

EVALUATION BRIEF

EX-POST EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT “REGIONAL CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR THE PRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS OF REGIONAL MIGRATION INFORMATION IN MESOAMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN”]

This evaluation brief presents a summary of the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations, as identified by the evaluator for use by key stakeholders, including internally by IOM staff and externally by project partners. More details can be found in the full evaluation report.

Evaluation type:	Internal Independent Ex-Post Eval.
Evaluator(s):	Martin Schmitt, Regional M&E Officer, IOM Regional Office in San Jose
Field visit dates:	Remote Data Collection (May-Aug 21)
Final report date:	September 2021
Commissioned by:	IOM Development Fund
Managed by:	Sofia Arce (Project Staff)

Evaluation purpose: To measure how well the project was performing in terms of the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria and, to identify knowledge, best practices, and lessons learned.

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

Evaluation methodology: Non-experimental mixed-methods design including document review, semi-structured interviews, observations and close-ended survey

PROJECT SUMMARY

Evidence-based migration policies are an inherent part of good migration governance. Data as well as policies based on them, are essential elements for the fulfillment of goals 10.7 and 17.18 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, oftentimes, evidence-based decision making in the field of migration is impeded by a lack of timely, comparable and high-quality migration data.

The project Regional Capacity-building for the Production and Analysis of Regional Migration Information in Mesoamerica and the Caribbean aimed at strengthening the capacities for the generation, systematization and access to information and data related to migration in Mesoamerica and the Caribbean and by this strengthening evidence-based decision making in the field of migration.

This objective should be reached by the outcome of improving the capacities of National Migration Directorates allowing them to generate migration related information through the cooperation mechanisms established for the production of this information.

Several outputs should contribute to this outcome:

Output 1.1: The Regional Cooperation Network "Virtual Information Platform for Migration Governance in the Americas (PVI-GMA; later renamed into PRIMI)" on migration data has been established.

Project information:

Geographical coverage: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, St. Lucia, Suriname, Belize, Guyana)

Project type: Migration Research and Publications

Project code: PR.0221

Gender marker: 2a

Project period: 01 February 2018 to 31 January 2020

Donor: IOM Development Fund

Output 1.2: The "Virtual Information Platform for Migration Governance in the Americas (PVI-GMA)" is established.

Output 1.3: Statistical information on migration is available and known to governments, regional bodies, civil society and academia.

Output 1.4: Governments have an assessment of migration data systematization tools used in Mesoamerican and Caribbean countries.

Output 1.5: NDM national officers gain knowledge on best practices in migration information management.

KEY FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

Relevance

The project is highly relevant. All interviewed stakeholders and basically all frameworks and strategies, be it on national, regional or global level, emphasize the importance of having access to timely, high-quality and comparable data in the field of migration to improve evidence-based decision making. While the data on the platform was considered very useful in general terms, lack of comparability and timeliness of the data on the platform compromised the utility for political decision makers.

Effectiveness

The project was partially effective. While the project achieved all outputs, not all countries reported an increase in their capacity to produce the required information. None of the Caribbean countries delivered the requested data during the project. The major challenge is the lack of capacities to produce this data. Furthermore, the usage of existing data can be improved.

Efficiency

The project was efficient. The project remained within its budgetary boundaries and could even leverage some additional funds for consultants after project end. Through enabling networking it also contributed to intraorganizational cooperation. There were various smaller delays in the implementation. The variety of data platforms leads to the establishment of inefficient parallel structures e.g. in the hosting, design and maintenance of those platforms.

Impact

The project had a moderate impact. Despite the fact that the project's objective could only partly be achieved, the changes brought about by the project at the outcome level contributed to a longer-term impact of the project. Especially countries with fewer capacities in terms of migration data collection and processing improved their capacity in various aspects: a) Higher awareness of which data exists in other countries and what it can be used for; b) Improved interagency communication and thus higher awareness of which data exists in their own country; c) Higher awareness of which data still needs to be collected.

Also, in some countries the project produced a higher *willingness* to work on their data capacities by e.g. revising their border management systems. This increased government buy-in is a crucial part of being able to cooperate in these kinds of projects.

Coherence

The project was partially coherent. It connected well with similar initiatives in the field and built on the experience with former, similar projects and made use of external expertise. Also, the availability of administrative data was innovative in this field. Despite including GMDAC into this project, there is still room for stronger collaboration to increase coherence and efficiency.

Sustainability

The sustainability is considered to be limited. Labor-intensive data cleaning and maintenance work result in major challenges as quality and coherence of incoming data was not always good. Improving the quality and coherence of incoming data is key for enabling a sustainable existence of the platform.

Gender Mainstreaming

Due to the challenges in the data collection, disaggregation by age and sex is considered sufficient at this point. At a later stage, further disaggregation should be considered.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Improve quality of incoming data** by establishing individualized mechanisms to support countries in their efforts to produce requested data. For this it is essential to: **a) Strengthen coordination efforts to assimilate definitions and harmonize data collection processes; b) Assist countries individually** in compiling requested data by **providing necessary hard-/software and capacity building measures; c) Automate data cleaning processes to the maximum; d) Increase synergies** with other (regional) actors in the field of migration data.
2. **Promote the use and correct interpretation of existing data** by **producing targeted knowledge products** like factsheets or thematic briefs.
3. Consider **better integration into already existing platforms**, while maintaining data collection and processing at the regional level to increase efficiency.
4. Further **strengthen liaison and advocacy work** promoting the benefits of the having this kind of data gathered in one place **to increase government buy-in** and by this leverage potential funding sources and willingness to change.
5. Once the platform is more consolidated, countries should be encouraged to **extend the level of disaggregation and include information on gender and persons with diverse SOGIESC** based on a needs assessment.