

“Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well managed migration policies.”

Newsletter for September - October 2020

IOM Lesotho Participates to UN Day Commemoration

IOM Lesotho staff members participated to the United Nations Day commemoration ceremony held on the 23rd October 2020. This day was commemorated with activities such as cleaning campaign, following His Majesty King Letsie III and The Government of Lesotho’s call to “keep Lesotho Clean” and many more.



IOM Lesotho supports Government's Diaspora Policy Briefing event



Honourable Ministers and Principal Secretaries attending the briefing session on the achievement of diaspora engagement and presentation of the draft Lesotho National Diaspora Policy. ©IOM 2020

On 16 October 2020, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Relations (MOFAIR) hosted Ministers and Principal Secretaries from relevant ministries for a briefing on the achievement of diaspora engagement and presentation of the draft Lesotho National Diaspora Policy. Present at the meeting were Ministers of Home Affairs, Tourism, Social Development, Labour and Employment, and Foreign Affairs and International Relations who was the host. At present, the draft policy is going through the final validation by Basotho diaspora in countries from the

United Kingdom (UK), United States of America (USA) and Republic of South Africa (RSA) where most Basotho reside and other countries in Africa. MoFAIR will incorporate the inputs from diaspora which will be submitted by the end of October 2020. The ministers concur that diaspora policy is an important guiding framework to position Basotho diaspora as a key stakeholder and strategic partner in the development and economic growth of Lesotho, particularly considering the impact of COVID-19 on the socio-economic situation of the country.

Basotho Diaspora abroad empowered to formalize and develop structure to operationalize Association



Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Relations (MoFAIR), Hon. 'Matsepo Ramakoae. ©IOM 2020

A series of training sessions for the Basotho diaspora capacity building organized by IOM Lesotho came to an end on 24 October 2020. Six training / dialogue sessions were facilitated by Mr. Kingsley Aikins and Dr. Martin Russel – both have extensive experience in diaspora engagement in their own country (Ireland) as well as provide capacity building and training support to diaspora overseas. The training sessions have been conducted virtually and diaspora located in different countries have been participating over the last three months. This event was inaugurated by the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Relations (MoFAIR) on 15 August 2020, and also, closed by the Minister. In her closing remarks, Hon. 'Matsepo Ramakoae acknowledged the strong passion and commitment among diaspora members towards supporting Lesotho's fight against poverty, efforts ▶

towards national development and COVID-19 response. This was echoed by the training facilitators who commended the diaspora's desire to contribute to the economy of their country and their willingness to do so in an organized and informed manner. The training covered different themes under the following topics.

- **Diaspora engagement**
- **Philanthropy and fundraising**
- **Networking**

“ We are grateful for the support of IOM to make this possible. We have learned a lot from experts in diaspora engagement. What is left for us is to put into practice the lessons learned. ”

This is a sentiment that is shared by all training participants. The next step for the Basotho diaspora members is the journey towards the establishment of Basotho Diaspora Association. Currently, members are developing a structure to operationalise the association.



Migration data working group convene to plan for evidence generation on migration data in Lesotho

On 28 October 2020, the Bureau of Statistics (BOS) supported by IOM under the project “*Lesotho Migration Profile: Supporting Evidence-Based Migration Related Policy Making and Planning in Lesotho (Phase I)*” convened a planning meeting for the migration data working group. The purpose of the meeting was to have a discussion with stakeholders to identify available migration data to form content of the migration situation report.

The process was building upon previous assessments that have been undertaken and recommendations of the assessments on the eco-system of migration data management in Lesotho. Each member from migration data producing ministries and institutions presented the data that is readily available and the format in which such data is collected and stored. In addition to data availability, each member explained the procedures that need to be followed to access the data, as well as the critical role that BOS has to play in coordination and harmonization of migration data and its sharing.



Data sharing remains a big challenge in Lesotho, and this project intends to contribute to harmonization and coordination among migration data producers for sustainable migration data management.

IOM and Ministry of Health visit Maputsoe to assess the progresses and challenges in access to SRHR-HIV services during the COVID-19 period



SRHR-HIV Knows No Border project Monitoring Team assessing the progresses and challenges in access to SRHR HIV services during the COVID-19 period. ©IOM 2020/Tsepo Molefi

As part of the **“SRHR-HIV Knows No Border: Improving SRHR-HIV Outcomes for Migrants, Adolescents and Young People and Sex Workers in Migration-Affected Communities in Southern Africa 2016 - 2020”** project implementation, funded by the Netherlands Government, IOM in partnership with the Ministry of Health (MoH) SRH and Adolescent Programs carried out a monitoring visit in Maputsoe on 12-16 October 2020. In this activity, the team visited health facilities, met with Change Agents and held an engagement meeting with Gatekeepers. This was an effort to determine what progress had been made, and to identify key challenges on access to services. Specifically, the team visited Maputsoe with the following objectives:

