

International Organization for Migration

# **ANTI-TRAFFICKING PASSPORT INSERTS ASSESSMENT REPORT**

**IOM'S PROJECT: COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN  
PERSONS IN MONGOLIA: RETURN AND  
REINTEGRATION VICTIMS' ASSISTANCE AND  
CAPACITY-BUILDING**

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## Acknowledgement

I would like to express my appreciation to all interviewed persons especially Brigadier General and Deputy Head of the Border Protection Authority Mr.Lhagvasuren and officials helped me to visit border posts.

## Acronyms

Term	Meaning in this document
ADC	Adolescent Development Center
TAF	The Asia Foundation
BP	Border post
BPA	Border Protection Authority
ECPAT	End Child Prostitution and Trafficking
GEC	Gender Equality Center
IOM	International Organization of Migration
MOJHA	Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs
MOFA	Ministry of Home Affairs

## Executive Summary

The International Organization for Migration (IOM), together with the Asia Foundation Mongolia (TAF) developed passport inserts against human trafficking in 2007. These passport Inserts have been distributed since March 2008 at Mongolian border posts.

One million passport inserts were printed for a total cost of US\$15,380. Additionally, training was provided for border officers on passport insert related issues at a total cost of US 7,524.

This assessment is focused on the issues of the distribution of the inserts and their usefulness, based on insights from border officers, victims of trafficking, and other stakeholders, in order to improve content, design and distribution of the passport inserts in future.

The main methodology of the assessment was interviewing stakeholder organizations, focus group discussions and communications with service provider organizations listed in the passport inserts.

During the contracted period the consultant met and interviewed 46 relevant stakeholders from the Ministry of Justice and Home affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Consular Department, Border Protection Authority, border officers who received the passport insert training and those who did not, International and local NGOs, and police officers responsible for anti-trafficking.

The Consultant also contacted 20 Mongolian Consulates and 18 foreign NGOs and service organizations listed in the passport insert to determine if any Mongolian victims have been in contact with them since the passport inserts were distributed.

The Consultant developed questionnaires for the meetings with the different stakeholders and completed field trips to 4 permanent and 1 temporary border post of Mongolia in order to observe passport Insert distribution directly.

Two focus group discussions were also organized: One among border officers in Zamiin Uud and another for girls staying in the shelter of the Adolescent's Development Center for sexually exploited children in Ulaanbaatar. The Consultant also met and discussed the passport inserts with one rescued victim of human trafficking in Zamiin-Uud at the shelter of the Gender Equality Center (GEC).

## Assessment Goals and Methodology

The purpose of this consultancy is to assess the impact of the Passport Inserts developed under the first phase of IOM's counter trafficking project in Mongolia, *Combating Trafficking in Persons in Mongolia: Return and Reintegration Victims' Assistance and Capacity-Building*.

