

I will RETURN

Editorial of the Project Manager

Welcome to the first edition of the CRI-Country of Return Information Project's newsletter.

This bulletin runs by the name **"I will return"**, referring to a poem written by the late Nigerian artist **Christopher Ifekandu Okigbo**. However, we don't have much ado with poetry. The objective of CRI is all about voluntary return and informing people on local security issues and reintegration possibilities. And this newsletter reflects our overall intentions.

The returnee's choice to prolong his stay in Europe or to return to his place of origin is a decision not to be taken lightly. Therefore CRI's **4 major European partner organizations** draw up country files and develop tools to inform potential returnees and their assistants, and to present their options. We are convinced that CRI will give considerable support in making a choice, and thus in decreasing the negative impacts of an unprepared return.

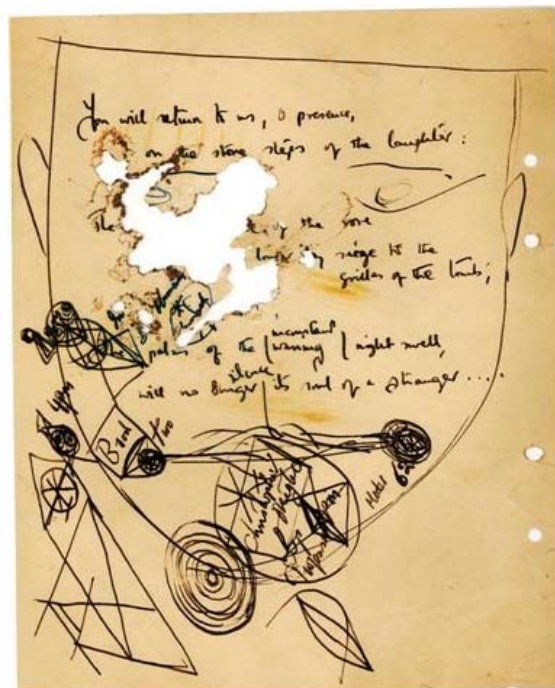
The CRI project is financed by the **European Commission** and focuses on an European-wide distribution of our information. The main target groups are NGO's on refugee work, national and regional governmental decision-makers, the international research community, local stakeholders, the press and other "multipliers". And these newsletters are one of the main tools for informing interested stakeholders on CRI. For the duration of the project, CRI will publish 4 regular newsletters, supplemented with extra editions on specific topics, going by the name **CRlsscross**.

This first newsletter aims to give you an overview of CRI's background, objectives and applications. Furthermore, we will briefly introduce the different European members and their third country partners. Finally, this newsletter will report on the different work phases and sketch the future work steps of the project. In each of the following editions we will inform you about all our research results so far.

In order to ensure that our newsletter meets your diverse needs, we welcome your ideas and constructive comments. We hope that this newsletter can serve as a means for continuous information exchange along with an ongoing and long-lasting cooperation between the CRI-partners and the public.

Enjoy your reading!

HENAU Stephan



Christopher Okigbo: I Will Return
Website: http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=21874&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html
Copyright: © Christopher Okigbo Foundation (COF)

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of **CRI**tical importance - country of return information

The CRI project saw the light of day on the 1st of June 2006 and runs until the end of 2007.

In its conception, CRI was a logical answer to the increasing number of people returning to their country of origin. So far this phenomenon had not yet been widely explored by any NGO dealing with asylum issues.

The subject of voluntary return is – not surprisingly - very unpopular among asylum-seekers. Since most migrants start asylum procedures in the hope to build a new life here, a return is not considered an option. It is regarded as a personal failure, making it a taboo topic in the counselling process. However, specific country of origin information that is adapted to the profile of the potential returnee improves the feasibility and the quality of return counselling.



Independent or voluntary return can be a valid option on condition that it is the returnee's own personal choice and that his safety and dignity are guaranteed. In order to make that decision, potential returnees must be well informed about their perspectives upon return.

Candidates for return obviously have a lot of questions about the social situation, their possibilities and perspectives for re-integration, security...

The Country of Return Information Project provides information on territorial access, personal safety, reintegration opportunities, accommodation, employment, social security, health care, education, NGO's, etc. And to guarantee a high degree of individualized information we set up a network of local partners in the return countries.

The service we offer is twofold.

1/ We run an information desk where potential returnees or their assistants can ask specific and individualised questions in order to decide on a return or its preparation.

