.

In my new role, I am pleased to introduce some of the highlights of the continuous efforts of IOM Tajikistan carried during the last quarter.

In our cover story (page 3), you can read about IOM's reintegration and rehabilitation assistance to victims of labour exploitation, and the role IOM played at addressing issues the victims of exploitation face, helping them with psychological and reintegration support. Also included in this newsletter are updates from our other service areas including Border Management, Migration Health, and Labour Migration.

Finally, I would like to use this opportunity to welcome comments and suggestions regarding this bulletin and encourage you to visit our website, Facebook and Twitter to learn more about our activities.

Best Regards,

Tajma Kurt

Chief of Mission, IOM Tajikistan

### *Current Donors to IOM Tajikistan Projects*





## Rebuilding Lives: IOM and USAID Support Reintegration of Exploited Migrant Workers



*Members of the local government and supporting NGO Women of Orient celebrate the opening of the new business*



*IOM delivered technical equipment for the rehabilitated migrant workers*

Within the framework of the USAID Counter Trafficking Project, IOM Mission in Tajikistan, jointly with its local partners identify and provide reintegration and rehabilitation assistance to victims of labour and sexual exploitation. NGOs in Tajikistan are actively engaged in identification related activities, including the provision of rehabilitation and reintegration assistance, since June 2010 and have made considerable progress in this field as evidenced by the results in recent years.

We would like to share the success stories related to the provision of reintegration assistance to three victims of trafficking who were subjected to labour exploitation. The victims of trafficking (VOTs) returned home to Tajikistan with physical injuries and disabilities due to prolonged exploitation. The desire and need for psychological and legal support for each victim (23 to 27 years old at the moment) were determined during the primary screening and needs assessment. These victims were initially identified by the NGO “Women of Orient”, Penjikent district of Sughd Province, and subsequently recognized as victims of trafficking by IOM experts in Tajikistan.

An important part of NGO Women of Orient’s work is identification, rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of trafficking. This work is implemented in close cooperation with local administration, *mahalla* councils, health agencies, passport office, municipal police department, and State Agency on Social Protection, Employment, and Migration. Over the past two years, the organization has identified 21 VOTs, including 11 men and 10 women. All victims have been assisted

with psychosocial rehabilitation, recovery of identification documents, provided with health care, professional education, and employment.

In 2010, the NGO “Women of Orient” identified three residents of Vahdat village, Khurmi Jamoat of Penjikent district, who had been fraudulently transported to Russia and for several years were violently exploited and forced to experience terrible hardships. NGO Women of Orient helped them get through the psychological and physical rehabilitation, restored their lost documents, and assisted them in enrolling in professional training courses with the municipal State Agency for Social Protection, Employment, and Migration. After receiving professional training, the returned migrants decided to build an auto repair shop in their native village as a way to support themselves financially since they could not work otherwise due to poor health.

There is a great demand for car repair in Khurmi Jamoat, and this type of business was identified as having great potential in the community. Previously, residents had to drive out of town to get their cars repaired. After discussing the matter with community leaders, the returned migrants decided to set up a joint, team-based employment with the final product to be the opening of a car repair service. Throughout the reintegration process the staff of NGO Women of Orient provided legal support to the returned migrants.



According to the district chairman's decision, a piece of land was allocated for the construction of workshop. The migrants prepared a draft design of the new shop's structure and estimated the cost for the construction. Through the USAID project, IOM financed the construction of the shop with a grant of 5,874 Tajik somoni to purchase the construction materials. The funds were used to purchase cement, fittings, sheet metal, doors, and roof timbers. The rest of the required material, i.e. stone, gravel, sand, bricks, and all the labour needed to construct the shop were provided by the migrants themselves with the help of their family members.

On 27 June, National Unity Day in Tajikistan, the opening ceremony of the workshop was held with the attendance of local authorities, village administration, and other supportive community members. The returned migrants discussed their future plans which included the eventual expansion of the repair shop's services. The workshop which was built with their own hands is of a great value and instilled a sense of pride among the residents.

After of the completion of the construction works on 21 July 2012, IOM staff delivered additional equipment (rough grinding machine, welding machine, angle grinder, air compressor, hydraulic floor jack, electrical pasting stove, inward flanging machine, air compressor hose, spanner set, table vice) to the shop. During the equipment handover, many community leaders were present including the chairman of Jamoat Khurmi, the chairman of Jamoat Khurmi's Women Council, and residents of Vahdat village of Jamoat Khurmi.