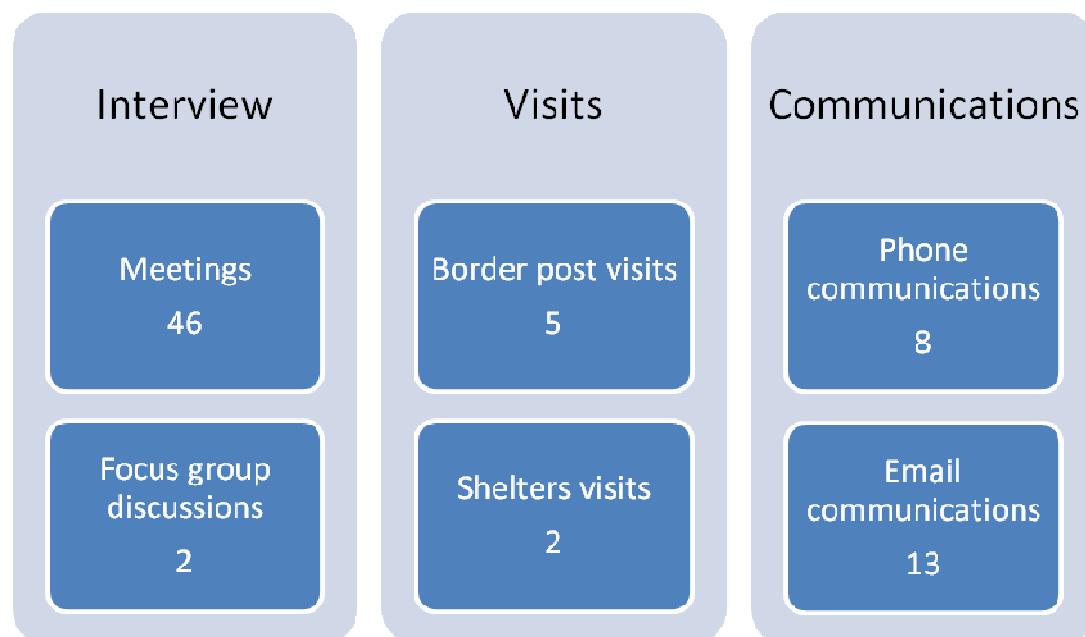
The Passport Inserts were designed and produced in 2007 and distributed in early 2008 through the Ministry of Justice. The assessment is intended to determine the extent to which the Passport Inserts were distributed effectively to the target population, the interest of the Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs and Border

Protection Authority of Mongolia in continuing distribution of the inserts, and the extent to which the inserts have been effective in identifying and assisting exploited and trafficked migrants. The main methodology of the assessment was to interview stakeholder organizations and people actively involved in development and distribution of the inserts, service providing processes, and the like.

The consultant met with and interviewed relevant stakeholders from the Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Consular Department, Border Protection Authority, border officers who received the passport insert training and those who did not, GEC, TAF, police officers responsible for anti-trafficking issues and other organizations which are in contact with or assist Mongolian trafficked persons.

Interviews were conducted on the basis of questionnaires. The Consultant developed questionnaires for the meetings with the different stakeholders as well as questionnaires for those organizations based in other countries from which written responses were requested.

**Figure 1: Structure of the interviews, visits and communications**



### **Interviewed organizations**

Passport inserts were most familiar to those interviewed from the Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs, the Border Protection Authority and its border officers. Most of those interviewed were seeing the Passport Inserts for first time during our interview, but expressed their positive reactions to it. GEC indicated that they were invited to give some comments just before the printing of the Passport Inserts as a specialized organization on Human Trafficking. Most of the officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicated that they were not aware of the Passport Inserts because 60-70% of staff changed during 2008-2009. However, they gave useful comments on the inserts and 13 consulates out of 20 replied to our questionnaire.

### **Foreign organizations listed in the Passport insert**

The Consultant communicated with 10 out of the 18 foreign organizations listed in the Passport Inserts. Getting this response was very difficult. In many cases the hotline numbers were unreachable from abroad. As a result, the Consultant was unable to contact the numbers from Malaysia, Singapore, Israel or the Russian Federation. The telephone numbers are designed for local callers so that the necessary codes to call from abroad are missing. Similarly, Turkey and Kazakhstan had toll free numbers which are not available for international calls. The Consultant also sent questionnaires to 9 organizations through email, but received only one reply from La Strada in the Czech Republic.

Even when the Consultant could succeed in contacting the organization, it was still difficult to get the desired information. Often those answering the phone could not answer on behalf of the organization (they were usually shift workers who answered the hotlines and did not have access to the information needed). However, they all expressed their ability to provide service to Mongolian victims of trafficking. The Korean Migrant women's emergency hotline immediately transferred the call to a Mongolian speaking counselor. The Counselor said that the hotline received 200-300 calls from Mongolians in 2008. These calls were mostly on domestic violence and cross cultural problems from Mongolian women married to Korean men. As far as they knew, no victims came to them as a result of the Passport Inserts.

All organizations listed in the passport insert spoke English with the exception of China, where the contact number was available but they spoke only Chinese. With the exception of Korea, Mongolian victims would need to speak the destination country language or English in order to explain their situation and receive appropriate services.

