



INTERNATIONAL  
ORGANIZATION  
FOR MIGRATION

## **IOM and the Central American Population Center to Study Migration and Health**

Posted:

09/10/07

Region-Country:

Costa Rica / America

IOM's Regional Office in San José and the Central American Population Center (CCP) of the University of Costa Rica have signed an agreement to carry out studies on the health needs of migrant workers in Costa Rica and to promote a national debate on health and migration issues.

Costa Rica is home to an estimated 400,000 Nicaraguan migrant workers, who are mostly employed in agriculture and in the booming construction sector or as domestic workers and security guards.

Without permission to live and work in the country, a majority face poor working and living conditions and a range of health challenges. Their access to the public health system is uneven and their participation in state-sponsored insurance schemes remains very limited. As a result, much of the healthcare provided to migrants takes place in the emergency room of local hospitals.

"There are very few studies on the health needs of migrant communities in Costa Rica," explains IOM's Rosilyne Borland. "The country urgently needs accurate information on the use of health services by migrants in order to adapt national policies and identify sustainable solutions for the future."

Combining the technical expertise of CCP and the operational experience of IOM, a comprehensive research programme will be carried out to better define the health needs of Nicaraguan migrants in Costa Rica.

"The Nicaraguan migrant population in Costa Rica is becoming a solid minority in the country," notes Roger Bonilla, researcher of the Central American Population Centre. "Although the Centre has carried out research on population themes such as migration and health throughout Central America, better information on Nicaraguan migration to Costa Rica is urgently needed."

For more information, please contact:

Rosilyne Borland

IOM San José

Tel: +506 221 5348 ext 120

E-mail: "<mailto:arborland@iom.int>">arborland@iom.int

or

Roger Bonilla (CCP)

Tel +506 207-4810

E-mail: "<mailto:rebonill@ccp.ucr.ac.cr>">rebonill@ccp.ucr.ac.cr