The car repair shop is a good example of creating jobs from the grassroots level. The Head of NGO Women of Orient" and the Chairman of Jamoat Khurmi expressed their enormous gratitude to IOM and USAID for the support and reintegration assistance to the returned migrants of Jamoat Khurmi in assisting with the opening of the car repair workshop. Furthermore, the head of Jamoat stated that that his community is always ready to collaborate with VOTs and support when is feasible. The Jamoat assisted in installing and electric pole and delivering an electricity line to the workshop. The Jamoat also stressed the importance of the first ever kind of workshop opened in the area which will be high in demand.

The three returned migrants were grateful to the donor of the project – USAID – as well as the project implementing organizations including IOM and the NGO Women of Orient, which identified their case, restored their confidence, and built their profession

One of the workshop workers stated: "Labour migration crippled me in Russia. More than three months I spent at the Institute of Sklifasovsky, undergoing three operations on injured internal organs and broken bones. Arriving home, I suffered through 2 more operations in Dushanbe on my kidneys. I lost hope for life. Thanks to the staff of NGO Women of Orient, I found the strength to rise again, to believe in myself. Today, I have a goal that I follow, thanks to the support of good people. Myself and my two countrymen are glad that we own a workshop, where we will work and bring benefit for our families and community."

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*The issues of providing reintegration assistance for victims of trafficking differ from country to country. Program and reintegration options are often directly linked to efficient development of programs and opportunities for funding. However, it should be noted that many services, such as reintegration assistance relating to employment, i.e. providing victims of a workplace are likely to be implemented by the NGOs or governmental partners in the residence of the victim. The success story of our victims is an exemplary instance of mutual cooperation of specialists in various government agencies, as well as public and international community.*

*Unfortunately, now the reality is that the options available with each of the assisting organizations are not always sufficient to meet the needs of victims. In this regard, it is important to provide the victim with a realistic picture of available options and possibilities and not give rise to unrealistic expectations, as this may damage the effective process of reintegration.*



## IOM Develops Skills of Migration Service in Sughd Oblast to Provide Counseling to Migrant Workers

IOM recently delivered a training to raise awareness and build the capacity of employees of the Migration Service under the Government and the State Agency for Social Protection, Employment and Migration of Sughd Oblast.

The goal of the training was to train state employees on providing information and counseling to Tajik citizens planning to migrate abroad for employment on topics such as pre-departure orientation; the legal requirements regarding the entry, stay and employment of Tajik citizens in Russia; and the risks confronting labour migrants while abroad and how to mitigate these risks. Trainers from the Migrant Support Center (MSC) in Khujand trained within the Central Asia Regional Migration Programme delivered the training.

The training participants discussed issues related to labour migration and its importance for the country. Understanding the importance of migration, participants also talked about the common problems facing migrants and their families and their possible solutions.

A particular stress was made on the importance of pre-departure orientation for citizens planning to work outside of Tajikistan. Program participants learned about various legal and administrative required norms and procedures, as well as the social and cultural expectations in the receiving country.

IOM also provide training participants print and video materials to further familiarize them with the needs of migrant workers and their families.

The branch of the Migration Service in Sughd Oblast and the MSC in Khujand have been very active in proactively providing information and legal consultations to Tajik migrant workers throughout the region.



*Migration Service staff members from Sughd Oblast attend IOM training*



## IOM Continues Joint Training with Tajik and Afghan Border Forces



*10 Afghan members of the National Border Police joined 5 Tajik Border Guards during July's training*



*Practical lessons during joint Tajik-Afghan training courses include vehicle searches with canine*

IOM is continuously working to increase the security and safety on the Tajik-Afghan border. In July 2012, a ten-day "Border and Immigration Control" training was successfully completed by 10 border police officers from the Afghan National Border Police and 5 officers from the Department of Border Forces of Tajikistan at the Training Centre for Border Guards in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

The training course was implemented within the framework of an ongoing project to build the capacity of the Tajik and Afghan border forces, funded by the US Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL).

The joint training aimed to contribute to the enhancement of security along the Afghan-Tajik border by increasing border officers' professional knowledge and skills at the border crossing points in the Gorno-Badakhshan region. The training covered the basics of border security; cross border cooperation; visa policy; detection of fraud documents; and combating human trafficking and terrorism.

