



Ex-post Evaluation:
**Strengthening the Knowledge
Base to Better Protect and Assist
Migrants in a Situation of
Vulnerability in Mali**

CT.1000

Final Report

August 2021

Evaluation consultant:
Anita Leutgeb



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Glossary of Terms	9
1. Introduction	10
2. Context of the evaluation.....	10
3. Evaluation purpose and objectives.....	12
3.1. Purpose and objectives.....	12
3.2. Evaluation scope.....	13
3.3. Evaluation criteria	14
4. Evaluation methodology	14
4.1. Data sampling	14
4.2. Data Analysis.....	15
4.3. Limitations and proposed mitigation strategies	15
5. Findings	16
6. Conclusion and recommendations.....	39
Annex one: Terms of reference and inception report	43
Annex two: List of persons interviewed	58
Annex three: List of documents / publications consulted	59

Executive Summary

The following report is an ex-post evaluation of the project, CT.1000 “*Strengthening the Knowledge Base to Better Protect and Assist Migrants in a Situation of Vulnerability in Mali*”, managed by the IOM Mali Country Office and funded by the IOM Development Fund (“the Fund”).

This ex-post evaluation was commissioned by the Fund and was carried out by Anita Leutgeb, Owl RE, research and evaluation consultancy, Geneva, from May 2021 to July 2021. The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the relevance and coherence of the project for the stakeholders and beneficiaries, the effectiveness and efficiency of project management and implementation; the expected impact; how well cross-cutting themes of human rights and gender were mainstreamed in the project; and how sustainable the desired effects were or could be.

The evaluation was carried out remotely, using a desk review of available data and documents and key informant interviews with 10 project stakeholders.

Findings

Although the project was assessed of having only partly achieved its objective it achieved valuable results. It contributed to increase the capacity, coordination and collaboration of government civil society actors and UN organisations. The project was the starting point for the creation of a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for vulnerable migrants which has been validated by the government in 2021, so more than 3 years after the end of the project. This shows an important long-term impact and the sustainability of some of the benefits created despite some inconsistencies in the project’s intervention logic.

Relevance, (rating: Adequate – 2)

The relevance of the project was mixed. It aligned well with national and IOM policies, strategies and mandates, it aligned well with various national priorities and strategies such as the *Politique Nationale de Migration* (PONAM), it also aligned well with IOM’s plans for the region to strengthen capacities of the government and civil society, in particular concerning human trafficking. CSOs consulted for this evaluation found a good alignment with their strategies towards victims of trafficking and protection of vulnerable migrants. However, the analysis of the project documentation shows some inconsistencies. For example, the objective formulated in the project rationale was not identical to the one in the results matrix. The outcomes, outputs, and activities were not included and described in the main body of the proposal. The proposal rationale included only a very short description of the objectives and the two components (Data and knowledge, vulnerability identification support), and, most importantly, they were formulated differently from the results matrix. There could also have been a broader analysis of stakeholders, linkages to other initiatives, cross cutting issues, partnerships, and coordination. These aspects

remained at a rather superficial level in the proposal. Stakeholders were involved to a limited extent in the design of the action, for example, the project did increase the number of trainings after discussions with the government but the training content was designed by the IOM only. Nevertheless, the trainings and the discussion around the creation of the NRM were noted by the majority of interviewees as highly relevant activities.

Coherence, (rating: Good – 3)

The project was compatible with ongoing IOM work on capacity-building and data collection, analysis and research implemented with the government and other stakeholders in the field of trafficking, protection. Some other projects ran in parallel and were overlapping to this project to a certain extent. The evaluation found, however, no evidence of an in-depth stakeholder consultation at the design stage to avoid duplication of efforts and promote synergies.

Effectiveness, (rating: Adequate – 2)

The effectiveness was assessed as adequate. Almost all activities were carried out (although with delays). However, the lack of adequate indicators and measurement of some outputs and outcomes made the verification of the full extent of achievement difficult. Collaboration and coordination with (implementing) partners and stakeholders was good. A greater involvement in the design of capacity-building activities would have been beneficial to increase ownership and take advantage of local expertise. A number of internal and external factors influenced the results of the project leading to a request for extension of 6 months to the original project timeframe.

Efficiency & Cost Effectiveness, (rating: Adequate – 2)

The project was rated as having adequate efficiency and cost effectiveness. The project was found to have used its available human and financial resources cost-effectively. The resources available were sufficient as costs were saved by IOM staff conducting IOM staff trainings themselves instead of external (international) experts and by using equipment purchased for another project. Project management was slightly problematic as the designated project manager (PM) had no previous experience in this position and with the Fund reporting requirements. The PM tried to use as much as possible synergies to avoid duplication and cope with the initial delays. Project reporting was late throughout the timeframe. A 6-month no cost extension was requested to finalise two key products (study on drivers of migration and the study commissioned for the development referral system) but was not approved.

Impact, (rating: Very good – 4)

The project was assessed as having a very good impact. In the short to medium-term the project increased the capacities of government and civil society actors and provided protection to victims of sexual violence. Perhaps most importantly it strengthened

collaboration and cooperation among key stakeholders in the country to improve assistance to vulnerable migrants by laying the foundations for the creation of a NRM for vulnerable migrants. The longer-term impact is seen through the products (e.g. vulnerability identification questionnaire) still in use, the continuation of the work on the NRM and the long-term partnerships created.

Sustainability, (rating: Good – 3)

The sustainability of the project results was assessed as good. The project was not designed specifically with measures to guarantee sustainability, such as a hand-over or follow-up action plan. Nevertheless, several activities of the project generated benefits that are continuing. The examples include: The project helped to create the basis for the NRM for vulnerable migrants. It was further developed by subsequent projects and was validated by the government in 2021. The vulnerability identification questionnaire developed by the project is still used in Mali and other Western African countries. The One-Stop centre for victims of gender-based violence (GBV) supported by the project continues and became a model for other such centres.

Conclusions and recommendations

The evaluation detected inconsistencies in the intervention logic but the project managed to achieve some key outputs/outcomes; these had consequent long-term benefits for the future.

The project set out to strengthen the capacity of government and civil society actors to support and protect migrants and potential migrants in their decision-making process not to engage in channels of irregular migration¹. While it is not possible to say if and how much impact the project made in supporting migrants and potential migrants in their decision-making process not to engage in channels of irregular migration, the evaluation has seen that capacity of the government and civil society actors was strengthened, notably in relation to counter-trafficking, the identification of vulnerable migrants, the increase in knowledge on migration patterns and trends and the protection of victims of GBV (including Victims Of Trafficking VOTs) reinforced with the One-Stop centre in Bamako. The project contributed to increase collaboration and cooperation among government, civil society actors and international organizations and laid the basis for a NRM.

Following are some conclusions and recommendations drawn from the detailed findings presented in the previous sections:

¹ To be clear that the project is about preventing irregular migration the evaluator included the word “not” every time the overall objective is mentioned although the objective in the original results matrix and respective project documents did not include it.

A. Project Design

Some activities were designed together with the implementing partners (such as the One-Stop Centre for example) but most other activities saw less involvement of the implementing partners and beneficiaries. Furthermore, greater attention should have been paid to the project description, the results matrix and the wording of the outcome and outputs, not all of which were well formulated. There could have been a broader analysis of stakeholders, linkages to broader initiatives, cross-cutting issues, and sustainability measures. Assumptions were not included in the proposal and results matrix. There was no description of the activities in the narrative part of the project document.

Recommendations:

For IOM Mali for future similar projects:

- Ensure that the project proposal has a clear and explicit Theory of Change, is based on solid assumptions and hypotheses, and that the outcome, outputs and indicators are correctly formulated and follow the recommended steps and approaches of the IOM Project Handbook. Furthermore, more attention should be paid to the general consistency and coherence in the proposal.
- Ensure that the projects are designed in a collaborative manner with all the relevant IOM units and all relevant actors in the field. Ensure that all beneficiaries and stakeholders are carefully selected and that a solid needs assessment is undertaken ensuring project relevancy.
- Ensure that follow-up measures are included in the project design concerning trainings carried out. After training, coaching has a greater potential for a sustained impact and knowledge retention and should therefore be considered in all projects that contain a training component.
- Include in the project design measures to promote and track the use of products and services provided as the production and dissemination of a study is not enough to ensure that it is also used by recipients.

B. Project management

The PM was new to the project management post and no experience with donor reporting. Reporting was late, in part because of delays in the launch of activities at the start, in part a result of the slow government endorsement process.

Recommendations:

For IOM Mali for future similar projects:

- Ensure that key project staff is in place before the project start, ideally already in the project design phase.
- Ensure that the reporting is carried out on time and more rigorously in line with the donor requirements and that delays, and other implementation challenges are communicated transparently, and as soon as issues arise.
- Ensure that new staff members are introduced to the needed communication lines and requirements of the donor.

C. Trainings:

The findings described above saw a potential for increased ownership and sustainability by increasing the involvement of stakeholders in the training design, by including follow-up measures, and by providing skills to trainees to carry out trainings themselves.

Recommendations:

For IOM Mali for projects with a capacity-building component:

- Explore possibilities to provide continuity to the training activities which are a key component in improving national capacity in coordinating protection of vulnerable migrants.
- Explore possibilities to offer training of trainer programmes (ToT) for government actors to increase ownership and sustainability.
- As mentioned above, ensure that post-training coaching is provided as a few numbers of trainings are not enough to ensure knowledge retention and the actual application of the knowledge gained.
- Consider the use of pre- and post-training questionnaires to evaluate the percentage increase in knowledge gained by training participants.

D. Partnership building, networking:

Within this project CSOs, governments and international organizations closely worked together and improved their collaboration and explored the use of synergies. This should be continued, and exchange more formally organized to learn from each other's practices and consolidate partnerships.

For IOM Mali for future similar projects,

- Explore the organization of study visits and other regular information exchange of CSOs on the assistance of VOTs and migrant assistance.

Points identified requiring an institutional response

For the Donor:

- Strengthen the validation process to ensure that the projects are designed with an adequate results matrix including well formulated outcomes, outputs, indicators, targets and assumptions following the IOM project handbook, a thorough needs assessment with clear linkages to similar projects either to use synergies or to avoid duplication. The narrative description of the project should be more detailed and include a description of all activities.

Lessons Identified

The following lessons were identified that could be of use for future similar projects:

- Bringing various actors working on the same or similar topics together, getting to know each other's interventions and strengths, looking for the harmonisation of approaches and exploring possibilities of collaboration contributes to an improved offer of services for vulnerable migrants.
- Data collected are only useful if they are regularly updated and disseminated or made accessible, for example, through a database where all actors have access.

Glossary of Terms

AECID	<i>Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo</i>
CO	Country Office
DFID	Department for International Development
DNDS	<i>Direction Nationale du Développement Social</i>
DNPFEF	<i>Direction Nationale de la Promotion de la Femme Enfant et Famille</i>
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
EUTF	European Trust Fund
FMP	Flow Monitoring Point
GBV	Gender-based violence
IDF	IOM Development Fund
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MiGOF	Migration Governance Framework
MRRM	Migration Response and Resource Mechanism
NCE	No-Cost Extension
NRM	National Referral Mechanism
PM	Project Manager
PONAM	<i>Politique Nationale de Migration</i>
RM	Results Matrix
ToT	Training of Trainers
VOT	Victim of Trafficking

1. Introduction

The following report is an ex-post evaluation of the project, CT.1000 “*Strengthening the Knowledge Base to Better Protect and Assist Migrants in a Situation of Vulnerability in Mali*”, managed by the IOM Mali Country Office and funded by the IOM Development Fund (“the Fund”).

This ex-post evaluation was commissioned by the Fund and was carried out by Anita Leutgeb, Owl RE, research and evaluation consultancy, Geneva, from May 2021 to July 2021. The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the relevance and coherence of the project for the stakeholders and beneficiaries, the effectiveness and efficiency of project management and implementation, the expected impact, how well cross-cutting themes of human rights and gender were mainstreamed in the project, and how sustainable the desired effects were or could be.

