

**Independent Final Evaluation of the Project  
“SUPPORT TO STRENGTHENING  
MIGRATION AND ASYLUM MANAGEMENT IN SERBIA”**

**Final Report**

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<b>Evaluator:</b>	Agnes Ebenberger, external consultant

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## Executive Summary

The migration crisis in the Western Balkan region exposed the need for an effective adjustment of the existing migration and asylum management system in Serbia. This includes more targeted legislative responses to asylum issues and irregular migration as well as operationalization of various dimensions of migration management, in particular reception, identification of vulnerabilities and referral of vulnerable migrants to protection services in compliance with international standards and best practices. IOM Serbia carried out an assessment to identify capacity building needs of Serbian government institutions involved in migration and asylum management in early 2017 and, based on the needs identified, developed a project with the objective to contribute to strengthening the migration and asylum management systems in Serbia. The project features four interlinked outcomes and related outputs contributing to this objective, along the following areas of intervention:

- 1) Increasing quality of asylum services/decisions
- 2) Raising awareness on migrant protection
- 3) Enhancing knowledge and skills of staff at reception centres
- 4) Reconstruction of the Migration Training Centre.

Due to the delay of the project inception, it was necessary to revise the initial project plan in order to secure timely implementation. Furthermore, some activities were amended, cancelled or added later in the project for various reasons, including visa issues and changing/emerging needs. The main focus of the project lay on the development of products which shall serve as capacities for development of human resource in a potential second phase of the project. While the second phase had not been confirmed or developed at the time of the evaluation, it is likely to happen in the near future.

IOM Mission in Serbia commissioned a final evaluation of the project to assess whether the planned activities and outputs of the project were achieved, whether the project was relevant and efficient, as well as how effective and sustainable the achievements are likely to be in reaching the mid-term outcomes and long-term objectives/impact. IOM will share the evaluation report with the donor of the project and participating institutions to demonstrate the value of the project, lessons learned and recommendations. The major data collection methods have been desk review of relevant documents as well as stakeholder interviews and observation of project activities. Where possible, collected data was triangulated by cross-checking different sources in order to obtain a diversity of perspectives and minimize potential bias.

The findings of the evaluation indicate that the project has been relevant as it was based on prior thorough assessment of capacity building needs. This has also enhanced the sense of ownership from beneficiaries as they received the kind of support they explicitly asked for. Despite the short timeframe, which was further limited by delays due to various reasons, the project has implemented most of its planned activities and widely achieved its outputs. It has generally used resources efficiently and has been good value for money. As for the achievement of outcomes and likely impact of the project, it may be too early at this stage to draw conclusions, but interviews and desk review suggest that several of the project's benefits may last beyond its cessation. Further engagement is recommended, as some gaps and needs still persist. A focus should be on enhancing sustainability, among others through supporting institutionalization of the project's products. It will be important to develop a clear vision and strategy for the future of the project and its benefits. The evaluation identified a number of good and promising practices as well as lessons learned from which recommendations to further improve future programming were derived.

### **Good and promising practices**

- 1) Needs assessment and validation workshop ensuring that proposed activities are fully in line with local needs and priorities
- 2) Thorough consultative process enhancing ownership
- 3) Involvement of many relevant actors enhancing quality and reach of activities and products
- 4) Bringing together stakeholders and supporting establishment of fruitful working relationships
- 5) Developing products based on existing resources to compile national and international good practices, standards and tools
- 6) Publishing content in several formats (e.g. curriculum and handbook) so that it reaches a higher number and variety of beneficiaries and can be used for different purposes
- 7) Holistic approach and synergies between project components enhancing effectiveness and efficiency
- 8) Satisfaction questionnaires and discussion at end of trainings to inform and improve future activities and phases of the project
- 9) Flexibility of project to adapt to changing circumstances, thus remaining relevant

### **Key recommendations derived from lessons learned**

Recommendations for development and implementation of the second phase of the project (some will also be valid for future programming more generally):

