



MIGRATION CRISES

Migrant Health and Psychosocial Support

Migration Crises

Migration Crises are an increasing consequence of natural and man-made disasters in our globalized world. Third Country Nationals (TCNs) are often left without employment or support networks in the midst of crises, and seek to return home or escape to safer locations. Crises can trigger waves of irregular migration and displacement, as economies are damaged and security and livelihoods are threatened or lacking entirely.



Migration and Health

Migration is a recognized determinant of ill health, as migrants are exposed to health risks, or have health conditions aggravated by the migration process. Some conditions of modern migration – such as risky travel, marginalization, exploitative living and working conditions, limited access to health and social services, or a sub-standard quality of care – define the physical, mental, and psychosocial vulnerability of migrants to ill health. Such vulnerability has potential repercussions on both individuals and communities and is often exacerbated in crisis situations.

Travel Health

IOM endeavours to ensure that migrants and other vulnerable persons travel in a safe and dignified manner, are fit to travel and are able to manage normal emotional responses to the abnormality of a crisis situation. This serves to minimize associated travel health risks for migrants as well as the hosting and the receiving communities.



IOM is the cluster lead in Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) for natural disasters and a partner for other emergency and disaster situations.



International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Organisation internationale pour les migrations (OIM)
Organización Internacional para las Migraciones (OIM)

IOM's Comprehensive Migrant Health Prevention and Care Package in Crises

Throughout a crisis situation, IOM endeavours to provide health services and care at every stage of the migration process.

Pre-departure Stage

This stage involves the provision of individual health care with a focus on communicable diseases and continuity of care for chronic conditions, public and environmental health in areas of displacement, psychosocial support, pre-embarkation fitness-to-travel and referral of cases in need of stabilization, and medical escorts where needed.

Transit Stage

This stage includes hygiene, environmental health and health care in reception centres, and the provision of mental health and psychosocial support. It also involves awareness raising and training of health and immigration personnel.

Upon Return

This final stage includes facilitated health referrals and continuity of care in case of chronic conditions and psycho-social assistance to reintegration.

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Public Health

Public health risks and psychosocial concerns in crisis-driven migration contexts depend upon the nature and scale of the crisis, the demographics and epidemiological profiles of the affected populations, and the location and nature of the response at the emergency onset. Pre-



existing health status and exposure to risky environments (e.g. detention, marginalization, exploitation and gender-based risks etc.), lack of immunity to new diseases, overcrowding, lack of adequate food, sanitation and shelter, and limited access to care, all contribute to enhanced disease risks, outbreak-prone environments, and high morbidity and mortality in the emergency/post-crisis phase. IOM implements projects to address public health issues and promote health conditions in situations of displacement and assisted movement.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

IOM promotes mental health, psychosocial wellness and intercultural communication and mediation through psychological first aid, discussion groups, counseling sessions and referrals. Training for humanitarian actors and health providers is delivered to promote understanding of the emotional experience of emergency displacement and the impact of cultural differences on concepts of distress. IOM's package of intervention includes the promotion of community-based activities including youth activities as well as mental health system strengthening, promotion of socio-cultural stabilization and capacity building for mental health and psychosocial providers in countries of displacement and return.



IOM

has 60 years of experience in providing health and psychosocial support to migrants in crisis situations including the following major migration crisis and emergency situations:

Libya 2011 Haiti 2010
Pakistan 2010 Sri Lanka 2009
Lebanon 2006 Indonesia 2005
Kosovo 1999 Iraq 1990
Ex -Yugoslavia 1993

IOM Tools and Training for Migrant Health in Emergency Situations

Assessing Health Conditions in Libyan Transit Centres: Key Findings and Priorities for Intervention

A guide to Mental Health, Psychosocial Assistance and Cultural Intergration in Emergency and Displacement

Knowledge and Practices for Integrating Health in Border Management

Training modules on Migration and Health for Health Professionals

Training Modules on Migration and Health for Border Officials

More information can be obtained from the
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