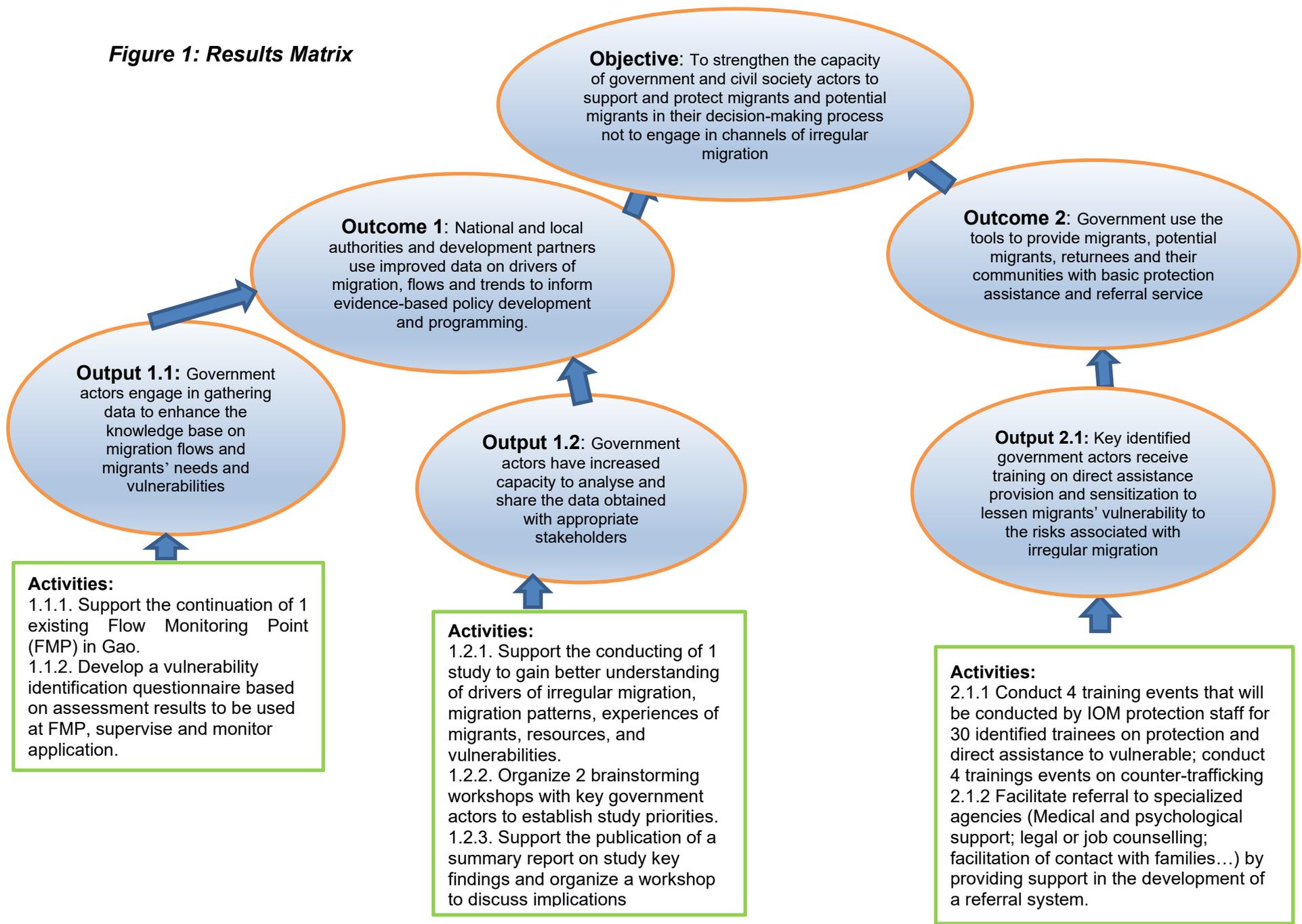
2. Context of the evaluation

Financed by the Fund, this was a project which aimed to strengthen the capacity of the Government of Mali and civil society actors to protect migrants and potential migrants on their migration routes.

Mali is a key origin and transit country on the West African migratory route. The town of Gao has become a major transit point towards Niger and Europe in Northern Mali. An increasing number of migrants has been taking the Gao-Tassalit route leading to Algeria and Europe. The actions proposed by IOM focused on strengthening the capacity of the government to provide quality information on migration patterns to the international community and civil society actors to respond to migration pressures in the best possible way. The action was aligned with the *Politique Nationale de Migration* (PONAM) adopted by the Malian Government in September 2014 which identified some of its main pillars to be protection and assistance, support to regular migration, capacity-building of relevant stakeholders, information campaigns and counselling for potential migrants and returnees.

The Results Matrix (RM) is reproduced below to illustrate the intervention logic foreseen for the project.

Figure 1: Results Matrix



Objective: To strengthen the capacity of government and civil society actors to support and protect migrants and potential migrants in their decision-making process not to engage in channels of irregular migration

Outcome 1: National and local authorities and development partners use improved data on drivers of migration, flows and trends to inform evidence-based policy development and programming.

Outcome 2: Government use the tools to provide migrants, potential migrants, returnees and their communities with basic protection assistance and referral service

Output 1.1: Government actors engage in gathering data to enhance the knowledge base on migration flows and migrants' needs and vulnerabilities

Output 1.2: Government actors have increased capacity to analyse and share the data obtained with appropriate stakeholders

Output 2.1: Key identified government actors receive training on direct assistance provision and sensitization to lessen migrants' vulnerability to the risks associated with irregular migration

Activities:
 1.1.1. Support the continuation of 1 existing Flow Monitoring Point (FMP) in Gao.
 1.1.2. Develop a vulnerability identification questionnaire based on assessment results to be used at FMP, supervise and monitor application.

Activities:
 1.2.1. Support the conducting of 1 study to gain better understanding of drivers of irregular migration, migration patterns, experiences of migrants, resources, and vulnerabilities.
 1.2.2. Organize 2 brainstorming workshops with key government actors to establish study priorities.
 1.2.3. Support the publication of a summary report on study key findings and organize a workshop to discuss implications

Activities:
 2.1.1 Conduct 4 training events that will be conducted by IOM protection staff for 30 identified trainees on protection and direct assistance to vulnerable; conduct 4 trainings events on counter-trafficking
 2.1.2 Facilitate referral to specialized agencies (Medical and psychological support; legal or job counselling; facilitation of contact with families...) by providing support in the development of a referral system.

3. Evaluation purpose and objectives

3.1. Purpose and objectives

The purpose of conducting this ex-post evaluation is to assess the relevance of the project to its stakeholders and beneficiaries, coherence, the effectiveness and efficiency of project management and implementation, the expected impact, how well were cross-cutting themes of human rights and gender mainstreamed in the project, and if the desired effects are sustainable, and/or have the prospects of sustainability, (following the DAC evaluation criteria²).

The evaluation aims to promote transparency and accountability which will, in turn, assist the Fund in its decision-making and to better equip staff to make judgments about the project and to improve effectiveness where possible and with regard to future project funding. Concerning the expected use of findings, the ex-post evaluation aims to also identify lessons learned, good practices, and provide a learning opportunity for the Fund and its implementing partners with regard to the project formulation process. The findings will also help make evidence-based strategic decisions in relation to specific projects, while also demonstrating the Fund's on-going commitment to results based management.

The primary objectives of the evaluation are to:

- (a) Assess the relevance of the project's intended results;
- (b) Assess the relevance of the Theory of Change and design of the results matrix and the extent to which the objective, outcomes and outputs are well formulated; the indicators were SMART and baseline and targets appropriate;
- (c) Assess the coherence of the project with IOM's activities and other interventions in the sector;
- (d) Assess the extent to which the needs of stakeholders and beneficiaries were taken into account during project design and if the project is aligned with national priorities and strategies, government policies and global commitments;
- (e) Assess the effectiveness of the project in reaching their stated objectives and results, as well as in addressing cross-cutting issues such as gender, human-rights based approach;
- (f) Assess the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of project implementation, along with regular progress monitoring of project resources and if the costs were proportional to the results achieved;
- (g) Assess the impact prospects and outcomes to determine the entire range of effects of the project (or potential effects) and assess the extent to which the project have been successful in producing expected change;

² Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee, 'Evaluation of development programmes, DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance', web page, OECD. See <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

- (h) Assess the sustainability of the project's results and benefits (or measures taken to guarantee it) or prospects for sustainability, and if these benefits generated by the project still continued once external support ceased;
- (i) Assess how effectively issues of gender equality and human rights protection were mainstreamed in the process of project design and during project implementation;
- (j) Identify lessons learned and best practices in order to make recommendations for future similar projects and help the Fund in its decision-making about future project funding.

These objectives are operationalised in a series of evaluation questions and indicators (see section 3.3 below).

The findings, recommendations and lessons learned from this evaluation are to be used by IOM Mali, all IOM units implementing IOM Development Fund projects and the Fund, as described in the following table.

Table 1: Intended uses and users of this evaluation

Intended Users	Intended Uses
IOM Mali	To improve identification of countries' needs and alignment of IOM's interventions with national, regional and global development agenda; To improve identification of and alignment of IOM's interventions with national, regional and global development and migration agenda. To improve efficiency and effectiveness of future project implementation. To demonstrate accountability of project implementation and use of resources. To identify specific follow-up actions/initiatives and project development ideas. To document lessons learned and best practices.
All IOM units implementing IOM Development Fund projects	To improve efficiency and effectiveness of current and future IDF funded projects
IOM Development Fund	To assess value for money. To use the findings and conclusions in consideration of future project funding approval.

3.2. Evaluation scope

The evaluation covered the full project period from 1st October 2016 to 30th September 2017. Although a no cost extension was not granted by the donor, a few activities were carried out also until the end of 2018 and included in this evaluation as referred to in the (delayed) final report (also see p. 27 question 9). Partners and stakeholders interviewed were chosen based on the extent of their involvement in the project and availability and were identified in collaboration with the IOM Mali project manager. The terms of reference/ inception report for the evaluation can be found at annex 1. The list of interviewees can be found in annex 2 and the main documents consulted are listed in annex 3.

3.3. Evaluation criteria

The evaluation focused on the following six main evaluation criteria, based on the OECD/DAC guidelines: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Gender and human rights were also mainstreamed where pertinent. In response to the evaluation purpose and scope, the evaluation focused on 21 out of the 25 evaluation questions found in the evaluation matrix (as outlined in the Inception Report found in annex 1). Responses to cross-cutting questions were integrated across the findings where possible.

4. Evaluation methodology

The evaluator used a participatory and mixed methods approach, involving and consulting with the relevant stakeholders as much as possible, integrating this approach into the methodology as feasible. Data was collected from a number of different sources in order to cross validate evaluation findings.

Data sources and collection

Two data collection methods were employed to ensure reliability of data:

- 1) Desk review of available data and documents (see annex 3);
- 2) Key informant interviews conducted with IOM and stakeholders involved in the project.

4.1. Data sampling

A sample of 10 stakeholders involved in the project were interviewed remotely. The stakeholders included:

3 IOM staff:

- 1 from the IOM country office in Mali (former project assistant),
- 1 IOM CO Uganda, former IOM CO Mali,
- 1 IOM CO Burkina Faso, former PM IOM CO Mali.

7 external interviewees

- 1 Sub Cluster gender-based violence (GBV) coordinator, UNFPA
- 1 consultant, former UNHCR staff
- 3 representatives of civil society organisations (CSOs)
- 2 government staff : *Direction Nationale de la Promotion de la Femme Enfant et Famille (DNPFEF)*, *Direction Nationale du Développement Social (DNDS)*

(See annex 3 for the complete list of persons interviewed).

4.2. Data Analysis

Quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to analyse findings from the document review and interviews. This approach was also used to assess the achievements of the results matrix and accompanying project documentation. Whenever possible, triangulation (reviewing two or more sources of data) was used to corroborate findings, substantiate findings and to underline any weaknesses in the evidence. For each evaluation criteria a rating was determined based on the following scale:

Table 2: Evaluation criteria and scaling

Evaluation Criteria Scaling		Explanation	Supporting evidence
5	Excellent (Always)	There is an evidence of strong contribution and/or contributions exceeding the level expected by the intervention.	<i>Supporting evidence will be detailed for each rating given.</i>
4	Very good (Almost always)	There is an evidence of good contribution but with some areas for improvement remaining.	
3	Good (Mostly, with some exceptions)	There is an evidence of satisfactory contribution but requirement for continued improvement.	
2	Adequate (Sometimes, with many exceptions)	There is an evidence of some contribution but significant improvement required.	
1	Poor (Never or occasionally with clear weaknesses)	There is low or no observable contribution.	

4.3. Limitations and proposed mitigation strategies

In total, 4 limitations and challenges were identified for the evaluation and detailed in the Inception Report. The following table describes these limitations and how they were addressed.

