



Blood sample collection at an IOM migration health assessment centre (MHAC) in Nigeria. © IOM 2021

## WHAT ARE PRE-MIGRATION HEALTH ACTIVITIES?

Pre-migration health activities (PMHAs) are one of IOM's most well-established migration management services and are delivered through IOM's Migration Health Assessment Programme (HAP). PMHAs are an array of procedures that are undertaken in the context of regular migration at the request of receiving country governments, and aim to achieve at least one of the following:

- identification of health conditions of public health importance (communicable and non-communicable conditions) in relation to specific country legislation and International Health Regulations;
- provision of continuity of care, linking pre-departure, travel, transit and post-arrival phases;
- establishment of fitness to travel to another country;
- improvement of the health of migrants before departure to another country through the provision of preventative or curative care;
- minimization or mitigation of public health risks related to mobility.

PMHAs may entail any number of screening, diagnostic, treatment or preventive services, as well as health-related travel assistance. IOM provides migrants with PMHAs for the purpose of assisting them with

resettlement, international employment, obtainment of temporary or permanent visas, enrolment in specific migrant assistance programmes, such as assisted voluntary return, or during post-emergency relocation and repatriation. While the vast majority of these activities occur prior to migration, in some cases, these activities may extend to the post-arrival phase, generally associated with the renewal of visa status (as with the IOM Sri Lanka Inbound Health Assessment Programme).

Reflecting national differences in immigration policies and practices, pre-migration health requirements and protocols vary among receiving countries. Despite these differences, one thing remains constant: the need to ensure that the migration process does not endanger the health of either the migrant or the host population.

As an international organization engaged in the promotion of the health and well-being of migrants, IOM's primary stakeholders in the provision of PMHAs are the migrants served, its Member States and the international health community. IOM is accountable to its stakeholders for the delivery of PMHAs that are technically sound, uphold national and international health legislation, are delivered in a timely and efficient manner, and are beneficial, equitable, and accessible for migrants. The migrant is at the centre of the pre-migration health process, which is adapted to specific migrant profiles and individual risk exposures.

IOM integrates its PMHAs with existing national disease control and prevention programmes by collaborating with national partners, training local providers and employing local personnel.

Pre-migration health activities are a valuable tool to promote individual and public health. As such, they positively impact a migrant's capacity to integrate fully into receiving societies.

## WHAT DO PRE-MIGRATION HEALTH ACTIVITIES INCLUDE?

Depending on the type of migrant and country-specific guidelines, PMHAs may include some or all of the following components:

- review of medical and immunization history;
- detailed physical examination;
- mental health evaluation;
- radiological or laboratory investigations;
- pre- and post-test counselling;
- referral for consultation with a specialist;
- health education;
- administration of vaccines;
- provision of or referral for directly observed therapy (DOT) for tuberculosis;
- provision of or referral for treatment for other conditions;
- disease surveillance and outbreak response;
- pre-departure medical procedures (PDMP);
  - pre-departure evaluation (PDE);
  - pre-embarkation check (PEC);
- detailed documentation of findings and preparation of required immigration health forms and documents;
- confidential transfer of relevant information or documentation to appropriate immigration or public health authorities;
- provision of medical escorts and arrangements for travel.



Migrant registration at the IOM MHAC in Khartoum, Sudan. © IOM 2021



Review of a migrant's chest X-ray at the IOM MHAC in Bangkok, Thailand. © IOM 2022

## WHY ARE PRE-MIGRATION HEALTH ACTIVITIES VALUABLE?

PMHAs provide an opportunity to promote the health of refugees and migrants through the initiation of preventive and curative health interventions for conditions that, if left untreated, could have a negative impact on the migrants' overall health status and on the public health of receiving communities.

PMHAs aim to prevent negative health events during travel or on arrival to host communities by assessing a migrant's fitness to travel, providing stabilization treatment and pre-departure care where needed, making special travel arrangements, such as provision of medical escorts, and facilitating continuity of care upon arrival.

PMHAs promote migrant integration in the receiving health system, particularly when supported by adequate pre- and post-arrival health services and community-based interventions. For example, with the patient's permission, IOM confidentially transfers medical information to the receiving health and resettlement authorities prior to arrival. This measure promotes continuity of care for migrants, as it ensures that they can be referred to appropriate medical services and receive the necessary assistance once they arrive at their destination countries. PMHAs also encourage positive health-seeking behaviours through health education and counselling that aim to empower migrants to take preventative and curative actions to improve their health.

