

EXTERNAL EVALUATION

IOM PROJECT

**CAPACITY BUILDING, INFORMATION AND AWARENESS RAISING TOWARDS
ORDERLY MIGRATION IN THE WESTERN BALKANS**

EUROPEAID/124151/C/ACT/MULTI - (EC/AENEAS PROGRAMME)

FINAL REPORT

February 2010

STAKE *house* International HB

René Verduijn

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The IOM/EC AENEAS funded regional project ‘Capacity building, information and awareness raising towards orderly migration in the Western Balkans¹’ has contributed to promoting orderly migration within and from Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina (BiH), Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo under UNSCR No 1244, Montenegro and Serbia. The project has started in February 2008 and closed down by end of January 2010. The project’s objective was to foster local capacity to develop policy related to labor migration and provide migrants and would-be migrants with efficient information, advice and referral to appropriate services, thus preventing irregular migration and enhancing their opportunities for legal migration. IOM received funding in 2007 from a 2006 AENEAS funding line. Co-sponsors included the Governments of Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein and Switzerland.

The project consisted of the following 4 components:

1. Information, advice and referral services to migrants and potential migrants are provided through the regional network of Migrant Service Centres (MSCs). The MSCs are hosted by Public Employment Services (PES) and receive visitors daily. Project and PES staff provide (potential) migrants with personal assistance on the reality and risks of irregular migration and possibilities/procedures for work opportunities in the country and/or for legal emigration. In the vast majority of cases the assistance remains limited to the provision of information. Job mediation, a strong desire from many visitors is not part of the service package but is provided by some of the PESs.

2. Capacity building - The MSCs are embedded within identified local institutional structures, such as central and regional offices with PESs. Officials within these structures work in tandem with IOM staff and received on-the-job training within the daily activity of the MSCs throughout the project implementation. The project also promoted the development of relevant policy and good practice for countries of origin and destination in the context of current and projected foreign labour needs. These activities transferred know-how and expertise to policy makers and practitioners at both regional and national levels. The project received substantial technical (in-kind) assistance in support the training for policy makers through another IOM/OSCE project² that developed a set of training modules based on the ILO/IOM/OSCE Labour Migration Policies Handbook (LMP Handbook) and used this project and the WB region for testing the training modules. Technical experts from both IOM and ILO were used as facilitators and trainers.

3. Research - The results of daily profiling of migrants and potential migrants undertaken by the MSCs fed into the research report on legal emigration from the Western Balkans and regular updates in a project newsletter and statistical updates. A comprehensive regional study, the main activity under this component, has been commissioned to the Central European Forum for Migration and Population Research (CEFMR) in Warsaw, Poland. The CEFMR has analysed the migration potential from the region as well as of current migratory trends. The study highlights the challenges that lie ahead for the target governments and migrants towards optimizing the use of legal avenues for migrating and minimizing the risks of irregular movements. At the time the evaluation took place, the report was being finalized.

¹ Hereinafter referred to in the text as ‘the project’

² ‘Development of Practical Training Material on LMM’ Duration: Dec 2008-9

4. Networking at national and regional levels – This final component aimed at strengthened networking and dialogue among target WB governments and with EU and other countries such as Switzerland, USA, Canada and Australia on LMM. Non-governmental institutions, the private sector and academic institutions were also allegedly targeted.

It is important to note that the timing of this project has been excellent. It has taken place in a context where the WB countries are involved in negotiations with the EU towards accession. A pre-accession strategy offers a structured dialogue between the candidate countries and the EU institutions throughout the accession process, providing all the parties with a framework and the necessary instruments. The strong commitment by all government entities to update their laws, policies and practices could be felt throughout.

RELEVANCE

Conclusions:

1. The project is relevant to the strategic objectives of the implementing agency (IOM) and donor (AENEAS Programme);
2. The project through its MSCs provides relevant services to migrants and potential migrants as well as national policymakers in the WB;
3. The project's design through its activities and outputs are relevant to the project's objectives.
4. It is felt that the project design and implementation could have gained more from seeking complementarity between the different components.
5. As regards to objective 1 - *reduce irregular migration through information, and awareness raising* - all countries have succeeded in setting up MSCs within the context of the PESs and they are on course of surviving the project's termination date.
6. The activities and outputs under objective 2 – *enhance national capacity in LMM* – are also relevant and generally very much appreciated by the governmental counterparts
7. The main output in support of objective 3 – *increase knowledge and understanding of the migration trends in the WB* - a comprehensive regional study on migration flows in the WB - is undeniably relevant.
8. It is felt that the research component has been treated too much in isolation from the other objectives, in particular the local capacity building and networking at regional and national levels.
9. The fourth objective - *strengthen networking and dialogue* - has received the least attention.

Recommendations:

1. Project management is requested in future to look for genuine complementarity between the different components to maximize results.
2. The research component could have benefited from a larger contribution from institutions from within the region.
3. Interesting case studies could have been developed by a network of civil society partners, which would have benefitted the readability of project publications by adding stories with a human face.

EFFICIENCY

Conclusions:

- The project implementation has been conducted in a very efficient manner.
- The Steering Committee has been the main regional project coordination mechanism.
- The WB government counterparts have been absent from the Steering Committee meetings.
- A more traditional Steering Committee with senior representation from government counterparts would have likely benefited the project's vision for regional networking and capacity development in the medium term with an even stronger role for local stakeholders.
- All questionnaires, interviews in the field are unanimous that the governments really own these MSCs and have a strong interest in these regional and national training workshops.
- Project activities have been implemented on time, and with sufficient technical and financial support.
- This project offers an excellent example of IOM's technical and operational capacity with a strong presence in the WB.
- Most of the IOM country missions have significant country programmes, with the exception of Croatia perhaps, and synergies with other projects to support vulnerable migrant groups (e.g. skills development for Roma and anti-trafficking projects) are easily made.
- The implementation of the training on LMM for policymakers has been implemented quite efficiently.
- The close collaboration with another project led by IOM's Labour and Facilitated Migration Division (LFM) to develop and pilot training material based on ILO/ IOM/ OSCE handbook on LMP has been mutually beneficial and most of the services have been provided in-kind.
- These national training workshops only have a limited reach among the potential audience of policy makers and practitioners.

- A ToT training, organized under the IOM/OSCE LMM Training Modules project, was conducted to maximize the impact of the training in the region.
- Just under EURO 500K or just over 35 per cent of the total project budget (1.4 million EURO) has been allocated to project salaries.
- It is encouraging to see that so much of the funding actually reaches the national levels. As a principal, funds should follow the decentralized mode of implementation and IOM is setting a very good example.
- The administrative costs for IOM at 7 per cent seems fair and reasonable, especially given the extensive communication, technical capacity building, research and networking that has taken place under this project.
- The project has also shown enough flexibility in addressing well-justified priorities put forward by the counterparts.

Recommendations:

- It is recommended to the project management team that the SC should meet another time in 2010 to exchange experiences and document lessons learned.
- The use of a SC in the traditional sense would include government representatives and should be considered in the future as it contributes immediately to regional networking and dialogue.
- In the future, a strategic and well-placed structure that provides strategic oversight over LMM issues could be set up in partnership between IOM, ILO, MARRI³, and other relevant partners.
- It is recommended that the LMM training module developed by IOM-LFM should make use of self learning/ distance learning or self-paced e-learning to increase the scale in capacity building.
- the networking component of the project would be greatly improved if online-communities around relevant topics (MSCs, policies, strategies and action plans on LMM) could be created and facilitated by IOM and/or ILO.
- A case could be made for the recruitment of a part-time communication expert in Budapest to enhance the quality of the website, newsletters, and facilitation of the creation of on-line communities.

³ The Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative (MARRI) in Skopje, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

EFFECTIVENESS

Conclusions:

- MSCs have been successful in reaching out to migrants and potential migrants, informing them how to legally access jobs or take up studies abroad.
- The project website www.migrant-servicecentres.org has been a success, with a growing number of visitors every month (6,600 Unique Visitors at the time of the evaluation for the month of December 2009).
- Governments are pleased with the provision of reliable information about legal requirements to emigrate to their citizens.
- All MSC visitors are warned of the dangers of irregular migration.
- Anecdotal evidence suggests that actually very few MSC visitors succeed to utilize the legal channels available for migration (mostly employment/ study) as summarized in the 40 country fact sheets.
- The OJT has been successful despite perhaps too few staff being trained.
- The information campaign conducted by the national IOM missions is generally a success.
- The project has managed well considering, but clearly could have profited from additional support in the area of communication in MRF Budapest.
- The project has been successful in enhancing the national capacity in LMM.
- The project has produced a solid publication on labour migration trends in the WB.
- Networking has been limited to ILO and associate partners, with NGOs only used as channels of distribution for information targeting potential migrants.
- The partnership with ILO has been meaningful but could have been more effective.

Recommendations:

- Continue the website but increase its scale and expand the on-line community to cover all MSCs in the world in order for MSC staff to maximize the exchange of experiences.
- Where possible, facilitate the inclusion of job mediation in PESs as that is the main aim of all visits to the MSC.
- Hire a part-time communication expert that facilitates the creation of an on-line LMM community.

