

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

on

IOM HUMANITARIAN EVACUATION ASSISTANCE TO MIGRANTS

IOM's primary objective is to facilitate the orderly and humane management of migration. Underlying this objective is the concept that organized migration is needed, inter alia, to ensure respect for the human dignity and well-being of migrants. Indeed, concern for the dignity and well-being of migrants has been present in IOM constituent documents since the Organization's inception. Many of IOM's operational activities providing assistance to migrants result in protection of the beneficiaries. For instance, by providing safe transportation or **evacuation** in conflict situations and related assistance, IOM protects the physical integrity of the migrants and contributes to the full realization of the right to leave any country and to return to one's country of nationality. (IOM Council Document MC/INF/298, 2009)

How does IOM engage in assisting a Member State with an emergency evacuation of its nationals from another country?

The local authorities and the host Governments are the first responders to any population influx and are responsible to provide the necessary assistance - including transiting - to reach the migrants' home country. The migrant's country of origin is responsible to protect its citizen abroad, and is therefore a stakeholder when its nationals are stranded migrants. Country of origin and country of transit can request IOM's support, including transportation and response to other needs, to facilitate the return of migrants affected by conflict or natural disaster.

A member state can also approach IOM and ask for support on the construction of a contingency plan for the possible protection and evacuation of its nationals from another country in case of a sudden situation of violence affecting foreigners. To spell out the terms of the partnership between IOM and a Member State regarding a possible emergency evacuation of its nationals, a **Memorandum of Understanding** is signed to clarify the scope of the assistance and the respective responsibilities [see below]. In case of a unforeseen emergency, a **formal letter** requesting assistance is presented to IOM from the Member State through a consular representation.

Depending on arrangements, evacuation operations can be carried out by IOM (e.g. Egyptians from Iraq in 2003) or migrant workers projects (e.g. Egyptians from Lebanon in 2006).

Is there a model Contingency Plan or checklist for IOM emergency evacuation operations?

A check list for arranging an emergency evacuation was prepared in the summer of 2010 [see Annex 1]. This general checklist can serve as a basis for country-specific checklists. It incorporates the necessary steps to follow in terms of arranging evacuation movements and in terms of exit formalities and travel documents.

What is the basic information IOM needs to collect/verify prior to arranging an evacuation?

The following must be verified:

1. Consular authorities/services

Is there a consular representation in the country? Does it have the authority to issue documents? What is the closest consulate that covers all substantive consular matters? Identify other consular offices in the region.

2. Numbers and whereabouts of migrants

The consular representative should be able to provide to IOM information on number and whereabouts of its country nationals. Local associations of migrants may possess more reliable data which includes irregular migrants, who may well be the majority of the migrants' caseload. An occupational profile of the migrants caseload is also welcomed.

The information provided should be compared with figures collected by IOM through migration profiling activities, when these have been carried out.

3. Travel documents

Documentation is a major issue, both in terms of **travel documents** held by migrants themselves, as well as exit, transit and entry formalities once a movement is initiated.

It should be taken into account that migrants may not be in possession of documents. In some countries labour migrants see their passports held by their employers throughout their stay in the country, as a sort of guarantee that they will not leave their jobs before their contract is up. Production of travel documents needs special arrangements.

What arrangements can be made about travel documents and exit formalities - or waive the need for these?

a. Travel documents for those migrants being assisted include regular or emergency travel documents delivered by consular authorities; valid passports, etc.

It is essential to make it clear to the assistance requesting Member State that **IOM holds no responsibility for securing adequate travel documents**, short of having government counterparts confer authority to IOM to produce travel documents (not likely).

ICRC travel documents can sometimes serve this purpose, but those are not issued for mass movements.

When passport issuance in the crisis-affected country is not possible for time restriction reasons, the Embassy or honorary consulate of the requesting party can negotiate with the crisis affected country's Interior Ministry their acceptance of an emergency travel document valid for the journey home [Lebanon experience, 2006]

When the Honorary Consulate in a country has no authority to issue either regular or emergency travel documents, IOM can suggest that they be empowered to do so in case of emergency, and be provided with sufficient equipment/stock [Philippines Contingency Planning for Sudan, 2010]

b. Exit formalities governing departure from a country include departure cards, restriction in terms of exit points, and means of exit (overland vs. by air), departure fees, ability to re-enter or quasi deportation decision.

When migrants travel under the auspices of IOM or in movements arranged directly by those governments who could afford to look after their own nationals, exit formalities may be rigorous regardless of the gravity of the crisis situation [Lebanon 2006]. On the other hand, neighbouring countries may decide to ease the transit process and lessen their entry requirements to allow IOM-assisted groups to transit for a certain number of hours (generally 48 but in effect sometimes much longer) as long as IOM commits to arranging the trip back home.

A program in which evacuation only covers a movement across the border, into the neighboring country entails additional discussions with host country governments on volumes, length of stay, IOM responsibility in case migrants refuse to leave the transit, or temporary host country, etc. [see below].

What arrangements can be made with neighbouring/transit countries?

Transit arrangements consist in the requirements imposed by neighboring countries if the movement takes place overland and include: entry requirements (visas), allowed length of stay in transit country, hosting arrangements (responsibility for caring for transit or temporarily evacuated migrants).

Plans with the authorities of neighbouring/transit countries should be initiated by assisted Member States in due course and shall include the possibility of waiving the need for visas and travel documents [Lebanon 2006]. In IOM assisted evacuation operations that arrange the trip to the migrants' country of origin, the transit countries can be assured about the short length of the temporary transfer process. Nevertheless, temporary stay in a neighboring country poses serious logistical challenges [case of Syria during Lebanon evacuation, 2006].

To advocate transit arrangements with a country, the argument can be used that their nationals benefited from arrangements with other countries during other evacuation operations carried out by IOM.