Table 3: Limitations and challenges

No.	Limitation	How these limitations were addressed
1	Timing: The timing of the evaluation during the Covid19	Early involvement of the project manager helped coordinate meetings and ensure availability of most key

	pandemic response will likely impact on the availability of IOM staff and project stakeholders/beneficiaries, and/or extend the time that will take to respond to the evaluation request and provide inputs.	stakeholders. The interview period took place remotely over a period of 4 weeks. All stakeholders and beneficiaries were willing to be interviewed remotely.
2	General problem of insufficient data or insufficient representative data collected, owing to poor response rate from interviewees.	Collection of data was slightly problematic for the evaluation. The number of interviewees identified and available was slightly lower than expected (10) and the level of recall was overall inconsistent. Of the ten interviewees it was not possible to speak to all former key staff of the IOM CO or the regional office. However, it was possible to speak to government officials and civil society actors involved in the project and, therefore, collect different perspectives. Interviewees had different memories, the dates on the reports referred to the original project duration. Where these problems of insufficient or insufficient representative data were encountered, they are noted in the report.
3	Objective feedback from interviewees – they may be reticent to reveal the factors that motivate them or any problems they are experiencing or being transparent about their motivation or about internal processes.	This did not materialize as a major obstacle; all discussions were transparent and open. All interviews were conducted by the evaluator alone.
4	General bias in the application of causality analysis.	This did not pose a major limitation to the findings as a general consensus was found on the majority of findings.

5. Findings

The project aligned well with national priorities and strategies and was found to be relevant. Stakeholder involvement could have been improved in the design of the project. Involvement during implementation was good. Although with delays, the project produced valuable results, most notably in laying the foundation for a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for vulnerable migrants (including victims of trafficking). Although the project was not designed specifically with measures to guarantee sustainability, work on the NRM continued after the end of the project with the various stakeholders indicating a good longer-term impact and sustainability of the project. Another example of longer-term impact and sustainability is the One-Stop centre created with the project funds.

The table below summarizes the findings and provides a rating for each evaluation criteria:

Table 4: Summary evaluation findings per criteria

Evaluation criteria and rating	Explanation	Supporting evidence
Relevance 2 - Adequate	The relevance of the project was mixed. It aligned well with national and IOM policies, strategies and mandates, but the analysis of the project documentation showed some inconsistencies. The proposal rationale included only a very short description of the objectives and the two components (Data and knowledge, vulnerability identification support), and, most importantly, they were formulated differently from the results matrix. Stakeholders were involved to a limited extent in the design of the activities. Nevertheless, the trainings and the discussion around the creation of the national referral mechanism were noted by the majority of interviewees as very relevant activities.	Interviewees Document review
Coherence 3 - Good	The project was compatible with ongoing IOM work on capacity building and data collection, analysis and research implemented with the government and other stakeholders in the field of trafficking and protection. Some other projects ran in parallel and were overlapping with this project to a certain extent. The evaluation found no evidence of an in-depth stakeholder consultation at the design stage to avoid duplication of efforts and promote synergies.	Interviewees Document review
Effectiveness 2- Adequate	The effectiveness was assessed as adequate. Almost all activities were carried out (although with delays). However, the lack of adequate indicators and measurement of some outputs and outcomes made the verification of the full extent of achievements difficult. Collaboration and coordination with (implementing) partners and stakeholders was good. A greater involvement in the design of capacity building activities would have been beneficial to increase ownership and take advantage of local expertise. A number of internal and external factors influenced the results of the project.	Interviewees Project documentation Document review
Efficiency and cost effectiveness 2-Adequate	The project was rated as having adequate efficiency and cost effectiveness. The project was found to have used its available human and financial resources cost-effectively. The resources available were sufficient as costs were saved by IOM staff conducting IOM staff trainings themselves instead of external (international) experts and by using equipment purchased for another project. Project management was slightly problematic as the designated PM had no previous experience in this position and with the IDF reporting	Interviewees Document review

	requirements. The PM tried to use as much as possible synergies with other projects to avoid duplication and cope with the initial delays. Project reporting was late throughout the timeframe. A 6-months no cost extension was requested to finalise two key products (study on drivers of migration and the study commissioned for the development referral system) but it was not approved.	
Impact 4- Very good	The project was assessed as having a very good impact. In the short to medium-term the project increased the capacities of government and civil society actors and provided protection to victims of sexual violence. Perhaps most importantly it strengthened collaboration and cooperation among key stakeholders in the country to improve assistance to vulnerable migrants by laying the foundations for the creation of a NRM for vulnerable migrants. The longer-term impact is seen through the products (e.g. vulnerability identification questionnaire) still in use, the continuation of the work on the NRM and the long-term partnerships created.	Interviewees Document review
Sustainability 3- Good	The sustainability of the project results was assessed as good. The project was not designed specifically with measures to guarantee sustainability, such as a hand-over or follow-up action plan. Nevertheless, several activities of the project generated benefits that are continuing. The project helped to create the basis for the NRM for vulnerable migrants. It was further developed by subsequent projects and was validated by the government in 2021. The vulnerability identification questionnaire developed by the project became a document that is still used in Mali and other Western African countries. The One-Stop centre for victims of GBV continues and became a model for other such centres.	Interviewees Document review

Relevance – 2 - Adequate

The relevance of the project was mixed. It aligned well with national and IOM policies, strategies and mandates, but the analysis of the project documentation shows some inconsistencies. For example, the objective formulated in the project rationale is not identical to the one in the results matrix, the outcomes, outputs, and activities are not included and described in the main body of the proposal. The proposal rationale included only a very short description of the objectives and the two components (data and knowledge, vulnerability identification support), and, most importantly, they were formulated differently from the results matrix. There could also have been a broader analysis of stakeholders, linkages to other initiatives, cross-cutting issues, partnerships, and coordination. These aspects remained at a rather superficial level in the proposal. Stakeholders were involved to a limited extent in the design of the action, for example, the

project did increase the number of trainings after discussions with the government but the training content was designed by the IOM only. Nevertheless, the trainings and the discussion around the creation of the national referral mechanism were noted by the majority of interviewees as highly relevant activities.

1. To what extent is the project aligned with national priorities and strategies, government policies and global commitments?

Finding: According to all interview partners the project aligned well with various national priorities and strategies, strategic plans of CSOs as well with IOM priorities.

According to all interview partners the project aligned well with various national priorities and strategies such as the *Politique Nationale de Migration* (PONAM). Key axes of PONAM were on migrant protection (4.1.), strengthening of capacities of migrant and civil society organisations (4.5.), promoting a better synergy among institutions and intervening actors (4.6.2.), in addition to the Strategy on Vulnerable Children of the DNPFEF. The project also aligned well with IOM's plans for the region to strengthen capacities of the government and civil society, in particular concerning human trafficking which, according to IOM staff, was becoming a priority in Mali during project implementation. CSOs consulted for this evaluation found a good alignment with their strategies towards victims of trafficking and protection of vulnerable migrants, in particular children. *"There was good coherence of the project's trainings with the National Migration strategy"*, as one government official explained.

2. To what extent were the needs of beneficiaries and stakeholders, taken into account during project design?

Finding: Although there is weak concrete evidence on the type and extent of involvement of beneficiaries and stakeholders in the project design of activities, outputs and outcomes, all external interviewees recognised and appreciated in general the participatory approach of the project and that the needs of their organisations and vulnerable migrants were met.

Most IOM interviewees had limited memories of how the project was designed and who was involved in the design. This is related also to the fact that the project manager arrived at IOM Mali only during the first months of implementation, i.e. after the whole project had already been set up. However, one government staff positively noted the participatory approach of the project: *"...we were involved at every stage and meeting of the project...many of our propositions were taken into consideration in particular concerning the need for a referral mechanism."* According to one interviewee outcome 1 of the project (*National and local authorities and development partners use improved data on drivers of migration, flows and trends to inform evidence-based policy development and programming*) was informed by a small pilot project for which IOM consulted a variety of stakeholders (government, mayors, local NGOs, etc.) and found out about a general lack of sufficient data on migration trends and movements. This project with the continuation

of support to the Flow Monitoring Point (FMP) in Gao was intended to fill this gap. All interviewees from the implementing NGO and UN partners recognized the relevance of the project for the capacity building needs of civil society actors and protection needs of vulnerable migrants. Prior to this project, victims of GBV had no safe space to go to, no services were offered to them where they could get treatment, etc. According to one UN partner, the one-stop center in Bamako, created by this project was a milestone in the protection of the GBV victims.

3. Was the project designed with a logical connection between its objective, outcomes, outputs and indicators based on a solid rationale/needs assessment?

Finding: The analysis of the vertical logic of the project results matrix shows that the project logic, objectives, outcome, outputs and indicators presents considerable flaws, such as a lack of clarity and logical links. In addition, there are discrepancies in the formulation of objectives in the project rationale and the project results matrix. Assumptions under which the project logic should hold true are completely missing. It is unclear to what extent a proper needs assessment was carried out. The available evidence indicates more an implicit approach.

Relevance of results-based matrix (RM) and vertical logic analysis:

As described below, the RM was developed with two outcomes (see Table 5), three outputs and seven activities. In the proposal, under point I. Rationale (p. 2), the overall objective was stated as: *To strengthen the capacity of government and civil society actors to protect migrants and potential migrants on their migration routes*. In the RM on p. 5 the objective was formulated slightly differently: *To strengthen the capacity of government and civil society actors to support and protect migrants and potential migrants in their decision making process not to engage in channels of irregular migration* (underline added to show differences). Outcome 1 in the RM, for example, has the focus on the *use* of the data to inform evidence-based policy development and programming while the Specific Objective 1 in the Rationale has a focus on *gathering* data to enhance knowledge base on migration flows and migrants' needs and vulnerabilities which in the RM became Output 1.1. Assumptions were missing from the RM.

The formulation of the overall objective “to strengthen the capacity of government and civil society actors to support and protect migrants and potential migrants in their decision-making process not to engage in channels of irregular migration” (if we take the one from the RM) or “to strengthen the capacity of government and civil society actors to protect migrants and potential migrants on their migration routes” (if we take the one from the Rationale) is not formulated as a longer term objective, as a vision, as a desired positive improvement the project is contributing to. Logically the increase in capacity concerning data collection and protection of vulnerable migrants should contribute to a situation where migrants are better protected.

From the evidence is unclear if a proper needs assessment was carried out. As mentioned above, the project manager was not involved in the project concept and design and other interviewees also did not recall well the design phase. The project proposal (p. 3) explains that *“this project comes as a direct response to a number of limitations observed in the capacity of national actors to implement the Politique Nationale and will aim at participating in bridging such gap most specifically through capacity-building in protection mainstreaming and information gathering and management.”* The term *“a number of limitations observed”* indicates that the project was based more on an “implicit feeling” of IOM staff of the capacity-building needs than based on a thorough needs assessment as outlined in the IOM project handbook.³

Table 5: Evaluation Assessment of the Project Results Matrix Vertical Logic

Vertical Logic and suggestions	Analysis ⁴
<p>Objective: <i>To strengthen the capacity of government and civil society actors to support and protect migrants and potential migrants in their decision making process not to engage in channels of irregular migration.</i></p> <p>Indicator: <i>% of individuals interviewed deciding not to engage in channels of irregular migration. (Disaggregated by sex and age, when possible.)</i></p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Target: 15%</p> <p>Assumptions: <i>No assumptions in the RM.</i></p>	<p>The objective is relevant (also if one looks at the intervention pillars of the National Migration Strategy PONAM) but as described above it does not exactly correspond to the objective outlined in the rationale of the proposal. In addition, the contribution towards a higher goal is not mentioned. Capacity-building is typically contributing to a higher objective, for example an increase in capacities is envisaged to improve the well-being of migrants. If the involved actors have the necessary and relevant data on who needs assistance, which type of assistance, etc. and actors are trained to better support migrants then, eventually, this should lead to an improved protection of migrants. A revised objective could have been: <i>The project will contribute to reduce the number of irregular migrants and improve their access to quality services.</i></p> <p>An indicator that measures access to services could be: % of migrants identified who have received access to basic protection needs according to international human rights standards, disaggregated by sex and age.</p> <p>The number of irregular migrants could be measured using DTM data.</p>
<p>Outcome 1: <i>National and local authorities and development partners use improved data on drivers of migration, flows and trends to inform evidence-based policy development and programming.</i></p>	<p>The outcome is appropriate.</p> <p>The indicators are inappropriate as the distribution of reports/data does not say anything about the fact that these data and</p>

³ IOM Project Handbook, p. 7 ff.

⁴ For this analysis the RM as outlined in the proposal on proposal on p. 5ff. The objectives and outcomes are slightly different from the ones in the project rationale.