- Adapt the LLM training module, developed by LFM, into a self-learning tuition package for distribution among a large audience. The courses can be facilitated on-line, with communication channeled through a web forum and regular email.
- Develop spin-off publications from the main regional study. They would include a summary of the main report, while the propensity study would also be published separately.
- Closer cooperation between IOM and ILO in the area of LMM needs a formal institutional structure that pushes actors towards greater use of complementary strengths.

SUSTAINABILITY

Conclusions:

1. The MSCs are likely to be sustained by WB governments over time with similar services to be added to regional/local employment services.
2. The capacity building towards LMM has been valuable and the ToT undertaken by the complimentary IOM/OSCE Training project has created a small pool of experts who could continue to conduct similar trainings.
3. While the main publication under this component was written by CEFMR, the research component has not used any local stakeholders to conduct research in the WB region.
4. The project has spent insufficient resources towards the development of networking and dialogue in the region. This is in part explained by the lack of time of the project coordinator in MRF Budapest, and the focus of the entire project management team to implement the other components on time.
5. There has been a lack in the use and strengthening of an appropriate regional inter-governmental institutional structure as a key ally in the promotion of regular migration and safeguarding migrants' rights.

Recommendations:

1. It is felt that in any follow-up, the project management team should be given more time to reflect on the work plan and identify spin-off activities and explore linkages with local partners that would increase chances for sustainability.
2. The capacity building component of a possible follow-up project should focus on the hands-on facilitation of ongoing policy formulation processes and facilitation of LMM in the region.
3. In order to reach large numbers of policymakers and practitioners it may be opportune to create and facilitate on-line communities that are supported by self-learning or e-learning courses.
4. Use local NGOs with research capacity to a larger extent and contribute to a viable civil society.

5. Explore opportunities with, and where possible strengthen the position of MARRI as a WB inter-governmental organ in the area of LMM.

Strengths:

- IOM's strong technical and operational capacity
- IOM's extensive presence in the WB
- IOM and ILO technical expertise in LMM
- Commitment of staff
- Support and interest from donor community
- High relevance to WB governments due to preparations for EU accession
- Close cooperation with, and high ownership from relevant government counterparts
- Solid regional study on migration trends in the WB
- High number of (potential) migrants reached through MSC and project website

Challenges:

- Budgeting for a regional project with large discrepancies in implementation costs at national level.
- Handling of EU budget format and rules together with the new introduction of PRISM as IOM's new financial management system during the initial stages of the project.
- Lack of sufficient resources for project coordinator to provide technical oversight for all four project components
- Minimal involvement of civil society within the WB

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all IOM staff from MRF Budapest, HQ Geneva and the IOM country missions in the Western Balkans for the trust and support given to this mission. I would like to thank the project staff, partner and associates for taking the time to complete the questionnaires and return them at short notice before the end of the year. I would like to thank ILO staff in Geneva for their valuable inputs as well.

A special thanks to all the stakeholders met and interviewed in Budapest, Geneva, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia in the past two months. Through our discussions I received a much better appreciation of the operating modalities, opportunities and challenges that faced the project. I am grateful for the hospitality shown and sometimes frank discussions we have had.

On the basis of our professional dialogue, I hope that this external evaluation report captures some of the major findings, lessons learned and recommendations that will help guide future work carried out in follow-up to the current labour migration project.

René Verduijn

External Evaluator

STAKE *house* International HB

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
I INTRODUCTION	13
1.1 Overview	13
1.2 Purpose of the evaluation	14
1.3 Methodology.....	15
1.4 Outline of the report	16
CHAPTER II RELEVANCE	17
2.0 Introduction	17
2.1 Relevance of project to key partners (IOM and EC AENEAS Programme).....	17
2.2 Relevance to its intended beneficiaries	18
2.3 Activities, outputs relevant to project objectives.....	19
2.4 Conclusions and recommendations	20
CHAPTER III EFFICIENCY	21
3.0 Introduction	21
3.1 Project’s coordination structure.....	21
3.2 Project monitoring tools	23
3.3 Project implementation.....	24
3.4 Allocation of funds	25
3.5 Conclusions and recommendations	26
CHAPTER IV EFFECTIVENESS	27
4.0 Introduction	28
4.1 Information, awareness raising and communication	28
4.2 Capacity building.....	30

4.3	Research	32
4.4	Networking and dialogue.....	32
4.5	Conclusions and recommendations	34
CHAPTER V SUSTAINABILITY		35
5.0	Introduction	35
5.1	MSCs	35
5.2	Capacity building.....	36
5.3	Research	36
5.4	Networking and dialogue.....	37
5.5	Conclusions and recommendations	38

ACRONYMS

AENEAS	EC Grant Programme for technical and financial assistance to third countries in the field of migration and asylum
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CEFMR	Central European Forum for Migration and Population Research
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ILO	International Labour Organization of the United Nations
LMM	Labour Migration Management
MARRI	Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative in the WB
MRF	Mission with Regional Functions
MSC	Migrant Service Centre
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
OJT	On-the-job training
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PEA	Private Employment Agencies
PES	Public Employment Services
SC	Steering Committee
ToT	Training of Trainers
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WB	Western Balkan region

I INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The IOM/EC AENEAS funded regional project ‘Capacity building, information and awareness raising towards orderly migration in the Western Balkans⁴’ has contributed to promoting orderly migration within and from Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina (BiH), Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo under UNSCR No 1244, Montenegro and Serbia. The project has started in February 2008 and closed down by end of January 2010. The project’s objective was to foster local capacity to develop policy related to labor migration and provide migrants and would-be migrants with efficient information, advice and referral to appropriate services, thus preventing irregular migration and enhancing their opportunities for legal migration. IOM received funding in 2007 from a 2006 AENEAS funding line. Co-sponsors included the Governments of Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein and Switzerland.

The project builds on experiences of a project of a very similar nature, i.e. “Promoting orderly migration in the Western Balkans through the Establishment of Regional Migrant Service Centers (MSCs) providing information and migration related services” funded by EC-B7-667 (AENEAS precedent) in 2003. The main difference is that in the period 2004-6, the MSCs were hosted by the national IOM missions. Then, the project managed to reach an audience of about 6,000 (potential) migrants. There has been a gap of about two years between the two projects. A project timeline with an overview of important outputs and events have been provided as Annex 1.

The project consists of the following 4 components:

1. Information, advice and referral services to migrants and potential migrants are provided through the regional network of Migrant Service Centres (MSCs). The MSCs are hosted by Public Employment Services (PES) and receive visitors daily. Project and PES staff provide (potential) migrants with personal assistance on the reality and risks of irregular migration and possibilities/procedures for work opportunities in the country and/or for legal emigration. In the vast majority of cases the assistance remains limited to the provision of information. Job mediation, a strong desire from many visitors is not part of the service package but is provided by some of the PESs.

2. Capacity building - The MSCs are embedded within identified local institutional structures, such as central and regional offices with PESs. Officials within these structures work in tandem with IOM staff and received on-the-job training within the daily activity of the MSCs throughout the project implementation. The project also promoted the development of relevant policy and good practice for countries of origin and destination in the context of current and projected foreign labour needs. These activities transferred know-how and expertise to policy makers and practitioners at both regional and national levels. The project received substantial technical and financial assistance in support the training for policy makers through another IOM/OSCE project⁵ that developed a set of training modules based on the

⁴ Hereinafter referred to in the text as ‘the project’

⁵ ‘Development of Practical Training Material on LMM’ Duration: Dec 2008-9

ILO/IOM/OSCE Labour Migration Policies (LMP) Handbook and used this project and the WB region for testing the training modules. Technical experts from both IOM and ILO were used as facilitators and trainers.

3. Research - The results of daily profiling of migrants and potential migrants undertaken by the MSCs fed into the research report on legal emigration from the Western Balkans and regular updates in a project newsletter and statistical reports. A comprehensive regional study, the main activity under this component, has been commissioned to the Central European Forum for Migration and Population Research (CEFMR) in Warsaw, Poland. The CEFMR has analysed the migration potential from the region as well as of current migratory trends. The study highlights the challenges that lie ahead for the target governments and migrants towards optimizing the use of legal avenues for migrating and minimizing the risks of irregular movements. At the time the evaluation took place, the report was being finalized.

4. Networking at national and regional levels – This final component aims at strengthened networking and dialogue among target WB governments and with EU and other countries such as Switzerland, USA, Canada and Australia on labour migration. Non-governmental institutions, the private sector and academic institutions were also allegedly targeted.

It is important to note at the start of this evaluation report that the timing of this project has been excellent. It has taken place in a context where the WB countries are involved in negotiations with the EU towards accession. A pre-accession strategy offers a structured dialogue between the candidate countries and the EU institutions throughout the accession process, providing all the parties with a framework and the necessary instruments. One of the instruments available pertains to pre-accession assistance.⁶ The strong commitment by all government entities to update their laws, policies and practices could be felt throughout.