Who is responsible for setting up transit centres?

Transit camp/reception centres for stranded migrants (TCNs) are a responsibility of the host government, and IOM should advocate together with UNHCR on this principle.

Where possible, it would be preferable to keep the TCNs at the border areas while communications and processing in the Capital take place. Field missions, if already undertaken, should highlight possibilities around the reception centers for accommodation, food, water, health facilities, etc. Suitable areas (lodges) can be identified and contracted on negotiated costs.

Generally speaking, what percentage of TCNs possesses travel documents?

This changes from context to context.

When national authorities identify migrants with false documents, the migrants are generally transported to a camp or reception centre, while IOM liaises with relevant consular officers in the same manner as for those TCNs that do not have documents. These officers visit the camp site, set up a desk within the IOM camp office and proceed with the identification and documentation process.

Is IOM responsible for reception arrangements?

If evacuation entails a return home, **reception arrangements** need to be made together with national authorities in the country of origin. A number of countries have adopted a fairly abusive approach to returning migrants, particularly in cases where they were undocumented or might have been considered irregular migrants prior to their being evacuated. In these circumstances, detention upon arrival is not uncommon (particularly in South Asia).

What are the costs of an evacuation operation and how are financial aspects managed?

Evacuation programmes generally incur three types of costs:

1. International transport costs (air and boat charters, commercial flights). These are overseen by the Resettlement and Movement Management Division (RMM) in Geneva and all IOM activities in this area should be coordinated in advance with this division.
2. Operational expenses (humanitarian assistance, ground transport, reception assistance, airport transfer assistance, migrant board/lodging, etc.), in-country staff and office expenses of IOM country offices. These are overseen by the Department of Resources Management (DRM) in Geneva, which should be provided with estimated expenditures. DRM will follow up directly with the Resource Management Officers and/or finance assistants in each office for additional information.
3. Expert staff deployments (international experts on TDY and/or short-term contracts). As this represents a considerable expenditure against an evacuation program's finances, for monitoring purposes coordination of all international staff deployments should be established and centralized within the Department of Operations and Emergencies (DOE). DOE should be informed of potential deployments prior to engagement and of starting and ending date of the assignments.

When an evacuation programme entails a wide dispersion of assets, both human and financial, a financial monitoring function in Geneva is established to oversee expenditures on an overall basis for the entire operation. The financial status is reviewed on a regular basis and regular updates on the overall financial situation are provided in HQ and field management sites.

Who covers the costs of evacuation operations, and how is fund-raising arranged?

Costs for evacuation may be covered by a member state, by a donor, or may be shared.

During the Lebanon crisis in 2006, costs were covered by the European Commission through its Rapid Response Mechanism (EUR 10 million) and some smaller contribution from the US Government's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (USD 1 million). In that operation IOM evacuated 12,000 migrants over the course of a month and a half and most funding went towards covering charter and regular flight expenses.

How is the movement arrangement planned?

To plan the movements, details of cost and time and, where relevant, capacity of regular or chartered services should be collected for:

- bus transport from crisis-affected country to neighbouring/transit country
- flights from crisis affected country (various ports) to neighbouring/transit country
- ferry services from crisis affected country to anywhere close outside
- flights from the crisis affected country to the country of origin

Logistics and cost information shall be gathered to decide whether it is better to transport migrants directly to their country of origin or through an intermediate point.

How should the Memorandum of Understanding be prepared between IOM and a Member State requesting evacuation assistance for its nationals?

Spelling out the terms of IOM partnership with a requesting party in advance of any movement is paramount, in terms of travel documents issues, exit formalities, funding commitments, travel arrangements (road, air, and transit), etc.

A **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** signed between IOM and a Member State serves to clarify the scope of the requested assistance and respective responsibilities. This is particularly relevant as this kind of partnership is likely to receive wide media coverage, calling on the migrant community to seek IOM support to evacuate the country and, in a short timeframe, leading many other labor sending countries that cannot afford to establish humanitarian bridges to seek similar support from IOM.

The MoU should specify the following:

- the assisted party should be responsible for identifying those nationals in need of evacuation assistance, establish listings with required bio-data, securing valid and accepted travel documents for those migrants being evacuated, and be the primary interlocutors with authorities of the host country in discussing exit formalities, unless IOM were to operate in a broader framework agreed to between IOM and the government of the host country.

It should be noted here that, as there is no “one size fits all” when it comes to the handling of different nationalities in an evacuation, it should be left up to respective consular authorities to work out exit formalities.

- IOM's commitment, within available resources should be to arrange transportation, via land or air, from the crisis affected country into transit countries, as well as onward transportation by air to the country of origin; this must stop at the origin country's entry point unless IOM accepts responsibility for further in-country travel. The timeline is also an important element: it should be specified that IOM doesn't pursue evacuation operations beyond the inception of a ceasefire or return to normalcy, as this would be conveying a negative message to authorities of the host country.

A **Regional MoU** can also be signed by two agencies, i.e. IOM and UNHCR, to respond to a regional crisis. Any agreement reached with UNHCR should always be in writing and if possible signed by the Representative. They normally would not honor agreements reached in meetings or through exchange of emails. Signatures have to be affixed in order to take it seriously especially where it involves money or policy.

Who is responsible for asking stranded migrants if they want to return to their country of origin?

IOM ensures that the evacuation is voluntary by asking migrants directly at the helpdesk or registration stage.

During an evacuation operation, IOM maintains an ongoing presence at the border and is responsible for actively identifying those that are requesting evacuation assistance. Those stranded migrants who do not request assistance, are not part of the population that IOM transports from the border to the camp. Assistance requests are re-confirmed by the IOM camp team when buses arrive. The process may vary for some nationalities who before arriving to the border, have already contacted their Embassies en route and their respective consular officers are waiting at the border when they arrive. [This happened for migrants from Thailand, the Philippines, Ghana, Togo and Sudan during the evacuation from Libya at the Tunisian border].

