



A MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF OFFICE

Welcome to IOM Dominica's July—September 2020 Newsletter. Over the last three months, IOM Dominica continued its support to the Government's COVID-19 response and preparedness initiatives. Through the partnership, IOM has worked to provide health and non-health equipment and materials to different governmental institutions and is facilitating risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) initiatives targeting migrant communities. We are totally aware of the negative implications miscommunication can bring and the devastating effect it can have on national efforts to combat the spread of the virus which is why these community engagement activities are so important to us.

Sadly, the threat of a sudden hurricane or other natural disaster remains a reality for Dominica and the Eastern Caribbean - despite being in the middle of a pandemic. As of September, our team has been working persistently with the Office of Disaster Management, Local Government Division and other stakeholders to improve preparedness in many rural communities in Dominica while addressing some of the needs of emergency shelters in those areas.

On a similar note, IOM Dominica is collaborating with the Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (GMDAC), the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission and other partners to assess environmental migration in the Eastern Caribbean. With more frequent and more powerful hurricanes affecting the region including Hurricanes Maria and Irma in 2017 and Hurricane Dorian in 2019 a study on environmental migration became critical to our mission. It is our hope to assist Dominica and the other five independent OECS member states to create tailored, data driven policies for improved governance on climate induced migration.

NATASHA GREAVES

Head of Office
IOM Dominica

MIGRATION HEALTH

COVID-19 RESPONSE

In August, IOM donated hygiene items to the Ministry of National Security and Home Affairs to assist with their institutional capacity to combat the spread of COVID-19 in Dominica as borders re-opened for commercial flights. In September, the mission handed over similar supplies to both the Roseau Primary School and the Isaiah Thomas Secondary School in the village of St. Joseph. IOM collaborated with the Ministry of Health, Wellness and New Health Investment facilitate access of migrants to foreign language support on the National COVID-19 Hotline. The three operators are managed by the ministry, supported by IOM and are all bi-lingual.

ENVIRONMENTAL MIGRATION

LAUNCH OF IOM/OECS REGIONAL MOBILITY PROJECT



L-R Interim CEO of CREAD, IOM Head of Office, Minister for Environment in Roseau, Dominica
© IOM 2020 (Photo: Jewele Browne)

On Wednesday 30 September 2020, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) observed another milestone in a growing partnership which began in 2016. The two organizations hosted the virtual launch of a new 15-month project which will support a “Regional Dialogue to Address Human Mobility and Climate Change Adaptation in the Eastern Caribbean”.

Over 40 government stakeholders in the areas of environment, immigration, statistics, agriculture and climate change from the six independent member states of the OECS (Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) attended the virtual event. The project, funded by the Federal Republic of Germany, has the objective of enhancing human mobility governance relating to climate change in the six independent member states of the OECS through improved evidence and regional cooperation. IOM and its Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (GMDAC) will be working closely with the OECS Commission and key stakeholders in to ensure that at the end of the project in 2021, policymakers in the six participating member states will benefit from enhanced data and evidence regarding environmental migration. Watch a re-cap of the event [here](#).

SUMMER ENTREPRENEURIAL HUB

A string of crises over the past five years, beginning with Tropical Storm Erika (2015), monster Hurricane Maria (2017), and the COVID-19 pandemic (2020) have posed severe and ongoing challenges to some of the entrepreneurs in DYBT's clientele. The effects have been particularly stark for businesses in the non-essentials sectors and those who cater to travellers, as business activity in the leisure and tourism sectors has been most severely impacted by all these disasters.

The Dominica Youth Business Trust and IOM teamed up to brainstorm an innovative solution to this challenge, that could inspire the entrepreneurs and provide them with a practical avenue of income generation and development of new skills and a platform to survive in this "new normal" of virtual business and digital economy. DYBT's Summer Entrepreneurship HUB provided a solution for both the hard-hit entrepreneurs and parents who were wondering what would replace the usual "summer school" activities to help their children to learn life skills.

DYBT's Summer Entrepreneurship HUB ran for four weeks from July to August 2020 and engaged 41 boys and girls from 20 primary and secondary schools across the island in a virtual space, for five days each week. The young students learned different skills including Graphic Design, Craft and Jewellery Making, Unique Cooking, Basic Hand Sewing, Eating Naturally, Make-up Tips for Teens, Basic Electronic Device Troubleshooting, and participated in a Virtual Gym. The DYBT team and entrepreneur-tutors introduced them to the idea of creating marketable products and services using existing skills, passions and creativity, by identifying needs to be fulfilled in society and creating innovative solutions to these. IOM through the IOM Development Fund capacity building project provided support towards facilitators' fees for the entrepreneurs-turned-tutors, and towards purchase of raw materials to facilitate the practical aspects of the training.