### **Content and design of Passport Inserts**

The passport insert consists of 4 parts and 6 pages.

1. Cover
  - Soyombo, the symbol of State based on the white flower.
  - Message 1. "Are you traveling abroad to study or for employment?"  
Main message to get attention.
  - Message 2. "If your Rights are violated during your stay abroad please get assistance from the following addresses"
  - Message 3. "We recommend you to get necessary information from phone 1903 before you travel abroad."
2. Second and third pages:  
These pages included contact phone numbers and email addresses of Mongolian diplomatic missions in 20 of the "most traveled to" countries by Mongolians.
3. Fourth page translates the statement "Please help me to contact this organization" in 6 different languages which are Mongolian, English, Chinese, German, Japanese and Russian.

4. Fifth and Sixth pages include contact phone numbers of 20 foreign organizations in 16 different countries which are providing service for victims of human trafficking.

Overall design of the Passport Insert is sufficient and content is informative. It seems that it has included a big effort to combine different type of information for the victims of Human Trafficking. Interviews with border officials about the content were valuable because they have been familiar with passport insert for a long time. The rest of those interviewed have seen passport insert first time and their comments were quick and random.

### **Comments to improve Content and design of Passport Inserts**

Most of those interviewed were not aware that the passport inserts were part of a larger advocacy campaign which had materials targeted to different groups. Therefore they suggested that passport Inserts be supported by other advertising materials like posters at the border area, TV announcements, newspapers and journal banners etc. The flower background of the campaign material was not fully understandable for them.

The Consultant also had a chance to have conversation with one of the victims rescued from an Erlian brothel and who was staying at the GEC Shelter. The victim is a 21 year old student trafficked to Erlian for 4 months. She had not seen the Passport Insert before even though she crossed the border at Zamiin Uud in December 2008. However, she thought it possible that she might have lost it or just did not give it any attention.

Her impression of the Passport Insert during the interview was that it is too big to hide easily and that it contains too much information. She also felt it would not be especially useful as neither she nor any of the girls who were with her in the brothel could speak any other language except Mongolian.

The victim felt that it would be more helpful if the passport insert was small enough that it can be easily hidden, that it contain less but necessary information, and that the organization to whom it directs one for assistance needs to be Mongolian and one who could keep private secrets.

The victim said that she did try to get help at the Mongolian Consultae in Erlian, but that the guard did not let her in because she did not have a passport. And she was not able to call them because she did not have their contact number (which is in the passport insert). However, she felt that even if she had their number it would have been difficult for her to explain her situation to such an official organization. And she does not believe that people would welcome her nicely and provide her their help.

According to the interviews, the design and content of the Passport Insert can be improved with the following changes.

- Main messages of the Passport Insert to be changed to simple, positive and familiar Mongolian proverbs like:
  - Have a nice trip.
  - Have a safe trip.
  - Ezen hichevel zaya hicheene (If you will try, fortune will try)

- For your information and etc.
- To change the Design
  - No Soyombo
  - Light color and dark script;
  - Passport size or not bigger than a name card (present size is little bigger than passport);
  - Print on a plastic card fitted to the wallet;
  - Choose thin and better paper (present one is coloring)
- Content
  - Need to give some case defining Human Trafficking;
  - To include a few important telephone numbers where they speak Mongolian;
  - To print out several different types in less quantity;
  - Need to involve specialized NGO's for development.
  - Use different designs for different proposes;
- To include a number which can received SMS;
- To include a phone numbers which can be easily contacted from abroad in Mongolian tariffs like G-mobile;
- To include an email contact in Mongolia through which they can receive assistance.

