
In line with the Plan of action for the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018-2027), IOM promotes and supports the integration of decent work and poverty eradication into national and international policies, strategies and programs. In support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, IOM plays a key role in Alliance 8.7, a global partnership established to assist UN Member States to achieve SDG target 8.7, which focuses on the eradication of forced labor; child labor including the worst forms of child labor; human trafficking; and modern slavery. In 2018, IOM launched the Alliance 8.7 Action Group on Migration with UNICEF, while providing continuous support to the Alliance 8.7 Secretariat, the Delta 8.7 knowledge platform, and the Alliance’s broader membership.

Within the Counter-Trafficking Division, IOM implemented a granting facility for civil society partners in six countries: Belarus, Brazil, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Mali, Morocco and South Africa. This facility allowed these partners to provide comprehensive protection and assistance services to vulnerable migrants, including victims of trafficking. To date, over 400 individuals have been assisted through this facility. In 2018, IOM provided direct assistance to 7,400 victims of trafficking. 462 victims were assisted through IOM’s Global Assistance Fund (GAF), which provides tailored assistance to victims of trafficking and other migrants vulnerable to violence, exploitation and abuse.

IOM also developed the “Handbook on Protection and Assistance for Migrants Vulnerable to Violence, Exploitation and Abuse”, which was soft-launched in Marrakech in December 2018 alongside the adoption of the Global Compact for Migration. The Handbook details IOM’s determinants of migrant vulnerability model, which provides a method for assessing the risk and protective factors at individual, household, community and structural levels that influence vulnerability or resilience to violence, exploitation and abuse within a migration context, including human trafficking. Based on such assessments, appropriate responses to mitigate and address migrants’ vulnerability to human trafficking can be designed and implemented at all levels, either before, during or after migration.

Considering that the transformation of the global health and social workforce is an important integrated program in a key sector for poverty eradication. IOM ensures that migrants are not susceptible to untenable out-of-pocket payments in order to access health services should be a priority to achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC). An example of a Member State that has successfully championed addressing the health of migrants is Thailand which offers a migrant health insurance scheme to migrants, a comprehensive prepaid, premium-based insurance. Even undocumented migrants could buy the insurance, under the condition of registering with the government, making insurance provision part of the process of becoming a documented migrant. Provision of health services to all migrants, in particular primary health care, not only fulfills equity principles and human rights, but also avoids future preventable costs to society. Financing for UHC must consider the migration realities of today, and in aiming for equity, must address migrants’ health if UHC is to be truly achieved.

In the knowledge that climate change and natural hazards risk exacerbating many dimensions of poverty and inequality. IOM contributed to the implementation of poverty eradication-related development goals through its work program on migration, environment and climate change, which recognizes the intrinsic links between environmental and climate change, migration and sustainable development. IOM has thus been supporting governments in addressing human mobility challenges associated with environmental and climate change through research, policy, capacity building and operational activities. As a founding member of the WIM Excom Task Force on Displacement under the UNFCCC, IOM contributed to the development of the recommendations adopted by the Parties to the UNFCCC at the COP24 and led on the implementation of several components of the workplan of the Task Force, highlighting the need for policy coherence between climate change adaptation, migration management and development and poverty reduction policies. Since 2013, IOM’s capacity building program on Migration, environment and climate change benefited over 470 policymakers from 57 countries. In 2018, fifty-three IOM offices worldwide were engaging in activities on migration, environment and climate change, contributing to strengthened resilience and sustainable livelihoods.

A key issue for fighting poverty in crisis situations is support to migrants, internally displaced persons and refugees to secure a better access to livelihood opportunities, finance, adequate housing with security tenure, and basic services including social assistance. IOM continued to work with the humanitarian community to ensure that the risk of trafficking is mitigated and addressed from the stages of humanitarian responses. Together with
UNHCR and Heartland Alliance International, IOM co-leads the Global Protection Cluster (GPC) Anti-Trafficking Task Team, which comprises UN agencies and NGOs. The Task Team supports the integration of anti-trafficking responses into humanitarian operations, by developing guidance and tools to strengthen anti-trafficking interventions in humanitarian responses; the exchange of good practices; and recommendations on how to best mainstream anti-trafficking responses into the existing humanitarian coordination mechanisms and Cluster activities.