- 1) IOM, beneficiaries and donor to develop a clear strategy and vision for the future of the project's products and benefits when designing the next phase
- 2) IOM project staff to further promote newly established project outputs and products
- 3) Future owner of the online platform, supported by IOM, to develop a vision for the platform, expand it and commit to its regular maintenance and update
- 4) IOM project staff and relevant national institutions (particularly CRM and Asylum Office) to clarify responsibilities and seek possibilities for future updates of handbooks and curricula developed within the project
- 5) IOM Mission, in consultation with CRM and the donor, to consider further reconstruction of the Migration Training Centre to provide accommodation for trainers and participants
- 6) Second phase of the project and potentially future IOM programming to support establishment of a centralized institutional training system in institutions benefitting from the project, particularly CRM
- 7) IOM team, together with TOT participants' institutions (particularly CRM), to explore possibilities and reach commitment to establish opportunities to deliver trainings
- 8) Further capacitate and support TOT participants
- 9) IOM project staff to encourage institutionalization of products developed within the project
- 10) IOM team to assess and respond to capacity building needs related to the recently passed new Law on Asylum and Law on Foreigners

- 11) IOM team to continue monitoring of project benefits six to twelve months after completion of the first phase to gather more conclusive evidence regarding their impact and sustainability

Lessons learned and recommendations for future programming more generally:

- 12) Donor to ensure the timely delivery of funds to launch the project according to the agreed timeframe
- 13) Mitigate negative consequences from delays of funding availability in future projects through IOM team starting preparations already before official project inception, particularly the staff hiring process and liaison with key stakeholders
- 14) Facilitate seamless transition from one project phase to the next through IOM team/project developer preparing the logframe and workplan for the next phase already during the last quarter of the current phase and donor working towards timely agreement and delivery of funds
- 15) Project staff and IOM Mission's senior management to further discuss internally to identify ways to enhance coordination synergies with other IOM programmes in Serbia
- 16) Consider conducting future study visits in smaller groups
- 17) IOM project staff to discuss the necessary conditions for meaningful evaluation of the project with the evaluator and ensure that they are in place at least one week before the evaluation field visit

## List of Acronyms

ASQAEM - Asylum System Quality Assurance and Evaluation Mechanism

CRM - Commissariat for Refugees and Migration

EASO – European Asylum Support Office

ECHR – European Court of Human Rights

EU – European Union

IOM - International Organization for Migration

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

SOPs – Standard Operating Procedures

ToR – Terms of Reference

TOT – Training of Trainers

UK – United Kingdom

UN – United Nations

UNFPA - United Nations Population Fund

UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF - United Nations Children's Emergency Fund

# 1. Introduction

This report presents the final evaluation of the project “Support to Strengthening Migration and Asylum Management in Serbia”, supported by the British Embassy in Belgrade and implemented by IOM between 28 April 2017 and 31 March 2018. The remainder of Chapter 1 will introduce the context, purpose, scope and criteria of the evaluation. Chapter 2 will explain the framework and applied methodology, including sources of data and possible limitations. Chapter 3 will discuss the findings, Chapter 4 will conclude by highlighting good practices and lessons learned as well as derive recommendations for future programming.

## 1.1 Context

The migration crisis in the Western Balkan region exposed the need for an effective adjustment of the existing migration and asylum management system in Serbia. As part of its effort to improve its response to the crisis, as well as seeking to fulfil its responsibilities laid down in the Action Plan for Chapter 24, the Ministry of Interior has been working on the revision of Laws on Asylum and Temporary Protection and the Law on Foreigners, setting more targeted legislative responses to asylum issues and irregular migration. Additionally, the migration crisis context also necessitates the operationalization of various dimensions of migration management, in particular reception, identification of vulnerabilities and referral of vulnerable migrants to protection services, for which responsibility rests with the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (CRM) and the Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veteran and Social Policy. Given the expected changes in the legislation and the ongoing effort to achieve full compliance with the best international practices in this field, the governmental institutions will need technical support to build their capacity to enforce the new legislative framework and to ensure protection-sensitive migration management. This includes screening, profiling and registration of migrants regardless of their status, which fully respects the migrants’ human rights.