Who does the registration of stranded migrants?

The registration procedure may vary. IOM usually takes the lead in registering all persons crossing borders. In some cases UNHCR may take the lead and register the migrants, including TCNs. Considering the slow process that UNHCR usually takes with heavy bureaucracy, it won't be surprising if more time is spent thereby requiring more funds for the upkeep of the TCNs. An additional option is a joint registration at the transit centers where all refugees and asylum seekers will be taken care of by UNHCR and IOM will handle TCNs and returnees.

If UNHCR does registration and verification of TCNs before referral to IOM, then they should provide the necessary support until the TCNs are referred to IOM, otherwise, IOM should take care of them directly without waiting for HCR/Embassy validation. This will allow you move the TCNs as quickly as possible.

For the TCNs with proper travel document, they don't need additional Embassy verification and can travel as quickly as possible. Those with no travel document but possess valid national identity cards are usually provided one-way travel documents by their Embassies to return home. IOM colleagues in their countries of origin or the country of closest Embassy should help in the request of the travel documents. Those with no identification at all, rare though, should be referred to their Embassies for identification through Application forms. Official Associations of some of the nationals also play important role in supporting their compatriots. The bottom line however, should be to move them as quickly as possible. Most of them also have no interest in staying any longer in the transit countries.

Does IOM register TCNs at the border or in the camp?

It depends. When there is no camp at the border, TCNs may be registered at the border, in the immigration compound.

The IOM registration process extends from the border to the camp, in that names and passport numbers are taken at the border and these lists are taken to the camp with those transported migrants, and verified by the IOM camp team upon arrival. Registration is conducted jointly with the national authorities.

Who refers stranded migrants (TCNs) to UNHCR?

IOM. Those migrants from countries who do not wish to/cannot return home are referred by IOM to UNHCR.

The refugee and asylum seeking caseload is identified by IOM either at the border or the camp and is referred to UNHCR. IOM is unaware of any such cases referred directly by the Tunisian authorities.

Does UNHCR refer stranded migrants (TCN) to IOM?

This usually doesn't happen. Migrants directly access IOM, or are referred to IOM by national authorities or consular staff.

UNHCR does not access migrants directly. Usually the process of identification has been through the border, where IOM is stationed.

How far is the transit camp from the border? How do TCNs get from the border to the camp? If by transport, who provides it?

Distances may vary. IOM may provide transport from the border to the camp.

Is the national border staff referring TCNs to consular staff or IOM?

The national border staff usually refers stranded migrants (TCNs) to IOM, who then contacts respective consular officers. In some cases there are some consular officers who visit the border periodically to monitor the situation, particularly looking to identify their undocumented nationals and to help them with obtaining emergency travel documents. Others are there to meet groups of their nationals who have notified them of their arrival to the border while en route.

What percentage of TCNs are handled by consular staff vs. IOM?

IOM staff sit within the office where passport control takes place. Cleared passports are directly (physically) handed over to IOM, for the production of the passenger manifests.

Those that do not have travel documents are referred to consular staff, who travel to the camp and set up a desk within the IOM premise in order to meet, identify, and issue emergency travel documents to undocumented migrants. Travel is then arranged onward by IOM. This occurs for approximately 15-20% of the total population that has arrived at the camp.

Can TCNs arrange their evacuation travel through their Embassy or by themselves?

Yes, some Embassies arrange evacuation travel for their nationals. Especially when the population in need of evacuation assistance is very numerous, countries subsequently request support from IOM.

Who notifies stranded migrants (TCNs) of their flight schedule?

Stranded migrants are settled in a camp by nationality. This enables the IOM team for a swift identification. When IOM confirms flights and capacity, the camp team is notified and takes the relevant steps to inform the population of the place and meeting time whereby migrants will be selected to depart. Stranded migrants (TCNs) are selected according to vulnerability criteria (women, children, and those with medical issues depart first) and by the day in which they arrived. Identification of those selected is followed by passport verification before migrants board the bus to the airport.

Who does the medical screening for fitness to fly and when does this occur?

The IOM medical doctors, before the TCNs get on the buses. Screening occurs at the camp where observation and prescriptive questions are used by IOM's medical team to identify any medical issues. Health screening occurs for a second time at the airport. Within the camp, migrants with medical conditions are referred to local health facilities and professionals. At the airport, they are referred to the airport clinic, whereby further referral can be made to national institutions.

Who compiles the flight manifest? Who is the manifest filed with?

IOM compiles the passenger manifests. These are shared with the immigration authorities, who stamp all passports and assign an escort to each convoy.

The IOM camp team compiles the passenger list of those selected for the flight and sends it with the group of those who are being transported. Once the group arrives, they are greeted by IOM and escorted to the relevant airport check-in (airline). The airlines then cross check the IOM flight manifest before migrants are escorted to their departure gate. The final list is provided by IOM team.

Who provides TCN transport from the camp to the airport or seaport?

IOM arranges the buses and organizes the convoys.

At what points during this process is security required? Who provides the security?

The national authorities or military are in charge of security at the border, within the camp, and at the airport. There may be no security during transportation from the camp to the airport.

How are excess baggage issues managed?

Leftover baggage at airports may represent a serious problem.

This affects most short haul destinations for which smaller aircraft are being used and which hold limited capacity. Migrants that are evacuated tend to travel with a volume of luggage that goes beyond normal capacity (on average 50-70kg). It is unrealistic to expect that all will be able to move with their belongings. Local authorities [military, customs and airport management] may quickly become agitated about this and menace to destroy the excess baggage, possibly causing adverse public information image on the entire operation.