1.2 Purpose of the evaluation

In order to review the success of the project, an external evaluation has been commissioned to assess the relevance, performance and sustainability of the project. The impact is outside the scope of this evaluation. The evaluation was asked to look at all components with particular emphasis on component 1. More specifically, the evaluation analysed⁷:

- The extent to which the project implementation was *effective* in line with expected results and indicators, and achieved its objectives/project purposes;
- If the coordination mechanisms in place were *relevant* and *effective*;
- If the target groups selected were *relevant* and if the project reached them *effectively* as planned. The evaluation will also examine if the project reached any indirect beneficiaries and if it was *relevant* and *effective*;
- The support received by local institutions;
- The *efficiency* of the project implementation and monitoring, in particular financial reporting;
- If the participating governmental institutions have the financial capacity to *sustain* the benefits of the project on a longer-term basis.

⁶ As an important step note that the EU Council of Ministers for Interior and Justice abolished visa requirements for citizens of the Republic of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia on 30 November 2009, which took effect on 19 December 2009. This allows their nationals to enter the EU freely on a tourist visa.

⁷ More details on the tasks requested from IOM can be found in the terms of reference, available as Annex 2

The review addressed the above questions by posing the following three generic questions:

- What is the current status of the implementation process?
- How successful is the project?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the project?

Based on a comprehensive project review, the evaluation attempted to draw conclusions and recommendations for improvements in the project design, management and coordination. This may be useful to IOM in running a follow-up to the current project; the development and management of similar projects in the region and beyond; the recipient governments in the Western Balkans and the non-governmental stakeholders involved. It is worth noting that ideas for a possible follow-up have already started and initial support from donors such as the EC seems likely.

1.3 Methodology

The following methodology was applied:

1. A **desk review** as input into the evaluation process comprising the following documentation:
 - (i) IOM project document, any other reports generated by the project (progress reports, studies, newsletters, etc.);
 - (ii) relevant policy documents as well as previous evaluations, reviews and studies of relevance to this evaluation; and
 - (iii) information available on the project's website www.migrantservicecentres.org ;
2. **Stakeholder interviews** were carried out in Budapest (IOM MRF), Geneva (IOM and ILO HQ) and three project locations in the Western Balkans, namely Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia.⁸

The selection criteria used for the latter three included:

- I. Countries selected should provide important lessons for the evaluation;
 - II. The three countries should represent different stages in socio-economic development so showing diverse (low and high) migration potential in and out of the WB;
 - III. Popularity of MSCs as measured through the number of visitors; and
 - IV. Practical reasons such as budget limitations, which prevented additional and extended visits to field locations.
3. **Questionnaires** were administered to a range of stakeholders to obtain feedback on the relative success of the project. A comprehensive questionnaire was distributed among primary stakeholders (such as project

⁸ A list of officials met during the field missions can be found under Annex 3

management in Budapest and WB) whereas secondary stakeholders (such as donors and MSC counterpart staff) received a shorter version. These were compiled, analyzed and the results incorporated into the final report. The questionnaires have been included in the inception report (Annex 4).

4. **Draft inception report** where all parties agreed on specific objectives, methodology and a detailed evaluation framework that guided the review process (Annex 4).⁹

5. Draft of **Final Report** including conclusions and recommendations, incorporating comments and suggestions from IOM.

Data collection strategy

The data collection strategy will use a number of tools to gain a deeper understanding of the strengths, weaknesses, and overall results and outcomes of the project. Examples of tools used follow:

- ✓ Desk review of background documents specific to the programme (Annex 5);
- ✓ Desk review of literature and documentation of activities that have been influenced by the programme - value added impact (Annex 5);
- ✓ Face-to-face and telephone interviews;
- ✓ Questionnaire surveys of IOM and ILO staff at HQ, Regional, and Country levels;
- ✓ Questionnaire surveys of donors, government counterparts, NGOs;
- ✓ Field visits to project sites in three WB countries;
- ✓ MSC registration database from all 7 sites.

1.4 Outline of the report

The structure of this report follows the widely agreed OECD/DAC evaluation criteria. Therefore chapter I provides the background and methodology used. **Chapter II** looks into the relevance of the project towards the strategic objectives of IOM and the EC AENEAS programme, its main beneficiaries and reviews the relevance of the project's activities and outputs versus its objectives. **Chapter III** discusses the project's coordination structure, monitoring tools, the manner of project implementation and allocation and use of resources. **Chapter IV** discusses the effectiveness of the project or extent to which the project has achieved its objectives or is likely to attain its objectives. The chapter provides a review of all four project components. During the review factors that contributed to the success and/or failure to achieve the objectives will be mentioned. **Chapter V** reviews the project components on the basis of sustainability. This tries to measure if the benefits of activities are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn. The report does not review the impact of this project as it goes beyond the scope and means of this evaluation.

⁹ This includes the project's evaluation framework, which combines the important elements of the *logical framework* – project objectives, result areas, indicators of success and ways of verification and the key questions for each result area that the evaluation is set out to answer.

Each and every chapter has a short-list of conclusions and recommendations. The conclusions and recommendations from all chapters have been combined into an executive summary at the start of the report.

CHAPTER II RELEVANCE

2.0 Introduction

In the following chapter one of the key evaluation criteria will be used to review the relevance of the project design, involvement of the right implementing agency and relevant project partners and associates involved. This chapter will also look at the relevance of the funding source and relevance of the activities and outputs to the main beneficiaries.

2.1 Relevance of project to key partners (IOM and EC AENEAS Programme)

The project's principal objective:

‘Develop and integrate efficient information, advice and referral services for migrants in western Balkans to assist their informed migration decisions while fostering local capacity and knowledge in the area of labour migration policy and practice.’

proves to be relevant to the strategic objectives of IOM, in particular points 5, 6, 7 and 12 of IOM's listed strategic focus¹⁰:

5. ‘To support States, migrants and communities in addressing the challenges of irregular migration, including through research and analysis into root causes, sharing information and spreading best practices, as well as facilitating development-focused solutions.’
6. ‘To be a primary reference point for migration information, research, best practices, data collection, compatibility and sharing.’
7. ‘To promote, facilitate and support regional and global debate and dialogue on migration, including through the International Dialogue on Migration, so as to advance understanding of the opportunities and challenges it presents, the identification and development of effective policies for addressing those challenges and to identify comprehensive approaches and measures for advancing international cooperation.’
12. ‘To support the efforts of States in the area of labour migration, in particular short term movements, and other types of circular migration.’

¹⁰ as listed on the IOM website <http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/about-iom/mission/lang/en>

The general objective of the EC AENEAS programme¹¹ was to incorporate issues of asylum and migration systematically in its political dialogues with third countries, to propose comprehensive approaches on migration and to mainstream these questions in its development cooperation strategies. The 2006 grant supported these countries' efforts to better manage migration flows in all its aspects. This includes the development of policy and legislation and the public awareness raising of the advantages of legal migration and the consequences of illegal migration among so-called third countries. This project is evidently in line with these set of objectives. The duration of the AENEAS programme, initially created for the period 2004-2008, was in the end shortened to three years (2004-2006) during which migration-related projects have been financed for an amount of about € 120 million.¹²

The project received additional financial and technical support from a number of bi-lateral donors. They include the Governments of Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein and Switzerland. It is no surprise that these countries, excluding Liechtenstein perhaps, are popular destinations for the people from the WB. Support to this project is conform with the aim of promoting awareness among potential migrants in the WB on the regulations for family reunification or find jobs in one of their respective countries. The contribution from bi-lateral donors such as Germany is important as most labour market agreements are bi-lateral in nature.

2.2 Relevance to its intended beneficiaries

As stated in Chapter I, migration issues are relevant to the region of the WB as access to the EU labour market is viewed as one of the few opportunities for future socio-economic growth in the region. A structured pre-accession dialogue between the candidate countries and the EU institutions has provided all parties with a framework, instruments and work plans. This includes pre-accession assistance to update the policy environment¹³

The preparation by the PESs to join EURES – The European Job Mobility Portal - is one of the relevant areas to this project. The services provided by the MSCs fit in very nicely with these preparations. EURES brings together PESs across the EU in order to facilitate mobility across national borders on the European labour market.

A number of the geographical entities have recently adopted migration policies, strategies and implementation plans (Albania, Serbia, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for instance), while others are in the process of formulating new ones. The project's training on LMM – regional round table followed by national training workshops subdivided the area according to the LMP handbook in nine separate modules. The awareness raising and training that took place has led to a more balanced view on the positive and negative aspects of migration for society. There is ample anecdotal evidence from the questionnaires as well as from interviews with government officials during the field visits that this awareness has led to, and continues to set the migration policy agenda by public institutions in the WB. At the same time the networking, mostly at national

¹¹ As described in the following document http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/migration-asylum/documents/aeneas_2004_2006_overview_en.pdf

¹² The project responded to the last call of 2006, was approved in 2007 and started early 2008.

¹³ As an important step forward, note that the EU Council of Ministers for Interior and Justice abolished visa requirements for citizens of the Republic of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia on 30 November 2009, which took effect on 19 December 2009. This allows their nationals to enter the EU freely on a tourist visa.

level has also enabled a range of stakeholders, within and without the government, to participate in the process of updating policies, strategies and action plans. Although this project provides no guarantee for continued networking an excellent start has been made, with many of the stakeholders sincerely involved.