<p>Indicator: <i>a. Bi-monthly FMP SitReps are circulated to relevant partners</i> <i>b. The data obtained on drivers of migration is shared with all identified partners.</i></p> <p>a. Baseline: 0. Target: 24 FMP reports are circulated</p> <p>b. Baseline: N/A Target: IOM DTM distribution list updated</p> <p>Assumptions: <i>No assumptions in the RM.</i></p>	<p>information is used by the relevant actors. In the base of indicator b, the target to update a list is an activity indicator. An outcome indicator needs to measure a change in behaviour and/or practice.</p> <p>Suggested indicator: % of recipients from national and local authorities as well as development partners that regularly use the reports/data for policy-making and programming. (The term “regularly” needs to be defined as well.)</p>
<p>Output 1.1: <i>Government actors engage in gathering data to enhance the knowledge base on migration flows and migrant’s needs and vulnerabilities</i></p> <p>Indicators: <i>A study is carried out. The quality and depth of data gathered on drivers of migration is enhanced.</i></p> <p>Baseline: <i>0 study. Gov and CS actors lack the adequate understanding of drivers of migration.</i> Target: <i>1 study. Gov partners participate in the assessment and demonstrate greater capacity to understand and identify drivers of migration.</i></p> <p>Assumptions: <i>No assumptions in the RM.</i></p>	<p>Output 1.1 is not formulated as an output as per the IOM Project Handbook, demonstrating the availability of a product, new skills or services. A suggested output is: Government actors have access to quality and in-depth data on drivers of migration.</p> <p>The indicator is only stating a project deliverable and poorly linked to the output. Moreover, its formulation is not precise enough. It does not say the type/content of study, who carries it out, etc. If the study is carried out by IOM or a consultant where lies the engagement of the government? Suggested indicators are: 1) Number of studies on drivers of migration of irregular migrants in Mali carried out by IOM; 2) % of government actors that have received the study on migration flows and migrant’s needs and vulnerabilities confirm their knowledge increase</p> <p>Indicator, baseline, and target contain additional information that are inappropriate as better part of a problem and solution tree.</p>
<p>Activities 1.1. 1.1.1 Support continuation of a FMP in Gao 1.1.2 Develop a vulnerability identification questionnaire based on assessment results to be used at FMP, supervise and monitor application</p>	<p>The activities supporting output 1.1. are not related to the indicator in output 1.1., i.e. there is no reference to the production of a study on drivers of migration.</p>
<p>Output 1.2: <i>Governments have increased capacity to analyse and share the data obtained with appropriate stakeholders.</i></p> <p>Indicators:</p>	<p>The formulation of Output 1.2. is technically correct but the connection between the output and the indicator is weak. The indicator is a description of the activity rather than an indicator.</p>

<p><i>The results of the study are compiled in a document to be circulated to concerned actors and presented</i></p> <p>Baseline: <i>0 document, 0 workshop</i></p> <p>Target: <i>500 copies of the document circulated; 1 workshop organized to discuss the impact of the study's result</i></p> <p>Assumptions: <i>No assumptions in the RM.</i></p>	<p>It is also flawed that both outputs 1.1. and output 1.2. have the production of a study as indication of increased capacity which is inappropriate as capacity-building measures such as trainings on data collection, data analysis, etc. are missing.</p> <p>Output 1.2 should include indicators with relation to capacity-building such as: 1) Number of government officials trained in data analysis and dissemination, disaggregated by sex 2) % of officials trained who score 70% and more on post-training test, disaggregated by sex</p>
<p>Activities 1.2</p> <p>1.2.1 Support the conduction of 1 study to gain better understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drivers of irregular migration (push vs pull factors/ perception vs expectations) (depending on the sex and age, when possible). - Migration patterns (origin and destination) (depending on the sex and age, when possible). - Experiences of migrants (depending on the sex and age, when possible). - Resources and vulnerabilities (conditions, capacities, needs) (depending on the sex and age, when possible). <p>1.2.2 Organize 2 brainstorming workshops with key government actors to establish study priorities.</p> <p>1.2.3 Support the publication of a summary report on study key findings and organize a workshop to discuss implications.</p> <p>A consultant will be hired for conducting the study, producing the summary and supervising the preparation and brainstorming events.</p>	<p>The activities listed support Output 1.2 but are estimated as being insufficient to increase government capacity to analyse and share data.</p>
<p>Outcome 2: <i>Government use the tools to provide migrants, potential migrants, returnees and their communities with basic protection assistance and referral services.</i></p> <p>Indicators: <i>The number of vulnerable populations interviewed offered protection assistance and referral services (disaggregated by sex and age, when possible).</i></p> <p>Baseline:</p>	<p>“Government use the tools” is unclear. One can assume that with “the tools” the vulnerability questionnaire of activity 1.1.2 are meant but then it would not be the right place under Outcome 2.</p> <p>If we assume the indicators are correct but not the outcome, a suggested outcome that is related to the indicators could be:</p> <p>Migrants and potential migrants benefit from improved protection assistance and referral services.</p>

<p><i>Interviewed populations present signs of acute vulnerability.</i></p> <p>Target: <i>80% of vulnerable interviewed populations are offered access to protection and referral services (disaggregated by sex and age, when possible). 40% respond positively to the offer for assistance (disaggregated by sex and age, when possible).</i></p> <p>Assumptions: <i>No assumptions in the RM.</i></p>	<p>The indicator should be expressed as a %. A second indicator is suggested because of the second target: % of vulnerable populations who were offered protection services accept these services.</p>
<p>Output 2.1.: <i>Key identified government actors receive training on direct assistance provision and sensitization to lessen migrants' vulnerability to the risks associated with irregular migration.</i></p> <p>Indicators: The number of trainings provided to the concerned actors on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - protection mainstreaming and vulnerability identification (4) - Sensitization to the risks of irregular migration and trafficking (4) <p>Baseline: <i>0</i> Target: <i>8</i> Assumptions: <i>No assumptions in the RM.</i></p>	<p>The output does not demonstrate the availability of a product, new skills or services as per the IOM project handbook. A suggested output is: Key identified government actors have the skills and knowledge on direct assistance to lessen migrants' vulnerability to the risks associated with irregular migration.</p> <p>The indicator formulation is appropriate.</p>
<p>Activities 2.1</p> <p>2.1.1 Conduct 4 training events that will be conducted by IOM protection staff for 30 identified trainees on protection and direct assistance to vulnerable populations</p> <p>2.1.2 Facilitate referral to specialized agencies (Medical and psychological support; legal or job counselling; facilitation of contact with families...) by providing support in the development of a referral system.</p> <p>2.1.2 Conduct 4 training events on Counter-trafficking to 30 key identified trainees</p>	<p>The activities supporting output 2.1. contain a second strand of interventions which is the facilitation of a referral mechanism. It is suggested to include a second output that could be: The basis for the development of a referral mechanism is in place.</p>

4. To what extent do the expected outcomes and outputs remain valid and pertinent as originally intended in terms of direct beneficiary needs?

Finding: The expected outcome and outputs remain relevant. There are thousands of migrants on the route that still need protection, that need government and CSO services to improve their wellbeing. The key stakeholders still have a need to increase data collection, analysis, and dissemination as well as protection capacities. As noted above, the outcomes and outputs still align with the priorities of key stakeholders.

Both capacity-building in the field of data collection and protection/referral services as addressed by the project remain valid and pertinent in the country context and in relation to the strategies and mandates of the involved stakeholders. There are thousands of migrants on the route that still need protection, that need government and CSO services to improve their well-being. The project made a contribution to meeting these needs. As noted by interviewees from the government and NGOs the project was pertinent to increase staff capacities but at the same time added that there is a need for continued action due to staff changes and knowledge gets easily lost.

5. How adequately were human rights and gender equality taken into consideration during the project design and implementation?

Finding: The human rights aspect was taken into consideration by the very nature of this project, namely the protection of vulnerable migrants, victims of trafficking and gender-based violence. Gender equality was also taken into consideration to some extent but more “implicitly and automatically” (IOM staff) than explicitly and systematically. For example, were not all indicators or feedback collected from training participants or in the study on violence against migrants and trafficking disaggregated by gender.

The project proposal included one paragraph on gender in that the activities “*will be completed in accordance with principles of gender equality and neutrality and will aim at benefitting men and women equally*” In addition, it was planned that “*IOM will put a particular emphasis on sensitizing government and civil society actors to the gender sensitive aspects of all activities to be implemented*”. For one indicator, gender disaggregation was foreseen (“*when possible*”) and reported in the final report, 10% of assessed vulnerable populations were women. The final report also reports the number of women that participated in the training events on counter-trafficking (32 out of 163 in total). The project documentation indicates that gender equality aspects were included in the vulnerability identification questionnaire (N.B. This evaluation was not able to obtain a copy of the questionnaire); and in the study on drivers of irregular migration, migration patterns, experiences of migrants, resources, and vulnerabilities (activity 1.2.1.). In the latter a systematic approach to present gender disaggregated data or a particularly gender-sensitive research approach could not be confirmed.

All interview partner agreed that given the subject of the project, protection of victims of trafficking, victims of gender-based violence, and the fulfilment of their basic rights regardless of their sex, age, origin, etc. the project had an intrinsic strong human rights

focus. The trainings offered for service providers had as main topics the protection of vulnerable migrants and the prevention and fight against human trafficking.

6. Is the project in line with IOM/IOM Development Fund priorities and criteria?

Finding: The project was found to be aligned to IOM and the Fund's priorities and criteria. It supported three of IOM's current strategic foci and IDF's eligibility criteria. The project also supported the first and third principle of IOM's Migration Governance framework (MiGOF) by strengthening partnerships and by improving the quality of and access to migrant protection services.

The project was found to support three of IOM's current strategic foci,⁵ notably:

- No. 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.
- No. 6: To be a primary reference point for migration information, research, best practices, data collection, compatibility and sharing.
- No. 11: To assist States in the development and delivery of programmes, studies, and technical expertise on combating migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons, in particular women and children, in a manner consistent with international law.

The project was also in line with the MiGOF, under Principle 1 contributing to improve the quality of and access to protection services and Principle 3, partnering with the government, civil society organisations, UN organisations.

The main project activities were capacity-building (including research) and therefore in line with the IDF funding priorities.

Coherence – 3- Good

The project was compatible with ongoing IOM work on capacity building and data collection, analysis and research implemented with the government and other stakeholders in the field of trafficking, protection. Some other projects ran in parallel and were overlapping to this project to a certain extent. The evaluation found no evidence of an in-depth stakeholder consultation at the design stage to avoid duplication of efforts and promote synergies between projects.

7. To what extent is this project compatible with other IOM activities?

⁵ IOM mission and strategic focus: https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/about-iom/iom_strategic_focus_en.pdf, accessed: 2 July 2021.

Finding: The project was found to be compatible with other IOM activities such as the data tracking matrix (DTM) and the Glo.Act project⁶. However, it was challenging having projects with similar or overlapping activities running at the same time by IOM.

In relation to outcome 1, this project was the extension of another project that had started in 2016 collecting data at a FMP) in Timbuktu. The project also organised capacity-building sessions jointly with another IOM led project Glo.Act. Partly in parallel and after this project at least three IOM projects intervened in the same direction as this project: 1) *Strengthening institutional capacity to coordinate national anti-trafficking response including the identification, protection of victims, investigation and prosecution of trafficking offenders in Mali* (financed by the Japanese government); 2) *Safety, Support and Solutions II in the Central Mediterranean Route - Mali* (financed by the UK government) implemented in coordination with several IOM missions and partner organisations; and 3) IOM/AECID project funded by the EU Trust Fund *Renforcement de la gestion et de la gouvernance des migrations et le retour et la réintégration durable au Mali*. This caused some challenges as capacity building activities were partly overlapping and potentially resources not used efficiently (aside from above-mentioned collaboration with Glo.Act).

8. To what extent is this project compatible with other interventions in this field?

Finding: During the project's lifespan, no comparable external interventions by other actors were identified.

Effectiveness – 2 – Adequate

The effectiveness was assessed as adequate. Almost all activities were carried out (although with delays). However, the lack of adequate indicators and measurement of some outputs and outcomes made the verification of the full extent of achievement difficult. Collaboration and coordination with (implementing) partners and stakeholders was good. A greater involvement in the design of capacity-building activities would have been beneficial to increase ownership and take advantage of local expertise. A number of internal and external factors influenced the results of the project leading to a request for extension of 6 months to the project timeframe which was not granted by the donor.

9. Have the project's outputs and outcomes been achieved in accordance with the stated plans and results matrix?

⁶ The **Global Action** to Prevent and Address Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants was a four-year (2015-2019) joint initiative by the European Union and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) implemented in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), www.iom.int/gloact - accessed on 1 July 2021.

Finding: The full extent of achievement is difficult to assess as not all indicators were measured and some indicators did not match well the objective, outcome or output and vice versa. If one looks only at the achievement of indicators the picture is different, less positive, than taking into considerations also stakeholder voices collected for this evaluation. However, it became clear from the positive feedback of government and non-governmental actors during interviewees that the project made an important contribution to increase capacities in particular concerning protection, identification of vulnerable migrants and referral to services. The project has not completed all proposed activities within the end of the project.