For this reason, it is important to look at dedicated solutions to address the problem of excess baggage since the beginning of the evacuation operation, including the possibility to charter a cargo aircraft that would shuttle to various destinations, or maritime options, which would be less costly, but would take more time. Contacting WFP to use their assets is also an option.

If you receive queries from partner governments on this issue, or migrants refuse to leave airports, it is suggested to reassure counterparts that a solution is being identified and that every piece of luggage will be transported to the final destination. Airport authorities can also collect contact details for those migrants who are yet to receive their luggage. Partner governments should also be advised that our priority is for migrants to be returned home safely, so baggage issues are not the prevailing factor in managing this operation -- these are not typical passenger flights, and should migrants return on commercial flights, they would have no choice but to leave most baggage behind, in any case.

What agency is responsible for un-accompanied minors (UAMs) during an evacuation?

While UNICEF will try to cover this smaller but very important group, UAMs still fall under the TCN population. It is advisable for IOM to form a partnership with UNICEF, which is globally responsible for protection of UAMs. IOM will be required, sooner or later, to provide transport to their home countries once they have been properly identified. The partnership should highlight the areas of responsibilities and UNICEF should be required, as it fulfills its protection mandate, to provide accommodation and assistance to the UAMs until time of departure when IOM will provide transport. IOM should however keep track of UAMs from the registration point in order to be prepared and anticipate the caseload. Tracing should be heightened as most of the UAMs may have lost their way from their parents while fleeing the conflict.

Annex 1.

CHECK LIST FOR EMERGENCY EVACUATION related to MOVEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

a. Prior to arranging the evacuation operation, the following points need to be discussed with authorities of the host and origin country:

- ☐ Travel documents for migrants to be assisted: emergency travel documents delivered by consular authorities; valid passports, etc;
- ☐ Exit formalities governing departure from crisis-affected country (departure cards, restriction in terms of exit points, overland vs. by air, departure fees, ability to re-enter or quasi deportation decision);
- ☐ Transit arrangements: requirements imposed by neighboring countries if the movement takes place overland; allowed length of stay in transit country, hosting arrangements (responsibility for caring for transit or temporarily evacuated migrants);
- ☐ Entry formalities in migrants' country of origin.

b. For commencing the movement arrangements, the following initial information is needed:

- ☐ Departure point;
- ☐ Final destination;
- ☐ Date of departure;
- ☐ Estimated number of people to be evacuated;
- ☐ Age breakdown and nationality;
- ☐ Any medical cases or passenger with special needs.

b. To prepare the movements, foresee possible routes through a number of scenarios for evacuation from different ports and to different countries including:

- (1) Evacuation from crisis-affected country to evacuees' country of origin
- (2) Evacuation via neighboring countries.

Collect information on route, cost and time for:

- ☐ Internal transportation. Ground (busses) or air (local carriers) transportation from different places inside the country (where the evacuees reside) to the country's main airport (contact local IOM operations branch);
- ☐ Exit transportation. Commercial flights (for individuals or groups up to 50 passengers) or charter flights (larger groups of over 50 passengers) from the country's main airport to evacuees' country of origin, using IOM general agreements (contact RMM-Geneva);
- ☐ Transit. Charter flights from the bordering countries' main airports to evacuees' country of origin (contact RMM-Geneva);
- ☐ Exit/Transit. Charter flights can be organized from other airports than the above mentioned, considering that the airport runway is sufficient and/or adequate for the operation of the aircraft chartered.

Annex 2.

IOM activities in Lebanon - 2006 **Assessment and Perspectives**

Evacuation Operations: Timeline

1. IOM was solicited by its membership immediately after hostilities began on 12 July in order to arrange evacuation operations in support of migrants in Lebanon, at a time when a number of prominent nations had already begun carrying out such operations unilaterally. France's initiative, in particular, conveyed a sense of pessimism among Western nations with respect to perspectives for reaching an early cessation of hostilities. Evacuation of nationals of Western Europe and North America led many among the large migrant worker communities present in Lebanon to seek similar support from their own representations in Beirut. Among those Sri Lanka proved the most proactive of IOM MS in seeking evacuation assistance, which resulted in the activation, following coordination with the UNHCR, of IOM's Rapid Response Transportation Fund (RRTF). The US Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migrants (PRM) also indicated early interest in IOM activities in this respect. IOM's response to these calls materialized in the mobilization of regional human resources with a first team on the ground on 18 July, and the organization of an initial evacuation movement to Syria benefiting 270 Sri Lankan migrant workers on 20-21 July. Onward flight arrangements were made in coordination with Sri Lankan authorities, which secured an Air Lanka aircraft in order to operate this first rotation between Damascus and Colombo. Meanwhile IOM launched a flash appeal for emergency funding, in order to carry on with evacuations for a caseload of 10,000 individuals (budget estimated at USD 10 million), a figure reached by aggregating early indications of concerned populations provided to IOM by partner Embassies and consular representations in Lebanon. A donor briefing was arranged in Geneva on 21 July in order to make partner governments and donors aware of IOM's responsiveness to calls for evacuation assistance. Early funding interest was identified with the European Commission as well as PRM. Eventual pledges quickly materialized to exceed IOM requirements.

Value added: IOM operational capacity

2. Activities were primarily carried out through the deployment of regional resources, with staff and equipment brought in from IOM missions in Cairo, Amman, Kuwait, Iraq. IOM's responsiveness proved critical in undertaking large-scale operational activities at short notice. In total, upwards of 13,000 individuals were assisted over a one-month period, the overwhelming majority of whom were evacuated prior to the 14 August cease-fire agreement. In view of the lingering political instability in the region, and uncertainty with respect to mid and long-term prospects for peace, IOM should maintain its deployment capacity intact, irrespective of immediate emergency funding perspectives in Lebanon. A regional operations center was established in 2005 in Amman in order to provide comprehensive support to return and operational issues in relation to Iraqi population displacement throughout the region. The existence of such structure proved its relevance on the occasion of the Lebanese crisis, and should serve to reassure traditional donors that while IOM has not held a formal presence in Lebanon, regional capacity in Syria, Jordan, Egypt can cover Lebanese activities well.