Finally, the ultimate beneficiaries, the migrants and potential migrants have been generally pleased with the services provided, according to the monitoring conducted by MSC staff, which was confirmed during the field visits. If anything, the housing of the MSC inside the PESs provides the customer base with easy access to an additional service. The fact that the MSC is not able to directly provide job mediation is often a disappointment as the search for a job abroad was the prime motivation for the visit. On the other hand, once properly understood, the increased awareness on the risks irregular (illegal) migrants are exposed to, as well as having access to precise and accurate information on how to migrate to 40 popular destinations in and outside the EU (Canada, the USA, Australia and New Zealand to mention the important ones) is very much appreciated. And all of this is available to the visitor *pro bono*, including personal advice and an invitation to visit again at anytime (during office hours).

2.3 Activities, outputs relevant to project objectives

The activities and outputs are thought to be generally relevant to achieving the project objectives, in particular objectives 1 and 2. As regards to objective 1 - *reduce irregular migration through information, and awareness raising* - all countries have succeeded in setting up MSCs within the context of the PESs and they are on course of surviving the project's termination date. In fact, there are indications that many will be expanded upon. The website, with information available in all major local languages has made access to the right information much easier for many.

This corresponds well with the characteristics described in IOM's 2009 quick assessment on MSCs worldwide in support of the Global Forum on Migration for Development in 2009. Migrants or potential migrants are often not aware of their rights (particularly their rights in relation to employment, and access to public services), or of the possibilities and procedures for regular migration. Such an information gap can therefore lead to the use of irregular means of migration, which may lead to their exploitation and abuse (Source: IOM 2009).

Similarly, to raise general awareness among target groups, the information and awareness campaigns implemented by the national project teams are useful means to reach their audience. Perhaps, more extensive use of direct messages to educate the public should be made rather than emphasizing the MSCs as a center for information all the time. For one, it is not clear if the MSC will continue under the same name beyond the scope of this project in February 2010, which could reduce the impact of the messages used.¹⁴

The activities and outputs under objective 2 – *enhance national capacity in LMM* – is also relevant and generally very much appreciated by the governmental counterparts. Synergy with another IOM/OSCE training project has also provided additional Training-of-trainers (ToT) training for some of the participants from the national training events. This also includes the translation of the handbook on LMM by the project and their training modules in all major WB languages, which has served as a reference for some of the recently emerging policy documents and action plans.

¹⁴ For instance, a simple message could be created for potential migrants from the three countries that have recently gained access to the EU (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia). It is widely believed that a tourist visa allows you to access gainful employment in the EU.

One could possibly suggest the use of additional activities regarding self-learning or e-learning modules for policy makers and practitioners. It is important to aim for a larger audience using modern didactical instruments and web tools using training material that has been piloted and fully adapted to the WB environment.

The main output in support of objective 3 – *increase knowledge and understanding of the migration trends in the WB* - a comprehensive regional study on migration flows in the WB - is undeniably relevant. Whereas the academic study¹⁵ provides much detail on the historical trends of the migration flows, relevant policy frameworks in the WB as well as an interesting propensity study of (potential) migrants in the WB, this component could have perhaps benefited from a larger contribution from institutions from within the region. It is felt that this component has been treated a bit too much in isolation from the other objectives, in particular the local capacity building and networking at regional and national levels. Perhaps interesting case studies - adding more local knowledge could have been collected by civil society partners, which would have created links and strengthened networks in addition to benefitting the readability of the large publication by adding stories with a human face.

The fourth objective - *strengthen networking and dialogue* - has received perhaps the least resources. Given the short time span of the project and busy work plan, it would be fully justified to look for networking opportunities while implementing the 3 main objectives. The evaluation team feels that this has been true mostly for the first and second objective but that more could have been accomplished under objective 3.

2.4 Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions:

1. The project is relevant to the strategic objectives of the implementing agency (IOM) and donor (AENEAS Programme);
2. The project through its MSCs provides relevant services to migrants and potential migrants as well as national policymakers in the WB;
3. The project's design through its activities and outputs are relevant to the project's objectives.
4. It is felt that the project design and implementation could have gained more from seeking complementarity between the different components.
5. As regards to objective 1 - *reduce irregular migration through information, and awareness raising* - all countries have succeeded in setting up MSCs within the context of the PESs and they are on course of surviving the project's termination date.
6. The activities and outputs under objective 2 – *enhance national capacity in LMM* – is also relevant and generally very much appreciated by the governmental counterparts
7. The main output in support of objective 3 – *increase knowledge and understanding of the migration trends in the WB* - a comprehensive regional study on migration flows in the WB - is undeniably relevant.

¹⁵ Note that as of December 2009 the evaluation team has only been able to review a draft of the publication

8. It is felt that the research component has been treated too much in isolation from the other objectives, in particular the local capacity building and networking at regional and national levels.
9. The fourth objective - *strengthen networking and dialogue* - has received the least attention.

Recommendations:

1. Project management is requested in future to look for genuine complementarity between the different components to maximize results.
2. The research component could have benefited from a larger contribution from institutions from within the region.
3. Perhaps interesting case studies could have been developed by a network of civil society partners, which would have benefitted the readability of project publications by adding stories with a human face.

CHAPTER III EFFICIENCY

3.0 Introduction

The following chapter discusses the efficiency of the project's coordination structure, monitoring tools (and financial reporting), the manner of project implementation and allocation and use of resources.

3.1 Project's coordination structure

The project team responsible for the implementation of the 1.2 million EURO regional project consisted of 5 discernable entities:

1. IOM MRF Budapest (overall responsible):
 - a. Regional project coordinator (50 per cent funded by the project)
 - b. Head of regional support (10 per cent funded).
 - c. Financial and admin support (15 per cent funded)
2. IOM WB country missions (with main focus on objectives 1 and 2):
 - a. National project coordinator (30 per cent funded by project)
 - b. MSC assistant (100 per cent funded)
 - c. Admin support (2 days a month)
3. IOM Brussels
 - a. 2 technical experts (2x 10 percent funded by the project)

4. *IOM HQ (responsible for capacity building component for policy makers):*
 - a. *The Labour and Facilitated Migration Division (LFM) developed all training material based on ILO/ IOM/ OSCE handbook on LMM.*¹⁶
5. ILO HQ (co-responsible for capacity building component for policy makers)
 - a. Technical support from the Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour and the International Migration Programme (2 days a month)
 - b. Admin support (1 day a month)

A full overview of the project management structure, including who is and who is not part of the SC can be viewed in Annex 6. A list of partners and associates can be found in Annex 7.

The Steering Committee (SC) has been the main coordination structure used by the project team. SC members included the project management team from Budapest, national coordinators from 7 WB IOM missions, relevant ILO and IOM representatives from Geneva and local representatives from donors. The meetings focused on a timely project implementation. The meetings were organized at four different locations in the WB. The SC met 4 times in total during the project life span with the last one being organized in June 2009. It would be recommendable to organize another such meeting before end of the project to allow all stakeholders to participate and exchange experiences and document lessons learned.

In a more customary setting, a SC provides much more strategic oversight to support the management team. SC members would be selected from senior representatives representing all major stakeholders. Therefore, the title of project coordination meeting would have been a more appropriate in this case. It is noteworthy that the government as the main beneficiary has been absent from these meetings. Alternatively, in a more traditional SC government representatives could have replaced the national coordinators and altogether would have provided more strategic guidance to the project management. They may also have insisted on earlier action for new donor funding to fund a follow-up phase and prevent a major gap to occur between phases. It is felt that this would also have facilitated further communication and exchange of experiences between government representatives in the region, which would have been an important element to achieve objective 4: regional networking.¹⁷

Perhaps such a strategic and well-placed structure that provides LMM strategic oversight could be set up in partnership between IOM, MARRI¹⁸, ILO and other relevant partners.

¹⁶ The development of the training material and subsequent travel budget for trainers to pilot training module and undertake the TOT in the WB was funded separately, which is highlighted in text by using *italic*.

¹⁷ The evaluators understand the difficulty to compose a steering committee with appropriate senior government representation in the short time span of 2 year project. This may in fact prevent an efficient implementation. On the other hand, it is pertinent that early commitment from the main counterparts through their participation in meetings show ownership of the process and provide guidance towards sustainability of the activities.

¹⁸ The Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative (MARRI) in Skopje, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Furthermore, as project associates, governments were also not obliged to sign any contract at the start of the project. This raises some issues. One, this could explain in part why the project has seen such a timely implementation as there has been no delay in waiting for the necessary approvals.¹⁹ Two, it brings up the question if there is real buy-in from the governments involved. And that is clearly the case. All questionnaires, interviews in the field are unanimous that the governments really own these MSCs and have a strong interest in these regional and national training workshops, where essential exchanges and networking takes place. So, perhaps signed documents do not tell the whole story. It is worthwhile to mention that all 7 IOM countries missions are close to signing a contract with their counterparts at the end of the project. This contract pertains to the transfer of MSC equipment to the government and the commitment of the government to continue MSC services when the project has been terminated.

