

## Final Internal Independent Evaluation of CE.0377

## Annex 4. Inception Report

December 2021

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## Introduction

<b>Project code:</b>	CE.0377
<b>Donor:</b>	The Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
<b>Period:</b>	17 Oct 2017 – 31 Dec 2021
<b>Evaluation Commissioner:</b>	IOM Mission in Albania
<b>Evaluation Manager:</b>	Mr Genci Pjetri, Programme Coordinator, IOM Mission in Albania
<b>Evaluators:</b>	Shiraz Jerbi, IOM Internal evaluator, IOM Mission in Italy
<b>Coach:</b>	Coaching guidance and support of Sarah Harris, Regional M&E Officer, IOM Regional Office in Vienna
<b>Interview dates:</b>	15 December 2021- 15 January 2022 (According to availability)

This inception report is provided for the Final internal evaluation of the programme “*Engage the Albanian Diaspora to the Social and Economic Development of Albania*”.

This evaluation will be completed at the end of the programme implementation. The evaluation will cover the entire period of implementation and will assess all of the programme’s components. The evaluation should include meetings carried out remotely with the most relevant stakeholders located in Tirana, in the south of Albania; Permet (Leuse, Benje and Kosine), Gjirokastra, and Vlora, in the north of Shkodra (Razem, Malesi e Madhe and Zadrime); as well as a selection from the relevant diaspora groups located in Italy, Belgium, UK, France, Portugal, Switzerland, USA, Germany, Turkey Canada, Netherlands, Austria and Luxembourg .

During the inception phase, the evaluator discussed the evaluation with the evaluation manager based on the **evaluation Terms of Reference (ToR)** (*see Annex 1*) and gathered available project documents from programme team as programme has not been uploaded on PRIMA. The evaluator compiled a list of documents available and additional to request, compiled a map of all stakeholders mentioned in the proposal and donor reports, and developed an Evaluation Matrix (*see Annex 5*) outlining the data sources and collection methods for responding to questions posed in the ToR.

The evaluator had a first call with the evaluation manager as well as with one of the programme coordinator part of the IOM team in Albania to review stakeholders, available documents, and discuss the upcoming steps of the evaluation.

This inception report presents a summary of those discussions and analysis to date, in preparation for the upcoming interviews to be conducted remotely during **15 December-15 January 2022**.

The inception report includes the following sections:

- ✓ Evaluation context
- ✓ Evaluation purpose
- ✓ Methodology
- ✓ Workplan
- ✓ Annexes including Evaluation terms of reference, Documents list, Stakeholder mapping, Agenda meetings, Evaluation matrix and Interview guides

## Evaluation context

IOM has been operationally present in Albania since 1992, while Albania became an IOM member state in 1993. Since then, IOM has become one of the main international partners of the Government of Albania, supporting its continuous progress and efforts in migration governance in line with Albania's priorities of European Union integration. IOM is a member of the UN Country Team (UNCT) since 2007. IOM actively contributes to the implementation of the GoA-UN Programme of Cooperation for Sustainable Development 2017-2021. IOM Albania works in four broad areas: (1) Migration Policy, Research and Legislation; (2) Migration Management; (3) Operations and Emergencies; and (4) Prevention of Violent Extremism / Countering of Violent Extremism (PVE/CVE).

As part of Migration Management, IOM Albania has been involved since 2015 on diaspora engagement programming. The diaspora entails great potential for Albania's development and the challenge for the stakeholders is to create an environment that encourages and supports diaspora engagement to the development of the home country. Nearly 1.7 million Albanians live outside the country, mostly in Europe, but also with significant presence in North America (USA and Canada) as well as other regions. The objective of this programme is to contribute to enhancing the engagement of Albanian diaspora to the development of Albania.

The objective of the programme "Engage the Albanian Diaspora to the Social and Economic Development of Albania" (Oct 2017 – Dec 2021), funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) is to enhance the engagement of the Albanian diaspora in the development of the country, and includes three outcomes with related outputs:

**Outcome 1:** Government of Albania (GoA) implements a comprehensive approach toward Diaspora engagement for development in line with the overall policy framework.

