

International Organization for Migration

Mission in Azerbaijan

WHO WE ARE

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is an inter-governmental organization that promotes humane and rights-based approaches to migration and development and assists governments in facilitating and regulating migration and fighting human trafficking. IOM was established in 1951 and today includes 166 Member States, a further 8 states holding observer status and offices in over 100 countries. On 19 September 2016, IOM became a Related Organization of the United Nation (UN) and was recognized as a crucial actor in the field of human mobility. That includes protection of migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in migration-affected communities, as well as in areas of refugee resettlement and voluntary returns, combatting human trafficking and incorporating migration in country development plans.

BACKGROUND

IOM Mission in Azerbaijan started its operations in January 1996. On the 8 December 1999, IOM and the Republic of Azerbaijan signed an agreement establishing a legal basis for further cooperation in handling migration issues. Following the agreement's ratification by the country's National Assembly on the 8 February 2000, the Council of IOM, at its 81st Session in Geneva, agreed to accept Azerbaijan as an IOM Member State on the 7 June 2001.

OUR ACTIVITIES IN AZERBAIJAN

IOM in Azerbaijan started its interventions with a multi-year project on capacity building in migration management in 1996. The activities of the Mission were followed by the numerous projects implemented under mainly eight program areas which are counter trafficking, immigration and border management, migration and development, international migration law, migration, environment and climate change, movement programmes, assisted voluntary return and reintegration and visa solutions. IOM works closely with government and civil society partners, as well as with international organizations.

Currently, IOM Azerbaijan Mission continues its activities in the following intervention areas:

I. COUNTER-TRAFFICKING

Since 2000, IOM has been providing assistance to the Government of Azerbaijan in analyzing the national counter trafficking legal framework and providing recommendations. IOM has conducted the country's first ever assessment of human trafficking. IOM organizes awareness-raising campaigns to inform the population at large, as well as those belong to risk groups, about the dangers of human trafficking. It provides capacity-building support through targeted interventions to both Government agencies and civil society organizations. So far, IOM Mission in Azerbaijan has provided assistance to more than 2500 victims and potential victims of trafficking in particular to



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The UN Migration Agency



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children, women and migrant workers in the country. Presently, IOM is implementing following projects on combatting trafficking in persons:

“Counter-Trafficking in Persons Activity” – The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded 36-month project aims to assist the Government of Azerbaijan and civil society organizations to further improve Azerbaijan's effectiveness in preventing and combating trafficking in human beings through raising public awareness on trafficking in human beings and providing technical and financial support to the shelters operated by civil society organizations for assisting potential and actual victims of human trafficking.

International Organization for Migration is currently implementing EU-funded **“Enhancement of National Capacities to Combat Human Trafficking in Azerbaijan (ENCT)”** project. The objective of this two-year project is to strengthen the capacity of the Government of Azerbaijan in effectively countering human trafficking and protecting the rights of victims of trafficking. The project contributes to the international and regional frameworks including the EU - Azerbaijan Comprehensive Institutional Building Program, Eastern partnership, and Mobility Partnership. The project supports the Government in combating human trafficking and consequently transnational organized crime by applying a comprehensive, holistic and multidisciplinary approach. It takes into account the specific competencies and needs of Government agencies and is being implemented in close partnership with the Government and non-government stakeholders in Azerbaijan.

“Enhancing Measures and Cooperation to Effectively Combat Trafficking in Persons through Capacity Building and Technical Assistance in Azerbaijan – Phase VI” – The project is funded by the United States Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL). The 24-month project aims to contribute to strengthening of judicial capacity in combating trafficking and improving victims' and potential victims' of trafficking access to specialized services and assistance.

2. IMMIGRATION AND BORDER MANAGEMENT

IOM started its interventions in 1996 with a multi-year “Capacity Building in Migration Management Programme (CBMMP)”, which included technical assistance in policy development, structural reform, legislation and operational performance on migration and border management. IOM's immigration and border management activities are directed at helping governments develop improved policy, legislation, administrative structures, operational systems and the human resource base necessary to respond more effectively to diverse migration and border challenges and to institute good migration governance.

On 1 September 2014, IOM Mission in Azerbaijan began to implement the **“Consolidation of Migration and Border Management Capacities in Azerbaijan (CMBA)”** project jointly with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, State Migration Service, State Border Service, Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population funded by European Union and co-funded by BP and co-ventures. The 36-month project seeks to consolidate Azerbaijan's migration management capacity to effectively implement the reforms foreseen by the EU Azerbaijan Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements in line with the Institutional Reform Plan II (IRP-II) of the EU-Azerbaijan Comprehensive Institutional Building Program, adopted by the EU and the Government of Azerbaijan in 2012, in full observance of international and European human rights standards. It aims to contribute to the efforts towards achieving an effective management of procedures and processes vis-à-vis the emigration, immigration, transit and asylum flows by following a tailored approach and taking into account the specific roles and needs of key State agencies of Azerbaijan.