One of the participants expressed gratitude towards the donor agency and IOM: "I would like to sincerely thank the Dushanbe Training Center's excellent instructors. The training exceeded all our expectations.

We hope that IOM will continue these trainings on a regular basis and train Afghan and Tajik border guards on border security and upgrade border guards' professional skills," said Batash Lal Mohammad, Sr. Captain of ABP 5th Zone, Sher Khan Bandar, Afghanistan.

In a further attempt to enhance border security, IOM delivered a five-day Training of Trainer's workshop for ten instructors in September 2012. The workshop was designed to increase the instructors' capacity to create and implement more sustainable projects and to deliver quality trainings using contemporary training methodologies.

This workshop was also made possible with funding from the United States Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL).



## Talk Show Reflects on Migration Issues in Tajikistan

Personal communication and mass media are often used to express various problems and issues related to migration for social and economic development. In an effort to formalize the Tajik migration debate, within the framework of the Rural Growth Programme the partner organizations organized a talk show on state television in Sughd.

The talk show addressed pressing migration issues where civil society representatives, government agencies, and vocational training institutions participated to offer best practical solutions beneficial for migration and development.

The main themes of the talk show included the lack of knowledge of Russian language among Tajik migrant workers; the needs for increased vocational education; the legal avenues necessary to protect oneself while abroad; mainstreaming migration into development planning; cultural awareness; and other pressing priorities for migrants and society.

As a result of the talk show, it is hoped that labour migrants can be better prepared to embark a more secure and safe labour migration.

The Rural Growth Programme is funded by Department for International Development and implemented by International Organization for Migration, United Nations Development Programme, GIZ and other partners.

To view the full talk show episode, readers are invited to visit IOM's YouTube account at <http://www.iom.tj/youtube>



*IOM specialist discusses the variety of ways migrants should prepare themselves before travelling*



*Talk show is available to view on IOM's YouTube account*

## Promoting Tolerance Toward People Living with HIV/AIDS



*Matlyuba Rahmanova, trainer of NGO Guli Surh conducts seminar on stigmatization and discrimination against PLWHA*



*IOM hosts seminar in Kulyab for outreach workers on STI prevention and awareness*

From July to September 2012, IOM conducted a number of refresher seminars and workshops to improve and strengthen the capacity of NGO partners that work in mobilizing communities for prevention of HIV among migrant workers and their families. This project is implemented within the framework of the joint project with UNDP “HIV prevention among labour migrants and their families through informational campaign and improving access to migrants’ friendly services in Republic of Tajikistan”.

The refresh seminars and workshops were scheduled following monitoring visits and recommendations of the NGO capacity assessment conducted in 2011. The NGO “Guli Surh”, who works among people living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA), was involved in facilitating the workshops on promotion of tolerant attitudes toward PLWHA in the communities.

178 outreach workers from twenty two target districts, such as Shurobod, Vose, Farhor, Muminobod, Kulob, Pyanj, Qumsangir, Jomi, Yavan, Penjekent, Ayni, Khujand, Kanibadam, Asht, Chkalovsk, Dushanbe, Nurobod, Rasht, Tojikobod, Fayzobod, Hissar and Tursunzade, substantially improved their knowledge and communication skills on sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV prevention. The results of workshop evaluations demonstrated the importance and effectiveness of the regular on the job trainings for the outreach network. The workshop provided the opportunity for participants to ask practical questions they came across during their outreach work.

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Additionally, NGO “Guli Surh” conducted a number of workshops among NGO partners from Nurobad, Rasht, Rumi, Pyanj, Qumsangir, Kulob and Muminobod aimed at promoting tolerant attitudes toward PLWHA.

During the workshops, outreach workers and volunteers of the IOM’s NGO partners became aware of legal regulations of PLWHA rights, the role of the civil society against stigma and discrimination, reflected on the role of religion in addressing such issues of stigma and discrimination, and lastly the role of outreach workers in improving PLWHA’s access to appropriate care services.





## IOM Hosts Workshop for Managers to Reduce Industrial Accidents and Occupational Diseases Including HIV and AIDS

As part of IOM's project "Improving Migrant Workers Access to Health Services in Tajikistan", a two day workshop was held at the Regional Coordination Training Center in Dushanbe. The workshop was designed to strengthen the knowledge of employers recruiting Tajik and foreign citizens on occupational safety and health issues. The IOM workshop was conducted in coordination with the Tajik Ministry of Health and Migration Service with further technical support provided by the International Labour Organization (ILO).

