

spring 2004

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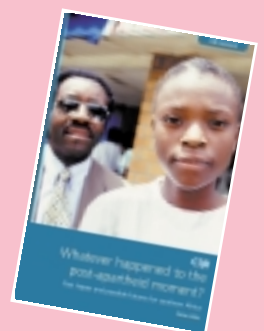
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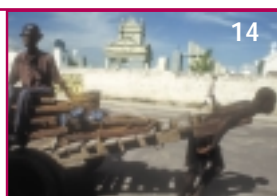
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editorial

Rethinking migration

The story of humanity is the story of migration. Since the beginning of history, the world has been peopled by, and shaped by, migration.

Today, the most powerful country in the world is one created and built by migrants. Many were what we would now call economic migrants.

In a consummate irony, that country – the United States – now seeks to control the global economy by imposing an economic order that suits its own purposes, while simultaneously tightening its controls on those people who seek, through migration, a share of its riches.

Those people are would-be economic migrants – or, in other words, poor people. For people in poor neighbourhoods, poor areas, poor countries, or poor regions, migration seems to offer a route, however fraught, to potentially a better life.

As the articles in this edition of **Interact** show, migration is therefore a key issue for international development. These articles only scratch the surface of this complex issue. But they do show that in today's world, a polarised and simplistic attitude to migration is a recipe for disaster.

The simple truth is that people will take whatever chance they have to make a living and provide for their families; and if there are no options available to them at home, they will continue to look elsewhere.

As this edition of **Interact** suggests, making the modern world work for everyone, including the poor, means rethinking migration.

Editor

alastair@ciir.org

Cover picture: Mexican migrant workers in San Diego, California. Photo © Sandy Huffacker/ZUMA/Corbis.

East Timor is a country of contrasts and contradictions, simultaneously bound by and breaking free from its past, writes **Deirdre Nagel**

Finding a place



Nick Sireau/CIIR

Women and children at Builua village in East Timor.

AS MY PLANE DESCENDED OVER East Timor I had to rub my eyes. I could not believe I would be spending the next year in such a beautiful place, an island surrounded by crystal green waters, mountains protecting its northern coastline and fire-smoke emanating from hidden villages in the hills.

What was I doing here and where had I come to? These were the questions reeling in my mind as the plane landed at Dili airport. The immigration officers, used to the constant influx of overseas development staff, asked the same, set questions: purpose, destination, organisation?

Enduring values

Driving into the city the dry, almost desolate surroundings shocked me. I expected lush green landscape instead of this desert-like terrain. The country is waiting for the rains to come.

Dili, hugging the northern coastline, is dominated by high mountains to the south. At night these come alive with the lights of villages, looking like strange

constellations suspended above the city. In these communities that look down on the capital, the people live as they have for many decades, their way of life revolving around their family, their crops and their customs.

On visits to various villages on the north coast and further inland, I pass long white empty beaches, the solitude broken only by the occasional fisherman or child who seem as much a part of the landscape as the palms that grow there.

Back to basics

Visiting these communities is a stressful and humbling experience. Their present-day normality hides a traumatic and tortuous past; but it also reveals a courageousness that can never be dismissed.

Sitting under a tree sharing lunch with the Ossorua community, I feel a sense of melancholy realising I will never really be a part of this beautiful expression of humanity. The men sit around me and tell tales of their local caves. Each has a story to share, conflicting as they may

be. The women cook and serve the food, while others groom each other's hair. I long to sit with them, but my wistful glances have to suffice. Children form their groups and crawl among the bodies of their parents, laughing at the *malae* (foreigner), as I think I would have done when younger.

They are relaxing, enjoying life – living again, free to take their time, not looking over their shoulders and worrying about curfews. They have time to rest while working together to thatch someone's house, or going to the fields to harvest someone's corn.

Looking ahead

Back in the capital, the ongoing peace and reconciliation processes garner crowds of interested parties: those who knew, those who want to know, and others who have to understand what happened. Outside, life goes on, as the East Timorese themselves did for so long. My neighbour takes flowers from my garden for church and reminds me of the English mass being held on Sunday. Thanking her, I see her smile is laden with uncertainty: about my presence and purpose in her country's future, a country so bitterly fought for.

No water yet: the rains insist on taking their time before they transform the landscape to lush green and drench the waiting crops for another year. Communities sit it out patiently. Languages from all countries of the world, women washing clothes and western music contribute to the cacophony of the night song, as the city slows down to take its rest. I try and learn the local Tetum language to communicate better. A language with no rules and tenses seems strange to a westerner, but for some reason it seems very right for the East Timorese who broke the rules and defied authority for so long.

Deirdre Nagel is a CIIR development worker in East Timor, working as a marketing advisor with community projects. She is from Ireland.



Global development demands that we recognise the positive side of migration, writes **Christine Allen**

An enriching experience

MIGRATION IS A COMPLEX and multifaceted issue, and one that touches the lives of people in all countries of the world.

In most cases, migration is the movement of people in search of greater economic opportunities. Very often this is on a local scale, evidenced by the shift of populations from the rural to urban areas.

Within a country, extreme poverty in the rural areas, lack of access to land and farming, or a natural disaster can generate internal migrations. Natural disasters are becoming more frequent, but their effects are still catastrophic and affect the poorest most disproportionately. This results in increasing poverty and overcrowding in the major cities around the world.

Forgotten people

Migrating overseas is another matter. The free and unrestrained movement of capital has become a new mantra, but the movement of people tends to garner (especially from the rich North) a fortress response.

Employment opportunities provided by multinationals and inward investment are of course important. They provide necessary jobs and income. But global trends indicate that there has been a rise in the working poor: those who are working, but whose incomes have been pushed down, whose jobs are increasingly insecure and unprotected.

Within that context, the migrant workers or 'guest workers' are less likely to have

security of employment and basic rights. They are the forgotten people, used and often abused. The migrant often ends up doing the work that in many countries others do not want to do, for pay that is extremely low.

Even so, migrant workers send money back to their families – called remittances, this money totals an estimated US\$32 billion across the globe. It provides the income that keeps many families alive. This is an area that many of us forget – that migrant workers are people who are seeking, and often forced through poverty, to find ways to feed their children and families.

Human rights

Here in the UK when the debate about immigration and asylum is confused and angry, the sense that migrant workers might have rights is often lost. But as the stranger, the marginalised, the poor, the migrant worker poses challenges for all of us if we say we are concerned about human rights and human dignity.

As an organisation that places international development workers, CIIR has a window on the migrant worker experience. Our development workers leave friends and family to live and work in a new country, often one with very different cultures. Time and again, development workers report back how their assignment has been an enriching experience for them. The sharing of different cultures and experiences, the mutual learning and the insights are all steps on the way towards a genuine international solidarity.

Every development worker faces challenges and difficulties, but the lesson for us is that the relationship is enriching because each side recognises the contribution of the other. Perhaps our global challenge is to find a way in which we can create

When migrant workers are welcomed and respected, we can celebrate that globalisation is making a difference to the poor

international relationships based on that honest exchange, learning and solidarity.

During CIIR's biennial staff conference in March this year, with at one point 28 different nationalities in the room, we experienced for ourselves the joys and frustrations of the international exchange. Perhaps it was no surprise that at the conference, in our discussions about key issues facing the world at the moment, migration emerged as an issue with a resonance in different regions and experiences.