Social assistants, volunteers as well as persons potentially interested in returning to their country of origin can contact the "helpdesk return" for specific questions on return.

The helpdesk can provide all types of actual information on the situation in the return country through its co-operation with specialized local partners. Some examples of topics are the accessibility of specific regions, personal security, reintegration possibilities, accommodation, employment opportunities, social security, health care, education opportunities, presence of NGO's, etcetera...

We will always try to find an adequate answer through desk-research first. If the result does not prove satisfactory, the question is transferred to our local partner.

You can contact the helpdesk by phone: **+32 2 274 00 23**
or by mail: **return@vluchtelingenwerk.be**

2/ We provide country fact sheets with general "things-you-should-know-information" on the target-countries of our project. These files are documented by international reports and can be consulted on **www.ecoi.net**.

Our **target countries** are:

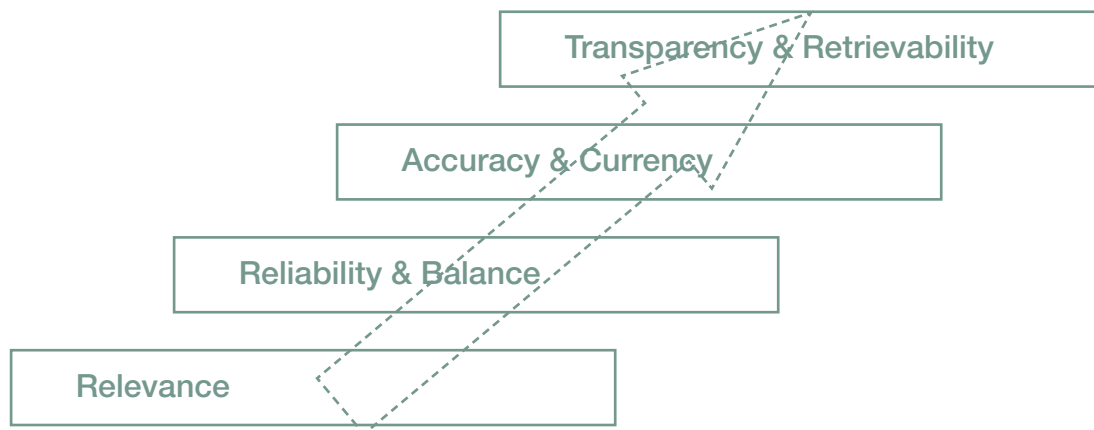
Africa: Algeria, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana and Sierra Leone
Eastern Europe: Albania, Armenia, Georgia, Russia and Serbia
South-America: Ecuador

Quality standards of information

It is quite evident that we are not the only information source for most potential returnees. Migrants usually maintain contact with their country of origin to stay informed on the local situation. However, sometimes a second opinion or an expert's point of view can be useful, even crucial.

This is how we distinguish ourselves. In order to meet the high expectations of our public, we introduce standards that engage us to a high level of quality. Because our information must enable people to rebuild their life.

Four substantive standards for high-quality COI research and use were developed by the COI Network coordinated by ACCORD in consultation with UNHCR and ECRE :¹



These standards are based on each other, e.g. even an accurate research of current information based on reliable and balanced sources will not help if it is not based on relevant case-related questions.

Relevance:

The information must be relevant to a potential returnee and give answer to his specific questions. It should help him to assess his situation and decide whether to stay in the E.C. or to prepare for a return. Therefore the focus must be on the possibilities and restraints for reintegration.

Reliability/ Balance:

No source provides complete and fully objective information as their scope and focus of reporting will be influenced by their mandate or mission, by their methods of collecting or presenting information and even by their financial situation. Therefore we do not rely on one single source, but consult many different authorities and many different types of references (e.g. international organizations, government sources, NGOs and media sources) in order to achieve the most complete and balanced picture of a country's situation as possible.

Accuracy/ Currency:

Accurate information is obtained from a variety of sources. And with due attention relevant up-to-date information is filtered from the particulars, without distorting the content. Every bit of information is verified and corroborated as much as possible by different types of sources.

Currency is a key element of accuracy. However this does not imply that older reports are no longer used; it depends on the specific issue. 'Older' does not always mean 'dated'. When coming to cultural, historical or religious issues, currency isn't necessarily a strict requirement since these facts do not change quickly with time.

