

# Business owners multiply in Zimbabwe

By [Alison Walkley](#)

4 Aug 2009

Seventy five Zimbabweans have officially graduated from a small business-training program, each specialising in a skill from which they can reap economic benefits. The program, run by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the Zimbabwe Women's Bureau, and sponsored by the Spanish government, has already turned out 45 graduates who have launched successful new businesses.

The specialisations offered were leatherwork, tinsmithing, hair dressing, bricklaying, baking, dressmaking, and small business training. IOM's program also includes networking, savings, and lending. Erin Foster, media spokesperson for IOM Zimbabwe, told MediaGlobal, "Other specialisation options are mushroom production, poultry, carpentry, motor vehicle maintenance, soap-making, and candle-making."

Foster continued, "The programme was established to save the lives and address the humanitarian needs of mobile and vulnerable populations (MVPs) affected by man-made and natural disasters. It also sets the basis to promote durable solutions for MVPs by integrating them into national and local recovery strategies."

These strategies will help reduce social exclusion as well as the need for exclusive, specialised assistance delivery mechanisms, according to Foster. "The graduates will benefit from all aspects of the comprehensive assistance package that is provided," she said. In addition, these families will also be able to eat more nutritious food and send their children to school. To date, 225 vulnerable households have benefited from the program, totaling 1,225 individuals.

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