But recognising the gifts and contributions is only the first step. When migrant workers have rights, are welcomed and respected, then perhaps we can truly celebrate that globalisation is making a difference to the poor. While people are abused, exploited and subjugated by the demands of international capital structures, then we still have a long journey ahead of us.

Christine Allen is CIIR's executive director.

Nick Sireau/CIIR



Mohammed Anwar da Costa (left), UNICET general secretary, and Mohammed Igbac Menezes, UNICET president, outside the mosque in Dili.

Muslims promote tolerance in East Timor

EAST TIMORESE MUSLIMS have set up an organisation to work for inter-faith tolerance in the country, writes Nick Sireau.

Since independence, the small Muslim population of East Timor has faced a backlash for the 24 years of brutal occupation by Indonesia. Mohammed Igbac Menezes, the president of the United Islamic Centre of East Timor (Unicet), says: 'Today, people think that because Indonesia is Muslim, the Muslims were responsible. They try to claim that Islam is a killer.'

Unicet started organising the Muslim community into groups in December 2003. In March 2004, it held workshops for the groups to identify the problems they wish

to tackle. A national congress of Muslims is planned to deal with issues at the national level.

In a display of interfaith unity, Unicet invited the Catholic church, the Protestant churches and CIIR to the Eid-ul Fitri celebrations that marked the end of Ramadan. Religious leaders hope that such events will show people that the faiths can get on and thereby increase tolerance.

CIIR's community worker in East Timor, Ildefonso Guterres, says: 'Since independence many of us have worked to show that Muslims, Catholics and Protestants are all the same human beings. God is unlimited and everywhere.'

Spectre of AIDS hangs over disabled people in Zimbabwe

DISABLED PEOPLE and the parents of disabled children in Zimbabwe are at increased risk of HIV infection, according to a small study undertaken by CIIR/ICD and the Zimbabwe Parents of Children with Disabilities Association (ZPCDA).

CIIR/ICD development worker Patrick Nganzi said the study indicated that disabled people are excluded from mainstream HIV and AIDS services, are at risk of infection where they depend on their sexual partners to put on condoms, and may be victims of myths such as the belief that sex with a disabled person counteracts HIV and AIDS.

The study also suggested that parents of disabled children tend to seek other sexual partners as a reaction to the birth of a disabled child. Many fathers also leave the home, putting the remaining female parent at risk of infection as she tries to cope with the situation, said Nganzi.

The study found that the quality of care for disabled children whose parent or parents have AIDS is highly compromised. These families also face double stigmatisation for both AIDS and the child's disability.

CIIR/ICD and ZPCDA held a workshop in February to share the findings of the study and initiate action by organisations working in HIV and AIDS, reproductive health, disability and development work.

- Chipo Phiri, the secretary of the Bulawayo branch of ZPCDA, has died after a long battle with ill health. Colleagues at ZPCDA have saluted her bravery and her contribution since 1998 to the cause of disabled people's rights. 'She was a very helpful, humble, cheerful and cooperative member of ZPCDA and she will be greatly missed,' they wrote.

Mass for Archbishop Hurley

CIIR will be holding a mass to celebrate the life of Archbishop Denis Hurley, who died in February of this year. Archbishop Hurley was a close friend and colleague of CIIR for more than 20 years. The stand that he took against apartheid and pursued with fortitude for 50 years came from his deep love of the South African people. The mass will be celebrated by Canon Pat Davies, who worked in South Africa and knew Denis.

The mass will be held on Saturday 8 May at 3pm, at the Church of Our Lady of the Assumption and St Gregory in Warwick Street, London W1, close to Piccadilly Circus. All are welcome. If you would like to come, please contact Clare Smedley at CIIR (email clares@ciir.org or phone 020 7288 8609).

Mindanao holds peace week

THE STRIFE-TORN CITY OF Zamboanga in Mindanao in the Philippines celebrated a Peace Week in December last year. Organisations and community groups, including the Inter-Religious Solidarity for Peace group, came together in a variety of activities culminating in a parade of 15,000 people through the city streets.

Father Angel Calvo, president of Peace Advocates Zamboanga, one of the prime movers behind the week's events, said the week aimed 'to celebrate our cultural diversity, the solidarity of the poor and the faith and hope of the youth'.

Resistance grows to GMOs

RESISTANCE to genetically modified rice known as 'golden rice' is growing among farmers in the Philippines, according to Elizabeth Cruzada, national coordinator for Masipag, an organisation that works with small farmers, *writes Nick Sireau*.

Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) have been aggressively promoted in the Philippines by multinational corporations. This year's Masipag general assembly will include a mock trial of Monsanto, seen as a key player in the GM battle in the Philippines.

Masipag is also concerned by the consequences of GMOs for health. Last July, an indigenous Filipino community known as the B'laan was hit by a major outbreak of sickness in which around 100 people became seriously ill. Masipag took blood samples from the sick, which were then tested by the Gene Ecology Institute of Norway.

The results were deeply worrying. The blood samples had high levels of antibodies linked to



Nick Sireau/CIIR

A Masipag farmer gestures towards his fields of rice.

the modified genes in the GM corn. This finding contradicted the constant assurances of the GM lobby that there was no proven health risk from GM.

Now Masipag is trying to set up a gene ecology institute in the Philippines to study in more detail the impact of GM on people's

health and the environment. It is a crucial issue, as Cruzada says: 'Rice is a political commodity. People here will riot if they don't have enough rice. The government is giving away our food sovereignty without even being aware of its implications. For the government, only the economy counts.'

Peruvian town says 'no' to gold mine

THE SMALL FRUIT-GROWING TOWN of Tambogrande, Peru, won a major victory recently in its four-year struggle to keep foreign mining interests out of its lush, subtropical valley, *writes Stephanie Boyd*. This past December the Peruvian government cancelled a Canadian mining company's option to build an open-pit mine under the town's main streets.

Tambograndinos have waged a remarkable campaign against the powerful transnational mining industry, forging new methods of community participation and non-violent resistance.

In June 2002, the town held the world's first referendum on mining. Voter turnout exceeded 70 per cent, 98 per cent of whom said they were against allowing

mining activity in their community.

In November 2003, government hearings on the mine prompted a general strike. Thousands of Tambograndinos and their supporters marched to the state capital to form a human chain around the site of the hearings. Holding mangos and limes above their exuberant faces the crowd sang 'Agriculture Yes! Mining No!'

The hearings were cancelled because of the protests – a testimony to the power of non-violence. A month later, the Peruvian government terminated the mining company's concession. Financial analysts say the company was not able to attract enough investment because of the community's vocal, highly

publicised opposition to mining.

But Tambogrande's mayor Francisco Ojeda says the battle is far from over. The company has vowed to appeal the decision and even if they lose, the government could award the concession to another bidder. Moreover, there are dozens of other mining concessions throughout the fragile tropical valley where Tambogrande is located, awaiting exploration. Ojeda says he and other community leaders will not rest until the entire district of Tambogrande is declared a protected agricultural zone.