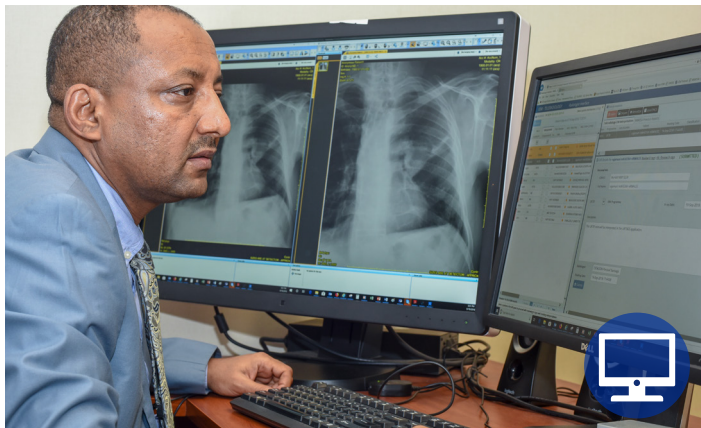


HIV pre-test counselling at the IOM MHAC in Manila, Philippines. © IOM 2020

## KEY SERVICE AREAS IN PRE-MIGRATION HEALTH ACTIVITIES

HAP employs advanced technologies in the provision of pre-migration health activities, particularly with regard to radiology and laboratory diagnostics.

### Radiology interpretation centres



IOM's two teleradiology interpretation and quality control centres work to standardize and optimize IOM's radiology services. © IOM 2018

### IOM laboratories



IOM operates 34 laboratories as of 2021, in addition to partnering with external laboratories. © IOM 2020

## 2021 KEY FIGURES

### TRAVEL ASSISTANCE

617 REFUGEES  
MEDICALLY  
ESCORTED

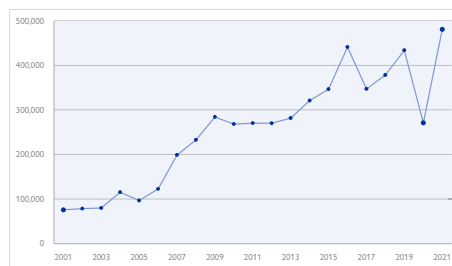


Services include, among others:

- medical escorts
- mobility assistance
- supplemental oxygen
- coordination with receiving service providers



### MIGRATION HEALTH ASSESSMENTS



More than 480,000 IOM and IOM-assisted migration health assessments provided

### HAP STAFF AND INFRASTRUCTURE



over 950 health staff, including:

- 200 physicians
- 270 nurses
- 490 other health staff\*
- 69 MHACs in 49 countries

\*includes lab, radiology, medical information technology, etc.

### TUBERCULOSIS (TB) DETECTION



512 active TB cases diagnosed by IOM



415 active TB cases (81.1%) laboratory-confirmed with positive sputum culture

12 multidrug-resistant (MDR-TB) cases (2.9%), no extensively drug-resistant (XDR-TB) cases.



TB cases were also diagnosed by radiological investigations.

### TREATMENT AND REFERRALS FOR TREATMENT

IOM provides or refers for:

- TB directly observed therapy (DOT)
- malaria treatment
- treatment of intestinal parasites
- treatment for other conditions detected by migration health assessments



IOM also provides referrals for specialist consultations and stabilization care.