3.2 *Project monitoring tools*

Main communication tools used for monitoring purposes include standard email, phone, SMS and Skype phone and teleconferencing. The project coordinator has also used the tool of an internal quarterly progress report to monitor progress of the implementation at the country level. While, a standard format has been used (that includes problems engaged by the local team and solutions presented or taken and main activities planned for the next period), the level of detail presented is at times disappointing and activities are often reported in more than 1 quarter. Perhaps a more individual approach is needed, where the generic progress report is adjusted to reflect the country context and specific weaknesses.²⁰

The monitoring undertaken by the project of registered MSC visitors has been very useful. They clearly provide indications of particular groups amenable to migration using characteristics such as age, education, gender, etc. it should be possible to go beyond in any follow-up, the project gives more attention to the profile of visitors, perhaps sub-contracting civil society to monitor a number of visitors over time that would provide more in-depth knowledge on their profile, behavior and aspirations. Relevant work in this regard is conducted by Grupa 484 in Serbia. It would be beneficial to also know more about their real needs as (potential) migrants, which the project (or implementing agencies and partner organizations for that matter) could help address. Collectively, these story lines or case studies from the region would provide a welcome indication of the most up-to-date migration situation in the WB, an area that was only partly covered by the regional study.

Probably the most valuable monitoring tools for the project coordinator has been the SC meetings where a full day could be spent face-to-face exchanges and fine-tuning of project budgets and activities.

A mid-term financial report has been prepared and submitted to the EU as scheduled. One budget re-allocation has been approved.

¹⁹ This is normal procedure for most UN agencies.

²⁰ This further underlines the need for the project coordinator to visit all countries at least once, as from these reports comprehensive monitoring is difficult.

3.3 Project implementation

Generally, project activities have been implemented on time, and with sufficient technical and financial support. The interviews conducted with the project team and project counterparts leave no doubt in the evaluators' minds. This project offers an excellent example of IOM's operational and technical capacity with a strong presence in the WB. It is perhaps even more remarkable if one knows that the position of regional project coordinator in Budapest has changed three times as well the political sensitivities that still remain among the participating regional geographic entities.

The efficiency is greatly supported by the decentralized infrastructure that IOM owns in the WB. IOM has missions in all 7 geographical entities. Communication with government counterparts is frequent and is generally perceived as beneficial to both. Most of the IOM country missions have significant country programmes, perhaps with the exception of Croatia, and synergies with other projects to support vulnerable migrant groups (e.g. skills development for Roma and anti-trafficking projects) are easily made.

The support to the so-called MSCs is not unique to the WB environment. There are MSCs or similarly named places to inform migrants and potential migrants all over the world, not all operated by IOM. A recent review by IOM found that they generally provide an independent and impartial structure through which migrants are able to obtain accurate information on: legal migration procedures; rights and responsibilities that migrants have throughout the migration process; and information on how to protect themselves so that migration is a positive experience (IOM 2009).

The implementation of the LMM training for policymakers and practitioners has been implemented quite efficiently. Large round table discussions at a regional meeting on LMM in Tirana have informed the agendas for a 5 days technical training in each of the 7 WB entities. These were jointly facilitated and delivered by technical experts from IOM and ILO. The close collaboration with the another project led by IOM's LFM to develop and pilot training material based on ILO/ IOM /OSCE LMP Handbook has been mutually beneficial and most of the services were provided in-kind.

A ToT organized by the IOM/OSCE training project was conducted very recently in Tirana, with participation from individuals who had participated in the national training workshops. This emphasized the realization that these national training workshops will only have a limited reach among the potential audience of policy makers and practitioners. There is also the cost aspect to consider. Organizing these face-to-face meetings can be rewarding but are also very expensive to organize. Travel costs and DSA provision for participants all need to be budgeted for. In this respect, a suggestion can be made for distance learning or self-learning modules, as these are more and more used as a key didactical tool that could dramatically increase the scale of training. This offers (through CD-Rom and internet) to support capacity building, OJT and workshops at all levels. The only requirement is to embrace an open source approach for the organizations involved.

The entire budget on research (EURO 60K) has been sub-contracted to one research institute for the preparation of a regional study on labour migration in the WB. This is an efficient way of ensuring that a proper output is obtained. IOM Budapest issued a call for proposals, and a selection was made from a shortlist of interested service providers.

Finally, the networking component of the project would be greatly improved if online-communities around relevant topics (MSCs, policies, strategies and action plans on labour migration) could be created and facilitated by IOM and/or ILO. The maintenance of these fora does not require large additional investments.

3.4 Allocation of funds

The largest budget item concerns salaries for the project team in Budapest and the 7 missions in the WB. Just under EURO 500K or just over 35 per cent of the total project budget has been allocated to project salaries. This is acceptable given the nature of the project (capacity building) and only 1 full-time position per country has been funded under this project. Perhaps it is even too efficient as a case could be made that a regional project manager with the responsibility of almost 1.5 million EURO budget should be given the opportunity to dedicate at least 70-80 per cent if not 100 per cent of his or her job to make it a success. This would have included a travel budget to visit all countries at least once and the time to reflect on the implementation and look for additional linkages and networking opportunities. Implications of this on effectiveness of the project will be reported in the next chapter.

It is encouraging to see that so much of the funding actually reaches the national levels. It is not unusual that similar technical projects run by the UN agencies spend much more at the HQ level. As a principal, funds should follow the decentralized mode of implementation and IOM is setting a very good example.

A large chunk of money has been spent on the regional workshop in Tirana and the subsequent national training workshops. The travel budget, DSA, and renting of venue and equipment is substantial. Although no replacement, opportunities to conduct virtual discussions on-line need to be assessed as alternatives.

It is worth mentioning that the budget for translation and interpretation into the local languages alone is 80K. This includes simultaneous interpretation during the meetings, as well as translation of main documentation, including a translation of the Handbook in all local languages. This investment is generally well worth making as it ensures local readership.

The administrative costs for IOM at 7 per cent seems fair and reasonable, especially given the extensive communication, technical capacity building, research and networking that has taken place under this project.

The majority of funds have been channeled to the IOM country missions through MRF Budapest. A large number of MSCs have been equipped with hardware that would grant access to internet (the project's website containing all 40 country fact sheets) and email and printing facilities. The project has also shown enough flexibility in addressing well-justified priorities put forward by the counterparts. For instance, IOM agreed to open up and fully equip an additional 2 regional MSCs in Albania, over and above the 12 (!) planned. In other countries, such as BiH, two centers needed to be opened to reflect the political reality. The support to a larger number of MSCs and OJT also required flexibility in the recruitment of (part-time) support staff.

Another possible alternative would see some reductions to the allocations to the MSC assistants. As they were mostly concerned with OJT of counterpart staff, the cycle of OJT could be shorter. At the same time, the field visits have shown that the MSC assistants have carried out a diverse set of tasks in their respective missions and have been responsible for the daily communication with PES staff, which has been critical in establishing a strong working relationship on the ground. In general, one should be very careful reducing the number of staff in direct contact with beneficiaries.

Perhaps, a case could be made for too much efficiency where additional funds should have been made available to the regional coordinator or for the recruitment of a part-time communication expert in Budapest to enhance the quality of the website, newsletters, and build on-line communities.

The only budget line that may be questioned is the allocation for the 2x 10 per cent technical experts (24 months) to IOM Brussels. As far as the evaluator has been able to judge, the technical inputs from IOM Brussels have been minimal, advice has been provided on EU required formats in monitoring progress and budget expenditures. Technical guidance and support have largely come from IOM HQ, IOM MRF Budapest and the IOM country missions. In view of the above, an allocation of 5 per cent per month, which would provide IOM Brussels with a total of 30 full-time days or 6 weeks over the course of the project is seen as more realistic.

3.5 *Conclusions and recommendations*

Conclusions:

- The project implementation has been conducted in a very efficient manner.
- The Steering Committee has been the main regional project coordination mechanism.
- The WB government counterparts have been absent from the Steering Committee meetings.
- A more traditional Steering Committee with senior representation from government counterparts would have likely benefited the project's vision for regional networking and capacity development in the medium term with an even stronger role for local stakeholders.
- All questionnaires, interviews in the field are unanimous that the governments really own these MSCs and have a strong interest in these regional and national training workshops.
- Project activities have been implemented on time, and with sufficient technical and financial support.
- This project offers an excellent example of IOM's technical and operational capacity with a strong presence in the WB.
- Most of the IOM country missions have significant country programmes, with the exception of Croatia perhaps, and synergies with other projects to support vulnerable migrant groups (e.g. skills development for Roma and anti-trafficking projects) are easily made.
- The implementation of the training on LMM for policymakers has been implemented quite efficiently.
- The close collaboration with another project led by IOM's LFM to develop and pilot training material based on ILO/OSCE/IOM handbook on LMP has been mutually beneficial and most of the services have been provided in kind.
- These national training workshops only had a limited reach among the potential audience of policy makers and practitioners.