In early 2017, as an inception phase, an assessment was carried out by IOM Serbia to identify training and study needs of Serbian government institutions involved in migration and asylum management<sup>1</sup>, which resulted in a comprehensive capacity building plan proposed as a response strategy to identified needs. This plan was re-confirmed by the Serbian government in a validation workshop in March 2017. A number of areas were identified where targeted capacity development intervention is needed, including in strengthening the capacities of three asylum instances; improving coordination of the management of asylum and reception centers; enhancing identification of vulnerable migrants, such as victims of gender-based violence, torture, forced marriage, trafficking and others; awareness of migrants’ rights; improving cultural sensitivity when communicating with migrants; expanding capacity in assisted voluntary return processes; and furthering capacity of staff working in detention centers.

Based on the needs identified in the inception phase, the project’s objective is to contribute to the strengthening of the migration and asylum management systems in Serbia. The main stakeholders within these systems that were targeted by the project include: CRM, asylum and reception centres, Asylum Office and Asylum Commission. The project features four interlinked outcomes and related outputs contributing to this objective:

Outcomes	Outputs
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<sup>1</sup> CRM, Asylum and reception centres, Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Policy, Centres for Social Work, Centre for Victims of Human Trafficking Protection, Ministry of Interior, Asylum Office, Asylum Commission, Administrative Court

<b>Outcome 1. Governmental officials provide high quality asylum services to persons of concern as a result of their strengthened understanding of effective processing of asylum claims</b>	<b>Output 1.1.</b> Governmental officials have increased their skills and knowledge on writing legal asylum decisions (Asylum Office employees)
	<b>Output 1.2.</b> E-curriculum on the application of asylum Related jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights is available for distant learning
<b>Outcome 2. Governmental officials applying in their daily work good practices related to assisted voluntary return, identity verification, immigration detention and alternatives to detention, and combatting irregular migration</b>	<b>Output 2.1.</b> Governmental officials have increased awareness on non-discrimination of migrants <sup>2</sup>
<b>Outcome 3. Rights of migrants are upheld as a result of improved reception conditions, identification of vulnerabilities and referrals to specialised services</b>	<b>Output 3.1.</b> Field workers in asylum and reception centers have increase skills for working with migrants
	<b>Output 3.2.</b> Serbian reception staff have greater awareness of challenges and operating procedures associated with operating a large reception center
<b>Outcome 4. Technical condition for delivery of high quality standardised migration management trainings to Serbian officials by the newly set up Migration Training Centre are improved</b>	<b>Output 4.1.</b> First phase reconstruction of Migration Training Centre carried out

Due to the delay of the project inception, it was necessary to revise the initial project plan in order to secure the timely implementation. Furthermore, some activities were amended, cancelled or added later in the project for various reasons, as will be discussed in the findings section of this report. A table of all outcomes, outputs, activities and products can be retrieved from the evaluation Terms of Reference (ToR) in Annex III. The main focus of the project lay on the development of resources/products which shall serve as capacities for development of human resource in a potential second phase of the project. While the second phase had not been confirmed or developed at the time of the evaluation, it is likely to happen in the near future. The findings of this evaluation shall feed the design and planning of the second phase.

## 1.2 Evaluation purpose

As specified in the evaluation ToR, the main objective of the evaluation is to analyze whether the planned activities and outputs of the project were achieved. Furthermore, it is essential that the evaluation highlights lessons learned and best practices for future programming. Additionally, some attention will be given to the relevance and efficiency of the project. As a secondary objective, the evaluation aims to assess how effective and sustainable the achievements are likely to be in reaching the mid-term outcomes and long-term objectives/impact, which are focused on strengthening of the migration and asylum management systems in Serbia. IOM will share the evaluation report with the donor of the project and participating institutions to demonstrate the value of the project, lessons learned and recommendations.