In 2018, the Task Team published the results of a consultation with over 20 country-level Protection, Child Protection, and GBV coordinators. The findings indicated that the humanitarian community’s limited understanding of human trafficking, and the absence of operational tools and guidance adapted to crisis contexts, were the key barriers to a system-wide response to human trafficking in humanitarian settings. In early 2019, the Task Team undertook a series of field consultations with UN and NGO humanitarian actors working on health, livelihoods, shelter, humanitarian coordination, and information management, to understand how to best support other Clusters’ anti-trafficking efforts.

IOM also worked with its UN partners to support regional and global regional policy dialogues and processes, such as the 2017 appraisal of UN Global Plan of Action, and the development of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. Moreover, IOM also continued to provide training and advisory services to companies and other stakeholders on ethical recruitment, including through the implementation of the International Recruitment Integrity System (IRIS), and CREST (“Corporate Responsibility in Eliminating Slavery and Trafficking”).

IRIS Standard has been pilot tested to ensure it is fit for purpose in different geographical, jurisdictional and sectoral contexts. In partnership with Social Accountability Accreditation Services, IOM also tested the feasibility and applicability of all components of the assessment and certification system. This took place in the Philippines and Nepal in 2018, with further testing planned in other locations in 2019. The first step in this process was engagement of all relevant stakeholders, including recruiters, employers, governments, civil society and the labor movement, with training on ethical recruitment and the IRIS Standard. CREST is a regional partnership initiative that aims to realize the potential of business to uphold human and labor rights of migrant workers in their operations and supply chains in Asia.

To respond to the need for accurate data on human trafficking in humanitarian, IOM has been using the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) to collect reliable baseline data on human trafficking and migrant exploitation, abuse, and vulnerability in situations of crisis, displacement and large-scale migration. Through DTM, IOM also collected data on vulnerability to human trafficking in humanitarian crisis and displacement contexts, such as in South Sudan, DRC, Cox’s Bazar, Northeast Nigeria, and the response to the Venezuela regional large-scale migration flows. IOM analyzed the collected data to inform IOM’s and other partners’ counter-trafficking activities in these settings. IOM also continued to refine its training packages, practices, and procedures for trafficking-related data collection and analysis in crisis contexts.

In 2018, IOM continued to work with its partners to develop the evidence base on human trafficking, and released a new version of the Counter-Trafficking Data Collaborative (CTDC) –the first global, open-access data hub on human trafficking. CTDC currently combines the three largest victims of human trafficking case datasets in the world, resulting in one centralized dataset with information on over 90,000 cases, representing 172 nationalities exploited in 169 countries. The data are from cases in which assistance has been provided by IOM, Polaris (via its human trafficking hotline in the US), and NGO partners of Liberty Shared. The CTDC website has been live for less than a year but already attracts over 4,000 users per month, with the number of users increasing by 10% every month. 50% of users are academics or students. Other users include public sector, private sector, international organizations, NGOs, and the media.

IOM continues to train and deploy IOM anti-trafficking experts to crises such as Libya, DRC, Cox’s Bazar, and Northeast Nigeria. Meanwhile, IOM data collection tools such as DTM help the Organization and its humanitarian partners to identify at-risk groups among crisis-affected populations to reduce the risk of trafficking and exploitation and provide direct assistance to those groups and identified victims. IOM continues to take an active role in the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in persons (ICAT), which published two issue briefs in 2018: ‘Trafficking in Children’ and ‘The Role of the Sustainable Development Goals in Combatting Trafficking in Persons.’