As the results matrix is flawed (see relevance section) it is difficult to assess the full extent of achievement. These discrepancies made it necessary for the evaluation to look at both achievement of indicators and achievement of the result (as seen in the column “Level of achievement”). Outputs and Outcomes were either partially achieved or difficult to assess because of the indicator problem. Despite these challenges, all activities were carried out and achieved, only with slight changes and according to plan (in terms of content but not timing). The trainings and the study contributed to increase the knowledge of participants and were reported by interviewees as useful and satisfactory (“*It was useful*” or “*Good quality, in particular the training, good memories*”). One activity that was repeatedly positively emphasized by interview partners was the workshop that brought together government, CSOs, UN agencies to discuss the details of a potential referral mechanism for vulnerable migrants. The project supported the creation of a One-Stop Center in Bamako where victims of GBV can receive care free of charge. During that time, it was the first one of this type in Mali (under activity 2.1.2 of the RM).

Analysis of the implementation timeline and completion dates from the narrative reports indicates that the project was not very timely in conducting its activities as planned in the project document.

Table 6: Assessment and Analysis of the Project Results Matrix

Results matrix element	Level of achievement	Analysis ⁷
<p>Objective: <i>To strengthen the capacity of government and civil society actors to support and protect migrants and potential migrants in their decision making process not to engage in channels of irregular migration.</i></p>	Partially achieved	According to the available documentation the indicator was not measured and was also not very appropriate to measure the objective. However, the available project documentation and interview partners from the government and civil society whose staff participated in the trainings reported an increase in

⁷ For this analysis the RM as outlined in the proposal on proposal on p. 5ff. The objectives and outcomes are slightly different from the ones in the project rationale.

		capacity following the trainings proposed by this project as well as by the study on the drivers of migration carried out.
Outcome 1: <i>National and local authorities and development partners use improved data on drivers of migration, flows and trends to inform evidence-based policy development and programming.</i>	Not possible to verify	The targeted indicators were achieved but were output indicators and not outcome indicators. The use of improved data was not monitored and, therefore, achievement is impossible to assess.
Output 1.1: <i>Government actors engage in gathering data to enhance the knowledge base on migration flows and migrant's needs and vulnerabilities</i>	Not achieved	The study was carried out as per the indicator. However, the information available indicates that government was not actively involved in data collection for the study.
Output 1.1. Activities	Achieved	According to project documentation and interview data the 2 activities under output 1.1. were carried out, i.e. the flow monitoring point of Gao was supported and data collection staff hired and trained. A flow monitoring survey including vulnerability and counter trafficking questions was developed and used for data collection. According to former project staff this survey was subsequently used in other West African countries as well.
Output 1.2: <i>Governments have increased capacity to analyse and share the data obtained with appropriate stakeholders.</i>	Not possible to verify	One workshop was organized to discuss the impact of the study results. The planned distribution of 500 copies of the study was not carried out "due to the sensitiveness of the results in the political context" as outlined in the final report. As mentioned above, one study alone produced by a consultant hardly increases the capacity of actors to analyse and share data. The increase in capacities was not assessed.
Output 1.2. Activities	Achieved	The study was carried out although with a slight deviation from the plan as a focus was given to violence experienced on the journey. The planned 2 brainstorming sessions were carried out, according to the documentation

		with key government actors to establish study priorities, interview partners had no or weak memories about their involvement in the design. A report was drafted by the local NGO contracted to conduct the study. The planned workshop to discuss the implications of the findings took place only in November 2018, ie after the project had already ended.
Outcome 2: <i>Government use the tools to provide migrants, potential migrants, returnees and their communities with basic protection assistance and referral services.</i>	Partly achieved	100% of those assessed were sensitized and informed about protection services. Data for the second part of the target “40% respond positively to the offer for assistance” was not collected according to project documentation.
Output 2.1.: <i>Key identified government actors receive training on direct assistance provision and sensitization to lessen migrants’ vulnerability to the risks associated with irregular migration.</i>	Achieved	12 training workshops on protection mainstreaming (6) and sensitization to the risk of irregular migration and trafficking (6) were carried out according to the project documentation.
Output 2.1 Activities	Achieved	6 training events of two days on protection were held from June to August 2017 in Bamako, Segou, Mopti, Gao, Kayes and Sikasso. In total 163 participants from non-governmental and government actor among which 32 were women. Note: The output speaks of “government actors” but also “non-government actors” were invited to the trainings.

10. Was the collaboration and coordination with partners (including project implementing partners) and stakeholders effective, and to what extent have the target beneficiaries been involved in the processes?

Finding: Collaboration and coordination with (implementing) partners and stakeholders was good. A greater involvement in the design of capacity-building activities would have been beneficial to increase ownership and take advantage of local expertise.

The majority view of interviewees was that the collaboration and coordination between IOM and partners was strengthened. Furthermore, collaboration and cooperation among government (technical services, police, civil protection, several ministerial departments, etc.), non-government and UN actors considerably improved. As mentioned above, the workshop around the creation of a referral system where a broad range of actors participated and made recommendations for the way forward was highlighted as having

strengthened cooperation: this was the first time in Mali such a broad discussion where all actors agreed on the need of a national referral mechanism to improve protection services for vulnerable migrants was organized. Some interviewees reported that a greater involvement of government partners in the design of activities would have been beneficial as it would have further increased the relevance and ownership. In particular NGOs felt some dissatisfaction “to be used” by IOM only to implement “*les faits accomplis*”, i.e., everything was prepared by IOM and NGOs only implement according to these plans, whereas they felt they have much more to contribute given their expertise in the field.

11. What major internal and external factors have influenced (positively or negatively) the achievement of the project’s objectives and how have they been managed within the project timeframe?

Finding: A number of internal and external factors influenced the results of the project leading to a request for extension of 6 months to the project timeframe. Negative factors included: a late start of the project manager, who had little experience with the management of such projects, delays in getting endorsement letters from government. Positive factors included the good collaboration among the involved stakeholders, the need to increase capacities for the identification and assistance of vulnerable migrants, or the good alignment with the national migration policy.

The following positive factors which influenced the results of the project were identified:

Internal

- IOM was present in the project region of Gao already before the start of this project and had experience with the relevant actors (e.g. Police, Gendarmerie, Mayors, etc.).
- Good collaboration with external partners and IOM that built on previous collaboration experience and partnerships and was reinforced (e.g. with the child protection authorities of the government, UNFPA, IMADEL, etc.).

External

- The desire of involved stakeholders in getting relevant data for evidence-based decision making and in learning more about the identification and assistance of vulnerable migrants.
- The project aligned well with the PONAM, the national migration policy.

The following negative factors which influenced the results of the project were identified:

Internal

- “One-shot trainings” without planned follow-up coaching measures reduced the likely impact and sustainability of the project.
- The project manager came into the project after the project had already started, she was new to the country and to the management of this type of project and the donor.
- IOM CO staff worked on several projects in parallel and had to balance their time between those projects.

- Activity 2.1.2, i.e. the facilitation of referral was overlapping with an activity included in another IOM project implemented in Mali, the Glo.Act project. This led to an increased need for coordination with the Glo.Act team and was one of the main reasons for asking for a NCE.

External

- It was challenging to get the right profiles of training participants from the government, also regarding gender balance.
- The gender-balance of enumerators to train was also challenging to ensure. Many more men migrate, and some sensitive questions cannot be addressed by a woman to a man.
- It was challenging to identify national consultants, experts on migration and protection, with good research and writing skills which meant that IOM had to put an extra effort to closely monitor the activity.

Efficiency & Cost Effectiveness – 2 - Adequate

The project was rated as having adequate efficiency and cost effectiveness. The project was found to have used its available human and financial resources cost-effectively. The resources available were sufficient as costs were saved by conducting IOM staff trainings themselves instead of an external (international) expert or by using tablets, chairs, tables, etc. purchased for another project. Project management was slightly problematic as the designated PM had no previous experience in this position and with the IDF reporting requirements. The PM tried to use as much as possible synergies to avoid duplication and cope with the initial delays. Project reporting was late throughout the timeframe. A 6-months no cost extension was requested to finalise two key products (study on drivers of migration and the study commissioned for the development of a referral system) but not approved.

12. How cost-effective was the project? Could the activities have been implemented with fewer resources without reducing the quality and quantity of the results?

Finding: The project was found to have used its available human and financial resources cost-effectively. The resources available were sufficient as costs were saved by conducting IOM staff trainings themselves instead of an external (international) expert or by using tablets, chairs, tables, etc. purchased for another project. For example, this approach did allow the project to carry out more trainings than planned or create a One Stop Center for the protection of victims of sexual exploitation.

To the extent possible complementarities and synergies with other projects implemented in parallel by IOM were sought. Much of the value of the project is represented in the trainings, the study, the data collected and, particularly on the discussions and agreements concerning the need of creating a national referral mechanism for the protection of vulnerable migrants and VOTs. Although not detailed in the project proposal

the project created – in collaboration with UNFPA - a One Stop Center based on similar centers in Rwanda. This was the first of its kind in Mali and protects and assists victims of sexual exploitation providing them with a safe space and medical treatment.

The resources available were enough to carry out all activities. As it was challenging for the IOM project team to find qualified expert trainers in Mali on the proposed subjects (according to the project manager bringing in international experts would have been too expensive) the trainings were designed and carried out by IOM project staff. This contributed to saving money and enabled IOM to conduct more trainings as requested by the government. All interviewed training participants were satisfied with the quality of the trainings and of the study.

13. How efficient was the overall management of the project?

Finding: Project management was slightly problematic as the designated PM had no previous experience in this position and with the IDF reporting requirements. Moreover, the PM had started several months after the project had been designed and launched. As mentioned in the relevance and effectiveness sections, the PM then had to deal with the inconsistent results matrix and the overlapping activities with other projects. The PM did, however, try to use as much as possible synergies to avoid duplication and cope with the initial delays. The main reason for the delays was due to misunderstandings with the authorities at the beginning and difficulties in receiving an endorsement letter for the NCE extension according to IOM staff.

The PM started her position several months after the project launch and when the activities were already delayed. She was new to this type of role and had no experience with the IDF reporting requirements. However, the main reason for the delays was due to misunderstandings with the authorities according to IOM staff (as the authorities initially thought the project would be a direct-funded project for them). This then led to delays in starting project activities as it required further clarifications and discussions. In terms of relations with the IDF there were communication problems due to inexperience of the PM.

14. Were project resources monitored regularly and managed in a transparent and accountable manner to guarantee efficient implementation of activities? Did the project require a no-cost or costed extension?

Finding: Monitoring and reporting were transparent, but the latter was delayed, and explanations not always exhaustive. Project reporting was late throughout the timeframe. A 6-months no cost extension was requested to finalise two key products (study on drivers of migration and the study commissioned for the development referral system) but not approved. The total budget of USD \$200,000 was used up to 85% with some major variation from the planned budget, especially for Output 1.1. (3.5 times less than planned mostly because of the reduction of the FLM report frequency). For the planned evaluations only one third was spent as only one out of three was carried out.

Output 2.1.(trainings), needed some more resources as instead of the planned 8 trainings, 12 were carried out.

Analysis of the implementation timeline and completion dates from the interim and final reports indicates that the project was not very timely in conducting its activities, as previously planned in the project document. The interim report was submitted 5.5 months after the end date of the reporting period due to a delay in the implementation of activities. The final report was submitted 1.5 years after the end of the project. The budget disbursement was at 85%.

Most activities were carried out according to the plans in terms of quantity and quality with a few slight changes, for example the reporting period of FMPs changed from 2 weeks to every month in accordance with the standards of the IOM Regional Office and instead of the planned 8 trainings, 12 were realized. As noted above the project activities were delayed. Two activities were finalized only after the project end and the mid-term and end of project evaluation were not carried out as planned.

A no cost extension was requested after the initial project period. The no cost extension was not approved by the donor. 2 activities, the publication and discussion of the produced study, were carried out after the official end of the project (i.e. after 30 September 2017).

Budget analysis: The project was allocated USD \$200,000 (including 7,500 USD for evaluations). According to the final financial report, the total budget used was \$164,479 (equaling an 85% disbursement rate).