The main objective of the workshop was to raise employers' awareness on migrants' right to health services and new occupational safety and health management system (ILO-OSH), including the prevention of the infectious diseases such as HIV and TB in the workplace in Tajikistan. The event was attended by representatives from various foreign and private companies, including specialists from the Ministry of Health, Migration Service, State Service for Supervision of Labour under the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, Employers Association of RT, Trade Union and HIV service community organization.

Mr. Boboev Anvar, the First Deputy of the Head of Migration Service, noted, "We have to ensure that workers and employers are educated about health and safety measures to prevent occupational accidents in the workplace, as well strengthen efforts to improve access of migrant workers to health services."

IOM led discussions with the participants on basics of migrants' rights to health from the national and international perspective. The specialists of the National Center for Prevention and Control of TB and AIDS centers made a presentation on the epidemiological situation of HIV and tuberculosis infections in Tajikistan and neighboring countries. Special attention was given to the prevention and control of infectious diseases, as well to the challenges of stigma and discrimination towards people living with HIV, and legal regulations of the problem.



*Workshop participants discuss the challenges of stigma and discrimination towards people living with HIV*



*Participants develop recommendations on how to improve the access of migrant workers and workers of other sectors of economy to health services in the country*

## IOM Conducts Training Workshop for NGO Partners on Outreach for HIV and TB Prevention among Migrants



*NGO staff members participating in "Chamomile" group exercise on STIs*



*Training conduct group work on TB prevention issues*

Since April 2012, the Republic AIDS Prevention Center of Tajikistan has registered more than 4000 HIV cases. In addition, according to the Republican Center of TB Control, 3169 cases of TB have been registered in Tajikistan since July 2012, of which 13.2% are migrant workers.

To address this problem, IOM jointly with Population Services International (PSI) within the framework of the USAID Dialogue on HIV and TB Project has conducted a Training of Trainers on the Principles of Outreach Work for HIV and Tuberculosis Prevention among Migrants on July 23 - 26, 2012 in Qurghontepa. The event brought together a total of 13 participants from two NGOs selected to implement HIV and TB prevention activities among migrants in Kulob and Qurghontepa.

The four-day training enhanced the participants' knowledge on the principles of outreach work among migrants and the needs of migrants for HIV and tuberculosis (TB) prevention and treatment. The outreach workers improved their knowledge and communication skills to provide information in a more engaging and interactive way to the target group. This will allow outreach workers to assist beneficiaries overcome stigmatization and discrimination as well as to help them cope with the psychological barriers they are facing.

Interactive methodology of training for adult audience such as role play games and practical exercises were used at each session of the agenda which transformed the process of learning from passive listening to active participation of the each of the trainees.

Each step of the referral system for migrants was discussed with the partner NGO's staff members to make easy referral of the migrants to the voluntary consultation and testing as well as TB diagnostics.

From August to September 2012, the trained outreach workers covered 546 migrants through preventative outreach work, referring 42 migrants for voluntary consultation and HIV tests as well as an additional 37 migrants for tuberculosis diagnosis. Five migrants were detected with TB and taken for treatment adherence support.

USAID Dialogue on HIV and TB Project is one of the many assistance projects supported by the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Since 1992, the U.S. Embassy in Dushanbe has provided approximately \$984 million in programs that support Tajikistan's democratic institutions, health care, education and economic growth.





## Roundtable on Cooperation for Improving Access to Migrant Friendly Services Held in Qurghonteppa



*Head of TB Prevention and Control Center leads a discussion on the epidemiological situation of TB among migrants*

A roundtable on strengthening the partnership with local government authorities on HIV and TB prevention among migrants was organized within the USAID Dialogue on HIV and TB project on September 25, 2012 in Qurghonteppa by the NGO Akhtari Bakht, Population Services International (PSI) and IOM. The heads of local authorities and communities, Migration Service, Centers for Adult Education, representatives of the TB Control Center and AIDS Control Centers also participated in the roundtable.

A presentation of the USAID Dialogue on HIV and TB project began the roundtable. This was followed by a review of the epidemiological situation on HIV and TB in Khatlon region, a discussion on the link between migration and health issues, and also a introduction to the role of the NGO Akhtari Bakht within the project and in the community.

