



AN EVALUATION OF IOM'S ENGAGEMENT IN AND CONTRIBUTION TO INTER-STATE CONSULTATION MECHANISMS ON MIGRATION (ISCMs)

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

Evaluation type: Internal independent thematic and strategic evaluation

Evaluator: Anca Paducel, Associate Evaluation Officer, OIG

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Evaluation purpose: Assess IOM's overall performance and achievements in its engagement in and contribution to ISCMs, examining its technical expertise and support provided to these processes, their relevance to IOM's mandate and other institutional frameworks, and the internal synergies and institutional steps taken for an effective and sustained contribution to ISCMs.

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

Evaluation methodology: Documentation review, semi-structured interviews, and electronic surveys.

BACKGROUND

The growing complexity and diversity of international migration, along with the persistent differences in attitudes towards this matter and the recognition that States cannot address migration issues alone has given way to the emergence of various ISCMs to address such challenges at the regional, inter-regional and global levels. Since the mid-1980s, these state-led processes have continued to expand, attesting to the importance that governments attach to taking regional, inter-regional and/or global approaches to migration governance. At the regional level, these ISCMs are referred to as regional consultative processes on migration (RCPs). Those ISCMs connecting two or more regions are referred to as inter-regional forums on migration (IRFs). At the global level, these mechanisms are referred to as global processes on migration.

The informal, non-binding nature of the discussions underpinning ISCMs supports cooperative dialogue on migration, information-sharing and confidence-building, which are essential pillars for developing links between States and influencing the likelihood of bilateral and multilateral agreements and initiatives that address migration issues. For example, RCPs such as the South American Conference on Migration and IRFs such as the Budapest Process drafted positions and recommendations on the Global Compact on Migration during its development. The main global processes on migration – the Global Forum on Migration and Development and the International Dialogue on Migration – also provided inputs to vari-

ous global initiatives addressing migration, including the Global Compact. Many of the recommendations made by the different ISCMs were incorporated into the final text of the Global Compact.

These fora bring together representatives of States, different types of permanent or ad hoc observers such as international organizations, civil society and in some cases the private sector, for instance the Government and Business Forum of the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime. IOM participates in several ISCMs as an observer or member organization and has taken up a number of roles, ranging from providing technical expertise and guidance on migration issues to acting as the technical and/or administrative secretariat. Since 2005, IOM has been facilitating the Global Meeting of Regional, Inter-regional and Global Consultative Processes on Migration to foster synergies and mutual exchanges among ISCMs on various migration topics.

Despite the significant human and financial resources invested by IOM into ISCMs, an evaluation exploring its engagement in and contributions to these processes, particularly its different roles, their relevance to the Organization's mandate and the returns to IOM has yet to be undertaken. Such an assessment is especially important as IOM prepares its strategic vision and framework for its internal governance system. Related to this is an interest on the part of the International Partnerships Division at IOM Headquarters to potentially develop a strategy to inform IOM's engagement in and contribution to ISCMs. It is against this background that the present evaluation was planned and carried out.

KEY FINDINGS

The evaluation analyses IOM's efforts through the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development–Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, outcome, impact and sustainability:

RELEVANCE: IOM's engagement in and contributions to ISCMs, including its various roles and responsibilities, which vary from one process to another, are suited to the Organization's mandate, institutional frameworks and operational work. For instance, through its engagement in ISCMs, IOM can support a better understanding of and partnerships among States for managing migration. Moreover, the continued requests on the part of ISCM Member States for IOM's continued support to these processes reveal that its contributions are also in line with their expectations. ISCMs also provide IOM with a setting to promote its strategic interests by ensuring that, for instance, the Organization's strategies in a given area are reflected in the agenda.

EFFECTIVENESS AND SUSTAINABILITY: With IOM's participation in ISCMs being dependent upon Member States' invitation, the Organization is at times proactive and at other times reactive. Its participation, which is most of the time self-paid is supported through Operational Support Income (OSI). However, in the absence of a strategic plan or agenda to establish what IOM intends to achieve through its efforts, it was not possible to determine in a rigorous manner whether the Organization's contribution have been effective in producing or achieving the desired or intended results. Despite this shortcoming, IOM staff at HQ and in the field are of the view that IOM has been effective in achieving the desired results, for instance, by promoting dialogue and cooperation among Member States of ISCMs in addressing migration issues, particularly through the development of legislation, policies, agreements and initiatives. Efforts to sustain its engagement in ISCMs include the continued and regular engagement with ISCMs and the provision of support, as per the requests of Member States, as well as engagement in resource mobilization.

EFFICIENCY: A review of the human and financial resources allocated towards a select number of ISCMs (2014–2019) revealed that many activities under these processes are funded through existing projects or programmes that combine at times ISCM-related costs with other project or programme implementation costs and only a handful receive OSI. Given these factors, it was not possible to provide a precise monetary figure of IOM's total investment in these processes for the period under review. The evaluation also revealed that a large part of IOM's contributions to ISCMs is through the dedi-

cation of staff time, which is largely ad hoc according to the type of ISCM meeting or event, this too was not possible to quantify in terms of monetary costs.

OUTCOME AND IMPACT: Given the identified weaknesses in monitoring and evaluating IOM's engagement in and contributions to ISCMs, the outcome and/or strategic impact were determined using primarily the perceptions of IOM staff interviewed and surveyed, along with insights obtained through the selected ISCMs. Data collected revealed that engagement with ISCMs has helped IOM in a number of ways, particularly by increasing the Organization's standing and visibility for its mandate, work and expertise. ISCMs have also helped IOM build and strengthen its bilateral and multilateral relations with Member States, as well as partnerships with other external partners, including intergovernmental organizations and private sector actors.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Moving forward, this evaluation presents several recommendations for each of the OECD-DAC evaluation criterion, including the following:

- IOM should carefully consider the development of an organization-wide strategy to inform its engagement in and contribution to ISCMs to avoid undermining the legitimacy and position that it has carved out for itself in and through these processes (Relevance);
- IOM should bring together the relevant staff to review prevailing challenges to achieving the intended or desired results of ISCMs and identifying solutions to ensure that its engagement in and contributions are effective to the greatest extent possible (Effectiveness and Sustainability);
- IOM should continue raising awareness about and support Member States in setting up their own self-financing mechanism to ensure the sustainability of these processes independently of OSI or project support (Efficiency);
- Ensure that it is strategic in the agenda items it proposes for various ISCMs and to put forward only those issues that are of a priority for the Organization and for which it has the resources and capacity to support (Outcome and Impact);
- IOM should strengthen its systematic and institutionalized tracking and assessment of IOM's engagement in and contributions to ISCMs; this should include identifying lessons learned and good practice such as through improved Knowledge Management (Outcome and Impact).