Table 7: Comparison between the planned budget and the actual budget spent⁸

Expenditure item	Budget	Actual expenditure	Revision /Change indicated in documentation
Staff	53,292	53,328	n/a
Office	6,500	4,292	n/a
Output 1:1	32,400	9,249	The change in the frequency of production and circulation was mentioned but not the effects on budget. In addition, resources (such as tablets) were used from another project. IOM staff explained that some charges for the FMP of Gao, Gogui, and Benena were initially charged under this budget item but then were changed to another

⁸ This table is based on the pdf file (1 page) which was signed by the chief of Mission IOM Mali, Pascal REYNTJENS, on 30 September 2020. The Excel-Financial final report had a different final balance with a total spending of USD 180,532. It was dated 29 November 2017. It is assumed by the evaluator that the difference has to do with the fact that two activities still needed to be completed (reason for the requested no cost extension).

			project, thus resulting in the significant underspend.
Output 1.2	29,508	19,993	The final narrative report mentions that the planned 500 copies were not distributed.
Output 2.1	70,800	75,117	The narrative reports mentioned an increase of the number of trainings from 8 to 12.
Evaluation	7,500	2,500	No reference is made to the (presumed) reduction of the number of evaluations in the documentation.
TOTAL	200,000	164,479	

15. Were the costs proportionate to the results achieved?

Finding: The project budget of \$200,000 was sufficient to carry out the project activities with 85% of it used. Within this evaluation it cannot fully be assessed if the products could have been produced also at a lower cost. Such an analysis would mean to do a lot more expert interviews and budget analysis of similar projects to find out if the costs of this project are comparable and proportionate.

The project budget of \$200,000 was sufficient to carry out the project activities, actually the project suffered from underspending: only 85% of the funds were disbursed. As noted previously, the project was also able to avail of savings made in use of existing staff and materials.

Impact – 4- Very good

The project was assessed as having a very good impact. In the short to medium-term the project increased the capacities of government and civil society actors and provided protection to victims of sexual violence. Perhaps most importantly it strengthened collaboration and cooperation among key stakeholders in the country to improve assistance to vulnerable migrants by laying the foundations for the creation of a NRM for vulnerable migrants. The longer-term impact is seen through the products (e.g. vulnerability identification questionnaire) still in use, the continuation of the work on the NRM and the long-term partnerships created.

16. Which positive/negative and intended/unintended effects/changes are visible (short and long-term) as a result of the project?

Finding: The project resulted in several short and longer-term positive changes which included: laying the foundation for the NRM for vulnerable migrants, increasing coordination among stakeholders involved in migrant protection, increasing the knowledge base on migration trends and patterns. No negative impacts were identified.

The following positive short to long-term changes were identified:

- The trainings offered through this project were important for the participants to have a common understanding on terminology (e.g. What is a vulnerable migrant? What actually is counter-trafficking?), on the extent of the problem of counter-trafficking, on the roles and responsibilities of different governmental and non-governmental actors.
- The project strengthened the collaboration and cooperation and created synergies among key governmental and non-governmental actors on protection of vulnerable migrants. Before the project the actors acted separately and now there is more coordination among them to avoid duplication of service provision. All interviewees emphasized the important role of IOM in convening all these actors for the first time. *“To involve all actors, NGOs and government, such an involvement was a first for us.”* according to one government official.
- The project laid the foundations for an NRM for vulnerable migrants. The respective document elaborated within this project was further elaborated by subsequent projects and validated in 2021 according to an interviewed government member.
- The project elaborated tools (e.g. vulnerability identification questionnaire) that contributed to harmonize the protection approach of the various actors and that, according to the government officials interviewed are still used.
- The collection and dissemination of data contributed to improve evidence-based decision-making to better assist and protect migrants and to understand migration patterns and trends.
- The One-Stop Center for victims of gender-based violence (including VoTs) set up with this project in Bamako was used as a model and replicated (with other funds) in other regions. Currently there are 10 such centers in the country.

No negative effects were identified.

17. Can those changes /outcomes/ expected impact be attributed to the project’s activities? Are there any contributions from external factors?

Finding: The existing evidence indicates that the project contributed largely to the changes/outcomes/impact achieved. The project collaborated also with another IOM project, notably the Glo.Act project, in the elaboration of the NRM. It was not possible to assess the different impact these projects have had.

A number of other IOM projects were ongoing at the same time or shortly after this project with partly similar activities. The project cooperated with the IOM Glo.Act project as noted earlier. However, it was not possible to assess how much influence the different projects had on this project as a whole as the data collected was insufficient. The view of the majority of interviewees was that the impacts described under question 16 were the results of this project but that, for example, the contacts and partnerships established prior to the project with implementing partners or that data collection staff already trained by another project have also contributed to the results seen.

Sustainability - 3 - Good

The sustainability of the project results was assessed as good. The project was not designed specifically with measures to guarantee sustainability, such as a hand-over or follow-up action plan. Nevertheless, several activities of the project generated benefits that are continuing. Some examples: The project helped to create the basis for the NRM for vulnerable migrants. It was further developed by subsequent projects and was validated by the government in 2021. The vulnerability identification questionnaire developed by the project became a document that is still used in Mali and other Western African countries, the One-Stop centre for victims of GBV continues and became a model for other such centres.

18. Did the project take specific measures to guarantee sustainability and how was this supported by partners and the IOM?

Finding: The project had insufficient planned measures in place to guarantee sustainability. Nevertheless, capacity building carried out with this project continued to be done also by other IOM projects that followed the ones under evaluation and did contribute to the sustainability. There was an almost uniform view from those interviewed that the partnerships and network created through this project have been sustained.

Following the project documentation and interviews the project did not plan follow-up measures in the project. Although continuity was not planned through concrete exit and follow-up measures during the project duration several components of the project could be sustained.

The project document anticipated sustainability being guaranteed through:

“The notion of sustainability is inherent to the present proposed action. As mentioned above, will be developed as a preparatory stage for longer-term engagement through the establishment of Migration Response and Resource Mechanisms (MRRM) throughout Mali. For that matter, the activities under this project will represent a stepping stone to strengthen the capacities of and coordination with government and civil society partners but also to build a knowledge base that will enable IOM and its counterparts to offer more tailored and sustainable responses.”

The sustainability of the project activities was unclear. The above mentioned MRRM was not anymore mentioned in any subsequent document and even IOM staff did not recall any details. The evaluator could not find any other source to assess if in the meanwhile the MRRM has been established in Mali. If the MRRM is equal to the NRM that had its starting point with this project, the latter has been realized in 2021.

Concerning trainings, no follow-up coaching was included in the proposal. This lack of in-built sustainability measures was, however, addressed by other projects, for example the DFID-funded *Safety, Support and Solutions II in the Central Mediterranean Route – Mali (2018-2020)*⁹ or the EUTF project *Renforcement de la gestion et de la gouvernance des migrations et le retour et la reintegracion durable au Mali*. Both projects continued to increase capacities for the protection of vulnerable migrants and data collection to increase the evidence-base for decision-making. The same stakeholders and beneficiaries were involved.

19. Have the benefits generated by the project deliverables continued once external support ceased?

Finding: The project was assessed to demonstrate a good stream of benefits that continued once the external support ceased such as the NRM, the collaboration and cooperation among the key stakeholders of the project, the centre for victims of GBV, data collection tools, etc.

Several aspects of the project demonstrate the continuation of benefits after the end of the project:

- Most of the partnerships created and strengthened with the project continued after the end of the project ensuring a more harmonized approach to protection. However, to the dissatisfaction of one NGO partner interviewed the partnership with IOM stopped after this project for reasons that were not clear.
- *“We continued the referral project with the same actors, NGOs, UN agencies, DNDS, etc. in the framework of other projects”*, (government official). The NRM discussed within this project was further elaborated by subsequent projects and the respective document validated by the government in 2021. By the majority of interviewees this was seen as one of the most relevant and sustainable contributions of the project under evaluation.
- The One-Stop centre for victims of gender-based violence (including VOTs) supported by this project was used as a model and replicated (with other funds) in other regions. At the time of this evaluation there were 10 such centers in the country according to UNFPA who had led this activity. The government supports the infrastructure, staff costs with the support of other donors.
- The vulnerability identification questionnaire continues to be used in Mali and other countries of West Africa according to interviewees

⁹ <https://rodakar.iom.int/safety-support-and-solutions-ii-programme-2018-2020>

- The support for FMPs to ensure consistent data collection on migration trends and patterns was included into other projects.

20. Was the project supported by national/local institutions and well-integrated into national/local social and cultural structures?

Finding: The project was supported by the government partners and stakeholders. They all had expressed an interest in improving coordination and collaboration among all actors who work for the identification and support of vulnerable migrants and the need for capacity building and the availability of improved data.

As detailed above, the project was supported by the involved stakeholders. Certain tools, such as the vulnerability identification questionnaire were subsequently integrated into the work procedure of these organizations and expanded to other regions in Africa. The One-Stop center in Bamako was integrated into a public hospital and supported by the government also after the end of the project. A culturally sensitive approach had been taken as the center was “hidden” so that women could feel safe without fear of stigmatization.

21. Have adequate levels of suitable qualified human resources been available to continue to deliver the project’s stream of benefits?

Finding: The project was not designed specifically with measures to guarantee sustainability, such as a hand-over or follow-up action plan. Therefore, the evidence suggests that partners had not committed human resources and budgets at this stage. But the delivery of the project’s stream of benefits was to a certain extent continued as several aspects of the project were integrated into other projects as noted above.

As previously mentioned some benefits of the project are ongoing at the national level. In particular, the national referral mechanism and the non-stop centre are owned by government institutions.

6. Conclusion and recommendations

The evaluation detected inconsistencies in the intervention logic but the project managed to achieve some key outputs/outcomes; these had consequent long-term benefits for the future.

The project set out to strengthen the capacity of government and civil society actors to support and protect migrants and potential migrants in their decision-making process not to engage in channels of irregular migration. While it is not possible to say if and how much impact the project made in supporting migrants and potential migrants in their decision-making process to engage in channels of irregular migration, the evaluation has seen that capacity of the government and civil society actors was strengthened, notably in relation to counter-trafficking, the identification of a vulnerable migrants, the increase in knowledge

on migration patterns and trends and the protection of victims of GBV (including VOTs) reinforced with the One-Stop centre in Bamako. The project contributed to increase collaboration and cooperation among government, civil society actors and international organizations and laid the basis for a NRM.

Following are some conclusions and recommendations drawn from the detailed findings presented in the previous sections:

E. Project Design

Some activities were designed together with the implementing partners (such as the One-Stop Centre for example) but most other activities saw less involvement of the implementing partners and beneficiaries. Furthermore, greater attention should have been paid to the project description, the results matrix and the wording of the outcome and outputs, not all of which were well formulated. There could have been a broader analysis of stakeholders, linkages to broader initiatives, cross cutting issues, and sustainability measures. Assumptions were not included in the proposal and results matrix. There was no description of the activities in the narrative part of the project document.

Recommendations:

For IOM Mali for future similar projects:

- Ensure that the project proposal has a clear and explicit Theory of Change, is based on solid assumptions and hypotheses, and that the outcome, outputs and indicators are correctly formulated and follow the recommended steps and approaches of the IOM Project Management Handbook. Furthermore, more attention should be paid to the general consistency and coherence in the proposal.
- Ensure that the projects are designed in a collaborative manner with all the relevant IOM units and all relevant actors in the field. Ensure that all beneficiaries and stakeholders are carefully selected and that a solid needs assessment is undertaken ensuring project relevancy.
- Ensure that follow-up measures are included in the project design concerning trainings carried out. After training, coaching has a greater potential for a sustained impact and knowledge retention and should therefore be considered in all projects that contain a training component.
- Include in the project design measures to promote and track the use of products and services provided as the production and dissemination of a study is not enough to ensure that it is also used by recipients.

F. Project management

The PM was new to the project management post and no experience with donor reporting. Reporting was late, in part because of delays in the launch of activities at the start, in part a result of the slow government endorsement process.

Recommendations:

For IOM Mali for future similar projects:

- Ensure that key project staff is in place before the project start, ideally already in the project design phase.
- Ensure that the reporting is carried out on time and more rigorously in line with the donor requirements and that delays, and other implementation challenges are communicated transparently, and as soon as issues arise.
- Ensure that new staff members are introduced to the needed communication lines and requirements of the donor.

G. Trainings:

The training content was carried out to the satisfaction of the participants. The findings described above saw a potential for increased ownership and sustainability by increasing the involvement of stakeholders in the training design, by including follow-up measures, and by providing skills to trainees to carry out trainings themselves.

Recommendations:

For IOM Mali for projects with a capacity building component:

- Explore possibilities to provide continuity to the training activities which are a key component in improving national capacity in coordinating protection of vulnerable migrants.
- Explore possibilities to offer training of trainer programmes for government actors to increase ownership and sustainability.
- As mentioned above, ensure that post-training coaching is provided as a few numbers of trainings are not enough to ensure knowledge retention and the actual application of the knowledge gained.
- Consider the use of pre- and post-training questionnaires to evaluate the % increase in knowledge gained.

H. Partnership building, networking:

Within this project CSOs, governments and international organizations closely worked together and improved their collaboration and explored the use of synergies. This should be continued, and exchange more formally organized to learn from each other's practices and consolidate partnerships.