- Output 1.1: Officials from relevant GoA authorities have the structures, knowledge, resources, tools and information to implement diaspora engagement activities.

**Outcome 2:** GoA facilitates the engagement of Diaspora into institutional strengthening and territorial development through skills and know-how transfer.

- Output 2.1: A repository of available skills and knowledge of Diaspora in Italy (five selected regions), France and Belgium is available to be used as a basis for orienting policy development and implementation.
- Output 2.2: Fellowship schemes are implemented in order to directly contribute to strengthening institutional capacities on Diaspora engagement, in Albania and Italy, to support territorial development in Albania and to exchange know how.

**Outcome 3:** GoA facilitates the engagement of Diaspora into country development through investments.

- Output 3.1: The Diaspora has the means to engage as development agents for investment and employment generation in local communities.

The political context in Albania shifted considerably between the programme's inception and implementation, most notably with the creation of the State Ministry for Diaspora (SMD) resulting in a new principal focal point with whom the programme had to engage and cooperate. As a result, programme activities were shifted more towards developing capacity of the SMD which caused initial

delays in programme implementation. On 8 September 2021, after the last parliamentary elections, SMD, as institution, was eliminated.

A mid-term Programme Performance Review was carried out by IOM's Regional Office in Vienna covering October 2017 to November 2019 (report finalized in 30 November 2019).

## Evaluation purpose

The overall objective of the evaluation is to analyse how effectively and efficiently intended results were achieved and if so, how impactful and sustainable these achievements were in engaging Diaspora into the development of the country, and which were the main obstacles in achieving these objectives and lessons learned for future potential similar projects.

Additionally, the evaluation will assess the design of the intervention in terms of logical coherence and alignment to IOM strategies, as well as the coherence to other projects implemented by IOM.

IOM will share the evaluation with the donors of the programme and programme stakeholders to demonstrate the value of the programme, and the results and impact of its activities. IOM, the donor, and partners will also use the evaluation findings to inform the design and implementation of other similar projects.

The Evaluation will assess the performance of the programme based on the OECD-DAC criteria, namely: Relevance, Effectiveness, Coherence, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability as detailed in the evaluation Matrix (*see Annex 5*)

The evaluation should gather good practices and lessons learned that may be applicable to other similar projects and should also address cross-cutting issues of gender and environment.

## Methodology

The following data collection and analysis plans are proposed based on review of the TOR, programme documentation, stakeholders, and tentative agenda proposed by the Evaluation Manager. The plans are captured also in the Evaluation Matrix (*see Annex 5*).

### Data collection and analysis methods

#### Stakeholder list

The evaluator compiled a stakeholder list based on an initial list provided by the Evaluation Manager and supplemented by review of project documents (*see Annex 3*).

The list includes all persons that are identified to be involved in or impacted by the programme. This include staff in the IOM Country Office, staff in the IOM Regional Office, diaspora focal points, direct and indirect beneficiaries including grant recipients and Diaspora groups, governmental counterparts, programme partners, UN agencies and NGOs working on similar programmes, and the donor (AICS). Based on this, the evaluator is coordinating the agenda with the Mission to ensure prioritization of key stakeholders. The sampling strategy is outlined further below.

#### Data collection

Desk review: The evaluator was provided with extensive documents and monitoring data that provide solid foundational evidence for responding to the evaluation questions.

All existing documents are included in the Programme documentation List (*see Annex 2*).

Other data collection methods will include:

- ✓ Final event workshop: The evaluator will participate to the final event workshop planned on 14 December 2021 that will bring together all IOM staff and implementing partners that worked on the programme, to reflect on results, lessons learned, unmet needs and how to build on the results of the programme.
- ✓ Key informant interviews: Semi-structured interviews are planned with IOM staff, EU fellows, key partners (Diaspora associations and Italian NGOs/institutions), governmental counterparts and the donor.
- ✓ Focus group discussions: Focus group discussions are planned for diaspora focal points as well as indirect beneficiaries (Local producers and artisans benefitting from the grants).

The interviews and focus groups discussions will be recorded as to be able to verify information during the analysis phase.