- A ToT training was conducted by the IOM/OSCE training project to maximize the impact of the training in the region.
- Just under EURO 500K or just over 35 per cent of the total project budget (1.4 million EURO) has been allocated to project salaries.
- It is encouraging to see that so much of the funding actually reaches the national levels. As a principal, funds should follow the decentralized mode of implementation and IOM is setting a very good example.
- The administrative costs for IOM at 7 per cent seems fair and reasonable, especially given the extensive communication, technical capacity building, research and networking that has taken place under this project.
- The project has also shown enough flexibility in addressing well-justified priorities put forward by the counterparts.

Recommendations:

- It is recommended to the project management team that the SC should meet another time in 2010 to exchange experiences and document lessons learned.
- The use of a SC in the traditional sense would include government representatives and should be considered in the future and contributes immediately to regional networking and dialogue.
- In the future, such a strategic and well-placed structure that provides strategic oversight over LMM issues could be set up in partnership between IOM, ILO, MARRI²¹ and other relevant partners.
- It is recommended that the LMM training module developed by IOM-LFM should make use of self learning/ distance learning or self-paced e-learning to increase the scale in capacity building.
- The networking component of the project would be greatly improved if online-communities around relevant topics (MSCs, policies, strategies and action plans on LMM) could be created and facilitated by IOM and/or ILO.
- A case could be made for the recruitment of a part-time communication expert in Budapest to enhance the quality of the website, newsletters, and facilitation of the creation of on-line communities.

CHAPTER IV EFFECTIVENESS

²¹ The Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative (MARRI) in Skopje, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

4.0 Introduction

The following chapter discusses the effectiveness of the project or extent to which the project has achieved its objectives or is likely to attain its objectives. The chapter provides a review of all four project components. During the review factors that contributed to the success and/or failure to achieve the objectives will be mentioned.

4.1 Information, awareness raising and communication

As the project title suggests, information and awareness raising is at the heart of this project. This focuses in particular on visitors of the MSCs - migrants and potential migrants - as well as government staff regarding their awareness on the various aspects of LMM.

MSCs

MSCs have been successful in reaching out to migrants and potential migrants, informing them how to legally access jobs or take up studies abroad. All public employment services, where the MSC has found a natural home, have incorporated this additional service as part of their arsenal in advising their main client base, the unemployed. There is a genuine concern about the potential abuse of their fellow citizens who may go abroad as illegal migrants.

The main source of information available to visitors at the MSC is contained in 40 country fact sheets that are available in the local language (also on the Web). Each of the 7 national teams in the WB are responsible for the updating of about 4-5 of these fact sheets for which they are in regular contact with different embassies and other IOM missions around the world. The sheets contain information about visa requirements for study or work opportunities. This information is generally collected from the internet and visa sections at local embassies.

Visitors also receive individual counseling which often refers them to other colleagues in the Public Employment Services for gaining practical skills such as writing CVs, language training, pc training, etc. The majority of visitors to the MSC enter with the specific goal to obtain a job abroad. Some are disappointed as the MSC does not provide job mediation services, but at least visitors stay around long enough to be made aware of the visa requirements as well as the risks related to irregular migration.

The project has received over 8,000 registered visitors by end of December 2009 and expects to reach about 9,000 by February 2010. This is conform trend. The target was set at 15,000. The project development team had selected this number as a reasonable target because the earlier regional pilot project (2004-6) had reached about 6,000 (potential) migrants in all. Given the new project's emphasis on placing the MSC inside the PES, expectations were high. Does that mean the project has failed? Not really. There is a large number of non-registered users that have accessed the project's website directly without ever visiting the center. The power of Web search engines is not to be underestimated. Unique visitors to the website increased from 3-4,000 in early 2009 to more than 6,000 towards the last quarter of 2009. With these additional numbers it is safe to assume that the total of 15,000 (potential) migrants has been easily reached.

The government counterparts feel that these numbers are very significant. They show there is a substantial demand for reliable information about legal requirements to emigrate. For instance, the evaluation team was able

to meet with the Minister of Labour and Social Policy in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia who repeatedly mentioned that this project had shown him there was a large demand for these services, not just in the capital but also from other cities and towns. The intention here is not just to illustrate an example of a well-informed politician, trained in a rights-based approach to labour migration but also shows the commitment of WB governments to inform their citizens as part of the preparations for EU accession, and in readying for EURES in particular.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that very few of the MSC visitors actually manage to use the legal channels described in the fact sheets and move abroad. Despite the fact that during the field missions all MSC staff could identify 1 or a number of people who managed to go abroad the vast majority are discouraged by the difficulties in procedures and absence of bi-lateral labour migration agreements with destination countries, which would provide openings for specific job categories.

While the MSCs clearly targeted potential emigrants, in most countries immigrants have also found their way to the MSC. Free individual counseling is by many seen as an opportunity to seek advice and guidance through the government bureaucracy. Many of them are repeat visitors. They are sizeable in number, above 20 per cent during the June-August 2009 period (5th and last statistical report available), with the vast majority of cases from Albania (88 per cent of all immigrant cases). Part of the explanation must be that the MSCs in Albania are used to issue work permits to immigrants. This means relatively easy access to the immigrants. Referral from PES to make use of MSC is driven by the new Law on Foreigners which provides for better services to immigrants in Albania.

In the future, there may also be a new group of users for the agencies to focus on. They are returning emigrants. For instance, negotiations between the EU and Serbia have forced the Serbian government to accept the return of a large number of Serbian nationals²² on home soil. It is not clear how they would assist this marginalized group, but there were suggestions that the recently created MSC, expanded to a number of cities and towns, could play an important role in facilitating the reintegration of these nationals into the country. It would be unacceptable if one of the most vulnerable groups in Europe would suffer as a consequence of the pre-accession negotiations between the EU and the WB entities. Help is needed to assist the return of these marginalized people.

Website

The project's website www.migrationservicecentres.org is informative and has over time extended its scope. It contains the 40 country fact sheets in all major local languages of the WB as well provides access to the quarterly newsletter and MSC statistical reports, The website is managed from Budapest with minimal resources. Interviews conducted and responses on the questionnaires suggest that the website is much appreciated as well as adding interesting information for potential migrants. Given the large number of visitors it may be opportune to solicit visitors to fill in a short survey online – similar to surveys on offer to physical visitors of the MSC. More direct feedback on suggestions to improve the website could be posted at the same time. Despite the fact the management team has not identified a new source of donor funding for a follow-up to the current project phase, IOM has already committed to keeping the website up-and-running till end of 2010, while IOM's country missions in the WB have agreed to regularly updating the 40 country fact sheets. Such commitment is necessary as otherwise, the usefulness of the web site would deteriorate drastically as there would be no guarantee that the information displayed is up-to-date.

²² Presumably the majority of up to 200,000 returning nationals are Roma from Kosovo/UNSCR 1244 residing in Germany

Information campaign/tv and radio jingles

The local project teams have used mostly public media and newspapers for dissemination of their information campaign – often showing the shortest route to the MSC. Without an opportunity to be more exact on impact of these campaigns, visitor numbers normally increased after a campaign. Each of the national project teams have produced a tv or radio jingle that was aired towards the end of 2009 or early 2010. Direct messages on rights of migrants and/or risks of irregular migration could be considered as well. There seems to be a need to accurately inform potential migrants that the visa liberalization scheme with the EU that came into force for Serbia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro on 19 December does not allow people traveling on a tourist visa to seek jobs. Specific messages to discourage people from going this route may make a lot of sense. Perhaps such could still be arranged in said countries before end of project.

Communication strategy

While information campaigns, the website, etc. have generally been a success, it may be argued that the project could have done even better with the services of a communication expert (30-50 per cent) in Budapest. S/he would be responsible for an overall communication strategy, with particular focus on adding functionality to the web site, and marketing the project within and without the WB to a much larger extent. No funds were available under this project. Perhaps it could and should have been more effective, reaching out and creating and facilitating discussions among LMM practitioners and policy makers on-line. Suggestions would include linking up MSCs in the WB and their counterparts in the EU on LMM. The latter was mentioned several times by participants from the Regional Round Table in Tirana that more networking – exchange of experiences -would be appreciated. Linking up all MSCs globally for an exchange of experiences would also be an idea that is worthwhile exploring.

4.2 Capacity building

The main training activities for job seekers are usually conducted in a job centre under direct supervision of PES staff, with inputs from the MSC Assistant. Topics normally cover CV writing, language skills and computer training. Often these job centers have been set up with assistance from other donors (e.g. European Agency for Reconstruction in Bitola, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia). In some places, synergies are achieved between IOM projects that provide such services (skills training for Roma, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia). Although these skills trainings are useful, the scale of training provided and the limited opportunities for work inside and outside the country limit the appeal and success at a larger scale.

The training of PES employees responsible for running the MSC on a daily basis received OJT, which was deemed generally sufficient. Through field visits, it was evident that these employees are very well qualified and motivated people. They often counsel citizens regarding job opportunities already. Subsequently, in future the time spent in OJT and hand-over may be shortened.

