

Counter-trafficking and assistance to migrants in Central Asia

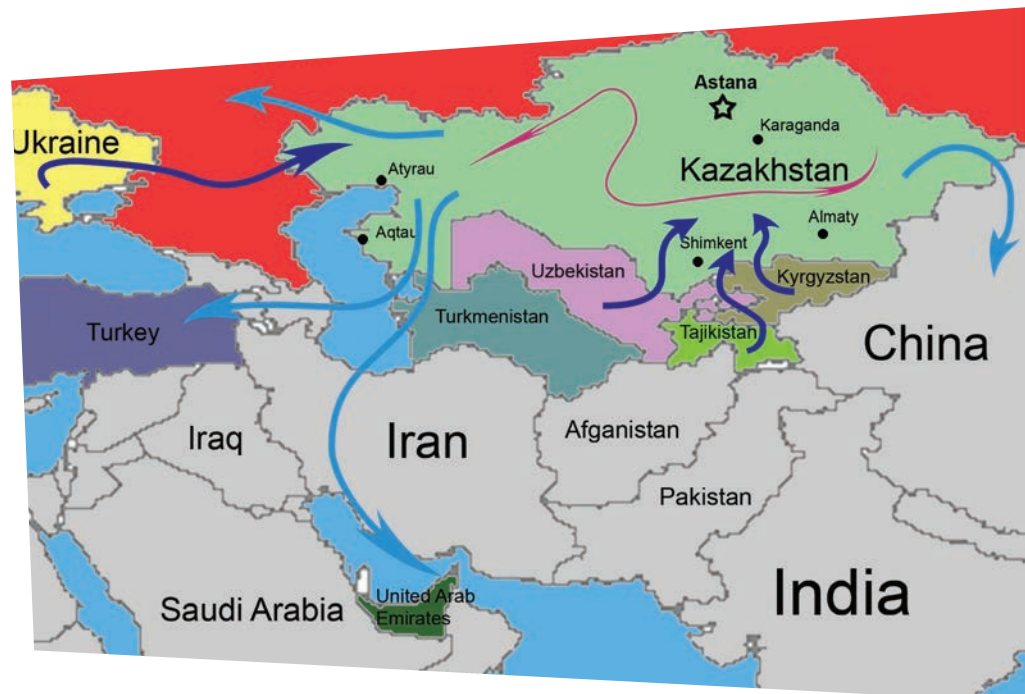


IOM has been working on the problem of human trafficking in Central Asia since 1998. IOM was the first organization to raise this pressing issue and direct the attention of Central Asian governments to the illegal exportation of their citizens abroad for the purposes of sexual and labour exploitation. Over the last ten years, IOM, in support of the international drive to fight human trafficking, has implemented numerous projects aimed at the prevention of human trafficking, protection of victims of trafficking, prosecution of recruiters and traffickers and development of regional co-operation among the countries of Central Asia. IOM also works closely with intergovernmental and non-governmental partners.

In December 2000, the Organization adopted the definition of trafficking in persons as set forth in the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime:

“Trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment, transportation, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs”.

IOM considers trafficking as a coercive and exploitative process starting with recruitment in the place of origin and continuing with exploitation in the places of



transit and destination. Despite the fact that in general trafficking involves crossing of at least one international border, unfortunately it also occurs within the boundaries of a single country in Central Asian region.

In order to act against trafficking at each point of trafficking process, IOM takes a multi-pronged approach to help prevent trafficking, mainly in the country of origin, to prosecute traffickers, and to protect victims of trafficking.

IOM has a 10-year experience in implementing counter-trafficking activities and has provided assistance to more than 5 000 victims of trafficking in Central Asian states. IOM recognizes that each victim is unique and is in need of individual assistance.

Kazakhstan has become a popular destination for Central Asian migrants due to its geographical location and more stable economic situation. The country is also marked by the high volume of internal migration: thousands of rural residents move to urban areas seeking for job opportunities. Both groups, internal and external labour migrants, are vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation by employers. Main destination countries for Kazakh labour migrants who become victims of trafficking abroad are the United Arab Emirates and Turkey.

Since the beginning of Counter-trafficking Programme in Kazakhstan, IOM office has been closely cooperating with partner NGOs working in various regions of the country.