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Join the No Dirty Gold campaign launched by Earthworks (Mineral Policy Center) and Oxfam America: visit www.nodirtygold.org

Find out more about Tambogrande at www.tambogrande.org.pe (Spanish)

Worlds apart

The issue of migration will divide North and South until the inequalities that lead people to seek a better life elsewhere are tackled, write **Bridget Wooding** and **Richard Moseley-Williams**

OUR HOME on the northern fringes of Santo Domingo, the capital of the Dominican Republic, is close to the community of Fundación, a jumble of poor and lower middle class dwellings squeezed together in the small space available. Of the thousand or so inhabitants of Fundación, probably 80 per cent migrated here from the countryside in search of work. There are also a number of Haitians, mostly young men who work as labourers on building sites and in the service sector. Early in the morning as people pass our house on their way to work you hear conversation in Kreyol as well as Spanish.

Migration of workers (a migrant worker is defined by the United Nations as a person working for more than 12 months in a state where she/he is not a national) is of course much older than the invention of states and nations.

There is no better example of the significance of the international movement of people than the Caribbean. The region is a microcosm of the world's ethnic diversity.

Over five centuries it was settled by people from Africa (two million slaves were shipped to the Antilles until the final abolition of slavery in Cuba in 1880), Europe, Asia, China, and the Middle East. Since the 1950s poor economic performance and the pressure of population growth set the pattern for the out-migration of today, in which people move from the poorer parts of the

Caribbean to the more wealthy countries, and from the region to the United States, Canada and Europe.

Controlling migration

The UN estimate is that in 2000 there were 175 million migrants in a global population of 6.3 billion. The number of migrants is expected to increase substantially in the coming years.

Two broad strategies are followed by receiving countries to control migrant entry. One is through immigration laws, which are becoming more restrictive as the flow of migrants threatens to become a flood. Added to these are the security measures introduced after 11 September 2001.

The trouble with this approach is that it is not very successful. In the Dominican Republic, as in scores of other countries, the opportunity of going to the US or Europe, legally or otherwise, is a topic of relaxed everyday conversation. Those involved are not only the poor but also middle class men and women (the rich can apply for visas).

It is primarily a question of different world views. In the frame of reference of people south of the divide, migration is a way of getting on in the world, as their family members and compatriots who live in the North have done. Theirs is a global view. The Dominicans who



live in the US think of themselves as both Dominican and US residents. A great many have joint nationality; large numbers travel to and fro.

No shame is attached to evading immigration laws in a foreign country. Potential migrants know (or think they know) of friends and relatives who have taken their chances successfully and, after a few clandestine years, have regularised their status. Their decisions to depart are supported, morally and financially, by their families. For the latter, the migration of a son or daughter is a matter of pride and love, as well as an investment that will be amply repaid by the dollar remittances which will be sent back home.

North of the border the world view is exactly the opposite. It is parochial rather than global. 'Guest workers' are welcomed for mercenary reasons only. Unwanted potential migrants are seen as aliens, inherently threatening 'others', and potential law breakers.

Promoting development

The second strategy Northern countries have adopted to reduce migration is to promote development in the migrants' home countries. Yet this approach too has had little success. The freeing of controls on the movement of capital, while creating wealth for the few in the South, has done little to reduce inequality and the poverty of the many. The most telling example is Latin America which, before the current phase of globalisation, was the region of the world where the greatest inequalities were found. Today it is even more unequal.

Recognition of the links between wealth creation and poverty reduction in highly unequal societies has now led to national anti-poverty programmes in developing countries, backed by international financial institutions. These follow a common pattern: government multi-sector policies aimed at reducing the indices of

poverty (covering employment, income, education, health and sanitation, housing, the position of women, and so on) by 2015.

Even if (a big 'if') some of these policies succeed, the achievement will be modest compared with the size of the problem. The year 2015 is a long way off for poor families whose time frame is the daily search for subsistence. In the meantime out-migration will go on rising. Free movement of capital will continue to promote the movement of labour.

So what is the alternative? There are two options: a fundamental reform of the rules of global investment and trade to give priority to job creation for low income women and men in the South; or for the North to substantially ease controls on the international flow of labour until there is a more manageable balance between international labour supply, demand, and national population policies.

Unfortunately, these approaches are unlikely to be politically acceptable in the foreseeable future. For this to come about, we need a better understanding of the connections between migration and development.

The migration chain

One example is the flow of migrants between Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and the United States. Haiti, one of the poorest countries in the world, exports large numbers of migrants across the poorly guarded border to the Dominican Republic, which is a middle-income country. The Haitian migrant labourers mostly work in jobs which Dominicans do not want to fill. In turn, the Dominican Republic exports large numbers of Dominicans who seek work in the US.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of this migration chain? For Haiti, out-migration reduces the country's pressing unemployment crisis. The Dominican Republic benefits from the wealth which Haitian immigrants create. The US profits because its booming economy needs labour while its population grows older.

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The International Organisation for Migration website offers a wide range of information on migration issues: www.iom.int

In addition there is the redistribution effect of remittances. The Dominican Republic receives US\$2 billion dollars annually which Dominicans abroad send home for their families. Remittances to Haiti total about half this amount – but are the country's largest source of foreign exchange. These intra-family remittances reach a large number of poor families directly.

This example suggests that policy-makers need to take a more holistic and international view of the relationship between migration, development, and human rights. Just as national governments are urged to adopt a multi-sectoral approach to poverty reduction, so should governments in the US and Europe understand better the trade-

Unwanted potential migrants are seen as aliens, inherently threatening 'others', and potential law breakers

off between immigration policies and labour needs at home, and poverty reduction and human rights protection in the countries and regions where migrants come from.

For, given the choice, there is no doubt where our neighbours in Fundación, and their relatives who have migrated, would prefer to live if there were better jobs and prospects: in their own country, rather than in the 'cold north'. In the meantime, they will wait and see where their best interests lie.

Bridget Wooding and Richard Moseley-Williams are British development consultants based in the Dominican Republic. They are the authors of Needed but unwanted: Haitian immigrants and their descendants in the Dominican Republic published in April 2004 by CIIR (from which the picture opposite is also taken).

A woman of Haitian origin outside her home in the Dominican Republic.



Isabelle Robles

Ostentatious wealth: a returning migrant's house on a hillside in Ecuador.

without a visa could not travel to Europe. And I remember the disappointed faces of the Ecuadorians, one saying to another, with sad irony: 'Ring your Mum so she can prepare the *mote* [a maize dish, typical of the Cuenca region] for us.'

That's the way it is. The US and Europe control their borders, limiting the freedom of Latin Americans to move about; but they oblige those same Latin American countries to open their borders to products from outside, from Europe and the US, without any restriction.

It's called 'liberalisation'

It would seem that products now enjoy more freedom than persons. They call it 'liberalisation'. It leads to the break-up of agriculture and local industry in Ecuador, and drives thousands of Ecuadorians to leave their country in search of better work opportunities.

Meanwhile, the remittances of the migrants support the economy. For a time, these remittances created local jobs for the building of the famous 'migrants' houses'. But now Peruvian migrants are arriving who charge less for a day's work. They accept US\$3 or \$4 for a day, while the Ecuadorian asks \$8.

Before long, the Peruvians are being blamed for Ecuador's economic difficulties. People say they take work away from Ecuadorians. They say the delinquents all have Peruvian accents.