### VACCINATION

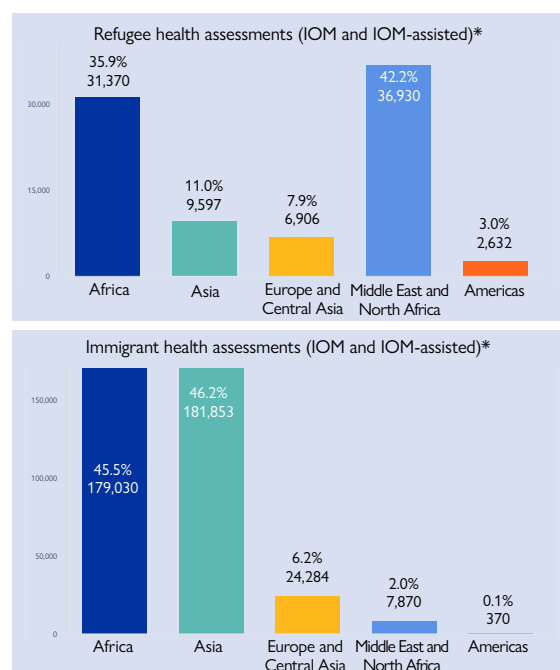
200,554 VACCINE DOSES PROVIDED



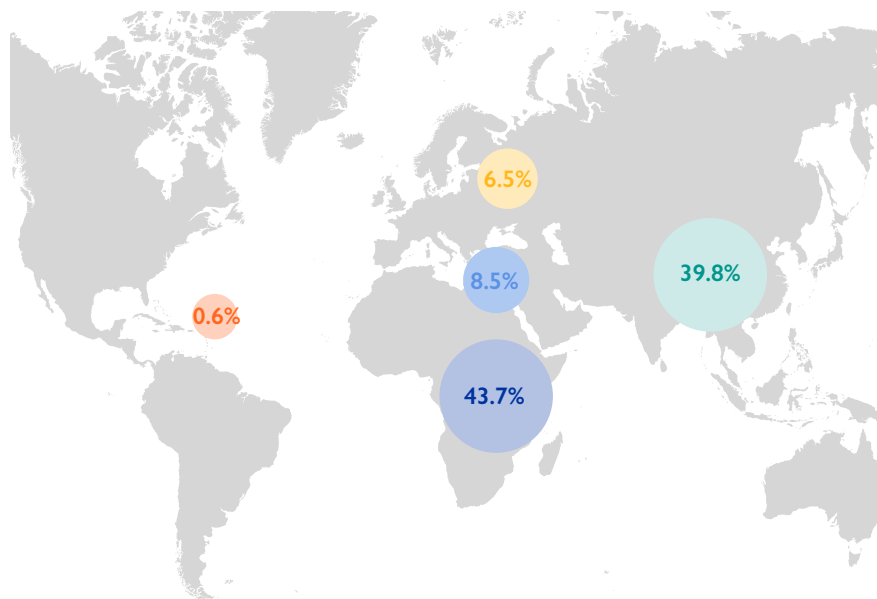
75 locations, including where services were provided by mobile teams, provided pre-departure vaccinations for 75,532 beneficiaries against 22 vaccine-preventable diseases

## 2021 MIGRANT DEMOGRAPHICS

In 2021, IOM provided or assisted the provision of over 480,000 migration health assessments, covering both immigrants (81.8%) and refugees (18.2%) across more than 90 countries. The geographical distribution of migration health assessments is shown below:



Distribution of total caseload by region of health assessment



\* Immigrants include various categories of visa applicants, labour migrants and others moving on a voluntary basis, while refugees fall under the definition of the 1951 UN Refugee Convention. Data is as of 31 May 2022.

## IOM MIGRATION HEALTH INFORMATICS

Migration health informatics has transformed the way migrant health data are generated, reviewed and processed by systematically applying new technologies and computer science to global information service provision in IOM HAP. This includes the development and management of migrant health software, such as:

- IOM's corporate migrant management platform, MiMOSA, used to capture data on an array of pre-migration health activities, including health-related travel requirements, carried out by IOM and IOM-affiliated panel physicians across 85 countries;
- United Kingdom Tuberculosis Global Software (UKTB GS), used for capturing migration health assessment data for visa applicants to the United Kingdom;
- IOM's Laboratory Information Management System (IOM LIMS), used to manage laboratory-related data;
- Systems for facilitating health service provision, such as MedStock for tracking vaccine, medical supplies and drug inventory levels, stock movement and lot details;
- Systems for data validation and quality control used in IOM teleradiology services;
- Interfaces for data exchange with external partners to facilitate application processing;
- An online medical appointment system, [MyMedical](#), to enable online and mobile appointment scheduling and management, as well as provide access to information about IOM's migration health assessments.

Data generated by IOM's PMHAs are employed internally to decrease processing time, efficiently manage resources, conduct

quality control, for programme planning and operational research, and to integrate all pre-migration health activities at the country level. By standardizing and centralizing data collection among country offices, IOM has produced a unique repository of migrant health information, governed by IOM's data protection principles.

Anonymized information can be analysed to support the development of evidence-based policy and practices, to raise awareness of migrant health priorities and to contribute to the evidence base on refugee and migrant health.

IOM's Migration Health Division contributes to global health goals through the provision of health services to migrant populations and through capacity building of national partners and providers. In particular, pre-migration health activities promote progress on the World Health Organization End-TB Strategy and SDG 3 on ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for people of all ages.

For more information on the above activities please contact Migration Health Division at [mhddpt@iom.int](mailto:mhddpt@iom.int)