The young participants were exposed to the DYBT team and range of support services and were inspired by their own achievements over the four weeks. This activity was judged as exceeding the expectations of DYBT and their entrepreneurs, both with regard to the interest displayed and the outputs achieved. DYBT has already announced plans to develop the Kids Summer Entrepreneurship HUB into an annual activity of DYBT's HUB of entrepreneurial support.

DYBT AND IOM CONTRIBUTE TO THE ENTREPRENEURIAL JOURNEY

Julie Robin could have left in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria. Instead, she decided to launch her business and contribute to rebuilding a sustainable economy. In May 2019, Julie completed the new Entrepreneurial Development Programme – a training package of the Dominica Youth Business Trust (DYBT). “This was the best decision I have taken in a while!”, Julie says. “The training helped me gain confidence to start talking about my project. It was just what I needed; I had the concept, but I was lacking direction on the steps to get it done, the legalities and all the other areas of running a business. The training touched on all the important areas and they answered all my questions.”

The training was part of an IOM Development Fund (IDF) project to help DYBT support economic recovery and foster engagement of young entrepreneurs after Hurricane Maria. Through the project, DYBT is developing essential business skills, providing grants, mentorship, and more to aspiring entrepreneurs through a new HUB of entrepreneurial support. In November 2019, Julie won a DYBT-IDF business grant for her start-up venture “Back-to-Basics”. She used the grant to secure credit and in April 2020, despite COVID-19, successfully launched her line of frozen “french fries” made with local starchy root-crops. Julie speaks of DYBT’s support see video here. She is excited about the opportunities being developed under the DYBT-IOM project.

John Roach, Chief Youth Development Officer in the Ministry of Youth Affairs, notes “The IOM Development Fund has had a major impact on a core programme of the Youth Development Division, namely the Dominica Youth Business Trust. This programme has benefited from technical and financial assistance under the IDF project, contributing tremendously to the social and economic empowerment of the DYBT Entrepreneurs and their dependents”. IOM is proud of this collaboration and looks forward to the culmination of this exciting project.

What you should know about: Irregular Migration



Italian Coast Guard rescues migrants and refugees bound for Italy
© IOM 2014 (Photo: Francesco Malavolta)

Irregular migration, often referred to as ‘illegal migration’ by the general public, is defined by IOM as the movement of persons that takes place outside the laws, regulations, or international agreements governing the entry into or exit from the State of origin, transit or destination. In addition, migrants with regular status in a country may become irregular/ undocumented upon expiration of their visa or permit. It causes significant and complex problems for countries and exposes migrants to exploitation and other vulnerabilities. Currently, there is a need to adopt more effective and coherent approaches to address this issue while acknowledging the concerns of countries and considering the need to protect the rights of irregular migrants.

LAUNCH OF MIGAPP IN DOMINICA



As part of IOM's Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) Initiative, the team in Dominica worked with our regional and international counterparts to launch the MigApp in Dominica. MigApp is our agency's mobile application specifically designed to help migrants make more informed decisions during their travel and stay in other countries by improving and simplifying access to reliable migration-related information and services.

The application is managed by a team of IOM experts from around the world who liaise with government representatives to ensure that the information provided on each country is updated and accurate. With this partnership, MigApp contributes to IOM's efforts to fulfil three of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's): facilitate orderly, safe, regular, and responsible migration; reduce transaction costs of migrant remittances and end modern slavery and human trafficking.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

In August, IOM launched a 12-month, US\$800,000 project funded by United States Agency for International Development (USAID), to support the Government with increasing emergency preparedness. The main objective is to help communities nationwide to be better prepared for a disaster. Emergency shelters (collective centres) in some of 46 vulnerable communities will be rehabilitated and equipped; and communications and community engagement initiatives will be created to reach a wide audience to encourage and train community members to improve their resilience to natural disasters. With more knowledgeable and trained individuals, it is hoped that the nation will be better equipped to respond quickly and efficiently to crisis and emergency situations in the foreseeable future.



For media inquiries and other information, please contact:

IOM Dominica Communications Officer

Email: iomdominica@iom.int

Call: 17672850794