The training module based on the LMP Handbook, and its translation into all local languages by the project has been the highlight for many involved in this project. Certainly, it has received the largest management support to organize all workshops, travel of experts, etc. In one year, the Regional Round Table plus 7 national training workshops have all been organized. It has certainly involved tight planning of a large contingent of international experts, mainly from IOM and ILO that was responsible for the facilitation and actual conduct of the training. The workshops were organized by the national project teams often in close collaboration and with inputs from their

government counterparts. Discussions at the Regional Round Table had certainly aided in identifying the main issues for each country. During these workshops local experts were also invited to present their expertise in a topic. This blend of international and local expertise has led to an almost universal appreciation of the training workshops.

The national training workshops have been most effective in providing an overview of the various aspects of LMM. As all geographical entities were at varying stages in adopting new legislation on LMM (policy, strategy or action plan) the added awareness has certainly aided in prioritizing these actions within the government and helped participants to understand that many stakeholders need to be involved to cover this properly. There is also anecdotal evidence from the interviews undertaken that specific sections of the handbook have been used as a key reference. The only complaint heard was that a 5 days training was excessive, so perhaps on future occasions this could be divided into two sessions.

The workshops' participants filled in a self-evaluation form at the end of these workshops. All showed positive reviews.²³ The real impact of training can only be measured after 6 months or so, to see if participants are actually using some of that information in their day-to-day work or that human behavior has changed. During the field visits, this was a standard question to participants, and it was evident that many were able to show examples of changed behavior and or action. They generally referred to awareness that had led to better facilitation, wider consultation among stakeholders in formulation a migration policy, strategy or action plan.

One of the aspects that has made this training on LMM so successful has been the synergies obtained from the IOM/OSCE training project that has used the WB for piloting their newly developed training material. This training was to some extent supply-driven, as the project could not be flexible in adopting the training modules to all local needs. Some of the ILO colleagues for instance felt that a more personal approach - focusing on just 1 or 2 of the areas, instead of all 9 training modules – would have been more beneficial. Indeed, rewards could have been large, perhaps more tangible as they would have directly fed into one or two areas that the country was dealing with. Despite this, the responses to the usefulness of the training have been overwhelmingly positive, presumably as such overviews had never taken place and filled a knowledge gap.

The TOT that took place at the end of 2009 has gone to some length in ensuring that some additional courses will be organized, predominantly within the PESs. This would include adapted training courses for regional and local employment services. Interviews with ToT participants in the field confirmed that such courses are very likely to be organized.

The success of a set of generic training modules could be further exploited through an adaptation into a self-learning tuition package to be distributed among a large audience. These courses can be facilitated on-line, with communication channeled through a web forum and regular email. Users can sign up and also provide support to each other and exchange experiences. The potential is very substantial and many international organizations have already taking this direction. Another option would be to contact universities or training institutes, if possible *in situ* that could also incorporate these into a student curriculum.

²³ One should be careful with using these results. Reasons for high scores could at times also underscore people's delight that the end of the training was near, or that many of the participants are very polite in nature.

4.3 Research

This component comprises of two main publications which will be published in January 2010. Both reports are in final draft, therefore it is difficult for the evaluation to give their views on effectiveness of these publications.

The main publication provides a historic overview of labour migration trends and migration policies in the region. It deals with the evolution of migration and its influence on current migration policies in the WB and future migration flows. A very interesting survey on migration propensities was added. This provides some useful insights into possible future labour migration flows. This is an important study for the WB, EU and IOM. It emphasizes a number of interesting findings, including the (perhaps obvious) lack of official data that can be used for research. Perhaps the most interesting finding of the report mentions that migration propensities in the WB are fairly low.

In reaching maximum exposure for this comprehensive study, it is recommended to develop a summary document with key findings, directed at the policy maker rather than the academic audience. The propensity study should be published as a separate study as well. These spin-off publications should take it into the realm of influencing decision-makers and should maximize effectiveness of such studies.

The monitoring data collected by the MSCs was to be included in the main report but will now be published separately. This report analyses data collected by the MSCs in the WB in the period between June 2008 and February 2009. Topics covered include issues of data quality; and socio-economic characteristics of the client population in general, client populations by country and the general population of the countries. The report will be a useful conclusion after the collection of data by the MSC staff in the 7 WB geographic entities.

While the above publications do respond to what was originally requested, an observation could be made that these reviews do not provide the micro, in-depth stories of individual migrants, their personal stories of labor migration and the inherent risks they take. It is felt that the careful use of such stories could have enriched the regional study. Perhaps there would be space for them in the spin-off publications. Local NGOs could have been used for this.

Statistics and LMM is another area where IOM and ILO could seek collaboration. During the interviews with ILO staff it was mentioned that they were involved in the piloting of a new LMM module in the Labour Force Survey. IOM does not seem to be involved or aware of this work undertaken by ILO. This is conceivably a missed opportunity for both parties and surely shows that communication is imperfect.

4.4 Networking and dialogue

No formal networks have been established under this or with assistance from this project. The informal networking and dialogue that has taken place during the project has mainly been under the awareness raising component for potential migrants and the capacity building component.

NGOs have been used in as part of the outreach campaigns. Posters, leaflets, brochures etc. have found their way to NGOs for further distribution to their client base. These NGOs were listed as project associates and can be found under Annex. The NGOs have been predominantly used as a distribution channel. Some of the NGOs were invited to the national training workshops as well. As many of these NGOs have a relevant client base, such as

Osnivač (Innovations) that serves youth in southern Serbia, and the National Red Cross Society of Croatia that helps asylum seekers and victims of trafficking.

The Regional Round Table in Tirana in early 2009 has clearly set off some serious networking between policy makers in the WB. Some of the participants do still communicate via email.

The national training workshops have also brought new networking opportunities at a different level as, often for the first time, representation from a large group of relevant mostly public stakeholders was sought. Representatives from bi-lateral donors and EU were often included. Many of the participants in their questionnaires referred to the large range of stakeholders at hand as a true eye-opener. These are obviously first and foremost informal networks.

It is difficult to assess the effectiveness of such informal networks. Perhaps there is scope to improve and strengthen the networking and dialogue in any follow-up, preferably under all components. Suggestions for community building and networking have been made earlier (MSCs and LMM experts).

This may be the place to review the relationship between IOM and ILO, its main project partner. The partnership with ILO has been meaningful but could have been more effective. The collaboration focused on the training for policy makers and practitioners through training modules developed by IOM based on the ILO/ IOM/ OSCE LMP Handbook. It is somewhat peculiar to observe that ILO had no part in the project tasked with developing training modules based on their handbook (due to lack of funding).

ILO has participated in the one regional workshop as well as all the 7 national training workshops. Perhaps most importantly, ILO's experts on international treaties, labour laws, etc. have taken part in the national training workshops. ILO's project focal point has also participated in the steering committees. It may well be argued that ILO could have played a larger role in this project, especially adding value to the research and networking components. ILO certainly has comparative advantages in these areas and could have improved the services and outputs.

The evaluation suggests that stronger collaboration between ILO and IOM should be encouraged, despite such physical proximity in Geneva (and even Budapest). Opportunities seem to abound for a stronger collaboration in the area of LMM with both organizations showing very specific and complementary strengths. IOM has a substantial operational and technical capacity in this area with proven capability of efficient and effective project management. ILO, on the other hand, may not be so strong on the ground but has an excellent complementary international network of high profile contacts and employs some of the best technical experts in the field. ILO's areas of expertise include among others labour standards & legislation, research, statistics and skills/ vocational training.

Current collaboration very much depends on individual contacts, rather than an institutional structure that provides guidance and so improves efficiency and effectiveness in this area. Perhaps joint quarterly meetings on LMM could be considered to review opportunities for closer collaboration. Another option was offered by one of the ILO staff as to strive for closer collaboration under the umbrella of something similar as the UN Global Initiative to Fight Trafficking that uses true joint programming to break through the bureaucratic barriers with some success. Perhaps a much smaller, dressed down version, bringing together the three agencies that worked already together to produce the handbook would provide a place that guides actions in LMM, a strategic think tank if you

like. This could surely be a vehicle for a more durable working relationship in this area. It may also provide the strategic guidance (the old fashioned Steering Committee structure if you like) that projects like this require. Membership could even be extended to relevant regional institutional structures such as MARRI in the WB.

Another regional network to be considered to work closely may be PERCO, the Platform for European Red Cross Cooperation on Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants. It was launched in 1997. It may be useful to review the opportunities for collaboration in the areas of outreach, capacity building and research and joining forces to influence national and European policies and developments in the field of migration.