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<sup>2</sup> In some project documents, Output 2.1 is referred to as “Stakeholders have a better understanding of roles, tasks and responsibilities of institutions in relation to returns”

### 1.3 Evaluation scope

One external consultant was hired to conduct the final evaluation of the project. The available time period was two weeks (15 to 31 March 2018), including development of the evaluation plan, desk review, interviews and drafting of the evaluation report. The evaluator was based in Vienna and conducted a three-day field visit to Belgrade (20 to 23 March) to assist in project activities and conduct stakeholder interviews.

The scope of the evaluation covers the entire project implementation period, except for its last week as it happened after the evaluation field visit. Most activities had already been completed by the time of the evaluator's visit or were about to be finalized. However, not all data relating to the indicators specified in the results matrix were available at the time of the evaluation, as they will only be compiled in the final report which was still in the process of drafting. Further limitations and proposed mitigation strategies will be discussed in Section 2.3.

### 1.4 Evaluation criteria

The evaluation assessed the project and its implementation in terms of the OECD/DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. Specific attention was given to cross-cutting issues - particularly gender and human rights - as a sixth criterion. The evaluation questions, chosen by IOM Mission in Serbia, as well as sub-questions guiding the evaluation can be retrieved from Annex IV.

## 2. Evaluation Framework and Methodology

Prior to the field visit, an initial review of the project documents as well as background reading was conducted in order to obtain information on the context, focus and structure of the project. An evaluation matrix (Annex IV) was developed based on this initial review and the evaluation ToR, specifying the evaluation criteria and primary questions and sub-questions, as well as potential indicators and means of verification. The evaluation matrix guided the entire evaluation process.

### 2.1 Data sources and collection

The major data collection methods for this evaluation have been desk review of relevant documents as well as stakeholder interviews and observation of project activities. Where possible, collected data was triangulated by cross-checking different sources in order to obtain a diversity of perspectives and minimize potential bias. The remainder of this section will explain the data sources and collection process in more detail.

**Desk review:** Desk review mainly focused on existing documentation related to the project, including project documents, donor reports, needs assessment report, handbooks, curricula, photos, and many more. For an exhaustive list of reviewed documents, please refer to Annex I. The materials were provided by IOM upon the evaluator's request. As explained previously, research for this evaluation had to be conducted before project completion and hence some documents, such as the final report, were not yet available.

**Stakeholder interviews and observations:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a variety of stakeholders during the evaluation field visit. The choice of interlocutors was to a large extent made by IOM, depending on availability. However, it was also attempted to accommodate requests for

interviews from the evaluator. Despite the last-minute nature of the evaluation field visit, it was possible to collect inputs and views from a wide variety of stakeholders, including: the project team; IOM staff working on related projects; implementing partners and beneficiaries of several project activities (field work manual, curriculum and TOT, handbook and e-curriculum on asylum and migration, protection handbook); employees of governmental institutions (CRM and Asylum Office) and other actors active in the field of migration and asylum (UNHCR). The sampling can thus be described as a combination of convenient and purposeful. The full list of persons interviewed can be retrieved from Annex II. Two project activities/events fell into the timeframe of the field visit and could hence be observed by the evaluator. These include the last day of Training of Trainers (TOT) for field workers and the launch event of the handbook and e-curriculum on asylum and migration. A variety of project stakeholders were present at the events and could be interviewed by the evaluator, thus contributing to efficiency of the evaluation as compared to visiting each interlocutor separately.

## 2.2 Data analysis

Qualitative and quantitative data collected through desk review, interview data, as well as from observations, were analyzed relationally in order to assess whether and how they contradict or reinforce one another. The evaluation matrix guided the coding and analysis process. Major themes confirmed across data sources were organized in relation to the evaluation criteria and will be presented accordingly in Chapter 3 of this report. Based on the findings, the evaluator identified good practices and developed a set of recommendations that could inform future programming (Chapter 4).