#### Data analysis

The collected data, both quantitative and qualitative, will be triangulated through cross analysis of interview and focus groups notes, findings from documentation review and notes from the final event workshop. The evaluator will strive to ensure that assessments are objective and balanced, affirmations accurate and verifiable, and recommendations realistic, and to follow IOM Data Protection Principles, United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) norms and standards, and relevant ethical guidelines.

#### Sampling

The collection of data will happen remotely due to the short timeline and to COVID-19 restrictions. The stakeholders are present in different locations, including in Tirana, in the south of Albania; and Permet (Leuse, Benje and Kosine), Gjirokastra, and Vlora, in the north of Shkodra (Razem, Malesi e Madhe and Zadrima). Diaspora associations and Diaspora EU fellows are located in Italy, Belgium, UK, France, Portugal, Switzerland, USA, Germany, Turkey Canada, Netherlands, Austria and Luxembourg.

- ✓ Individual stakeholders semi-structured interviews including IOM staff, EU fellows, key partners (Diaspora associations and Italian NGOs/institutions), governmental counterparts and the donor.  
Semi-structured interviews will allow in-depth analysis based on detailed data from key informants, to support programme assessment according to the OECD-DAC criteria. The evaluator initially aims to meet with all key stakeholders prioritized in the stakeholder analysis (*see Annex 3*). The evaluator is coordinating with the Evaluation Manager to ensure that the priority ones are included and ensuring that IOM staff as well as diaspora focal points, supported by the programme, will be met before the closure of the programme (end of December 2021).
- ✓ Focus group discussions  
Focus groups discussions will be organized with diaspora focal points as well as indirect beneficiaries (Local producers and artisans benefitting from the grants) and will encourage dialogue and discussions among participants on specific questions.

The selection of individuals is being coordinated by evaluator with the Mission based on beneficiary lists.

#### Limitations and proposed mitigation strategies

There are several limitations to the data collection and analysis, as explained below:

- ✓ Timeline: As the programme ends by 31 December 2021, data collection needs to take place during holidays period, ensuring the participation of IOM staff and diaspora focal points. Data

collection and analysis should be completed by early February, as the final report should be submitted to the donor by March 2022.

- ✓ In person Vs Remote data collection: The collection of data will happen remotely due to the short timeline and to COVID-19 mobility restrictions. Stakeholders appear to be reachable remotely and favorable for online interviews.
- ✓ Governmental counterparts: The State Ministry for Diaspora (SMD) was one of the principal focal points with whom the programme had to engage. The SMD, as an institution, was however eliminated in September 2021 following the last parliamentary elections. Counterparts from SMD will probably not be able to participate to the interviews (the staff do not appear to be reachable and/or willing to participate). This will have an impact on the ability of the evaluator to gather information from the key partner under this programme; however, the evaluator will still gather a wide variety of perspectives from all other stakeholders, and will make sure to include other governmental counterparts and will assess the impact of the dissolution of such institution.
- ✓ Language: Several stakeholders might not be able to respond to the questions in English. The evaluator will also propose to conduct the interviews and focus group discussions in Italian, if respondents would be more comfortable with that.

## Workplan

The evaluation started on Thursday 2 December 2021, with a preliminary meeting with the evaluation manager (programme manager in this case) and a project coordinator from IOM Albania. On Monday 6 December, 2021 the desk review phase started.

Activity	Working Days	Responsible	Timeframe												
			December					January				February			
			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	1	2		
Preliminary meeting with RO Vienna Evaluation Officer and Evaluation manager at IOM Albania	1 day	Evaluator, Regional M&E Officer, Evaluation Manager													
Review project documents and relevant literature, prepare the inception report	3 days	Evaluator													
Finalizing inception report and the data collection agenda	3 days	Evaluator and PM													
Data collection	4 days	Evaluator													
Data analysis and Report drafting: Draft report and submit for feedback and further inputs	10 days	Evaluator, Regional M&E Officer, Evaluation Manager													

Finalization of the report : Submit final report along with two-page brief	2 days	Evaluator												
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## Annexes

- Annex 1. Evaluation terms of reference
- Annex 2. Document list
- Annex 3. Stakeholder list
- Annex 4. Agenda meetings
- Annex 5. Evaluation matrix
- Annex 6. Interview guides