Transparency/ Retrievability:

The information presented uses a transparent method of referencing, i.e. source, title, date of information (and eventually the period to which the source refers to) and internet address.

You can contact us at:

return@vluchtelingenwerk.be

The **flyer** with a project presentation can be downloaded in :

English: <http://www.vluchtelingenwerk.be/pdf/CRI/Eng.pdf>

French: <http://www.vluchtelingenwerk.be/pdf/CRI/Fr.pdf>

Dutch: <http://www.vluchtelingenwerk.be/pdf/CRI/Nl.pdf>

An Italian version will soon be available as well.

¹ For more detailed information on the research standards listed above, we recommend the Training Manual „Researching Country of Origin Information“ which was published by the Austrian Red Cross in September 2004 and can be downloaded from <http://www.ecoi.net/index.php?id=6> (in English, French, German, Russian, Romanian and Spanish).

CRIsscross - an international network on return information

The following organisations are part of the CRI-network.

Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen (VwV)

Lead agency and operational partner responsible for information on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa area and Kwilu district in Bandundu), the Russian Federation (Moscow and Saint Petersburg region) and Albania.

VwV is an independent, Belgium-based non-governmental organization which safeguards and supports the interests of refugees and asylum seekers. It co-operates with a number of member-organizations and numerous volunteers.

Its activities include: legal advice, training, actions and campaigns, reception of asylum seekers, specialized helpdesks on country of origin information, diploma equivalency and study counselling.

Other return-related activities are:

- The ERF/Fedasil project "Individualised help for reintegration after return", a return program to Russia and Albania in collaboration with local NGOs (contact with the family, counselling on housing and work, legal advice and monitoring of the safety).
- A "Helpdesk on Return" where you can get information and advice on return to specific countries (positions on return, statistics, return aid projects, specific COI, safety monitoring procedures).

For further info: www.vluchtelingenwerk.be



Consiglio Italiano per i Rifugiati (CIR)

CIR (Italian Council for Refugees) is the operational partner responsible for information on Ghana (Accra, Kumasi, Takoradi, Volta Region), Sierra Leone (Freetown, Kono area) and Cameroon.

CIR is an independent, non-governmental organization that defends the interests of refugees and asylum seekers in Italy.

Among its activities are legal and social assistance (with a focus on victims of gender related abuse and victims of torture), trainings, seminars, actions and campaigns, a specialized helpdesk on country of origin information.

In 2005, CIR took part in the project "Increasing refugee participation in the field of voluntary return", coordinated by ECRE. They published a booklet, containing observations and recommendations of Italian refugees, originating from Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia.

For further info: www.cir-onlus.org



Caritas International Belgium (CIB)

Operational partner responsible for information on Armenia, Georgia and Serbia.

CIB is a Belgian non-governmental organization active in the field of development co-operation and emergency relief in Africa and Asia, and assistance of migrants (asylum seekers, refugees, illegal immigrants). Caritas Belgium is connected to a worldwide Caritas network. Hence it can count on a number of partner organizations to develop humanitarian projects and to co-operate in refugee- and return-related matters.



CIB carried out the European Refugee Fund project 'Sustainable reintegration' in 2004, focussing on returned migrants to Ukraine and Bulgaria.

In 2004-2005, several families were assisted throughout their voluntary return process by the social services of local partners. For many years CIB has been the NGO counselling the largest number of returnees in the IOM REAB program. In 2007, Caritas enlarged the reintegration program worldwide.

Coördination et Initiatives pour Réfugiés et Étrangers (CIRÉ)

Operational partner responsible for information on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa), Ecuador and Algeria.



CIRE is a pluralistic Belgian non-governmental organization that defends the interests and rights of foreigners (with or without legal status), refugees and asylum seekers, together with its 22 member-organizations.

Its activities include: actions and campaigns, legal advice, training, reception of asylum seekers, accommodation assistance, French courses, diploma equivalency, reintegration in the country of origin.

In recent years CIRE built up experience on assisted return in different countries of return, providing training and individual counselling on business plans, feasibility studies and follow-up by local partner organizations and start capital. CIRE and VwV also conducted research on return aid. The full report (“Return Aid: Observations and Perspectives”) can be downloaded from <http://www.cire.be/publications/rapports/aide-au-retour-volontaire.pdf>

Currently, the ERF/Fedasil project “Individualised help for reintegration after return” offers assistance on return and reinsertion to Ecuador, Algeria and DRC.