3. Coordination with the IDF: all evacuation movements carried out during the conflict were notified to the Israeli Defense Forces, in line with recommendations provided by Israeli authorities to the UN and international organizations on ways to ensure acceptable levels of safety for staff and humanitarian movements throughout Lebanon. In this respect, though an IDF communication channel was established within the UN system, the volume of IOM activities and necessity to be informed of potential developments in 'real time' justified the continuation of direct communication with the IDF, while maintaining coordination with UNDSS. This mechanism proved efficient in ensuring overland evacuation movements to Syria would carry on despite developments affecting staff security (e.g. violence against the Beirut UN HQ housing all UN staff prompted a suspension of all movements, except for IOM convoys) or the disruption of transportation infrastructure, including along routes normally used for IOM movements. Over the course of the 4-week operation one convoy was forced to reverse course halfway through, while another could not depart. In each case, convoys were able to proceed unhindered within 24 hours of those mishaps.

Evolution of Lebanese position with respect to Evacuation Operations

4. Lebanese authorities have provided general support to evacuation operations undertaken by a number of partners by facilitating exit procedures for those among assisted individuals in an irregular situation. While no obstacles ever were in place for those holding valid working/residence permits and travel documentation, a sizable proportion of beneficiaries were considered irregular migrants. The mechanism agreed upon while hostilities justified the implementation of evacuation activities, required concerned Embassies and consular representations to communicate, in advance, lists of their nationals in an irregular situation and wishing to leave Lebanese territory. The Lebanese General Security Directorate of the Ministry of Interior (GSD), upon receipt of these lists, communicated all names to authorities at official land border crossing points. Since 16 August, however, authorities have put an end to this mechanism and reinstated formalities previously in place, which call for irregular migrants to pay penalties before being allowed to leave Lebanon. While some among partner Embassies continue to encourage their nationals to avail themselves of the opportunity to return home, one must remain considerate of the logical shift in the Lebanese approach to such operations. Assistance to migrant worker populations in Lebanon may be justified out of concern for the potential lack of safety and overall poor treatment of vulnerable individuals, yet this cannot be done within an emergency framework which primarily applied to a war context and is not designed for the provision of sustainable assistance to migrant populations.

From Emergency Operations towards Migration Management Endeavors

5. The large pool of beneficiaries handled throughout this operation has brought about a better and more focused identification of concerns and difficulties typically affecting migrant worker groups in the Middle East, the Levant in particular. The overwhelming majority of assisted migrants consists of single women in their 20's and 30's. This profile roughly corresponds to the entire Filipino, Ethiopian and Sri Lankan caseloads, which together represent upwards of 90% of migrant volumes. With all due caution with respect to potential over-generalization of what should be handled as individual cases, many reports of abuse, breach of work contract, non payment of salaries, use of coercion and refusal to let workers leave their jobs, have been reported to IOM teams upon departing Beirut or while transiting through Syria. Examples of trafficked cases have also been identified. While a number of endeavors are already in place in Lebanon in order to tackle some of these aspects, including the provision of legal assistance to migrants (through support from Caritas) and technical advice to Lebanese authorities (through the UNODC Project Lebanon initiative), concerned parties are encouraged to take stock of the patterns that have emerged in handling evacuation operations, in order to point to additional gaps and adjust existing programs as well as future initiatives to some of the newly identified parameters. It should be noted that a number of partners have shown interest in IOM adopting a regional approach to some of the aforementioned issues, as concerns are similar throughout the Middle East, though approaches towards government counterparts would arguably differ significantly. Repeated mentions have been made, as a matter of example, of trafficking rings originating in Dubai, with transits through Syria before trafficked individuals reach Lebanon. While this specific instance may no longer be relevant, it points to the need, when addressing issues relating to smuggling and trafficking of persons, to be considerate of their regional dimension. Lastly, IOM finds itself in a strong position with respect to support received from Member States whose nationals were assisted by the Organization in their evacuation from Lebanon. Sri Lanka and the Philippines, in particular, have encouraged IOM to develop initiatives in this regard.

6. GSD operates a closed detention facility for migrants found to be in an irregular situation. It is located underground, nearby the GSD headquarters in Beirut. The detention center has long been the object of sharp criticism from the international community, human rights groups in particular, pointing to GSD's failure to meet international standards in its handling of detainees there. UNHCR and a number of other agencies as well as partner governmental authorities have also advocated in favor of an overhaul of the facility. IOM is now in receipt of a request from GSD to provide assistance in its relocation and management, in addition to the provision of a number of items designed to improve living (and working) conditions; this includes access to electricity (generator) and availability of medical assistance for urgent cases (ambulance). IOM has responded favorably to the latter requests, and has undertaken to make traditional donor partners aware of Lebanon's renewed interest in responding to calls for improvement and development of its capacity to manage irregular migration. Though the current humanitarian assistance framework tends to take over all such long-term prospects, Lebanese and international interests have quickly met on the immediate need for enhanced local capacity to handle border control and all related functions, including migration management. In this respect, a national security entity has been established, gathering relevant national stakeholders, including GSD, as well as international partners. Chief among those

will be Germany, who has offered to provide technical assistance towards upgrading Lebanon's international border points. IOM's expertise on both fronts – irregular migration management and border authorities capacity building – can represent significant value added to this burgeoning process. Australia has expressed interest in supporting IOM's involvement in such matters. Agencies already active in this field in Lebanon are UNODC and ICMPD, though gaps identified throughout the implementation of activities show the relevance of a renewed approach to migration management, both from human resources and technical standpoints.