For IOM Mali for future similar projects,

- Explore the organization of study visits and other regular information exchange of CSOs on the assistance of VOTs and migrant assistance.

Points identified requiring an institutional response

For the Donor:

- Strengthen the validation process to ensure that the projects are designed with an adequate results matrix including well formulated outcomes, outputs, indicators, targets and assumptions following the IOM project handbook, a thorough needs assessment with clear linkages to similar projects either to use synergies or to avoid duplication. The narrative description of the project should be more detailed and include a description of all activities.

Lessons Identified

The following lessons were identified that could be of use for future similar projects:

- Bringing various actors working on the same or similar topics together, getting to know each other's interventions and strengths, looking for the harmonisation of approaches and exploring possibilities of collaboration contributes to an improved offer of services for vulnerable migrants.
- Data collected are only useful if they are regularly updated and disseminated or made accessible, for example, through a database where all actors have access.

Annex one: Terms of reference and inception report

Introduction and Context

Project for Ex-Post Evaluation	CT.1000
Duration of the Project	12 months (1 October 2016- 31 March 2018)
Budget (USD)	USD 200,000
Donor	IOM Development Fund (IDF)
Countries covered	Mali
Evaluation	External Independent Ex-post Evaluation
Evaluation Team	Owl RE Research and Evaluation
Evaluation Period	May – July 2021

This document is a combined Terms of Reference (ToR) and Inception Report produced for the IOM Development Fund (the Fund), the ex-post evaluation of the project, *Strengthening the Knowledge Base to Better Protect and Assist Migrants in a Situation of Vulnerability in Mali*. This report outlines the purpose, objectives, methodology, questions, tools and workplan of the consultancy.

Financed by the Fund, this was a project which aimed to strengthen the capacity of the Government of Mali and the Civil Society actors to protect migrants and potential migrants on their migration routes.

Mali is a key origin and transit country on the West African Migratory route. The town of Gao has become a major transit point towards Niger and Europe in Northern Mali. An increasing number of migrants has been taking the Gao-Tassalit road leading to Algeria and Europe. The actions proposed by IOM focused on strengthening the capacity of the government to provide quality information on migration patterns to the international community and civil society actors to respond to migration pressures in the best possible way. The action was aligned with the *Politique Nationale de Migration* (PONAM) adopted by the Malian Government in September 2014 which identified some of its main pillars to be protection and assistance, support to regular migration, capacity-building of relevant stakeholders, information campaigns and counselling for potential migrants and returnees.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of conducting this ex-post evaluation is to assess the relevance of the project to its stakeholders and beneficiaries, coherence, the effectiveness and efficiency of project management and implementation, the expected impact, how well were cross-cutting themes of human rights and gender mainstreamed in the project, and if the desired effects are

sustainable, and/or have the prospects of sustainability, (following the DAC evaluation criteria¹⁰).

The evaluation aims to promote transparency and accountability which will, in turn, assist the Fund in its decision-making and to better equip staff to make judgments about the project and to improve effectiveness where possible and with regard to future project funding. Concerning the expected use of findings, the ex-post evaluation aims to also identify lessons learned, good practices, and provide a learning opportunity for the Fund and its implementing partners with regard to the project formulation process. The findings will also help make evidence-based strategic decisions in relation to specific projects, while also demonstrating the Fund's on-going commitment to results based management.

The primary objectives of the evaluation are to:

- (k) Assess the relevance of the project's intended results;
- (l) Assess the relevance of the Theory of Change and design of the results matrix and the extent to which the objective, outcomes and outputs are well formulated; the indicators were SMART and baseline and targets appropriate;
- (m) Assess the coherence of the project with IOM's activities and other interventions in the sector;
- (n) Assess the extent to which the needs of stakeholders and beneficiaries were taken into account during project design and if the project is aligned with national priorities and strategies, government policies and global commitments
- (o) Assess the effectiveness of the project in reaching their stated objectives and results, as well as in addressing cross-cutting issues such as gender, human-rights based approach, etc.;
- (p) Assess the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of project implementation, along with regular progress monitoring of project resources and if the costs were proportional to the results achieved;
- (q) Assess the impact prospects and outcomes to determine the entire range of effects of the project (or potential effects) and assess the extent to which the project have been successful in producing expected change;
- (r) Assess the sustainability of the project's results and benefits (or measures taken to guarantee it) or prospects for sustainability, and if these benefits generated by the project still continued once external support ceased;
- (s) Assess how effectively issues of gender equality and human rights protection were mainstreamed in the process of project design and during project implementation;
- (t) Identify lessons learned and best practices in order to make recommendations for future similar projects and help the Fund in its decision-making about future project funding.

¹⁰ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee, 'Evaluation of development programmes, DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance', web page, OECD. See <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

These objectives are operationalised in a series of evaluation questions and indicators (see annex 1: Evaluation matrix). The Results Matrix (RM) is reproduced in annex 5 to illustrate the intervention logic foreseen for the project.

Methodology

The evaluation framework will focus on the standard DAC criteria and cross-cutting themes criteria, supported by standard tools (i.e. interview guide and evaluation checklist – see annexes 3 and 4) and will take place over a period of 8 weeks. The evaluation will be conducted remotely, in line with COVID 19 restrictions and take a participatory approach involving and consulting with the relevant stakeholders in the different steps of the evaluation and integrating this approach into the methodology as far as is feasible. It will use a mixed methods approach and cross validate evaluation findings through the triangulation process, where possible.

Research methods/tools

Research tools will be both quantitative and qualitative and will be used across the different themes and questions. The following table provides further information on these tools and how they will be deployed.

Tool	Description	Information Source
<i>Document review</i>	Review of main documentation	IOM documentation on PRIMA, including internal/external reports, relevant publications, review of websites, country reviews etc.
<i>Interviews internal</i>	Some 4-6 semi-structured interviews using an interview guide	By skype or phone: - IOM Mali country office program staff, past and present. - IOM Regional staff in Dakar
<i>Interviews external</i>	Some 8-10 semi-structured interviews using an interview guide, virtually or by email.	By skype/zoom or phone: - Selected government and civil society stakeholders, training participants; study recipients; project partners

Sampling

Overall sampling will be purposeful in that the stakeholders will be selected for the evaluation, based on their involvement as staff, consultants, experts, partners or beneficiaries of the project. The selection of participating stakeholders will be led by the project co-ordinator and will aim to be representative, to ensure that a balance is found in terms of gender, race/ethnicity, age range and other project-specific criteria.

Analysis

The findings from the desk review, key informant interviews will be collated and analysed using appropriate quantitative and qualitative techniques and the evaluation criteria used will be rated by the evaluator based on the scale in the table below, with supporting evidence described. Where the evidence is weak or limited, it will be stated.

Findings will be used to assess the achievements of results as articulated in the Results Matrix, (see Annex 1) both numeric and descriptive results and used to rate the project as a whole according to the assessing evaluation criteria, see table below for further explanation.

Evaluation Criteria Scaling	Explanation	Supporting evidence
5 Excellent (Always)	There is an evidence of strong contribution and/or contributions exceeding the level expected by the intervention	<i>Supporting evidence will be detailed for each rating given.</i>
4 Very good (Almost always)	There is an evidence of good contribution but with some areas for improvement remaining	
3 Good (Mostly, with some exceptions)	There is an evidence of satisfactory contribution but requirement for continued improvement	
2 Adequate (Sometimes, with many exceptions)	There is an evidence of some contribution, but significant improvement required	
1 Poor (Never or occasionally with clear weaknesses)	There is low or no observable contribution	

Limitations and proposed mitigation strategies

The following limitations have been identified with accompanying mitigation strategies to minimise the impact described, where possible. If it is not possible to fully rectify the limitations identified, findings will have to be reached based on partial information. Where this occurs, the evaluation will seek to be transparent about the limitations of the evaluation and to describe how these may have affected the overall findings, conclusions and recommendations.

- (a) The context of COVID-19: The timing of the evaluation during the COVID-19 pandemic response will likely impact on the availability of IOM staff and project stakeholders/beneficiaries, and/or extend the time it will take to respond to the evaluation request and provide inputs.

Mitigation strategy: Early and close involvement of the project manager and former project managers to help coordinate meetings and ensure availability of key stakeholders. Interviews

will take place remotely over a period of 6 weeks and will allow for an extended interview period to compensate for the disruptions caused by COVID-19.

(b) General problem of insufficient data or insufficient representative data collected, owing to poor response rate from interviewees.

Mitigation strategy: Triangulation with other data gathering tools from different sources will help address data gaps.

(c) Objective feedback– interviewees may be reticent to reveal the factors that motivate them or any problems they are experiencing or being transparent about their motivation or about internal processes.

Mitigation strategy: Anonymizing sources and ensuring interviews are conducted on a one-to-one basis in confidentiality can help address issues of reticence.

(d) General bias in the application of causality analysis

Mitigation strategy: Judgements will be informed by the team and all findings will be reviewed jointly, as well as by the project manager and the main evidence for ratings will be described.

Workplan

The workplan is divided into three phases, covering an 8-week period:

Phase 1 – Inception: An initial meeting with the project manager to discuss the evaluation framework, identify stakeholders and to ensure involvement and ownership from the start. From this, a methodology, timeline, standard tools and evaluation approach has been developed and detailed in the inception report (this document).

Phase 2 – Data collection: During the second phase of the evaluation field work will be undertaken remotely. Interviews will be conducted through a virtual platform (Skype, Zoom, etc.), phone (whatsapp) or email, and all relevant project data will be collected and reviewed.

Phase 3 - Report writing: During the final phase collected data will be analysed and a report drafted for validation. The results of the evaluation will be disseminated by means of the report.

The key tasks and timing are described in the following table:

	May 2021 – July 2021					
Week beginning	24.05.	31.05.	7.6.- 21.06.	28.06.	05.07.	12.07.-
Key tasks	1	2	3 - 5	6	7	8
Kick off meeting with project manager; document review						
Drafting and delivery of inception report						
Data collection: remote interviews						
Data analysis and report writing						
Delivery of draft report						
Validation of the report by the project manager and Fund staff; finalisation of report and evaluation brief						

Team management

The evaluation will be carried out by Anita Leutgeb with Glenn O’Neil as a support and for quality control.

Deliverables

The following deliverables (draft and final) are foreseen for the consultancy: Inception report (this document), Executive summary, (2 pages), Evaluation report and Evaluation learning brief.

Deliverables	Schedule of delivery (week beginning)
1. Inception Report shared with IOM	24.05.2020
2. Completed field data collection	21.06.2020
3. De-briefing session with project manager delivered	21.06.2020
4. Draft Evaluation Report	05.07.2020
5. Final Evaluation Report and Evaluation Learning Brief	12.07.2020

Annex 1: Evaluation Matrix

Key Evaluation Questions and sub questions	Indicators	Data Collection Tools	Sources of Information
RELEVANCE: Extent to which the project's objective and intended results remain valid as originally planned or modified			
1. Is the project aligned with national priorities and strategies, government policies and global commitments?	Alignment of project with relevant national policies, strategies, government policies and global commitments (e.g. international treaties and agreements).	Document review Interviews	Project documentation Interviewees
2. To what extent were the needs of beneficiaries and stakeholders taken into account during project design?	Needs of beneficiaries and stakeholder groups reflected in project design. Evidence of consultation during project development and of project activities and outputs tailored to their needs	Document review Interviews	Project documentation Interviewees
3. Was the project designed with a logical connection between its objective, outcomes, outputs and indicators based on a solid rationale/needs assessment?	Consistency and logic of the results matrix. Design of project according to IOM project development guidelines; SMART indicators and outcomes, needs assessment carried out.	Document review	Project documentation
4. To what extent do the expected outcomes and outputs remain valid and pertinent as originally intended in terms of direct beneficiary needs?	Current relevance of project outputs and outcomes to beneficiary needs.	Document review Interviews	Project documentation Interviewees
5. How adequately were human rights and gender equality taken into consideration during the project design and implementation?	Reference to human rights and gender equality concerns integrated into project design and deliverables. Informed opinion/perceptions of Project Manager and key informants on human rights and gender equality issues in relation to the project.	Document review Interviews	Project documentation Interviewees
6. Is the project in line with IOM/IOM Development Fund priorities and criteria?	Adherence to IDF eligibility criteria, IOM's current strategic focus and the principles/objectives of IOM's Migration Governance Framework (MIGOF).	Document review Interviews	Project documentation Interviewees
COHERENCE: The compatibility of the project with other IOM activities and interventions of the sector.			