Yet 'those dangerous Peruvians' keep on coming, stacked up in lorries from Peru, to earn a few dollars more than they can in their country, eating badly and sleeping piled up to save as much as possible. The Ecuadorians are already asking that the Peruvians be denied access to Ecuador. An old story. They call it 'liberalisation'.

Isabelle Robles is a CIIR/ICD development worker with the Mazan Ecological Foundation, Cuenca, Ecuador. Isabelle is from France.

Risky business

Something is wrong with a world where products enjoy more freedom than persons, writes **Isabelle Robles**

COFFEE BREAK in the offices of the Mazan Foundation where I work as a development worker. In the newspaper we read of a small boat which failed in its attempt to reach the United States coast and was found drifting near the Costa Rican beaches. The article lists the names of all 101 Ecuadorians who were rescued and sent back to Ecuador. The families can be reassured.

Since the 1980s it is estimated that about one million Ecuadorians, or eight per cent of the population, have left to work in the US and Spain, most of them without documents. In order to pay for an illegal journey the families get into debts of over US\$10,000, mortgaging houses and land. They hope to repay the debt by working overseas for a year.

The money pays for guides for the journey to the US, by land and sea, evading the controls. The journey can last several months, under precarious conditions. Often a husband and wife will travel, leaving their children with the grandparents or neighbours. If they reach their destination, they face difficult working and living conditions.

A calculated risk

What leads people to risk their lives on these uncertain travels, separated from their children for years? The reasons criss-cross, add up, multiply... One of the more visible is economic: the lack of work opportunities in Ecuador, the unprofitable nature of farming because of low prices, the impossibility of accumulating money, and the attraction of being able to save in two years what in Ecuador would take a lifetime.

In the US an hour of work pays about US\$8, which is a day's work in Ecuador. Migrants return showing off luxurious houses, new cars, and electrical household gadgets. Others who want to live in the same way feel that migration is their only chance to change their status.

So, the same year that I came to live here, 125,000 Ecuadorians left to look for work in Spain or the US. And when I went on holiday this year to visit my family, I again found myself going the other way to Ecuadorians: while I was in transit in Bogotá on my way to France, six Ecuadorians were being sent back to Ecuador.

I remember the airline official explaining that any Latin American

Into the unknown

Taher Ali Qassim describes how migrations between Yemen, Sweden and England have influenced his education, career, social life and cultural identity

I WAS BORN in a poor village north of Taiz, now the second city in size and population in Yemen. As I grew up, I came to know every part of our local mountain. The top of the mountain was my dream part. Every time I reached the cliff, I would look beyond the range of the mountains as far as I could. Then I would dream. I would tell myself that I would love to discover what was beyond, in the far distance. What is the sea? What is Aden?

One day a letter arrived from my brother in Aden, inviting me to go and live with him and his wife. I nearly fainted when I heard the news. But I had to suppress my excitement for fear of my mother not allowing me to leave the village.

The 22 km journey to Taiz took the whole morning because of the bad road. Every time the car stopped I imagined that someone would come from my village to tell me to go back. We reached Aden after three days. Nowadays, the journey would take two and a half hours.

About a year after my arrival, I enrolled in primary school. I was 11 years old. Later, when I was older, I trained as a nurse.

Migration to Sweden

Back in Taiz, I met and married a woman from Sweden. We decided to move there. My biggest anxiety was about the cold weather. I could not comprehend how people could live and function normally: in my mind, it would be like living in a refrigerator.

At Charles De Gaulle airport in Paris, the immigration officer pushed aside my passport. He would speak neither to my wife nor myself. He just looked at me and turned away. We had to go and find a stewardess to mediate. It worked but I realised how worthless my passport was.

From Stockholm, we travelled by train to Smalland in the south of Sweden. Almost all of my wife's family came to the station to meet us. It was a fantastic feeling. They were all very friendly.

Towards the end of the 1970s more people came to Sweden from different countries. Gradually the phrase *utlaning* (foreigner) was emerging negatively. It was getting uncomfortable being a 'foreigner'. I was never attacked or directly insulted but somehow felt the tension.

I gained a lot being in Sweden. A short marriage, my son, my qualifications, and I became a Swedish citizen. Yet I was looking for something else, something more challenging. I began to learn more about Yemen where I was born. I learnt about what I liked and disliked. Then at the beginning of the 1980s I moved back to Yemen. I felt like I was discovering my self.

Migration to England

My work in health education and public health brought me into contact with the British Organisation for Community Development. At the time, I had strong reservations about the British people as a whole. I remembered



A hard road to travel: men on a truck in rural Yemen.

British soldiers mistreating Yemenis in Aden in the 1960s. Yet the BOCD turned my attitudes about the British upside down.

I also met my present wife who was one of their workers, changing the course of my life one more time. We moved to Britain to study, then went back to Yemen where we worked for almost 10 years. We then decided to go back to live in Britain. Liverpool appealed to us because of its cosmopolitan nature. It has people from all over the world including Yemenis and Irish.

There are approximately 9,000 Yemeni people in Liverpool. The majority of them are illiterate. Most of them work in newsagent corner shops. Many have lived here for decades. Yet they, as citizens of this country, can neither communicate in English nor find out about their rights and responsibilities. This is where I found something meaningful to do: change, influence, and make a difference.

Taher Ali Qassim is a public health manager for the Central Liverpool Primary Care Trust.

Turning migration inside out

Internal migration from other parts of Indonesia means indigenous Papuans face marginalisation in their own land, writes **Neles Tebay**

WHEN THE TERRITORY of Papua was under Dutch rule, the population was almost exclusively Papuan, made up of some 252 ethnic groups. Since Indonesia took over the territory in 1963, however, the composition of the population has altered due to the influx of Indonesian migrants.

The main reason has been the government-sponsored programme of *transmigrasi* (transmigration). According to the regional office of the Department of Transmigration in Papua (formerly known as Irian Jaya), from 1964 to 1999 nearly 250,000 households – or over 500,000 people – have been settled in Papua, living in more than 200 settlements or villages built by the government. Slowly but surely these transmigration sites have developed into towns with ballooning populations.

The majority of the transmigrated people originate from the island of Java and are Muslims. Although the government denies it, Papuans suspect the transmigration programme to be a thinly veiled policy of ‘Javanisation’ of the territory of Papua.

Other newcomers have been ‘spontaneous migrants’ who have settled in all major towns in Papua. Two-thirds of the population of major towns are now Indonesians who were not born in Papua.

The influx of migrants has already altered Papua’s demography.

In 1961, the population of 700,000 was predominantly Papuan. In 2001, of the 2.2 million people in Papua, there were approximately 800,000 migrants and 1.4 million indigenous Papuans. If this trend continues, within a few years the Papuans, who are a minority in Indonesia, will also be a minority in their own land.

Changing places

The influx of migrants has effectively marginalised indigenous Papuans. Migrants play a dominant role in society, excelling in trade, services, construction and contracting in virtually all major towns. Jobs in government offices are taken by migrants and their descendants.

Government development activities have also been concentrated in towns, which are far more developed than rural areas. Consequently, migrants have disproportionately benefited from these government programmes, while the majority of the Papuans who live in isolated and remote villages are ignored.