Emergency Operations: UN/GoL perspectives

7. Generally, the cluster approach has not shown its expected efficiency in the Lebanese context. What might be a functional approach to inter-agency coordination in other national emergency scenarios (particularly in natural disaster cases) proved unable to respond in a timely manner to the needs as they appeared. While emergency teams for the main humanitarian agencies quickly deployed to Beirut, uncertainty with respect to staff security and the ensuing prevalence of SMT matters over the humanitarian agenda led to a widely shared perception that the UN coordinated effort for the Lebanese crisis 1. does not reflect the actual relief work carried out in southern Lebanon by non-UN actors, including major NGOs and the ICRC, failing in this sense to aggregate all efforts into one channel of communication; 2. is not able to identify needs and develop contingency planning approaches, responding instead in a retroactive manner. A case in point is UNHCR's emphasis on setting up camps in Beirut when all signs indicated a rejection of this type of shelter among the internally displaced. Similarly, no measures were in place to respond to the massive return flows towards South Lebanon witnessed in the hours following the inception of the cease-fire.

8. Lebanese authorities are willing to grant, at best, limited support to UN relief efforts. Current difficulties with respect to the endorsement by GoL of the revised Flash Appeal, both on the expected timeline for completion of the emergency and early recovery processes, as well as the funding volumes expected from donors to support cluster actions, illustrate the overall skepticism expressed by the Lebanese towards multilateral humanitarian efforts. Support for the expansion of the UNIFIL mission is of course of an altogether different nature, even as DPKO's inputs appear limited. The latest developments in this respect indicate indeed that the UNIFIL chain of command will be narrow and handled primarily by nations whose troops will be leading the force, i.e. France till February 2007, at which point Italy is expected to take over. The GoL approach seems to be supported by a number of international partners having pledged significant bilateral funding towards reconstruction activities, including Gulf countries.

9. With respect to IOM traditional donors supporting the cluster approach, a number of avenues are currently being explored:

- ECHO has expressed continued interest in funding IOM towards the provision of assistance to returnees and the displaced, on the condition that prior coordination take place on a potential division of labor with UNHCR, which is already in receipt of significant ECHO funding. Close coordination is in place with the HCR cluster leads, though targeted areas and actions remain to be identified.
- A coordinated approach to rubble removal activities has been agreed on with UNOPS, should funding be received towards such endeavors.
- In-kind contributions received from Norway should be used strategically so as to position IOM among already established relief providers, particularly with respect to Lebanese counterparts who are keen to learn of IOM's capacity to cater to Lebanese communities in addition to its track record on assistance to migrants. Though the remaining Norwegian supplies could take up to a month to make their way to IOM in Lebanon, the large tents that comprise most of the contribution currently represent IOM's most valuable asset. Proper distribution mechanism and local coordination system need to be quickly identified in a way that maximizes IOM visibility and outreach. While the UN is currently focusing its effort on the establishment of a base in Tyre/Sour, there may be scope for IOM to base itself in separate locations, closer to the areas where needs are the greatest. Nabatiyah and the Bekaa Valley (Baalbek) are two options previously discussed by IOM Beirut. IOM assessment missions to Baalbek and Tyre were conducted over the past two weeks in order to further take stock of local circumstances. However repeated assessments across the board should quickly lead to implementation measures to as to show value added to Lebanese and donor counterparts alike.
- IOM can use its expertise towards reconstruction and community building efforts. Key to achieving donor support in this respect will be the US decision to launch quick impact and

transitional initiative programs for Lebanon, as part of a recently announced USD 230 million US aid package.

- A number of non-traditional donors represent great potential for IOM in Lebanon. Contacts have been established to this end with Al Waleed Foundation, as well as Qatar Charity. It should be noted that though more focused on the immediate impact of funded activities on project beneficiaries, these actors are also increasingly keen to learn of overall coordination efforts undertaken in order to avoid duplication of activities. Such standpoints reinforce the need to envisage potential endeavors taking into consideration all actors and potential local partners rather than an exclusive focus on UN inter-coordination mechanisms which tend to be perceived by Lebanese authorities as overlooking existing structures in favor of 'reinventing the wheel'.

IOM and GoL

10. GSD has up to now represented IOM's principal institutional and operational counterpart. The provision of technical support and further development of initiatives designed to increase the capacity of authorities to manage irregular migration should serve to further cement the fruitful partnership already engaged between IOM and GSD on voluntary returns and other issues of common interest. A MoU, initially addressing cooperation on returns, is still under discussion with GSD and could be extended to cover broader aspects of migration management. Potential confirmation of Australian support towards a phased border assessment project will support this long-term perspective for a cooperative approach.

11. Coordination entities have been established in order to manage governmental response to the humanitarian needs. In this respect the Prime Minister's office, through the High Relief Committee, has taken on a leading role. Lebanon, while not a MS of the Organization, has shown support to the development of IOM activities in the country in encounters with authorities at all levels of the government. Emphasis in official and informal exchanges with representatives of GoL should be made on IOM's status as an inter-governmental, flexible and service-based entity that is not part of the UN system, though closely attached to its relevant decision-making bodies.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

Within 1 month

- Gather relevant data and present conclusions drawn from the implementation of activities while donor awareness of the program is high;
- Develop mid to long term follow-up MM strategy for Lebanon based on aforementioned conclusions and launch assessment phase of technical cooperation project;
- Pursue coordination with UNHCR so as to seek access to ECHO funding for assistance to return and other affected communities;
- Distribute in-kind contributions to conflict affected communities in close coordination with local authorities;
- Build a local network of ground partners, institutionally and operationally;
- Pursue fundraising initiatives with non traditional donors as well as Gulf countries;
- Seek accreditation for IOM as an independent intergovernmental organization in Lebanon;
- Identify financial resources (including internally) in order to ensure IOM's presence in Lebanon for a minimum period of 6 months, irrespective of emergency funding levels.