For further info: www.cire.be

Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation (ACCORD)

ACCORD is an external consultant to CRI and is responsible for the quality-control of the country sheets. It also contributes to the development of specific CRI-related methodology on information gathering and presentation.



ACCORD aims to set up a fair asylum procedure by providing independent, neutral and objective information on the asylum seeker’s countries of origin.

ACCORD’s research services are open to asylum lawyers, professional and volunteer refugee counsels as well as persons deciding on claims for asylum and other forms of international protection in Austria. Their sources include both online publications and external country experts.

In addition, ACCORD coordinates the online information system ecoi.net - the European Country of Origin Information Network. Its database is maintained in collaboration with their European partner organizations.

ACCORD regularly conducts trainings on COI research standards and methodology for eligibility officers and lawyers. The organization is also in charge of the coordination of the COI Network III project, which consists of 18 governmental and non-governmental organizations from 15 European countries. ACCORD was established in 1999 by the UNHCR and the Austrian Foundation for Development Research. Since January 2002, ACCORD is part of the Headquarters of the Austrian Red Cross.

For further info: <http://www.ropeskreuz.at>

Hungarian Helsinki Committee (HHC)

The HHC checks the quality of the obtained local information by examining the application of procedural and substantive COI standards, and it supports the local partners in their methodological approach (fact finding missions, etc.).

The Hungarian Helsinki Committee (Magyar Helsinki Bizottság) is a leading human rights organization in Hungary since 1989. Its field of activities covers various areas, with special emphasis on asylum, access to justice, anti-discrimination, detainees’ rights and assistance to those whose human rights have been violated by state authorities.

The Hungarian Helsinki Committee – as implementing partner of the UNHCR since 1998 – coordinates a national network of asylum lawyers who provide free legal assistance to asylum-seekers in Hungary. The organization regularly visits reception centres for asylum-seekers and refugees, as well as alien policing jails. It also comments on draft legislation in the field of asylum and immigration and makes continuous efforts to lobby for higher standards in international protection.

The HHC is particularly active in educational activities both at a national and international level: since 2001 it has been supporting and coordinating a network of two dozens of Central and Eastern European “refugee law clinics”, it yearly organizes and hosts Europe’s only international asylum law moot court competition, and it publishes The Refugee Law Reader, the first-ever on-line curriculum for the study of refugee law. Experts of the HHC regularly train governmental and NGO staff on various human rights-related issues in several European countries. Within the framework of the pan-European “COI Network”, the HHC cooperates with ACCORD and various other organizations with expertise in the field of country of origin information research and use.



For further info: www.helsinki.hu

Operational European actor	Country of return	Name of local partner	
Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen	Albania	Albanian Institute for International Studies (AIIS)	a NGO dedicated to analyses and prognoses of contemporary political, economic, security, ethnic, cultural and religious issues and conflict prevention
		Albanian Centre for Human Rights (ACHR)	a national NGO active in the promotion of human rights, providing information and training on human rights conditions and abuse
	RD Congo	La Voix des Sans-Voix pour les Droits de l'Homme	a Kinshasa-based NGO, active in the field of training, assistance and monitoring of human rights violations and accompaniment of returnees
		Communauté Paysanne de Développement Intégré	a grass roots organisation in the Kwilu District, active in the field of local development, basic democracy and micro-economic projects
	Russia	The House of Peace and Non-Violence	a St Petersburg based NGO active in the field of conflict management and human rights education, with a broad experience in assisting forced migrants
		Civic Assistance Committee for Forced Migrants and Refugees	a network organisation present in 46 regions, with its main office in Moscow. They act as an in-between for governmental bodies and migrants, supporting the latter with legal advice and humanitarian aid
Caritas International Belgium	Armenia	Armenian Caritas	partner of the worldwide Caritas network, active in the development of health services and infrastructure, and the assistance of vulnerable groups (elderly, disabled persons, children, women, returnees)
		Mission Armenia	a large-scale organisation working in the field of local development and assistance of vulnerable groups and refugees, enclosing remote regions in the whole country
	Georgia	World Vision	an organisation active in the field of relief, rehabilitation and community-based development initiatives
		Georgian Young Lawyers' Association abbreviation (GYLA)	a local NGO, specialized in legal matters and legal research, active in preventing human trafficking, offering legal education, lobbying for human rights

