

EVALUATION BRIEF

EX-POST EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT “BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: STRENGTHENING GOVERNMENT CAPACITIES IN INTEGRATED BORDER MANAGEMENT”

This learning brief is a summary of the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations prepared by the Owl RE consultancy for use by IOM project staff and management and the Fund. Details on all of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations can be found in the full evaluation report.

Evaluation type:	External independent ex-post evaluation
Evaluator(s):	Sharon McClenaghan, Owl RE
Final report:	20 March 2022
Commissioned by:	IOM Development Fund (“The Fund”)

Managed by: Irma Sadikovic, Project Coordinator

Evaluation purpose: To assess the relevance of the project for the stakeholders and beneficiaries, to determine whether the project has achieved its intended objective; the effectiveness and efficiency of project management and implementation; promote transparency and accountability, assist the Fund in its decision-making, better equip staff to make judgments about the project and to improve the effectiveness for potential future project funding.

Evaluation criteria: Relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability.

Evaluation methodology: Document review and semi-structured interviews (conducted remotely with support of a national researcher).

PROJECT SUMMARY

The aim of the project was to support the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina (GBiH) institutions to adopt new/revise instruments to address migration and border management challenges, in line with the European Union (EU) integrated border management (IBM) concept and humane migration management principles.

BiH occupies a strategic geographical location within the Western Balkan region and since the second half of 2017, has experienced a steady increase in the number of migrants and refugees entering the country in attempts to reach the EU. In line with the country’s objective to become an EU candidate BiH must harmonize its legislation with the EU and Schengen acquis, applying EU IBM standards and procedures and bringing its strategic documents, legislation and procedures up to date.

The project planned to provide technical assistance and expertise to the BiH government authorities by updating the IBM Strategy and Action Plan, outlining the gaps and recommendations for further alignment of IBM relevant regulatory framework with the EU acquis and in amending legislation to ensure full compliance with EU and Schengen requirements.

Project information:

Geographical coverage:	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Project type:	IB - Immigration and Borders
Project code:	IB.0030
Project period:	October 2018 – March 2021
Budget:	USD 100,000



Workshop of the Working Group in charge for the development of the new IBM Strategy and Action Plan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2018.

KEY FINDINGS

The project was found to be very relevant, successfully supporting the position of the GBiH in the EU accession process, through the development of a revised IBM Strategy and Action Plan (2019- 2021), and draft legislation on Border Control in line with EU and best practices. The project demonstrated a cross-governmental approach and was managed very efficiently despite a number of delays compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, which necessitated a 12 month no-cost extension (NCE). The sustainability was rated as good with evidence of continued support for activities pertinent to the IBM Strategy but is ultimately dependent upon the current political situation being resolved and a continued implementation of the action plan.

Relevance (rating: Excellent - 5): The project was found to be very relevant, responding to the national priorities of the government, in particular the need to update the IBM Strategy and the wider process of alignment of the regulatory framework with the EU acquis. It was also very relevant to the migration context and the country's exposure to increased migration pressures. The project outputs and activities were consistent with the objective and were revised to respond to the COVID-19 context, ensuring continued relevance to the government beneficiaries.

Coherence (rating: Excellent - 5): The project was found to be coherent with previous and ongoing IOM projects and other interventions in the field.

Effectiveness (rating: Very Good - 4): The project was found to be very effective supporting its objective to strengthen the government's migration and border management, in line with EU standards, through the development of (and subsequent adoption of) an IBM Strategy and Action Plan, (2019- 2023), and the development of draft Border Law legislation.

Efficiency and Cost Effectiveness (rating: Very Good - 4): The project was managed and implemented very efficiently through the joint efforts of IOM and the government partner, the Ministry of Security, (MoS). The project was delayed primarily as a result of COVID-19, during which time activities were halted and required a one year NCE to complete. The project was found to be very cost effective in relation to the results achieved and utilized additional support and savings from the budget to organize additional workshops to further support the project objective.

Impact (rating: Very Good - 4): The project demonstrated short -medium term impact and a strong potential for longer term impact by creating an IBM strategy and action

plan and new draft legislation harmonized with the acquis. The project also strengthened working relationships and the coordination of the government on IBM. Ultimately future impact and sustainability of the results of the project will be determined by the political situation and the extent and pace at which the legislation is implemented.

Sustainability (rating: Good - 3): The project took measures to ensure project sustainability, developing a five year strategy and action plan, which was later successfully endorsed by the Council of Ministers, (CoM). Activities related to the action plan are currently being taken forward through additional funded projects. However, the country's political context is a crucial factor influencing the sustainability of project results. Government decision making has been currently stalled for the last two years and the draft legislation developed has not yet been adopted.

Conclusions

The project successfully supported the development of a five -year strategy, action plan and new legislation, helping the country move forward in the accession process as a potential EU candidate country. Longer term impact will be determined by the political situation, (and the CoM agreeing to adopt the draft Law on Border Control), the readiness to continue with efforts aimed at EU integration, BiH reaching accession stage and the extent to which financial resources needed for the strategy to be implemented are available.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are for IOM BiH

A. Project Design

- For future projects in of a similar nature, attention should be paid to the wording of outcome and outputs in the Results Matrix to ensure all potential changes are included.

B. Project Management

- For future projects in the implementation phase, ensure that the workplan is regularly updated.

C. Gender

- For future projects of a similar nature, encourage the government partner to broaden the scope of working groups and ensure that gender representatives are included in all the project activities.

D. Project follow-up

- To sustain the results of this project, continue to work with the MoS to push for the adoption of the draft Law on Border Control and in delivery of the Action Plan.