

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

EVALUATION

**EVALUATION OF THE CONSTRUCTION
COMPONENT IN IOM INTERVENTIONS**

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IOM International Organization for Migration

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

IOM's involvement in construction and basic infrastructure activities is not recent as some projects were implemented in the eighties and early nineties. However, in the last five years construction components have been included more frequently in IOM interventions, particularly in emergency and post-conflict situations. From 1996 to 2000 the total budget of projects with a construction component represents approximately USD 145 million, with at least 50% of the project budget being attributed to construction. Twenty seven projects have been considered in the framework of this evaluation, with budgets ranging from USD 30,000 to 30 million, as well as four evaluation reports.

Some of those projects that involved a construction component have been severely criticised due to problems encountered during implementation. The projects of most concern were in Guatemala — in the framework of the FONAPAZ initiative — and in Croatia for the Return Assistance Programme. A third project in Albania is currently being investigated. However, these problems were not necessarily due to the construction component itself, and the projects concerned represent a relatively small percentage of all the interventions with a construction component.

In view of the increasing level of construction activities, and following the different difficulties encountered, it was considered timely to deepen the learning process started with three evaluations — EREG, RAP and the Shelter project in Honduras. This evaluation therefore presents a broader picture of the construction component in IOM interventions and how it is integrated in the overall context of IOM's work and mandate.

Five different categories of projects have been defined in order to facilitate the overall analysis:

- 1) A community-based approach for the stabilization of populations in conflict and post-conflict situations,
- 2) Return of displaced populations and reintegration assistance,
- 3) Construction of shelters in emergency and post-emergency situations,
- 4) Specific interventions,
- 5) A special case: FONAPAZ.

A main goal has been identified for each category as well as specific target groups, construction types and context. The analysis of the relevance to IOM's mandate, the effectiveness in contributing to the attainment of project objectives and the impact of the construction component has been based on the five categories identified.

In summary, it has been found that the construction component was not in contradiction with IOM's mandate, and that it has been effective in contributing to the achievement of project objectives. Looking globally at impact, it was found to be positive for the target populations, as well as for the migration problem which the IOM intervention aimed to address. Efficiency and cost-effectiveness have not been

looked at in any depth as the analysis of these concepts is more appropriate on a case-by-case basis.

This evaluation also demonstrates that the problems encountered in the different projects mentioned above do not detract from the validity of the approach and the use of construction as a component of IOM interventions. Such problems have occurred because of failings at the management level rather than a lack of IOM experience and expertise in implementing such projects.

In its last section, the evaluation report analyses the management of the construction component inside IOM. It has been recognized that IOM field Missions are mainly responsible for project implementation and monitoring, and should continue to be. However, it has been clearly identified that IOM Headquarters should improve its technical support to facilitate work in the field and to avoid the type of problems encountered in some projects. This would also avoid the field having to 'reinvent the wheel' by producing guidelines or a set of rules and regulations as has been the case up to now.

Finally, it has also been underlined that future prospects exist due to the overall performance and success of most of the interventions examined, and at least in four of the five categories identified. IOM management should therefore promote such initiatives more actively.