Papuans see the migrants getting rich easily and quickly. People say: ‘They only come for the money,’ or ‘They only come to find and steal our natural resources, not to educate the Papuan people.’ The situation inevitably fosters envy and tension among local communities.

In 2001, the provincial

government of Papua, worried about the impact of transmigration, introduced a programme of development for villages occupied by Papuans in rural areas. In the same year, the central Indonesian government in Jakarta, in its law on special autonomy for Papua, agreed to limit the influx of spontaneous migrants to only those who are experts and have completed studies at high school or university level. However, to date the Indonesian government has failed to implement the law on special autonomy.

Breaking point

In the future, many more migrants will continue to go to Papua, to fill government jobs or work for private companies investing in the territory – such as BP’s gas project in Bintuni Bay in partnership with the state-owned Indonesian company Pertamina.

Qualified and skilled people are needed for these jobs – and indigenous Papuans cannot fill all the jobs. Indonesians are free to move to and live in any part of Indonesian territory. People will go where the jobs and the opportunities are, and consequently many more internal migrants will go and settle in Papua.

The influx of migrants is inevitable but it is also, inevitably, altering Papua’s demography. Indigenous Papuans are already marginalised socially, culturally and economically. Many of them feel it is no exaggeration to say that sooner or later, if these trends continue, ethnic Papuans will ultimately vanish from the surface of the earth.

Papuans are therefore calling on the international community to put pressure on the Indonesian government to implement its own law on autonomy for Papua. The Indonesian government must also be urged to engage in peaceful and constructive dialogue with Papuans to identify the root causes of the problems and to determine peaceful solutions – before it is too late.

Neles Tebay is a Papuan priest from the Diocese of Jayapura in Papua. He is studying at the Pontifical Urban University in Rome.

This year, a delegation of Indonesian and East Timorese human rights activists will once more be arriving in Geneva to lobby the United Nations Commission on Human Rights to deal with the impunity enjoyed by the Indonesian army. It will be a harder job this year.

In previous years, human rights violations in East Timor have been dealt with under the agenda item titled 'gross violation of human rights'. Last year, activists were expecting the commission to express its strong disapproval of the failure of Indonesia to bring human rights violators to account. Instead it only expressed 'disappointment', and duly moved the opportunity to discuss these issues further down the agenda, to item 19, which relates to 'technical cooperation' on human rights issues.

The context of 'war against terror' now has the same effect that the cold war did. Indonesia's size and economic and political importance, as well as its strong alliances, mean that the US and its allies are desperate to keep Indonesia onside against Islamic terrorism, particularly in the wake of the bomb attacks which have taken place in Indonesia. There have to be trade offs – and it looks for the foreseeable future as if justice for victims of Indonesian military crimes against humanity is one of them.

Justice in the balance

The international community is letting Indonesia off the hook over violations of human rights in East Timor, warns **Catherine Scott**

Call for action

The East Timorese Alliance for Justice, to which the human rights advocates visiting Geneva belong, is a coalition of local and international NGOs, churches, students and victims of human rights violations. They are calling for more commitment from the international community to ensure that justice is achieved. Their specific demands are:

- The setting up of an international criminal tribunal on East Timor, backed by the political will to compel Indonesia's cooperation – which until now has been absent as far as the serious crimes unit and special panels operating with UN assistance in East Timor are concerned.
- Until such time as the tribunal is set up, the serious crimes unit and

special panels must be strengthened and supported so that they are able to continue with their backlog of cases.

The alliance is dissatisfied with the progress of the serious crimes unit to date, as it has mainly prosecuted low-level perpetrators, while the masterminds of the worst violations are still safe in Indonesia. The alliance argues that East Timorese judges can handle these lower-level cases.

Frustration mounts

Above all, members of the alliance are frustrated that the status quo provides an excuse for the international community to avoid meaningful action, and for East Timor's government to avoid the issue of justice so that it does not sour its fragile but growing relationship with the Indonesian government.

CIIR and a network of international church and secular organisations and NGOs have joined forces with the activists and continue to press governments internationally for progress on justice. This is important because there are strong implications for troubled hot-spots in other parts of Indonesia, where violations are still taking place, even at the hands of some of the same military perpetrators as those who were operating in East Timor during 1999.

Indeed, General Wiranto, the former defence minister with command responsibility for the military in 1999, is a current contender for the Indonesian presidency. Elections are due in May.

Should he be elected, it would be another message that Indonesia is washing its hands of crimes committed by the military in East Timor.

Catherine Scott is CIIR's programme manager for Asia.

Action on East Timor

CIIR members and supporters are encouraged to write to MPs and government ministers urging:

- a thorough UN Security Council review of progress on justice in relation to East Timor
- strengthening and financing of the serious crimes unit so that it can complete its work regardless of how long it takes.

An international criminal tribunal should still be considered for the most serious cases, so that a much stronger signal is given that impunity for military perpetrators of crimes against humanity will no longer be tolerated by the international community.

Nick Sireau/CIIR



A poster displayed on an office wall in East Timor.



Leah Gordon

Daily grind: an image from the 'Haiti: behind the headlines' photo exhibition held by CIIR in London in April.

programmes. New teachers and doctors were trained and public housing built.

However, in recent years Aristide grew distant from the majority of his supporters. Adopting an increasingly autocratic style, he relied for support on armed gangs known as *chimères*, whose violence and thuggery against perceived opponents was unchallenged by the weak and corrupt judicial system and by Aristide himself.

Meanwhile, at the economic level structural adjustment measures imposed upon Haiti by the international financial institutions had a disastrous impact on the lives of poor Haitians as well as the small middle class.

Unless the new government takes steps to address the needs of the poor and truly include them in building a peaceful and democratic country then Haiti is doomed to repeat its own history. In the present climate of insecurity and widespread violence, CIIR has called on the UN to ensure that the new multinational peace-keeping force addresses the issue of arms decommissioning. An adequately trained, professional police force must be created, and questions of equitable economic development must be addressed.

'Who will pay the cost? Ordinary people have no possibilities.'

CIIR's partner organisation the Association of Small Farmers of Vallue recently wrote to CIIR commenting: 'What has happened is going to have serious consequences for the lives of Haitians and the development of the country for years to come. We will need a great deal of money in order to replace the losses and enable the country to function. Who will pay the cost? Ordinary people have no possibilities.'

Anne Street is CIIR's advocacy coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Moment of truth

Haiti faces an uncertain future following the forced departure of president Aristide, writes **Anne Street**

EVEN AS HAITI CELEBRATED the 200th anniversary of its founding as the world's first independent black state, on 1 January 2004, the storm clouds of violence and rebellion were gathering on the horizon.

By the end of February, president Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the country's first democratically-elected president, had been overthrown by an alliance of ex-paramilitary and ex-police officers who were responsible for human rights abuses during the military regime of the early 1990s. The rebel group was supported by the political opposition parties of the Convergence Democratique and business-led civil society organisations under the umbrella of the Group of 184.

Aristide's departure coincided with the arrival of US forces, sent to help restore order in the chaos of looting and violence that followed his departure. Although for many of the business-led interests in Haiti the new government looks likely to represent their interests, how the poor will be served is the key question.

What does the future hold?

A former CIIR/ICD development worker now living in Port-au-Prince told CIIR: 'If

the present cast of players is anything to go by we're heading back to the "bad old days" once again. Everyone's talking about democracy, and freedom and economic progress, and peace and security, but actions speak louder than words.