1. Understand the progress, lessons and challenges in addressing SRHR-HIV needs and rights of migrants, Adolescent and Young People (AYP) and sex workers in Maputsoe through monitoring visit and discussions with health facilities
2. Assess the current situation and approach to improve uptake of Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) and HIV services through focal group discussion with target groups (sex workers, migrants and AYP)

3. Improve awareness amongst gatekeepers on key SRHR and HIV issues and leadership required during COVID-19 period

Meeting with Change Agents and Dialogue with Project Beneficiaries

In the activities, the monitoring team met with change agents and change agent coordinators to discuss current implementation and identify challenges related to implementation. The monitoring team noted the following emerging issues: ▶



Change Agents share experiences with Project Monitoring Team ©IOM 2020

- Referred clients growing impatient and do not complete referrals due to long queues.
- Community members not adhering to hygiene practices and there is no existence of IEC materials on use of masks.
- Need for PPE for communities while Change Agents provide information and education.
- Clients reluctant to seek services due to health professional strikes.
- Coordination of partners poor as there is duplication of efforts (this includes partners all using different referral slips).
- Human mobility through irregular crossings on the increase.
- There are increasing Gender Based Violence (GBV) cases.
- The monitoring team also met with Project beneficiaries who indicated a frustration as clinics are not user friendly (denied services due to not having transfer letters).

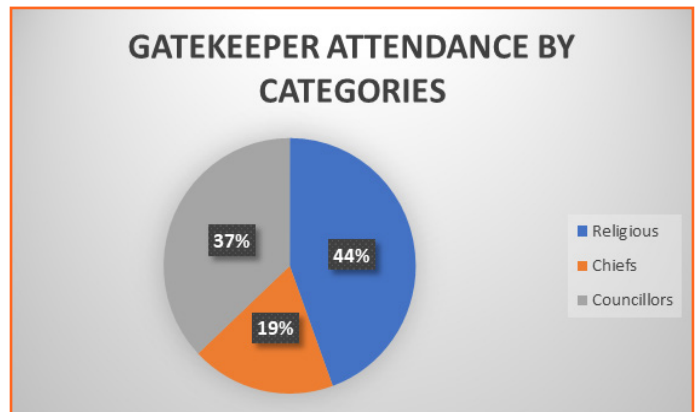
Meeting of Gatekeepers

The team further held a one day meeting with chiefs, councillors and religious leaders where the Ministry of Health team facilitated two sessions on unpacking the sexual health programs and adolescent program. Among other things, the SRH program Manager indicated the different components of the SRH program including:



Project Monitoring Team and Gatekeeper discussing the SRH experiences. ©IOM 2020/Tsepo Molefi

- Family planning, PMTCT, Adolescents and Young People, maternal and child health, males clinics.
- The adolescent programs focus was mainly on child abuse, forced marriage, school drop-outs, HIV infections, and early and unintended pregnancies.
- The meeting also underscored the need to educate children on age specific information on sexuality education.
- Leaders were informed that GBV cases are on the increase.
- Leaders indicated the need for information that is specific for men and to be empowered with more information to speak from informed position.



IOM continues to support South Districts towards Reintegration of vulnerable Returnees, and introduce Migration Flow Monitoring



Quthing DISCOSEC discusses returnees beneficiary selection. ©IOM 2020/Tsepo Molefi

On the 3-6 November 2020, IOM held follow-up workshops for District COVID-19 Secretariats (DISCOSEC) in the districts of Mafeteng, Mohale's Hoek, Quthing and Qacha's Nek. The purpose of these workshops was to review the lists of vulnerable returnees identified by Ministry of Social Development, share Information Education and Communication (IEC) materials on Covid-19, revised Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) with DISCOSEC and discuss the next step to start migration flow monitoring targeting the hot spots with high level of human mobility.

A key outcome of those workshops for Auxiliary Social Workers was to begin the process of beneficiary selection of returnees in need of food assistance in the next three months. The recommendation was that the districts would

do selection and preliminary lists would be presented in the first week of November 2020. This is to carry out the overall intention to respond to livelihoods challenges of vulnerable communities where IOM, WFP and FAO with the support from ECHO, had been implementing a project titled **“Drought and COVID-19 pandemic in Lesotho: agriculture, Food Security and Protection Support to Vulnerable Communities**, where IOM is expected to provide the list of 2000 deserving returnees to receive emergency food assistance in the districts of Mafeteng, Mohale’s Hoek, Quthing and Qacha’s Nek.