Within 6 months

- Development of MMS activities based on completion of the funded initial assessment phase and endorsement of MM strategy for Lebanon;
- Assistance to return and other affected communities in areas of origin with temporary shelter, rubble removal through the end of 2006;
- In relation to b., establish a secondary base in one or several priority areas, depending on confirmed funding levels;
- Pursue donor support with respect to reconstruction efforts, in close coordination with local authorities;

<u>Beyond 6 months</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seek GoL support towards IOM membership.

Annex 3.

EMERGENCY VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION ASSISTANCE FOR STRANDED ETHIOPIANS MIGRANTS IN HARADH- YEMEN

Coordination:

- IOM Yemen operates through the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and has deployed its operations team, medical and supporting staff from its country office and Geneva based Emergency and Post Crisis Division to ensure timely and effective response to this humanitarian crisis.
- IOM conducted registration and identifying the caseload, whilst refurbishing the processing/transit center. The registration and database management is carried out in close coordination with UNHCR and cooperation with the Government of Yemen, partner agencies, to ensure transparency.
- IOM set up an air operation to repatriate 150 to 200 pax every 3 days. The ground transportation from Haradh and surrounding areas where migrants are stranded will be coordinated to ensure a constant flow of beneficiaries to the processing/transit center, which will have capacity for 200 beneficiaries; the maximum use will be made of these facilities. .
- Out-processing and exit formalities will be done in close coordination with the Yemen Immigration Authorities and the embassy of Ethiopia; UNICEF and child protection NGOs will be involved in UAM cases.
- Transit and reception services will be provided by country of origin IOM offices and post-arrival grants will be awarded before the concluding ground leg to the final destination.
- Monitoring and evaluation will be integrated in all phases of the project and reporting mechanisms will be as per IOM standard and to meet any special requirement of the donor.
- Monitoring tools will be in place in both Yemen and Ethiopia and a IOM internal evaluation concluded within two months of the completion of the project

Activities:

Pre-departure phase: (i) Identify and register beneficiaries and undertake bio-data verification; (ii) Provide beneficiaries with return-related information and counseling, food and water and sanitation facilities; (iii) Facilitate medical screening (and, where required, refer cases to the MoH and/or WHO for further treatment); (iv) Facilitate travel document and exit visa issuance; (v) Carry out Advanced travel booking.

Transit phase: (i) Transport beneficiaries to the Airport/Port of Departure; (ii) Provide air, or land transport to the final destination.

Post-arrival and referral for reintegration phases: (i) Provide reception assistance and onward transportation, (ii) Issue a reintegration grant and/or in-kind assistance (up to USD 100/person) and provide return related information and referral; (iii) Where possible, monitor the reintegration process through follow up visits

Annex 4.

Lybia Evacuation Stabilization Project (LESP)

Brief description of the process for stranded migrants Evacuation Operations in IOM Djerba Hub, (Tunisia-Libyan Border)

1. Who asks stranded migrants from (TCN) if they want to return to country of origin?
IOM maintains an ongoing presence at the border and is responsible for actively identifying those that are requesting evacuation assistance. If the TCN does not request assistance, they are not part of the population that is transported from the border to the camp. Assistance requests are re-confirmed by the IOM camp team when buses arrive. The process may vary for some nationalities who before arriving to the border, have already contact their embassies en route and their respective consular officers are waiting at the border when they arrive. This has been known to happen for TCNs from Thailand and the Philippines, Ghana, Togo and Sudan.
2. Who refers stranded migrants (TCN) to UNHCR?
The refugee and asylum seeking caseload is identified by IOM either at the border or the camp and is referred to UNHCR. IOM is unaware of any such cases referred directly by the Tunisian authorities.
3. How does UNHCR pass stranded migrants (TCN) along to IOM?
UNHCR do not access migrants directly. Thus far the process of identification has been through the border, where IOM is stationed.
4. What percentage of TCNs have travel documents?
IOM estimates that approximately 80-85% of stranded migrants from TCNs have travel documents. The Tunisian authorities have identified some documents to be false, in which case the migrants are still transported to the camp and IOM liaises with relevant consular officers in the same manner for those that do not have documents. These officers visit the camp site, set up a desk within the IOM camp office and proceed with the identification and documentation process.
5. Does IOM register TCNs at the border or in the camp?
The IOM registration process extends from the border to the camp, in that names and passport numbers are taken at the border and these lists are taken to the camp with those transported migrants, and verified by the IOM camp team upon arrival. Registration is conducted jointly with the Tunisian authorities.
6. How far is the transit camp from the border? How do TCNs get from the border to the camp? If by transport, who provides it?
Approximately 5-7km. IOM transports stranded migrants from TCNs.
7. Is the Tunisian border staff referring TCNs to consular staff or IOM?
No, Tunisian border staff are referring stranded migrants (TCNs) to IOM staff, who in turn contact respective consular officers. That said there are some consular officers who are visiting the border periodically to monitor the situation, particularly looking to identify their undocumented nationals and to help them with obtaining emergency travel documents. Others who are there to meet groups of their nationals who have notified them of their arrival to the border while en route.
8. What percentage of TCNs are handled by consular staff vs. IOM?
Those that do not have travel documents are referred to consular staff, who travel to the camp and set up a desk within the IOM premise in order to meet, identify, and issue emergency travel documents to undocumented migrants. Travel is then arranged onward by IOM. This occurs for approximately 15-20% of the total population that has arrived at the camp.

9. What percentage of TCNs have travel arranged through Embassy or by themselves?

Vietnam, Thailand, and the Philippines Embassies have arranged travel for their nationals. Sudan was initially arranging travel for its nationals but has since requested support from IOM. Of the population inside the camp, which is estimated to be between 16,000-18,000 (today statistics), IOM estimates about 5-10% of this population has been assisted by their embassies.