7. To what extent is this project compatible with other IOM activities?	Extent to which the project is compatible with other IOM activities in the country.	Document review Interviews	Project documentation External documentation Interviewees
8. To what extent is this project compatible with other interventions in this field?	Extent to which the project is compatible with other identified interventions in this field.	Document review Interviews	Interviewees External documentation
EFFECTIVENESS : The extent to which the project achieves its intended results			
9. Have the project's outputs and outcomes been achieved in accordance with the stated plans and results matrix?	Extent to which project outputs and outcomes have been achieved and the projects deliverables and results (expected and unexpected) led to benefits for stakeholders and beneficiaries.	Document review Interviews	Project documentation Interviewees
10. Was the collaboration and coordination with partners (including project implementing partners) and stakeholders effective, and to what extent have the target beneficiaries been involved in the processes?	Level of Involvement and extent of effectiveness of target beneficiaries, partners and stakeholders in collaboration and coordination processes.	Document review Interviews	Project documentation Interviewees
11. What major internal and external factors have influenced (positively or negatively) the achievement of the project's objectives and how have they been managed within the project timeframe?	Identification of influential a) internal factors (positive and negative) and b) external factors (positive and negative). Effectiveness of project management of internal and external factors.	Interviews	Interviewees
EFFICIENCY & COST EFFECTIVENESS: How resources (human, financial) are used to undertake activities and how well these are converted to outputs			
12. How cost-effective was the project? Could the activities have been implemented with fewer resources without reducing the quality and quantity of the results?	Adherence to original budget- Level of budget variance. Extent to which the resources required for project activities could have achieved the same results with less inputs/funds, on a sustainable basis.	Document review Interviews	Project documentation Interviewees
13. How efficient was the overall management of the project?	Degree of timeliness of project inputs provided by stakeholders /beneficiaries needed to implement activities. Narrative and budget reports submitted on time.	Document review Interviews	Project documentation Interviewees

	Implementation of project activities implemented as scheduled; any variations to the project reported and adapted on PRIMA		
14. Were project resources monitored regularly and managed in a transparent and accountable manner to guarantee efficient implementation of activities? Did the project require a no-cost or costed extension?	Level and quality of monitoring of project resources. Incidence of no cost/ costed extension allocated.	Document review	Project documentation
15. Were the costs proportionate to the results achieved?	Comparison of costs with identified results.	Document review Interviews	Project documentation Interviewees
IMPACT: How the project intervention affects outcome and whether these effects are intended or unintended.			
16. Which positive/negative and intended /unintended effects/changes are visible (short and long-term) as a result of the project?	Incidence of positive and negative effects /changes (short and long-term, intended and unintended) to which the project contributes.	Document review Interviews	Project documentation Interviewees
17. Can those changes /outcomes/ expected impact be attributed to the project's activities? Are there any contributions from external factors?	Estimation of contribution of project and identified external factors.	Document review Interviews	Project documentation Interviewees
SUSTAINABILITY : If the project's benefits will be maintained after the project ends			
18. Did the project take specific measures to guarantee sustainability and how was this supported by partners and the IOM?	Number of documented specific measures taken ensure sustainability; level of support by partners and IOM.	Document review Interviews	Project documentation Interviewees
19. Have the benefits generated by the project deliverables continued once external support ceased?	Extent to which the benefits generated by the project have continued post external support.	Interviews	Interviewees
20. Was the project supported by national/local institutions and well-integrated into national/local social and cultural structures?	Extent of sustainability measures taken by national /local institutions to support the project. Level of commitment by key stakeholders to sustain project result.	Interviews	Interviewees
21. Have adequate levels of financial resources and suitable qualified human resources within IOM and partners been	Extent of level of financial capacity and human resources of partners and IOM to maintain project's benefits in the future.	Interviews	Interviewees

available to continue to deliver the project's stream of benefits?			
Cross Cutting Criteria			
22. Was the project designed and planned, taking into consideration a gender analysis, needs assessment and available guidance?	Extent to which the project has carried out a gender analysis and needs assessment and followed MA/59 (Guidelines on Implementing the IOM Programme Policy on Migrants and Gender Issues) and MA/62 (Guide on Gender Indicators for Project Development).	Document review Interviews	Project documentation Interviewees
23. If greater gender equality was created through the project, has there been increased gender equality beyond project completion?	Extent to which gender equality has been created by the project and is still evident.	Document review Interviews	Project documentation Interviewees
24. During data collection (if carried out during implementation), were the persons interviewed or surveyed diverse and representative of all concerned project's partners and beneficiaries and the data appropriately disaggregated and in respect of IOM's Data Principles?	Extent to which data collected is representative of the diversity of the project's partners and beneficiaries. Application of IOM's Data Protection Principles. Disaggregation of data collected e.g. by age, disability, displacement, ethnicity, gender, nationality, migration status.	Data analysis Interviews	Project documentation/data Interviewees
25. How were the various stakeholders (including rights holders and duty bearers, local civil society groups or nongovernmental organizations) involved in designing and/or implementing the project?	Level and quality of involvement of stakeholders in designing and/or implementing the project.	Interviews Document review	Interviewees Project documentation

Annex 2: Draft structure for evaluation report

1. Executive summary
2. List of acronyms
3. Introduction
4. Context and purpose of the evaluation
 - context
 - evaluation purpose
 - evaluation scope
 - evaluation criteria
5. Evaluation framework and methodology
 - Data sources and collection
 - Data analysis
 - Sampling
 - Limitations and proposed mitigation strategies
6. Findings
7. Conclusions and recommendations
8. Annexes:
 - Evaluation terms of reference;
 - Evaluation inception report;
 - Evaluation matrix;
 - Timeline,
 - List of persons interviewed or consulted;
 - List of documents/publications consulted;
 - Research instruments used (interview guidelines, survey, etc).

Annex 3: Interview guide

This guide is intended for interviews with internal and external stakeholders. The questions will be adapted on the basis of the persons being interviewed.

Interview Questions		Informants
General		
0.1	Please briefly explain your work at IOM/external organisation (and how long have you been in this position?).	All stakeholders
0.2	What has been your role and involvement in the project being evaluated? At what stage did you become involved in the project?	All stakeholders
Relevance		
1.1	How well aligned is the project with relevant national/regional policies, organisational mandates and global commitments? - What were the national / regional policies the project aligned to? - How well aligned is the project to the IOM mandate and relevant country and regional strategies/ MIGOF?	All stakeholders
1.2.	How relevant was the project to the needs and priorities of stakeholders and beneficiaries? - Were stakeholders and beneficiaries consulted during the development of the project? If so, were the project activities/outputs tailored to their needs? Did they change at different stages of the project? - To what extent were their needs reflected in project design?	All stakeholders
1.3.	Were the project activities and outputs consistent with the intended outcomes and objective? -Is the original project logic still relevant? Did the assumptions hold true? If not, how were the results affected and how did the project respond? - To what extent, if any, was the project revised/amended from the first to the second phase, to be more relevant to stakeholders' needs?	IOM Staff
1.4.	How did the project consider human rights and gender equality during the project design and development (and implementation?)	All stakeholders
Coherence		
2.1.	How well is the project integrated with other IOM work in the country?	IOM staff
2.2	How well is the project integrated with other work with similar objectives?	All stakeholders
Effectiveness		
3.1.	Did the project produce the intended results, compared to its plan and target outputs? How was the quality of results? -Does this include gender and HR considerations?	All stakeholders

3.2.	What role did collaboration and coordination play in the project's achievements? [With the different government departments, consultants and other stakeholders].	All stakeholders
3.3.	What would you describe as the factors [Classify by internal or external] which helped or hindered the achievement of the output, outcome and objective results? And, how did the project respond / adapt to those factors?	All stakeholders
Efficiency and Cost Efficiency		
4.1.	To what extent did the project represent the best possible use of available resources to achieve results of the greatest possible value to stakeholders and beneficiaries involved?	All stakeholders
4.2.	How well was the project implemented; were all inputs delivered on time? -Were the project activities undertaken and were the project outputs delivered on time / within budget, as planned?	IOM staff
4.3.	Were project resources monitored regularly and managed in a transparent and accountable manner to guarantee efficient implementation of activities? Did the project require a no-cost or costed extension?	IOM staff
4.4.	Are the costs proportionate to the results achieved?	IOM staff
Outcomes and Impacts		
5.1.	What would you describe as the positive/ negative changes resulting from the project in the short term and longer term? [Classify by intended or unintended]	All stakeholders
5.2	Can those changes / expected impact be attributed to the project's activities? Are there any contributions from external factors?	All stakeholders
Sustainability		
6.1	What measures did the project take to ensure sustainability?	IOM staff Government institutions
6.2	How likely are the benefits of the project to continue and what are the main factors that influence the achievement or non-achievement of project sustainability?	IOM staff Government institutions
6.3.	How well has the project been supported by national/local institutions and how well is it integrated? -What sustainability mechanisms/options were put in place by the Government and/or partners to ensure that project results are sustained? -Are there sufficient resources in place to ensure sustainability of the project's financial and human resources?	IOM staff Government institutions
6.4.	What resources are there within IOM and partners to continue to deliver the project's stream of benefits? - To what extent have the partners and beneficiaries been able to 'own' the outcomes of the project post funding?	IOM staff Government institutions
Cross Cutting		
7.1.	Were the guidelines MA/50 and MA/62 referred to when designing the project?	IOM staff
7.2.	To what extent is gender equality created by the project still evident?	IOM staff

7.3.	Is the data collected representative of the diversity of the project's partners and beneficiaries? Were IOM's Data Protection Principles applied?	IOM staff
7.4.	What was the level of involvement of stakeholders in designing and/or implementing the project?	All stakeholders
Other		
8.1.	What would you recommend for the continued success for this project's results (and other similar)?	All stakeholders
8.2.	What would you say are the main lessons learnt from this project? 1) for the management of the project and 2) the results achieved?	All stakeholders
Any other comments		All stakeholders

Annex 4: Checklist for evaluation

Following is a checklist that will be followed by the evaluation team for the evaluation.

#	Step	Yes / No Partially (specify date)	Explanation / comment
<i>Inception and preparatory phase</i>			
1.	Document review by Owl RE team		
2.	Kick-off meeting with project manager		
3.	Creation of an inception report		
4.	Validation of inception report by project manager		
5.	Validation of inception report by Fund team		
6.	Creation of interview schedule by project manager		
7.	Reception and comment on interview schedule by the evaluation team		
<i>Data collection phase</i>			
8.	Initial briefing with IOM manager/staff		
9.	Data collection conducted with main stakeholder groups		
10.	Feedback presentation/discussion with IOM manager/staff at conclusion of data collection		
<i>Analysis and reporting phase</i>			
11.	Compilation and analysis of data /information		
12.	Quality control check of evidence by evaluation team leader		
13.	Submission of draft report to project manager and Fund team		
14.	Reception of comments from project manager and Fund team		
15.	Consideration of comments received and evaluation report adjusted		
16.	Validation of final report by project manager		
17.	Validation of final report by Fund team Production of learning brief		

Annex 5: Results Matrix (see figure 1)

Annex two: List of persons interviewed

1. Mamadou Sidibé, Project assistant, IOM Mali.
2. Manon Cagnard, Project officer, IOM Burkina Faso (former project officer IOM Mali)
3. Olivier Balagizi, DTM Officer, IOM Uganda (former DTM Officer IOM Mali)
4. Fabiola Ngeruka, Sub Cluster GBV Coordinator, UNFPA, Mali
5. Marine Rousselot, Consultant (ex UNHCR staff Mali)
6. Seckna Bagayoko, ENDA Programme Officer, ENDA Mali.
7. Somah Doumbia, AJDM Director, AJDM Mali.
8. Mamoudou Abdoulaye DIALLO, IMADEL Director, IMADEL Mali.
9. René Sanogo, Direction Nationale de la Promotion de la Femme Enfant et Famille, Mali.
10. Abdramane Togora, Direction Nationale du Développement Social, Mali.

All interviews were conducted remotely during June 2021 and had a duration of 45 minutes to 1 hour.

Annex three: List of documents / publications consulted

Project documentation:

- IOM project document, including proposal and budget.
- Interim project report and Final report
- Final Financial report
- Request for extension document
- Report on counter trafficking training workshops
- Report on the evaluation mission (D'évaluation finale du Projet sur le renforcement des capacités pour mieux protéger et aider les migrants dans une situation de vulnérabilité)
- Report on the state of the referral mechanism in Mali
- Study on violence against migrants
- Email correspondence with former PM

IOM Guide on Gender Indicators for Project Development (January 2006)

IOM Project Handbook (July 2017)

IOM Fund eligibility criteria (undated),

IOM mission and strategic focus (undated)

External documentation:

Politique Nationale du Mali, adoptée le 03 septembre 2014 par le Gouvernement de la République du Mali