The audience was active in proposing their ideas for future collaboration with IOM and the NGO Akhtari Bakht. Heads of the local communities (*mahallas*) assumed the responsibility to assist in organizing groups of migrants in each *mahalla* and invited outreach workers to conduct sessions on prevention of HIV and STIs, Voluntary Consultation and Testing (VCT) services, safe sex behaviour as well as means to prevent the spread of TB.

The representative of the Khatlon Oblast Migration Service said that his office is ready to assist with the referral of migrants with TB symptoms and can provide legal support to migrants in need as identified by the staff of the NGO Akhtari Bakht.



*NGO Akhtari Bakht presents on the organization's activities within the USAID Dialogue on HIV and TB project*

A representative of the Oblast Center for Adult Education noted that migrants referred by the NGO staff to this Center are welcome to attend professional training courses on a diverse number of areas including computer skills, welding, mechanical skills, and construction among others. Upon completing the courses, migrants would receive certificates of completion which may assist them in finding better employment in the Russian Federation or Kazakhstan, where the vast majority of Tajik migrant workers seek employment.

The participants recommended to extend the project implementation into the rural villages where the majority of migrant workers reside. They agreed to cooperate for improving migrant's access to the existing legal, social and health services offered in Qurghonteppa. It is expected that as a result of the roundtable, the referral system will be improved and the number of migrants which will voluntarily request a TB diagnosis and voluntary consultation and testing for HIV will increase.

USAID Dialogue on HIV and TB Project is one of the many assistance projects supported by the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Since 1992, the U.S. Embassy in Dushanbe has provided approximately \$984 million in programs that support Tajikistan's democratic institutions, health care, education and economic growth.





## Project Briefs



*IOM conducts field visits with its partners to ensure the cotton fields are free from forced child labour*

### **IOM, Tajik Government, and Civil Society Organizations Continue Monitoring the Cotton Harvest for Forced Child Labour**

Despite Tajik legislation officially prohibiting child and forced labour, in previous years schools in rural areas were at times closed with the students being sent to the fields during the harvest period, potentially endangering their health and limiting their educational development.

For the third consecutive year, IOM is conducting this monitoring project with the financial support of the U.S. Department of State Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) to assess the exploitation and forced recruitment of children and students in the cotton industry in the 25 cotton-growing districts of Tajikistan.

IOM cooperates in this effort with a network of NGO partners throughout the country as well as with the Inter-Ministerial Commission to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Ministry of Labour and Social Protection.

The goal of the project is to assess the extent of trafficking with regard to the involvement of children and students in the cotton-picking campaigns and to raise awareness around the negative impacts on children as a result of their involvement in the harvest. IOM this year will also cooperate with media outlets and local partners to identify additional economic sectors where concerns over the use of child labour are present.



IOM Tajikistan



*IOM comics for migrant workers are available to view and share on IOM's website and Facebook page*

### **IOM Produces Comic Booklets to Raise Awareness on Safe Migration Procedures**

Under the framework of the Central Asia Regional Migration Programme, IOM has developed a series of comic booklets as another tool to inform migrant workers of the ways to reduce their exposure to the many risks they face while in labour migration.

IOM decided to produce the comics to supplement traditional information materials in response to many migrants' concerns and comments that often times organizations produce overly legal documents and brochures.

The first of the comic booklets discusses the unification of a married couple separated by migration where the wife joins her husband in Russia. The booklet shows the necessary procedures for the couple to receive a "patent."

The second booklet (pictured above) shows the risks of migrants working without a valid employment contract. Many migrant workers in Russia remain unaware of the necessity to obtain the appropriate work permit and signing of a legal employment contract before engaging in labour.

IOM operates a network of free telephone hotline services to inform and consult migrant workers and their families on precisely these needs.

## About our mission

The IOM Mission in Tajikistan was established in 1992. Currently, the mission employs 20 staff stationed at the headquarters in the capital city, Dushanbe.

## Who supports us?

IOM Tajikistan is currently supported through the financial contributions of the United Kingdom, the United States of America, as well as the United Nations Development Programme, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, Population Services International (PSI) and the IOM Development Fund. In its projects, IOM partners closely with the Government of Tajikistan, as well as implementing agencies in Tajikistan such as the World Bank, UN Women, GIZ, and others.

## Follow us online!

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