'We've already seen the newly-appointed prime minister happily sharing the stage with the convicted criminals of the "rebel" army. We've heard of bodies – with their hands tied and plastic bags over their heads – washing up on a daily basis on the seashore. At night we hear gun-fire.'

Elections are likely to be held, but the masses of ordinary Haitian people will see little benefit. As the former CIIR/ICD development worker said, 'There'll probably be lots of candidates... But who's going to vote for them? Not the masses. What's the point?'

Where it went wrong

Aristide, a former priest from a poor district of the capital, was elected on a pro-poor agenda. During his first term of office he did much to implement reforms which favoured the mass of the Haitian people. He built new schools, clinics and hospitals, and implemented feeding programmes and literacy

IT'S ANOTHER SCORCHING HOT DAY in Manila, the capital of the Philippines, as we climb out of the cab into Barangay Escopa 3, a crumbling shantytown area located near and under an overpass. We step over the rubbish as we make our way through the narrow streets, between overhanging huts crammed together and made of bits of wood, cardboard, cement and corrugated iron.

We duck into the home of Jomar Modesto, a young man who chairs the local community organisation, Aliansa (Alliance).

I'm accompanied by Marie Chris Cabreros, youth programme coordinator of the Centre for Popular Empowerment (CPE), and Debbie Cabanag, the community outreach worker of the Alliance of United Youth Force.

All three – Jomar, Marie and Debbie – are from organisations working for social justice and the political empowerment of young people. All three are in their early twenties and are motivated by a burning desire to see young people take their rightful place in Filipino society.

The right to vote

A key area where young people need to be mobilised is in the shantytowns: the sprawling yet packed districts where tens of thousands of the urban poor live in degrading conditions and where few children and youth have an education.

Politicians have little interest in these areas, except at election time. Then they come in droves, making promises and agreeing to everything people ask for, before disappearing until the next elections. As Marie says: 'It's a democracy for the few.'

Politicians come, making promises and agreeing to everything before disappearing until the next elections.

Marie believes that young people's votes can make an important difference in the upcoming national elections. As she explains, young people are still fresh and new to the system, and enough are revolted by the current state of affairs to want to change it.

Yet there is one big hurdle: getting them registered to vote. At the last election in 2001, five million young people over 18 could not vote because they missed the registration deadline.

Another world

Young people are fighting back against the unjust systems that make life in the shantytowns of Manila so hard, writes **Nick Sireau**



Jomar Modesto (in white t-shirt) talks to a family in Barangay Escopa 3.

There were no government campaigns to inform people of this, leaving many disenfranchised.

CPE and its partners are now running the First Time Voters' Project, which tells young people how to register and teaches them about the political system. It is supported by CIIR partner the South East Asia Committee on Advocacy (SEACA).

The cost of living

Vital areas of concern for young people are utilities, education and health. As we walk through the shantytown, we come across a group of children climbing on the frame of a water tank. Marie points out that the tank is the only supply of water for the community of 5,000 families living in the area.

The Philippines water system was privatised recently, she adds. Water used to cost 0.20 pesos per gallon. Since privatisation it costs 2 pesos per gallon – a 1,000 per cent increase. Obviously, few locals can now afford much water.

Electricity has also been privatised, and the local area now suffers from frequent power cuts.

The education system is no better. The state schools and universities are

full, and private education is expensive.

Access to health care is difficult. As we climb up the broken steps of the shantytown, we come across Loreta, a 73-year-old woman lying on a mat outside a collapsed cement hut. She has serious asthma and can barely move.

Further along, my hosts point out a young man also lying on a mat. He cannot get up: he's too sick. He spends his days looking at the world go by as his health deteriorates.

How can they get help? Even the state hospitals charge – 100 pesos (US\$2) an hour – next to nothing by Western standards, but several days' work for a large portion of the Filipino population.

That evening, Marie and Debbie accompany me back to my hotel – a modest place, but a rich man's dwelling compared to shantytown Barangay Escopa 3. I shake their hands – embarrassed, confused, inwardly apologetic. Next day, I fly home via Hong Kong, one of the world's most luxurious airports, to what seems like another world.

Nick Sireau is CIIR's communications manager.

Winning respect

People of Haitian origin living in the Dominican Republic face an uphill battle to win their rights, reports **Finola Robinson**

IVRANCE MARTINE, 27, was born in Haiti but has lived in the Dominican Republic most of her life. However, like most children of Haitian parents, she has struggled to secure even the most basic rights that other Dominicans take for granted.

After marrying a Dominican citizen, Ivrance was eventually granted a *cédula* – an identity card used as proof of residency in the country – in December last year. But her brother José Miguel, 11, and her two sisters, Elimene, 16, and Francia, 14, are still waiting for their papers – even though they were born in the Dominican Republic and, as such, are legally entitled to Dominican citizenship.

'The ridiculous thing is I have lived in the Dominican Republic all my life but it was as if I just didn't exist,' Ivrance says. 'We have struggled with this in my family for so long now that my sisters

and brother are very tired of it all. Elimene has lost all hope of ever getting her papers.'

Stand up for your rights

Many people of Haitian origin or descent living in the Dominican Republic find it easier to exist without their papers than to spend years fighting for them through the courts. But it is impossible to continue in education beyond a certain point without the *cédula* and this is what gave Ivrance the motivation to keep going.

A bright, funny and spirited woman, she used to work as a teacher in a community school set up by CIIR/ICD partner Oné Respe, an organisation working to eradicate social prejudice and help poorer communities improve their quality of life. She has high hopes for the future and now works in Oné Respe's health team, focusing on health

and reproductive issues with immigrants and women's groups.

As well as the battle to obtain her papers, Ivrance has also endured racist abuse on a daily basis, but she refuses to feel downtrodden. 'Racism is terrible here because it is there in every instant: when you walk along the street and in just about every situation you might find yourself in. I do find it hard but believe it has probably made me stronger as a person.'

'In the same way, the struggle for my identity card has affected me in many ways. You realise that so many people here have to fight for their rights but it gives you hope that things can change because there are organisations like Oné Respe working for human rights.'

'Honour and respect'

Oné Respe, which means 'honour and respect' in Kreyol, was set up in 1990 to tackle discrimination and promote human rights in poorer communities.

'It was as if it had happened to them, not just to me'

Oné Respe now has 46 paid staff, including the schoolteachers and a 10-strong health team. CIIR development worker Susie Daniel joined the group in November 2003. She works with the health team and is also helping Oné Respe develop their strategic plans on HIV and AIDS.

Susie says: 'Every person who is HIV-positive faces discrimination: 93 per cent of the people we spoke to [in a survey] said they had been victims of discrimination in their own communities – 79 per cent from medical personnel and 50 per cent from their own families. All but one had contracted HIV through sex. For the majority, their only form of support is through Oné Respe.'

For these people and many others facing discrimination, Oné Respe has been a continuing source of support. As Ivrance says: 'I have never felt alone. That support has been so important. It makes you feel alive.'

'When I went in December to get my papers, everybody at Oné Respe was so excited: it was as if it had happened to them, not just to me.'

Finola Robinson is CIIR's press and information officer.



Ivrance Martine: 'so many people here have to fight for their rights'.