	Serbia	GRUPA 484	a leading organisation in the research of return matters, and conducting several operational projects with refugees, IDPs and returnees
		Centre of Development Services (CDS)	an operational partner of the Dutch NGO Cordaid, with a broad experience on the reintegration of ex-asylum seekers
CIR	Cameroon	Centre for Rehabilitation and Abolition of Torture (CRAT)	a NGO involved in refugee related issues, with a focus on rehabilitation
		Cameroon Youths and Students Forum for Peace (CAMYOSFOP)	a NGO involved in peace education youth related development projects
	Ghana	African Centre for Human Development (ACHD)	partner of IOM Ghana, active in the field of Child Rights advocacy, micro-credits, rural development and competency-based skill training at grassroots level
		Centre for the Development of People (CEDEP)	a NGO involved in human development activities: advocacy campaigns, development education, gender awareness, training, consultancy, research, networking
	Sierra Leone	Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD)	a national civil society advocacy and development organization
		Community Action for Rural Development (CARD-S/L)	a NGO, carrying out programs on: education, micro-finance, national and international consultancy services
CIRE	Algeria	Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli (CISP)	an Italian development NGO, active in the fight against social exclusion; implementer of different programs on the management of transit migratory flows in Algeria
	Ecuador	Centro de Documentación en Derechos Humanos “Segundo Montes Mozo S.J.” (CMMS)	a NGO working active in the field of good governance and human rights, with an expertise on civil society dialogue and migration research
		Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS)	a NGO working on the integration of migrants and asylum seekers, with an expertise on migrant rights, labour market, micro-business, psychological assistance
	RD Congo	Programme Régional de Formation et d’Echanges pour le Développement (Prefed)	an NGO with a broad experience in the field of development, good governance, exchange of information and creation of networks

products - unlocking information/ making information accessible

COUNTRY SHEETS

The country sheets provide asylum seekers and other possible future returnees with relevant, structured and comprehensible information in order to decide whether a return to their country of origin is viable and desirable. The information contained in the country sheets can help future returnees to plan and organize their return and reintegration in their countries of origin (by finding a job, accommodation, etc.).

However, the country sheets are no scientific reports designed for students, academics etc. nor a detailed analysis of political, economic and social developments in a given country.

All country sheets will gradually be available on www.ecoi.net.

Every country sheet features the following topics:

1. General background information

- 1.1 Political situation
- 1.2 Socio-economic situation
- 1.3 Demographic overview

2. Access to territory (from country of asylum to return area)

- 2.1 Documentation
- 2.2 Travel to country of origin (means, prices, duration, luggage limits, etc.)
- 2.3 Entry procedure (proceeding authority, interrogation, control, detention, bribes, etc.)
- 2.4 Impacts of former acts and statuses upon entry
- 2.5 Access to return area
- 2.6 Transfer of personal property and belongings (if not carried by the returnee)
- 2.7 Communication system (availability of phone, internet access, etc.)

3. Physical security (in return area)

- 3.1 On-going armed conflicts
- 3.2 Regions with high security risk (political, inter-ethnic or inter-religious tension, etc.)
- 3.3 Crime

4. Social security and reintegration

- 4.1 Regions with no reintegration and return opportunities (e.g. natural disasters, famine, etc.)
- 4.2 Housing, accommodation
- 4.3 Livelihood – basic “survival”
 - 4.3.1 Employment
 - 4.3.2 Recognition of degrees obtained / university semesters completed elsewhere
 - 4.3.3 Education and retraining programmes (and access to them)
 - 4.3.4 Utility of capacities obtained while living abroad
 - 4.3.5 Starting a new business
 - 4.3.6 Social security
 - 4.3.7 Charity organizations (services, contact information)
- 4.4 Health

Albania

Like many Eastern European countries, Albania is recovering from 40 years of communist rule and the transition period has proven difficult for many. The country sheet on Albania provides a clear picture of the current situation and informs of many important issues such as entry procedures, employment programs and health.

Albanians leaving the poor mountain areas of the country and expatriates re-migrating back to Albania, put pressure on Tirana's housing market. A lot of houses are built illegally and prices are rising. That's why special attention goes to housing problems in Albania's main cities.





Russia

This country sheet contains a lot of up-to-date information on relevant items for returnees, and includes for instance the issue of lost property restitution in Chechnya and the complicated custom regulations upon entry in Russia. The human rights topic especially is well detailed and the information on the new official program of the Russian state to assist voluntary repatriation of Russian people living abroad deserves mentioning.