Qacha’s Nek DISCOSEC discusses returnees beneficiary selection. ©IOM 2020/Tsepo Molefi

As to reduce the spread of Covid-19 and mitigate its impact in the communities, IOM team had promised to share Covid-19 IEC materials with the districts, and a presentation of flyers for chiefs, traditional beer brewers, irregular migrants, and taxi drivers was made. The IOM

team promised to print at least 100 IEC materials for the districts. IOM also shared the copies of the District based SOP which was developed during the previous DISCOSEC workshop in September 2020.

The IOM team further provided a refresher of upcoming migration flow exercise. The districts reflected on previous submissions regarding the hotspots (official and unofficial) where movement would be higher. Some the districts confirmed the hotspots while others made few changes. The tools to be used in this exercise were also introduced. Following the training, the IOM team visited both official and unofficial borders to observe the movement of people. At the unofficial border, the team witnessed the movement of people – facilitated by smugglers – who prefer to use unofficial borders due to various barriers (lack of COVID-19 certificates, proper documents, permits etc).



IOM team visits Paqama point of crossing ©IOM 2020/Tsepo Molefi

Labour Inspectors trained on Counter Trafficking and Identification of TIP and Victims

On the 27-30 October 2020, IOM conducted training sessions on counter Trafficking in Persons (TIP) to Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE) 40 officials (26 female, 14 male) and 7 journalists attended this training. The objective of the training was to improve knowledge on Basic concept of TIP, identification and referral of Victims of Trafficking (VOT), and tools and guidelines which will enhance oversight of recruitment agency for Labour Inspectors from all districts and officials from Labour Migration Unit. The training was officially opened by the Principal Secretary (PS) in the MoLE, Mr. Emmanuel Lesoma. In his remarks, PS thanked IOM and donor for

availing this opportunity and said it is his hope that the knowledge gained from the training will enhance the Ministry in its endeavours to curb trafficking.

One of the training sessions was facilitated by a senior police officer from Anti-Trafficking Unit of Lesotho Mounted Police Service (LMPS). LMPS established Anti Trafficking Unit in October 2020 to effectively respond to the TIP cases in Lesotho. During the training, it was noted that Anti-Trafficking Unit will work closely with labour inspectors as there are TIP cases of labour exploitation which labour inspectors are well positioned to identify ►



A group photo of Labour Inspectors, Principal Secretary and IOM Team before training on Counter Trafficking and Identification of TIP and Victims. ©IOM 2020/Tsepo Molefi

and refer the cases to Anti-Trafficking Unit for investigation. Training also introduced IOM’s Integrated Recruitment Information System (IRIS) and went through Montreal recommendations (2015) to strengthen ethical recruitment. Identification of potential TIP “during the recruitment stage” is critical. The training concluded that it is feasible to implement some of the key recommendations from Montreal recommendations in order to strengthen the oversight of recruitment in Lesotho.

Key Issues Identified in this Training Include

- Due to the poverty and COVID-19 negative impact to their livelihood, girls and women are engaging in commercial sex in construction projects area which could include TIP.
- Debt bondage (young boys working as herd boys over years to pay the debts for their parents) is common in Lesotho .
- Lack of resources (transport) and limited collaboration among the key stakeholder hinders effective and frequent inspection / identification of potential TIP in Lesotho.
- There is an increasing number of smuggling across the country. Smuggled migrants could be exploited (fall into Victims of Trafficking on the transit or when they reach their .
- While Labour Code punishes recruitment by unregistered recruiters, there are frequent cases of non-registered recruiters continue to recruit Basotho

for oversee job opportunities including domestic works, construction works and farm work.

What is the difference between Trafficking & Smuggling?		
3 Differences	Trafficking	Smuggling
1. How money is made	Exploitation of victim in destination country	Helping people cross borders illegally
2. The question of consent (agreement)	Potential victim agrees to travel on basis of false information	Client agrees to travel with full information about journey, destination and costs
3. Relationships ▪ Trafficker-Victim ▪ Smuggler-Client	Trafficker-Victim Relationship continues in country of destination	Smuggler-Client Relationship ends once border is crossed in country of destination

“Human trafficking can take place within one country without any movement across an international border”

This training was fully funded by the United States Government under project titled **Supporting Lesotho in Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Prevention and Protection**. This Project will be implemented over a period of two years with the overall objective to strengthen the TIP response including the identification, protection and referral of potential victims of trafficking at district and national level.

“MIGRATION FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL”

- **Advocating for evidence-based policy to enhance migration management**
- **Promoting migration and development including engaging diaspora for economic growth**
- **Strengthening border security and immigration management to combat trafficking in Persons (TIP)**
- **Promoting access to health services for migrants**
- **Enhancing Migration Data Collection and Analysis for Evidence Based Policy Making**



IOM thanks the following donors:



Kingdom of the Netherlands



IOM thanks the following implementing partners:



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