Prevention

- A toll-free line 8 8000 8000 15 for victims of trafficking and potential labour migrants was established in Kazakhstan;
- In close cooperation with partner NGOs, IOM has been conducting nationwide anti-trafficking awareness raising through dissemination of printing materials, broadcasting of public service announcements, providing trainings for various groups, national conferences, round-tables and other anti-trafficking events;
- IOM organized several summer educational camps for teenagers from unprivileged families to improve their awareness about human rights in general as well as about human trafficking;
- IOM produced several public service announcements about TIP and toll-free line services;
- IOM produced a documentary "Long way home" telling about a problem of trafficking in persons in Central Asia;
- IOM produced an educational movie "Hard way to a dream"



based on three true stories of victims trafficked in Kazakhstan.

Protection

- Since 1999, IOM has been providing direct assistance for victims of trafficking (return, reintegration and rehabilitation);
- IOM established 2 shelters for victims in the North and South of Kazakhstan. Currently these shelters are managed by the partner NGOs;
- IOM conducted nationwide anti-trafficking information campaign, established a network of 15 NGOs working in counter-trafficking area, organized national conferences, round-tables and other anti-trafficking events;

- During the period of 2002-2010, IOM has assisted more than 610 victims of trafficking.

Prosecution

- IOM is a member of the Governmental Inter-agency Committee on Combating Smuggling and Trafficking in persons under the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
- IOM closely cooperates with the Ministry of Internal Affairs on providing assistance to victims of trafficking;
- IOM provides trainings for law enforcement, prosecutors and judges;
- IOM produces printing materials for law enforcement.

The Kyrgyz Republic is a source, transit, and destination country for purposes of trafficking. Main destination countries, where nationals of the Kyrgyz Republic are trafficked for labour exploitation, are Kazakhstan (agriculture, livestock farming, construction) and Russia (construction, private business and agriculture). IOM estimates that between 5,000 and 15,000 victims are trafficked from the Kyrgyz Republic to other countries annually. 64% of 5 million population of Kyrgyzstan is below the national poverty line.

In implementing its activities, IOM relies on the support of more than 35 NGO partners working in the area of counter-trafficking.

Prevention

- Developing and printing of more than 15 different types of information materials in Kyrgyz and Russian;
- Information campaign “Stop Traffic” among schoolchildren, labour migrants, and within local communities;
- More than 35 NGO partners continuously inform the population about risks of illegal employment abroad;
- 7 “Stop Traffic” Hotlines operate all over the Republic with unique three-digit number 189. During the period of 2006 - 2010 hotline operators have provided more than 30 000 consultations;
- More than 50 banners and billboards are installed advertising the hotlines;
- Video and audio-reels informing about the risk of being trafficked are broadcasted on national TV and radio-channels.

Protection

In the Kyrgyz Republic IOM supports 2 shelters for victims of trafficking and an asylum for re-



habilitation of children- victims of trafficking.

Practical aid to victims of human trafficking, in cooperation with NGO partners is provided in the following forms:

Return:

Booking of tickets, provision of travel documents, accompanying victims of human trafficking to an airport (other point of destination if needed), airport pick-up and accompanying to the point of destination.

Rehabilitation:

Providing shelter support, assignment of legal, medical consultations, medical treatment if necessary.

Reintegration:

Assistance in providing professional education, assignment of reintegration scholarships, assistance in further employment. During the period of 2002-2010 IOM provided rehabilitation assistance to 1 130 victims of trafficking.

Prosecution

- Trainings for law-enforcement officers;
- Assistance in developing legislation;
- Development of methodology on investigating trafficking crimes;
- Development of training modules and materials for law enforcement officers.

Tajikistan is a country of origin of labour migrants for destination countries as Russia and Kazakhstan. Labour migrants from Tajikistan are vulnerable due to low level of legal awareness of the population. Main destination countries for victims of sexual exploitation are the UAE, Turkey and Iran. Main transit countries are Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Russia and Iran. There is also internal trafficking in Tajikistan. Children forced to labour exploitation, pick pocketing, domestic servitude are most common victims of internal trafficking in Tajikistan.

In implementing its activities, IOM actively cooperates with government agencies and NGOs working in different regions of the country.

Prevention

- Establishing and operating 10 hotlines throughout Tajikistan;
- Conducting national information campaigns “Caravan”, “Anti-trafficking”, “Youth against Trafficking in Persons”, “All together against Trafficking in Persons” and “No to Trafficking in Persons” through trainings, seminars, lectures and dissemination of information materials;
- Conducting summer educational camps for children from vulnerable families to raise their awareness on human rights and human trafficking;
- Producing and broadcasting PSAs;
- Development and demonstration of movies “Boz ki?”, “Maro nachot dihed”, “Nikob”, “Man tavonistam ne guftan” based on real events to highlight various aspects of human trafficking. IOM also produced a documentary film “Ba Moskva ravon shudem” about life of labour migrants in Russia.