This state program developed by the government aims to stimulate and organize the process of Russian nationals' voluntary return to Russia with a regional approach. It also seeks to compensate for the natural population loss of the country by attracting Russians to settle permanently in Russia.

DR Congo

DR Congo's country sheet offers very detailed first hand information.

A considerable part focuses on the Kinshasa region, however the information on security and human rights issues touches the whole country.

Quite unique are the chapters that show future returnees how to start a business or how to calculate the cost of living. But what makes this country sheet really worthwhile is the listing of many local contact addresses for most subject matters. This makes it a very useful instrument in preparing a return.



Algeria

The Country Sheet on Algeria prospects coming events, such as the several planned elections: legislative elections, communal elections and a referendum on the Constitution. Given recent incidents in Algeria (in particular the kamikaze attacks of April 11 in Algiers and other incidents in Kabylie) there are indications that the security situation is rapidly changing. Hence, monitoring and updating the news on Algeria will be our biggest challenge. We will definitely come back on this in future Newsletters.

Furthermore, the Algerian Country Sheet is very rich on specific data retrieved from the O.N.S. (National Office of Statistics).

Armenia

The Country Sheet of Armenia gives practical information on the actual situation and describes in detail the necessary documents and red tape (birth certificate, military card, alternative military service, social security card, property certificate, family social passport, disability grade reference, pension card, work record book, drivers license,...). The differences between documents, e.g. the RA entry visa for foreigners from the RA citizen passport, are clearly documented.

Special attention is given to how one can start a business. Elaborate information is also available on housing programs in return areas. Since the devastating earthquake of 1988, housing is an actual problem in Armenia. Procedures on applying for accommodation are included.



Georgia

This Country Sheet highlights the information on territories that are impossible or too dangerous to approach (landmines, natural degradation, etc). To guarantee the currency of data, maps and references to specialized websites are added,

It also offers insight in the cost of living, presenting prices of daily goods, e.g. gasoline, potatoes or butter. Especially costs related to healthcare are considered and diversified by the different fields of expertise, such as: psychiatric assistance, gynecology, pneumatic assistance, oncology, infectious diseases, referral assistance, urgency treatment, additional examinations, medical care components etc.

Serbia

Given the recent political developments, Serbia's Country Sheet is quite elaborate. Upon approval of the CRI project, Montenegro was still part of Serbia-Montenegro while now discussions on the independence of the Kosovo region are vividly held. Therefore, the Country Sheet treats Serbia and Kosovo separately.

For Serbia a lot of attention goes to recent migration flows (in and out; ethnic, religious or social profile). Numerous groups, minorities and migrants are introduced, as well as their impact in society. Extensive information is also given on the physical security in return areas.

Costs of healthcare (treatment, medicines, bribes for doctors, participation fee) are available for each type of treatment. Besides this, information on services of non-state agents (international, NGOs, church) and government bodies active in health care, education and retraining programs are treated.



storyboard - people's talk

Each edition of our newsletter will present a Question & Answer and someone's testimony. The following chronicle has been collected by Caritas Belgium. Only the names are fictitious.

Bartev (°1957) and Dalita (°1954) Toroian are an Armenian couple, residing in Belgium and planning a return to Etchmiatsin, at 20 km near Yerevan. Bartev suffers from an acute inferior myocardial infarction. The current treatment is conservative and consists of administering the following medication: Plavix 75 mg, Cardioaspirine, Coversyl 4mg, Crestor 20mg, Emconcor 2,5mg, Zanidip en Al-dactazine.



Q1: Since Doctors Without Borders is no longer active in this region, do you have any information on the availability and medical treatment of cardiovascular problems in Etchmiatsin?

Mr. Toroian would like to start a small business as a carpenter, making furniture, together with his son who's still in Yerevan.

Since he earned his living before by making furniture, he already disposes of the necessary technical skills. His son also reserved a location for his enterprise and a business plan has been drafted. His starting capital is € 1.400, which is insufficient for making the necessary investments on equipment and wood.

Q2: Where can Bartev or his son obtain legal advice about starting up a micro-business and which are the administrative conditions he has to fulfil (e.g. paperwork, registration...)?

Q3: To complete his starting capital for his carpenter business, Bartev seeks to get a loan from a bank or any other financial institution. Which possibilities do exist here?

A1: On treatment possibilities of cardiovascular problems.