**Figure2. Focus Group discussion with Border Post Officers. Zamiin Uud**



### Passport Insert Distribution Criteria

The Passport Inserts distribution criteria and its allocation plan were approved by the Decree of the Border Protection Authority as follows:

1. Youth aged 15-28
2. People traveling for the first time abroad
3. People married to a foreigner or getting married
4. People traveling to China, Macao, Korea, or Kazakhstan for employment or study
5. Youth traveling abroad in a group
6. Children traveling with a person other than their parents

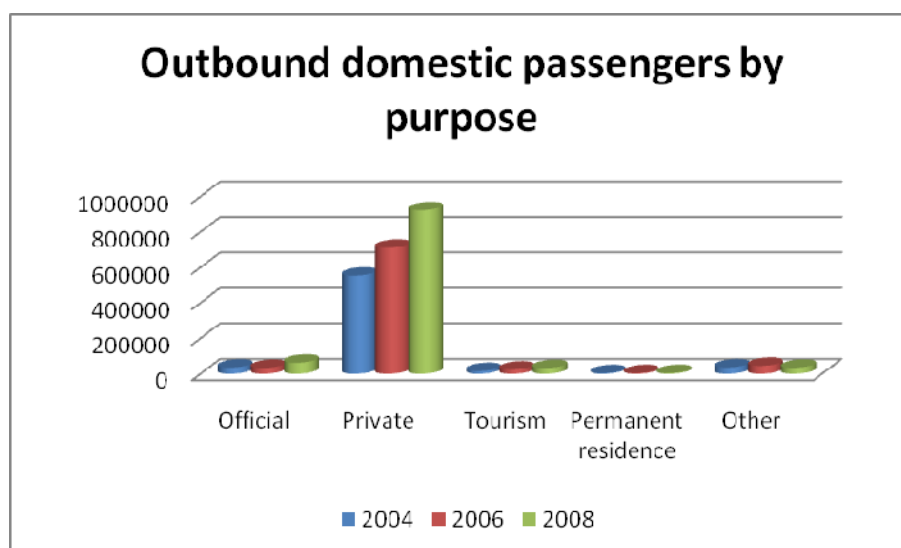


However, during the assessment, border officers indicated that they were distributing them only "to females under the age of 23 who were traveling for the first time abroad". Most indicated that they had not actually seen the decree which explained the broader criteria.

According to the statistical data of outbound domestic passengers of 2004, 2006, 2008 the number of private visitors constantly increased as from 553,242 in 2004, to 710,988 in 2006 and to 922,578 in 2008.

**Figure 3: Number of outbound passengers crossed Mongolian border in 2004, 2006, 2008**

	Official	Private	Tourism	Permanent residence	Other
2004	35388	553242	15712	3945	35984
2006	33276	710988	24160	4168	45045
2008	62 785	922578	32 373	4 724	34 106



Source: Mongolian Statistical Yearbook 2004, 2006, 2008

Research done on human trafficking in Mongolia and data on victims of trafficking indicates that most of the Mongolian victims of human trafficking are aged 15-28 and trafficked to the countries mentioned in the criteria. That victims include both males and females and people trafficked for labor as well as prostitution and exploitative marriages. Therefore the passport insert distribution criteria are effectively targeted to the at-risk group crossing the border. However, implementation is too narrowly focused on sex trafficking and is not following the broader criteria.

Border inspectors can easily determine the age and the travel frequency from passport data, and relationship of child travel attendant to the child, destination country and purpose of the travel from departure card of the passenger. Border officers can obtain additional information if necessary by asking additional questions,

but they are not able to spend significantly more time than usual to individual passengers for this purpose.

There are many Mongolian illegal migrants staying in Russia and China and other countries for long periods of time. They can't come back due to their irregular status in the destination country, but these migrants may be able to identify potential victims of human trafficking. These migrants have sustainable contact with those who are traveling particularly to Russia and China as most of them meet Mongolian trains to receive and to send parcels. Therefore Mongolian trains can be good distributors of Passport Inserts for Mongolians staying abroad.