10. How does the GoT notify IOM when passports have cleared?

The GoT does not have a role within this process. Emergency travel documents are issued from the embassies to their nationals stranded (TCNs) to enable departure.

11. Who notifies the TCNs they are leaving on a flight?

IOM team has the stranded migrants are settling into the camp by nationality, which enables their swift identification. When IOM confirms flights and capacity, the camp team is notified and takes the relevant steps to inform the population of the place and meeting time whereby migrants will be selected to depart. Stranded migrants (TCNs) are selected according to vulnerability criteria (women, children, and those with medical issues depart first) and by the day in which they arrived. Identification of those selected is followed by passport verification before migrants board the bus to the airport.

12. Who does the screening for fitness to fly and when does it occur?

IOM's medical doctor. Screening occurs at the camp where observation and prescriptive questions are used by IOM's medical team to identify any medical issues. Health screening occurs for a second time at the airport. Within the camp, migrants with medical conditions are referred to local health facilities and professions. At the airport, they are referred firstly to the airport clinic, whereby further referral can be made to national institutions.

13. Who compiles the flight manifest? Who is the manifest filed with? (If with GOT, can IOM get a copy of the manifest from GOT?)

The IOM camp team compiles the passenger list of those selected for the flight and sends it with the group of those who are being transported. Once the group arrives, they are greeted by IOM and escorted to the relevant airport check-in (airline). The airlines then cross check the IOM flight manifest before migrants are escorted to their departure gate. The final list is provided by IOM team.

14. How long is the drive from the camp to the airport or seaport? Who provides that transport?

The drive from the camp to the airport is approximately 2.5 hours and transportation is done by IOM.

15. At what points during this process is security required? Who provides the security?

There is no security from the camp to the airport. The military is in charge of security at the border, within the camp, and at the airport.

Brief description of the process for Stranded Migrants Evacuation Operations in IOM Sallum Evacuation Hub, (Egyptian-Libyan Border)

a) Stranded migrant reporting at the border, is checked by Egyptian immigration authorities and allowed to enter the immigration compound. If in need of IOM's assistance (i.e. not directly taken care of by his/her Embassy or employer), s/he is then referred to the IOM office/helpdesk by Egyptian immigration authorities, consular officials and/or other migrants in the vicinity.

b) Stranded Migrants (TCNs) are registered and processed within the compound, where IOM, together with Egyptian authorities, UN and NGO partners, also provides humanitarian assistance (e.g. food, water, blankets, hygiene/dignity kits, (limited) shelter, wat/san and health/psychosocial assistance). As agreed by Egyptian authorities, **no transit/reception center has been established at the Egypt-Libya border.**

c) Once a stranded migrant (TCN) has been registered by IOM, his/her travel documents are handed over to Egyptian immigration authorities, for processing/clearance. If s/he doesn't have travel

documents, IOM facilitates contact with the relevant Embassy's representative in Sallum, or Cairo and/or ICRC in Sallum, and supports consular work.

d) Once a passport/laissez-passer is obtained, it is handed over to immigration, for processing. Immigration authorities hand over 'cleared' passports to IOM, which produces Passenger manifests.

e) Passenger manifests are shared with IOM Cairo for booking (on commercial flights) or HQ (for charter flights). Once booking is confirmed, Stranded migrants (TCNs) are notified (via their Consulate representatives or community leaders) and buses are arranged for transportation to the relevant airport (Marsa Matroh, Alexandria or Cairo).

f) Stranded Migrants (TCNs) are screened for fitness-to-travel. Passenger manifests are shared with GoE authorities, which assign police escorts to each bus, as well as a medical escort, if necessary. IOM also escorts buses and provides airport assistance at check-in. IOM offices in transit and origin countries are notified too, for provision of airport assistance in transit or upon arrival.

g) Stranded migrants (TCNs) spend an average of 24-72 hours at the border. The time spent is longer if they don't have travel documents; of if they travel onward aboard commercial flights - as IOM therefore depends of availability of flights and seats.

1. Who asks TCN if they want to return to country of origin?
IOM, at the helpdesk or registration stage.

2. Who refers TCN to UNHCR?
IOM. Those migrants from countries who do not wish to/cannot return home are referred by IOM to UNHCR

3. How does UNHCR pass TCN along to IOM?
They usually don't - migrants directly access IOM, or are referred to IOM by Egyptian authorities or consular staff

4. What percentage of TCNs have travel documents?
Approximately 2/3 have valid travel documents

5. Does IOM register TCNs at the border or in the camp?
There is no camp at the Egypt-Libya border. TCNs are registered at the border, in the immigration compound

6. How far is the transit camp from the border? How do TCNs get from the border to the camp? If by transport, who provides it?
N/A

7. Is the Tunisian border staff referring TCNs to consular staff or IOM?
The Egyptian border staff usually refers stranded migrants (TCNs) to IOM.

8. How does the GoE notify IOM when passports have cleared?
IOM staff sit within the office where passport control takes place. Cleared passports are directly (physically) handed over to IOM, for the production of the passenger manifests

9. Who notifies the TCNs they are leaving on a flight?
IOM, directly or through community leaders and consular staff

10. Who does the screening for fitness to fly and when does it occur?
The IOM doctor, before TCNs get on the buses

11. Who compiles the flight manifest? Who is the manifest filed with? (If with GOT, can IOM get a copy of the manifest from GOT?)
IOM compiles the passenger manifests. They are shared with the immigration authorities, who stamp all passports and assign an escort to each convoy.

12. How long is the drive from the camp to the airport or seaport? Who provides that transport?
Marsa Matruh airport is 3-4 hours from Sallum, Alexandria 6-8 and Cairo 10-12. IOM arranges the buses and organize the convoys.