History

East Timor emerged into the 21st century having endured 400 years of colonial rule, followed by nearly a quarter of a century of brutally repressive Indonesian occupation, and finally a brief but devastating period of acute violence. Having chosen independence, the people of this tiny country now face the multiple tasks of building a political, social and commercial infrastructure from the ashes of conflict.

Timor, which lies 482 km north of Darwin, Australia, was settled by Malay, Melanesian and Polynesian peoples before the arrival of Dutch and Portuguese settlers in the 16th century.

The nationalist liberation movement, Fretilin, came to power after Portugal's withdrawal in 1975. In December 1975, worried by the proximity of an independent state with radical policies, Indonesia launched a full-scale invasion of East Timor with the knowledge of the United States and the encouragement of Australia. The United Nations always regarded the annexation as illegal.

Independence

In 2000, following the fall of president Suharto, president Jusuf Habibie bowed to international pressure and traded East Timor for much-needed support from the International Monetary Fund. The people of East Timor were given the opportunity to vote on their own future.

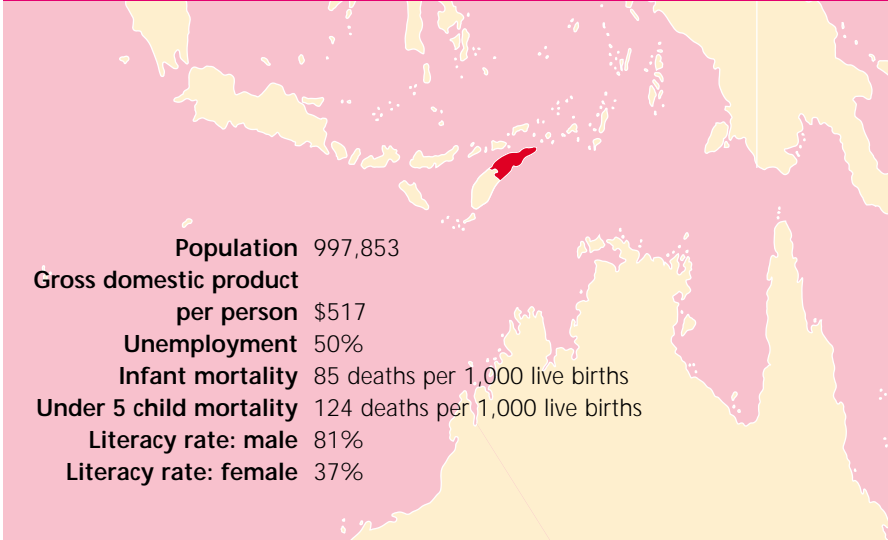
Braving violent intimidation by Indonesian militia, more than 90 per cent of eligible East Timorese voters turned out, and nearly 80 per cent of them opted for independence. As UN personnel fled, the Indonesian military and militias drove 300,000 people over the border into West Timor, while killing, raping and laying waste to East Timor's long-neglected infrastructure.

Following an intervention by an armed UN force in September 1999, East Timor came under the administration of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). UNTAET inherited a country with a largely unemployed population and an economy in ruins.

Xanana Gusmao, the 'Asian Mandela' who spent most of the 1990s in jail in Indonesia for his part in the armed resistance, was chosen by an overwhelming majority in presidential elections in April 2002 to be the country's first head of state.

country profile: East Timor

Facts and Figures



Population	997,853
Gross domestic product per person	\$517
Unemployment	50%
Infant mortality	85 deaths per 1,000 live births
Under 5 child mortality	124 deaths per 1,000 live births
Literacy rate: male	81%
Literacy rate: female	37%



Nick Sireau/CIIR

Thinking ahead: youths at a roadside project in Aileu village.

CIIR's work in East Timor

CIIR has had an advocacy programme for East Timor since 1976, and has been developing a skill-share programme since 2002.

Currently CIIR has development workers working with the REDE women's network and with community-based enterprises in several East Timorese villages.

CIIR's international advocacy on East

Timor focuses on supporting the search for reconciliation with justice. Within the country, the creation of a strong civil society is a major challenge. CIIR works to support and strengthen women's organisations. This includes building their advocacy skills to enable them to seek the changes they need to ensure women's broader participation in civil society, in administrative structures, and in political life.



Ivete d'Oliveira (left) meeting the head of the Office for the Promotion of Equality, Maria Domingas Fernandes.

Looking for justice

Ivete d'Oliveira is playing a key role in promoting women's rights in East Timor, reports **Nick Sireau**

WHEN IVETE D'OLIVEIRA returned to East Timor in 1997, she was well aware of the Indonesian government's determination to continue its illegal occupation of East Timor. In her four years as a student in Indonesia, she had worked with the clandestine student movement campaigning for East Timor's independence. The Indonesian government sent spies to disrupt the student movement and regularly tried to repress it.

But as an independence activist in East Timor, Ivete experienced the repression in a much more personal way. Her father was a district official – an important man, yet one who tried to remain out of politics. Her uncles, however, were strongly pro-Indonesia, and did not appreciate Ivete's pro-independence actions.

'I used to drive around in an official car driven by a friend. He was the son of a governor and the car had a red plate, which meant the military checkpoints could not stop it,' says Ivete. 'We would use the car to bring help to the resistance movement.'

As the army eventually found out

about her insurgent activities, they sent a squad to her home to find her. 'They came with a photo of me and asked my parents where I was. My parents said they did not know me. The soldiers said that if they found me they would rape me and cut me into pieces.'

So she went into hiding in the jungle, as did many others from the resistance movement. It was only after the violence of 1999, when the Indonesian army ravaged East Timor following the referendum vote for independence, that many emerged again.

A voice for women

Today Ivete, 28, is women's advocacy officer for CIIR in East Timor. She is well connected, often advising the government's Office for the Promotion of Equality, which works for gender equality in government and society. Although women played a major part in the fight for independence, they have since been relegated to secondary roles in the life of the nation.

She sees her work as being a bridge between the local and national levels of women's work in East Timor. 'At the

high level, I lobby, influence and network. I work with the government and groups from civil society to help develop policies. At ground level, I work directly with communities and projects. I find out about their needs and feed these into the higher levels.'

Domestic violence is high on her agenda. 'Seventy five per cent of all cases reported to the police are of domestic violence,' she says. 'Even many of those who campaign against domestic violence then go home and beat their wives.'

The key to success

Much of the problem is linked to East Timor's strongly patriarchal society. Men rule every aspect of society and gender rights are seen as a women's issue.

'Twenty-six per cent of members of parliament are women, which is a direct result of the campaigning we did a few years ago with the first National Women's Congress,' says Ivete. 'But the women do not have the training and education that the men have, so they cannot compete with the men, who then say they're no good.'

That's why the focus of the women's movement is now on educating and helping women at ground level, in the communities and villages.

In the villages, for instance, the women are often the ones working to

'They cannot compete with the men, who then say they're no good'

provide an income for their families. They weave cloth and take food to sell in the markets. Yet in most cases, the men do the accounts and decide what happens to the money, leaving the women dependent once again upon their husbands.

Women make up the majority of the population in East Timor, since many men died during the occupation or are abroad looking for work. 'So women's empowerment is key to the success of our nation,' says Ivete. 'Now is the chance to look for justice.'