Currently, IOM is also performing the **“Enhancement of National Capacities for Integrated Border Management in Azerbaijan”** project funded by the United States Department of State, Bureau of



International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL). The main objectives of 18-month technical cooperation project are to continuously enhance capacities of the State Border Service of the Republic of Azerbaijan (SBS) on integrated border management, to apply advanced practice of SBS in the field of integrated border management as a best practice in establishing and improving border management systems of other countries, as well as to establish close cooperation between SBS and IOM on strengthening the existing border management systems of these countries. The project explicitly addresses issues such as the prevention of migration-related crime through information/risk analysis and intelligence-led law enforcement intervention and transfer of specialized expertise in the area of document fraud. The project facilitates that border management systems and practices are brought into closer compliance with international standards through further introduction of the IBM concept at Azerbaijan's borders.

3. MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The objective of IOM's migration and development programme is to contribute to a better understanding of the links between international migration and development in order to harness the development potential of migration for the benefit of both societies and migrants and to contribute to sustainable development and poverty reduction. In order to carry out its objective, IOM implements programmes in the form of research, capacity building for governments and communities, community stabilization in countries that have undergone conflict, delivery of social programmes, community development, and partnership building with relevant institutions, authorities and business.

IOM is currently performing the **“Support to the socio-economic development of conflict-affected populations in Azerbaijan”** funded by the UK Embassy in Baku, Azerbaijan.

The overall goal of the project is to contribute to the economic empowerment of conflict-affected populations, including IDPs and refugees, through business development activities, which will mainly focus on economic empowerment of target groups through business counseling, business trainings and small business development. The project will cover conflict affected regions in mainland identified in close collaboration with the Government.

4. INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION LAW

IOM works to increase knowledge and acceptance of the legal instruments that protect migrants' rights, as well as the ratification and implementation status of these instruments. It also assists States in developing migration policies and legislation that conform to Integration Migration Law (IML) in order to manage migration more effectively and in a manner consistent with international law.

IOM presently implements the **“E-Learning Solutions to Support Justice Academy of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Azerbaijan”** project funded by the United States Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL). The objective of the project is to contribute to attainment of high level of professionalism among judges and prosecutors in Azerbaijan that would support the Government of Azerbaijan in strengthening the respect for democratic principles, rule of law, good governance, human rights and freedoms in line with international and European standards.

5. MIGRATION, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

IOM applies its comprehensive migration management approach to the complex linkages between climate change, the environment and migration. Through its activities, IOM helps to reduce vulnerability of populations exposed to environmental risk factors; assists populations on the move as a result of environmental causes; and builds the capacities of governments and other actors to face the challenge of environmental migration.



6. MOVEMENT PROGRAMMES

IOM provides resettlement assistance for UNHCR-recognized refugees, displaced persons or individuals officially identified by third countries for humanitarian resettlement. The IOM's role is to provide the receiving and sending Governments with efficient movement arrangements. The Movement programmes in Azerbaijan include the United States Refugee Admission Programme (USRAP), the Canadian Warrants (CW) and re-settlements in Europe and elsewhere. The objective is to provide the migrants with secure, reliable, and organized transfer services.

7. ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION ASSISTANCE

As a core activity of IOM, Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) activities provide vital assistance to thousands of migrants returning home every year. Building on experience and a worldwide network of offices and partners, IOM's AVRR programmes promote international dialogue and cooperation on migration management issues among host countries and countries of origin.

IOM Mission in Azerbaijan continues to assist migrants in returning voluntarily from/to Azerbaijan and reintegrating into their communities. Thus far, Mission has facilitated returns from Belgium, Canada, Switzerland, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovenia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, the UK, Uzbekistan and others followed by reintegration assistance when necessary and available.

8. VISA SOLUTIONS

Since October 2013, IOM is operating the Canadian Visa Application Centre (CVAC) in Azerbaijan under a public-private partnership mechanism with VFS as an exclusive service provider for the Government of Canada, authorized to accept applications in all temporary resident categories (visitor visas, study and work permits) and travel document applications from Canada's permanent residents in Azerbaijan.

CVAC is authorized to provide administrative support services, such as; the collection of visa applications, fees and return of passports in sealed decision envelopes to applicants.

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