The Armenian doctor we consulted confirmed us that the medication prescribed for the treatment of cardiovascular diseases are available on the market. But often names are different from Europe or are replaced by others with a similar composition. Pharmacies only have the right to import and sell those drugs that are registered in Armenia. Here follows the details for the medication mentioned above :

- "Plavix N 14" is not registered but is available in some pharmacies in Yerevan (price: 23.800 AMD, approx. € 50,6);
- "Cardioaspirine 100 mg N10" is registered and available (price: 1.000 AMD, approx. € 2,12);
- "Coversyl 4 mg" is not in use in Armenia, the appropriate substitute available is "Prestarium 4 mg N30" (price: 3.240 AMD, approx. € 6,89);
- "Crestor 20 mg" is not in use in Armenia, the appropriate substitute available is "Rosuvastatin 20 mg N 28" (price: 25.000 AMD, approx. € 53);
- "Emconcor 2.5 mg" is not in use in Armenia, the appropriate substitute available is "Concorcor 2,5 mg N 30" (price: 1.890 AMD, approx. € 4,02);
- "Zanidip" is not in use in Armenia, the appropriate substitute available is "Lerkamen 10 mg N28" (price: 5.760 AMD, approx. € 12,25);
- "Aldactazin" is not in use in Armenia, the appropriate substitute available is "Verospiron 25 mg N 20" (price: 980 AMD, approx. € 2,08).

Prices are derived from pharmacies in Yerevan. All these drugs should be available in Etchmiatsin as well.

A2: On legal advice and administrative conditions when starting up a small business.

There exists a very good survey "Med/Sme development in Armenia: assessing the impact of micro-lending on poverty reduction and reintegration", written in 2005. It focuses on returnees who wants to start a business in Armenia and the challenges they face when receiving loans or credits. Unfortunately it is not on the internet, so it will be send to you by mail and you would receive within a week. I am sure it will help you a lot, not only for this case but also in the future.

On the website <http://www.spyur.am/htmfix/yp.htm> you can find a detailed list of organizations who give legal support and consulting. Go to "legal aid, business support" and click on "business services and consulting", you will be directed to a list of organizations providing such services and information. They must also know of where one can get a business loan. Very useful to contact are also the following organizations (with phonenumber):

- "Small and Medium Entrepreneurship Development National Center of Armenia" (374-10)541648/541645;
- "Ameria" (374-10)524040;
- "Business Support Center" (374-10)574778/574964/571753.

A3: Further information on business loans

The organizations already mentioned above can help in his search for credits. Although not impossible, it can prove to be quite difficult to get funds from banks, since a guarantee will be asked for (e.g. mortgage, etc.).

Apart from that, there's a high demand for carpenters in the region.

If Mr. Toroian does not succeed in obtaining a loan, a short-term alternative could be to work as an employee in the carpentry business, and not as an independent. Or, what is quite common, to put an advertisement in the Armenian newspaper "Gind" and only work on an offer-demand base.

Since the title of this newsletter is lent from one of the major African modernist writers of the twentieth century, it is only appropriate to end with an excerpt of another one, **Aimé Césaire's masterpiece Cahier d'un retour au pays natal** (Paris: Presence Africaine, 1956)

Il me suffirait d'une gorgée de ton lait jiculi pour qu'en toi je découvre toujours à même distance de mirage - mille fois plus natale et dorée d'un soleil que n'entame nul prisme - la terre où tout est libre et fraternel, ma terre.

Partir. Mon coeur bruissait de générosités emphatiques. Partir... j'arriverais lisse et jeune dans ce pays mien et je dirais à ce pays dont le limon entre dans la composition de ma chair : « J'ai longtemps erré et je reviens vers la hideur désertée de vos plaies ».

Je viendrais à ce pays mien et je lui dirais : « Embrassez-moi sans crainte...
Et si je ne sais que parler, c'est pour vous que je parlerai ».

Et je lui dirais encore :
« Ma bouche sera la bouche des malheurs qui n'ont point de bouche, ma voix, la liberté de celles qui s'affaissent au cachot du désespoir. »

Et venant je me dirais à moi-même :
« Et surtout mon corps aussi bien que mon âme, gardez-vous de vous croiser les bras en l'attitude stérile du spectateur, car la vie n'est pas un spectacle, car une mer de douleurs n'est pas un proscenium, car un homme qui crie n'est pas un ours qui danse... »



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