### Distribution of Passport Inserts

According to the Border Protection Authority, the number of border crossings at each border post in 2008 was as follows:

**Figure 4: Number of Border Crossing vs. Number of Passport Inserts**

<b>Name of Immigration Post</b>	<b>Outbound passengers in 2008</b>	<b>Allocated Passport Inserts</b>
Sukhbaatar	53,028	100,000
Altanbulag	129,920	
Buyant-Ukhaa	270,711	250,000
Zamiin-Uud	809,551	300,000
Tsagaan-Nuur	18,043	10,000
Gashuun-Sukhait	42,609	10,000
Olgii	3,452	10,000
Khankh	9,783	10,000
Ulikhan, Ereentsav	6,884	100,000
Bichigt	24,131	50,000
Bulgan	25,971	10,000
Baitag	653	
Borshoo	18,227	5,000
Burgastai	1,116	10,000
Shiveekhuren	39,562	10,000
Khavirga	22,232	50,000

Other	51,153	25,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,527,026</b>	<b>1,000,000</b>

Source: \* Data from Border Protection Authority \*\* Statistical year book 2009

In 2008 1.5 million people left the country. According to border post officers, the number of outbound passengers decreased comparing with the same period of last year. In the first 4-5 months of 2008 distribution of the Passport Inserts was intensive when 6-8 thousand passengers crossed the border per day only in Zamiin Uud. However, according to Zamiin Uud border officers, distribution is going slow because 70% of the passengers are repeat travelers who are not given the passport inserts. As well, the economic crisis and USD exchange rate increase had resulted in a two – three times decrease in the number of people crossing the border.

The Consultant visited 4 out of the 16 above listed border posts. These border posts selected for the assessment Sukhbaatar, Altanbulag, Buyant Ukhaa, Zamiin Uud and Havirga are the biggest border posts in Mongolia. 84.17% of all outbound passengers crossed via these 5 posts. Generally speaking, the Consultant found that the border posts still had substantial quantities of inserts on hand. Official at the Ministry of Justice and Home affairs said that the distribution of passport inserts was intensive and that they are almost finished with them and they need to reprint more. This contradicts the situation identified by the Consultant at the border posts.

**Figure 5. Passport Inserts in Storage - Chinggis Khaan International Airport**



Chinggis Khan International Airport received 250,000 passport inserts and has been distributing them since early 2008. Airport officials could not say the exact number distributed and remaining because the size of the boxes containing them contain

different numbers of inserts. After counting the medium box contained up to 3,500 and the big box contained around 5,000 pieces. In May 05, 2009, the Airport still had 49 boxes remaining at the Chinggis Khans Airport storage. The estimation is that they still have approximately 196,000 inserts remaining, which means 78.4% of the 250,000 passport inserts have not yet been distributed.

Border posts like Sukhbaatar, Altanbulag, Zamiin Uud, Havirga also did not have a possibility to say the exact number of distributed passport inserts. In the Consultant's opinion, these border posts still have approximately 200,000-250,000 inserts on hand.

One explanation of this would be the economic crisis which has led to a decrease in number of passengers traveling, but also to the narrow distribution criteria being used (see above). Both the Border Officers trained on the passport inserts and those who were not trained agreed with providing the passport inserts to protect people from trafficking. But most of them did not agree with the narrow distribution criteria. It seems that in connection with the Consultant's visit, border posts started distributing the inserts to all outbound passengers and travelers. They seemed unaware that the actual distribution criteria was broader than the criteria which they were using in practice.

**Figure 3. Chinggis Khaan Airport and Zamiin Uud Automobile BP**



Some officials interviewed believed that distributing passport inserts to passengers based on their age or sex is a violation of the Constitution. Article 14.2 of The Constitution of Mongolia says that 'No person may be discriminated on the basis of ethnic origin, language, race, age, sex, social origin or status'. Additionally, young victims of sexual exploitation who attended focus group discussions expressed that think it would be shameful to be selected to receive the passport insert at the border if others were not also receiving it.

To improve distribution:

- Passport inserts could be distributed according to the official criteria, including to all youth aged 15-28, (male and female), all persons traveling for the first time abroad (male and female), all people married to a foreigner or getting married to a foreigner, all people traveling to China, Macao, Korea, or

Kazakhstan for employment or study, all youth traveling abroad in a group, and all children traveling with a person other than their parents.