Protection

- Since 2005, IOM has been providing assistance to victims of human trafficking in voluntary and safe return, legal, psychological and medical assistance, as well as professional training;
- IOM opened two shelters for victims of human trafficking. One is for adults in the north and another for minors in the south;
- During the period of 2005-2010 IOM provided repatriation, rehabilitation and reintegration assistance to more than 315 victims of trafficking.



Prosecution

- Conducting trainings for law enforcement officers, prosecutors and judges;
- Developing training manuals for law enforcement officers, judges and prosecutors;
- Establishing the National Training Center for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings at the Tajik National University;
- In 2005, IOM initiated the establishing of the Interagency Commission on combating human trafficking under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan. IOM is a member of the Commission;
- IOM actively participates in development of national legislation on combating human trafficking.



The situation evolved greatly since the break up of the Soviet Union. Changes in the economic situation in all states forced huge migration processes in the post soviet territories. Economic instability provided a solid ground for the criminal elements to build networks and flourish. All of the former Soviet States have become vulnerable and exposed to a number of threats. One of the major threats is the human trafficking.

IOM is building a network of NGOs. Five NGOs have successfully been introduced into the network. The network will be extended further.

Prevention

- IOM developed and printed a series of printing products;
- A number of information campaigns were conducted by IOM and jointly with NGOs. Prevention campaigns are executed through the local NGO network and other interested organizations;
- A hotline was established and is functioning. The hotline number is +99312 450911.

Protection

During the period 2005-2010 IOM provided repatriation, rehabilitation and reintegration assistance to more than 71 victims of trafficking.



Protection is divided into three main components:

Return:

Air tickets booking and provision, escort, meeting at the airport or other entry points.

Rehabilitation:

Shelter services provision, medical, legal and psychological assistance.

Reintegration:

OIM Turkmenistan provides assistance to victims through professional trainings.

Prosecution

- Issues of prosecution are reflected in the Law on combating illegal human trafficking adopted in December 2007;
- Study courses for law enforcement officers;
- Assistance in prosecution methodology development.



Uzbekistan is a country of origin and transit for trafficking in women, men and children for labour and sexual exploitation. The main destination countries for Uzbek women are the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Israel, South Korea, Thailand, Greece, Malaysia and India. Uzbek men are mainly trafficked for labour exploitation to Kazakhstan (agriculture and construction) and Russia (construction, private enterprises and agriculture). Internal trafficking also increased in past years.

In implementing its activities, IOM Programme Office in Uzbekistan relies on support of 9 NGO partners working in the area of counter-trafficking.

Prevention

- Establishing and operating hotlines opened by IOM Programme Office on the basis of NGO partners in 9 regions of Uzbekistan;
- Developing and producing information materials on prevention of human trafficking (booklets, flyers, postcards, posters, billboards, etc.);
- Preparing and broadcasting video and audio materials (doc-



umentaries, PSAs) on oblast and national TV channels and radio stations, and also at the airports;

- Conducting prevention campaign (seminars, trainings, actions, round tables) at schools, summer camps and local communities in cooperation with the NGO partners.

Protection

IOM Programme Office supports 2 shelters for trafficking victims in Uzbekistan (in Tashkent and Bukhara). In close cooperation with the NGO partners IOM Programme Office provides direct assistance to trafficking victims:

Repatriation:

Assistance in safe return of trafficking victims (obtaining ID documents, preparing travel documents, flight booking, meeting at the airport and land border checkpoints, transportation victims to final destination).



During the period of 2002-2010 IOM Programme Office provided repatriation assistance to more than 3 000 trafficking victims.

Rehabilitation:

Providing social, psychological, legal assistance to victims of trafficking in the shelters.

During the period of 2002-2010 IOM Programme Office provided rehabilitation assistance to more than 2 844 trafficking victims.

Reintegration:

Assistance in providing professional education, assignment of reintegration scholarships, assistance in further employment.



Prosecution

- Training law enforcement officers to strengthen their capacity in protecting trafficking victims and prosecuting traffickers;
- Developing manuals, information and reference materials for law enforcement officers;
- Arranging study tours to destination countries for law enforcement officers to establish cooperation, exchange of information and experience in the field of combating human trafficking;
- Assistance in developing legislation.