Nick Sireau is CIIR's communications manager.



On top of the world: disabled children in Zimbabwe using a globe for physical therapy.

Steve de Gruchy describes how three central biblical stories throw light onto the contemporary human experience of migration

Solidarity, hope and hospitality

THE VULNERABILITY around human migration is a key issue in contemporary development theory and practice. Given the scope of biblical history, it is not surprising that this theme also emerges often in the pages of Scripture.

Indeed, the two great 'crises' of the Old Testament, the exodus and the exile, centre on this theme. Joseph's family moves to Egypt to escape a famine, but as time passes their vulnerability in a foreign land is underlined by their enslavement. The exodus is God's way of intervening so as to draw the people of Israel back to their home and their land.

Much of the Law of Moses, drawing on this exodus experience of freedom from slavery in a foreign land, is rooted in an awareness of such vulnerability. Time and again the people of Israel are reminded that they may not do wrong to aliens amongst them, 'for you were

aliens in the land of Egypt' (Exodus 22:21). Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy are full of such statutes.

The issues of migration and vulnerability are even more central to the exile in Babylon that becomes such a crucible for re-defining Israel as a religious community. The lament of those Jews taken into captivity strikes a very contemporary note: 'By the rivers of Babylon – there we sat down and there we wept when we remembered Zion... How could we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?' (Psalm 137:1-4). And the great songs of joy that accompany the return from exile to Jerusalem bear witness to the pain of being driven from one's home and familiar places.

A third, and perhaps most striking image, is of the holy family hastily fleeing to Egypt to escape the wrath of Herod (Matthew 2:14). From the emotional high of the visit to the Magi,

we can only imagine the sheer crisis into which Joseph, Mary and Jesus were thrown by becoming refugees. But this sojourn in Egypt is a powerful narrative of the connection between God-in-Christ and the vulnerability of so many of the world's migrant people, exiles and refugees.

Three important insights to do with solidarity, hope and hospitality emerge as we allow these central biblical stories to throw light onto this contemporary human experience of suffering.

The first is the awareness that the Bible engages with this kind of human suffering, and that the revelation of God's word is found in the midst of it. God does not abandon those whose lives and livelihoods are shattered by such forced migration, but journeys with them and is found in the midst of their vulnerability.

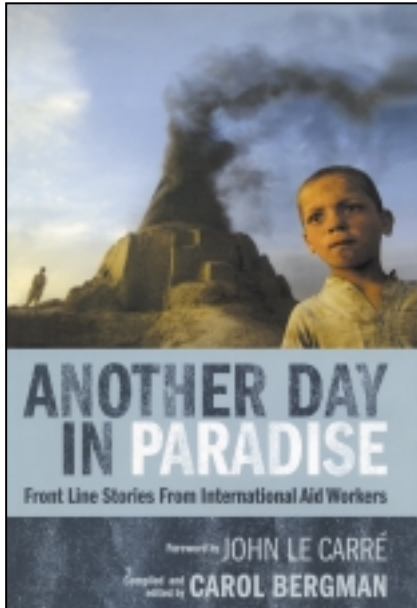
Second, though it seems hard to express it, the biblical witness reminds us that we cannot lose hope. From the depths of despair, of 'weeping when we remembered Zion', Deutero-Isaiah sounds the trumpet of hope as he announces the return: 'those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint' (Isaiah 40:31). Perhaps hope remains the last and yet most powerful weapon that the Christian faith can share in such times.

Finally, as the Law of Moses saw so clearly, there is an ethical command rooted in the experience of such vulnerability. The solidarity of God in the midst of such suffering, together with

God does not abandon those whose lives are shattered by forced migration, but journeys with them

the hope rooted in the Gospel, must find concrete expression in the hospitality extended by the people of faith towards the aliens amongst us: 'For by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it' (Hebrews 13:2).

Dr Steve de Gruchy is director of the Theology and Development Programme at the University of Natal, South Africa.



Another day in paradise
edited by Carol Bergman

Another day in paradise is an immensely readable collection of short stories describing the first-hand experiences of aid workers working in disaster response. It gives an insight not only into the realities and practicalities of responding to natural and man-made disasters, but also to the diverse and very personal motivations of the humanitarian workers themselves.

These are very personal accounts and this is the strength of the collection. The breadth and the familiarity of the

geographical locations, which are known by their affliction, is striking. From Sudan to Afghanistan, from Rwanda to Bosnia, the authors succeed in communicating some of the reality behind the headlines. They bring us into contact with the victims and the perpetrators of conflict, and awaken us to the reality of the often harsh, hostile and wholly unglamorous circumstances in which they operate.

Danger is evident, altruism less so. Without exception the narratives expose the individuals: the humanitarian worker is human. Their motivation to assist those in need unites them all, but some are driven by excitement, others by personal experiences. Some enjoy the liberation of interacting with a world in which they have no place, no history nor ties, where they are free of the responsibility and accountability to family and friends from home.

Some root their narratives in their own role and their own coping strategies; for others the focus is on those they assist. All express to some greater or lesser extent the loneliness and the sense of inadequacy that haunts so many aid workers who respond to disaster.

Yet you would be forgiven, after reading these stories, for believing that this sort of humanitarian response is the preserve of the international agencies and organisations. It is not. Local organisations also play a vital role in

emergency response that is neither represented – nor, it seems, sought – in this anthology. The desperation and frustration of local agencies to respond to a humanitarian situation – and to make their response endure beyond those of international actors – is neglected by all but one of the authors.

This is a worrying trend in the stories and it captures an unease with the way that some of the writers create the impression of complete autonomy – of a freedom to act independently of any regulation or authority. It is as if they are taking on the situation alone, sorting things out, tackling that which everyone else neglects.

Yet humanitarian aid in disaster situations is strictly governed by codes of conduct and guidelines designed to limit abuses and bad practice and to protect local populations in desperate circumstances. It is important therefore when reading this nonetheless compelling anthology not to do what the editor and John le Carré, in his foreword, do: divorce the aid workers from the business of aid.

Another day in paradise: Front line stories from international aid workers, edited by Carol Bergman, Earthscan, £17.99 hardback, ISBN 1 84407 034 4.

Reviewed by Colette Fearon, CIIR's regional manager for Africa and the Middle East.

Have you got skills to contribute to CIIR's Board of Trustees?

CIIR has a Board of Trustees who oversee the work and strategic direction of the organisation. CIIR members have the final vote on Board appointments at the Annual General Meeting.

We are looking for two people to join the Board this year. The roles involve four evening board meetings a year in London plus a one-day joint strategy meeting with the CIIR management team. If you have a questioning approach, time to contribute, and

skills, experience and expertise in strategic thinking or advocacy and policy, together with a commitment to CIIR's purpose, then please contact Clare Smedley (address below) with a CV expressing your interest.

We welcome nominations from people with a Southern perspective and especially welcome people from ethnic minorities.

The nominations committee, a sub-committee of the Board, will consider

the expressions of interest. There will then be follow-up contact/meetings before the final recommendations are made to the Board and the AGM.

The deadline for expressions of interest is 15 May 2004.

Contact:
Clare Smedley, CIIR,
Unit 3, Canonbury Yard,
190a New North Road,
London N1 7BJ
(email clares@ciir.org)