4.5 Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions:

- MSCs have been successful in reaching out to migrants and potential migrants, informing them how to legally access jobs or take up studies abroad.
- The project website www.migrant-servicecentres.org has been a success, with a growing number of visitors every month (6,600 Unique Visitors at the time of the evaluation for the month of December 2009).
- Governments are pleased with the provision of reliable information about legal requirements to emigrate to their citizens.
- All MSC visitors are warned of the dangers of irregular migration.
- Anecdotal evidence suggests that actually very few MSC visitors succeed in utilizing the legal channels available for migration (mostly employment / study) as summarized in the 40 country fact sheets.
- The OJT has been successful despite perhaps too few staff being trained.
- The information campaign conducted by the national IOM missions is generally a success.
- The project has managed well considering, but clearly could have profited from additional support in the area of communication in MRF Budapest.
- The project has been successful in enhancing the national capacity in LMM.
- The project has produced a solid publication on labour migration trends in the WB.
- Networking has been limited to ILO and associate partners, with NGOs only used as channels of distribution for information targeting potential migrants.
- The partnership with ILO has been meaningful but could have been more effective.

Recommendations:

- Continue the website but increase its scale and expand the on-line community to cover all MSCs in the world in order for MSC staff to maximize the exchange of experiences.
- Where possible, facilitate the inclusion of job mediation in PESs as that is the main aim of all visits to the MSC.
- Hire a part-time communication expert that facilitates the creation of an on-line LMM community.
- Adapt the LLM training module, developed by LFM, into a self-learning tuition package for distribution among a large audience. The courses can be facilitated on-line, with communication channeled through a web forum and regular email.
- Develop spin-off publications from the main regional study. They would include a summary of the main report, while the propensity study would also be published separately.
- Closer cooperation between IOM and ILO in the area of LMM needs a formal institutional structure that pushes actors towards greater use of complementary strengths.

CHAPTER V SUSTAINABILITY

5.0 Introduction

In the following chapter the main project components will be reviewed on the basis of a key OECD/DAC evaluation criterion: sustainability. This tries to measure if the benefits of activities are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn.

5.1 MSCs

As regards to the question what activities will continue after the end of the project, it is widely assumed that the MSCs will survive the termination of this project phase. Despite the absence of a contract with the PESs initially, all IOM missions are in the process, or have just finalized a contract that deals with the handover of the equipment and also obliges the government to keep these MSCs open. By itself, these signed documents must be viewed as good intentions as the government may have to reprioritize expenditures. In this case, the likelihood that these centers will survive is actually high. The main lesson learned from the initial pilot project in 2004-6 was to relocate the MSC into the PES, which has really made a big difference. It is very clear from the questionnaires received and interviews conducted in the field that there is a strong local ownership of these centers. Civil servants are really worried that some of their fellow citizens may become victims of exploitation as a result of irregular migration. In most places, the MSC provides a welcome additional service to a range of facilities that the PES has on offer for their unemployed client base. This includes job centers that offer skills training. In short, the PESs have increased their status as a one-stop-shop for job seekers.

Again, most countries have given high priority to preparations for gaining EU accession. Obviously, the visits to Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, closest in line for EU accession, have underlined this observation. The information provided by the MSC on legal migration forms an important part of the terms and

preparing for EURES in particular. Most countries have plans to expand the MSC services to other regional employment service centers.

The high income country (Croatia) and upper-middle income countries (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, BiH and Serbia) will have less problems sustaining these activities than the lower middle income countries such as Albania and Kosovo under UNSCR No 1244, although the prioritization of the respective governments can make all the difference. For instance, Albania is the country with the first migration strategy in the Balkans, with 14 MSC integrated into in regional employment centers. It would be surprising to see such initiative disappear quickly.

5.2 Capacity building

The OJT training that was conducted at the MSC has numbered few. The number of people trained generally range from 1-6. This raises questions of sustainability as job mobility is a significant factor to contend with. On the other hand, it must be said that all PES staff met in the field were very capable and well-qualified and should be in a position to take over these activities quickly.

The other and main capacity building that was conducted dealt with building awareness on the LMP Handbook. These trainings have certainly reached a large audience - around 150 for 7 national training workshops altogether - with a large variety of stakeholders present. The sustainability of this component depends almost entirely on the assumption that the right persons have been trained and will continue to spread the word. Will they be able to access internal funding to organize similar 1-2 day events? Some of the participants of these national training workshops were invited to a two-day ToT, again organized and paid for by the IOM/OSCE training project. This helped to build these people's confidence to conduct presentations. So, at some scale these trainings are sure to be continued, mostly as part of presentations within their own organization.

It is important that IOM national missions keep up a close dialogue with the governments to make sure that continued technical support is provided when needed. The strong IOM presence in the WB should make this possible and certainly helps guarantee some form of sustainability.

Currently, negotiations are taking place with some of the donors to increase the lifespan of this regional project. The capacity building component could perhaps focus on the hands-on facilitation of an ongoing policy formulation processes in the region.

Otherwise, the objective to reach large numbers of policymakers and practitioners may be best served through the creation and facilitation of on-line communities that are supported by self-learning or e-learning courses. It should not be too costly to develop those on CD-ROMs or make them available through internet. This would constitute a very economical measure and would also prove that the organizations involved take capacity building seriously and putting their customers first.

5.3 Research

The research component may have contributed to some form of sustainability and profile building of the CEFMR in Poland. There have been no research activities in the region by any of the project associates, and therefore the sustainability is considered low for this component. It may be said that at least the analysis provided by the main regional report has identified opportunities that others can take up. The main migration flows as observed may in

fact direct perhaps bilateral discussions between geographic entities in the WB and bordering nations from the EU for instance.

The evaluation team would recommend that local NGOs with research capacity are being used to build capacity in research and promote networking. Suggestions may include case studies giving a human face to the risks of irregular labour migration. It is felt that this project has dealt with some of the problems of individuals through the MSCs mainly, but the reporting has been generic. It would be appreciated to see the stories of individuals, picture books to illustrate the issues of labour migration within and without the WB.

5.4 Networking and dialogue

First and foremost, networking and dialogue on labour migration will continue in the context of the Regional Cooperation Council for south-eastern Europe and the bi-lateral negotiations for accession between EU and WB geographical entities. The right timing is a key feature of this project that has allowed the project to feed into this larger political process, with an emphasis on development of appropriate policy frameworks and emphasizing migrants' risks.

The project has certainly made progress in linking main public stakeholders in the field of labour migration (ministries of Interior, Labour, Health, etc.) at the national level through the series of training workshops conducted in 2009. What perhaps has been lacking is the use and strengthening of an appropriate regional inter-governmental institutional structure as a key ally in the promotion of regular migration and safeguarding migrants' rights. The Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative MARRI, created in 2004 under the Stability Pact for south-eastern Europe may provide such an opportunity. MARRI is based in Skopje, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and deals with the issues of migration management in the Western Balkans by promoting closer regional cooperation and a comprehensive, integrated, and coherent approach to the issues of migration, asylum, border management, visa policies and consular cooperation, refugee return and settlement in order to meet international and European standards – with EU accession as the ultimate aim.

Labour migration has recently been added as one of the main priorities. MARRI publishes an annual statistical report for which it distributes a questionnaire among its member states. These are useful sources of information and also provide additional opportunities as they could be expanded upon. The approach used by MARRI is refreshing as it does not solely operate at the diplomatic level, but seeks advice from and promotes the networking of WB experts on the ground. This hands-on approach with appropriate network of local contacts should make them a sought-after partner in the region. MARRI has also some capacity to participate in research and documentation.

MARRI already collaborates with the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD). ICMPD was created to serve as a support mechanism for informal consultations, and to provide expertise and services on migration and asylum issues. ICMPD is active in inter-governmental dialogue, capacity building and research and documentation.

IOM has been instrumental in establishing MARRI in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and enjoys a close working relationship with them. For instance, MARRI representatives have been invited to the national training workshops. In any future collaboration, it is good to note that the IOM country mission in Skopje, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia can provide any operational support needed to facilitate any regional

projects with a coordination role for MARRI. ILO has recently opened an office in Skopje so perhaps a new regional hub on LMM is in the make.

5.5 Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions:

6. The MSCs are likely to be sustained by WB governments over time with similar services to be added to regional/local employment services.
7. The capacity building towards LMM has been valuable and the ToT undertaken by the complimentary IOM/OSCE training project has created a small pool of experts who could continue to conduct similar trainings.
8. While the main publication under this component was written by CEFMR, the research component has not used any local stakeholders to conduct research in the WB region.
9. The project has spent insufficient resources towards the development of networking and dialogue in the region. This is in part explained by the lack of time of the project coordinator in MRF Budapest, and the focus of the entire project management team to implement the other components on time.
10. There has been a lack in the use and strengthening of an appropriate regional inter-governmental institutional structure as a key ally in the promotion of regular migration and safeguarding migrants' rights.

Recommendations:

6. It is felt that in any follow-up, the project management team should be given more time to reflect on the work plan and identify spin-off activities and explore linkages with local partners that would increase chances for sustainability.
7. The capacity building component of a possible follow-up project should focus on the hands-on facilitation of an ongoing policy formulation processes in the region.
8. In order to reach large numbers of policymakers and practitioners it may be opportune to create and facilitate on-line communities that are supported by self-learning or e-learning courses.
9. Use local NGOs with research capacity to a larger extent and contribute to a viable civil society.
10. Explore opportunities with, and where possible strengthen the position of MARRI as a WB inter-governmental organ in the area of LMM.