- In addition to having border guards distribute according to the full criteria, passport inserts could also be displayed prominently at all borders crossings so that passengers can take one themselves if they want one.
- Cars, vans, and buses used for border crossings could be used to display and distribute the inserts

### **Impact of Passport Inserts**

It is quite difficult to assess impact of the Passport Inserts. People may have used the passport inserts even if that use it is not recorded anywhere. However, those interviewed or contacted by email did not know of any case about victims seeking assistance as a result of the Passport Inserts. Ms. Altangerel, Department Director of the Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs indicated that use of Passport Insert is obvious and that an example is the return of 4 victims from Malaysia. GEC assured that the 4 victims returned from Malaysia using the train ticket insert which is part of the same advocacy campaign as the inserts, but is a different tool than the passport insert.

Most of the foreign organizations listed in the Passport Insert have not met a Mongolian victim yet except Polish La Strada. The Polish La Strada does not want to talk much about the victim for reasons of security. They wished to contact with Mongolian NGO dealing with victims of human trafficking. Consultant provided GEC website and email address by email and suggested to contact Mongolian Embassy in Warsaw They did not answer question about the use of Passport Inserts by this victim.

Most of the organizations and people who were interviewed regarding the reprinting the passport inserts said that it is very helpful to reprint them. But there were no organization who could provide a concrete positive result from the initial distribution. None of the interviewed organizations mentioned the domestic nor incoming flow. Most of them said that people are trafficked out of Mongolia and very few of them mentioned domestic or labour trafficking.

### **Conclusion**

By the assessment about 60% of printed Passport Inserts are still at the Border posts. Maybe this is because of narrow distribution criteria. Passport inserts were distributed and correlate this to migrants' vulnerability to trafficking. Categories of migrants who may be vulnerable need to be included in the criteria such as repeating travelers, travelers crossing small BPs. Another point of distribution can be through State Registration Department where they issue new passports.

From observation at border posts it can be seen that Border officials are distributing the passport inserts as instructed, however, it is more mechanical work than responsible action. Both the untrained and trained officers are not ready to answer questions concerning how to get services, how to make a call to the hotline number,

knowledge about how reliable those numbers are, etc.

If there is a need to reprint the passport inserts then the design and content should be reviewed. Border posts can easily collaborate with colleagues' of neighboring countries and they can find more effective information, more effective mechanism to develop and distribute the inserts. They also need to be a smaller size, of different types, and include more important information. For example, there could be inserts specifically tailored to the needs of older male migrant workers, others tailored to young women or students of both sexes, etc. They could include advice about never allowing anyone else to keep your passport for you, to contact your family on arrival, etc. The number of Passport inserts to print does not need to exceed 300,000 per year.

The Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs and Border Protection Authorities had interest in continuing distribution of the passport inserts and are interested in additional support. They are interested in trainings on the distribution of the inserts with demonstrations how to dial the telephone numbers and how to seek assistance, as well as training by immigration authorities from other countries who have experience in dealing with trafficking.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has an interest to develop bigger information booklet with Q&A on human rights issues for travelers. This idea is considerable if one can find a good way to distribute them.

Anti trafficking advocacy materials and information is always needed and not only during a campaign. NGOs and service providing organizations are always in shortage of meaningful, reliable advocacy material against human trafficking. The Passport Insert against human trafficking is one of the powerful advocacy tools for prevention.

During the assessment the Consultant was introduced with more than 30 different advocacy materials from different organizations against human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children. Many of them have separate messages mostly calling to fight against Human Trafficking not saying how and by whom. A big logo of the producing organizations is not an important message for victims or ordinary people yet seems to be the main focus of the materials.

The Consultant found two other Inserts produced by HRDC and GEC against human trafficking. They are small in size, have a good quality paper and also contain important Information.

It would be good to introduce PI's before people reach the Border Point.