## 2.3 Limitations and proposed mitigation strategies

There are a number of limitations to this study that could have impacted results. First, the evaluation had to rely on interviews with a selection of project stakeholders that was to a large extent made by IOM. The choice of interview partners depended on who was present and available at the events in which the evaluator participated and at IOM's office. Hence, it was not possible to develop question guides for each interview and plan the evaluation in a detailed manner. The used mitigation strategy was development of the evaluation matrix and questions based on broad categories of potential interlocutors (project staff; beneficiaries; implementing partners) and adapting them as needed. While it cannot be assumed that the views of all involved in or benefitting from the project are represented, the number and variety of interviewed stakeholders described in the previous section has facilitated a look at the project from many different angles and diverse perspectives. Data was triangulated, where possible, hence contributing to robustness of results.

Second, interview participants may have been affected by social desirability bias, i.e. the tendency to answer questions in a manner that will be viewed favorably by others. The fact that they are expecting to benefit in one way or another from the next phase of the project may have also biased responses, for example through exaggerating positive results and future needs. Furthermore, some interviewees, particularly training participants, did not seem familiar with the concept of external evaluations. For these reasons, the purpose and process of the evaluation was explained in detail, focusing on the benefits that it can bring for all stakeholders when they respond truthfully. It was ensured that interviewees understood that their inputs were confidential and reported in aggregate, without mentioning of names of individuals. IOM staff were present during two interviews to help with translation which could have resulted in bias.

Third, as many of the project's products were only about to be launched and activities implemented during the evaluation field visit, it was too early to assess or even predict their long-term impact in a reliable manner. While the project's focus was on capacity building, it will only be visible after several more months to what extent this was achieved. The focus of this evaluation was hence put on exploration of the perceptions, views and ideas of stakeholders interviewed, thus identifying directions in which results may be developing, potential amplifiers of and challenges as well as recommendations for future phases of the project.

## 3. Findings

### 3.1 Relevance

Stakeholder interviews and desk review indicate that the project is widely relevant to the target groups as well as the international and partner government policies and strategies in the domain of migration and asylum. This has been ensured from the very beginning through building the project on a comprehensive needs assessment, involving desk review of relevant national and international policies, strategies, studies and reports, stakeholder interviews, questionnaires and field consultation meetings. Based on the assessment results, a capacity building plan was developed as a response strategy to identified needs and re-confirmed by the Government of Serbia in a validation workshop. This approach has many important benefits, including:

- Ensuring that existing capacities are analyzed and the most pertinent needs identified and responded to;
- Mapping of related activities conducted by other actors can help avoiding overlaps/duplication and reveal potential for synergies;
- Identification of existing resources generated in previous similar interventions (such as manuals, training curricula, available trainers, partnerships, training approaches, operationalization of recently developed procedures) can serve as input/basis for products developed under the project;
- Beneficiaries' sense of ownership of the project benefits is enhanced as they are consulted and involved from the very beginning.

Several interviewed beneficiaries and other stakeholders saw the fact that the project had been based on a needs assessment and stakeholders were consulted and involved already at the project development stage as one of the best and most important aspects. Replication of this good practice in future programming is recommended.

Due to the limited timeframe as well as changing circumstances and emerging needs identified during project implementation, some initially envisaged activities were revised. For example, a study visit of public prosecutors to the UK was cancelled, among others due to difficulties in obtaining visa for participants, and the training on management of emergency situations in detention centers was also not implemented. The funds were instead used for strengthening other activities and adding new ones, in consultation with the relevant stakeholders. Added activities include on-the-job training on writing decisions on asylum as well as development of an online platform on which the products developed in the scope of the project will be stored. On the one hand, the amendments indicate the project's ability to adapt to changing circumstances and emerging needs and thus remain relevant. On the other hand, several issues leading to the changes should arguably have been foreseen earlier on, which would have saved time for better execution of the activities. The issue will be further discussed in Section 3.3

dealing with efficiency. Initiatives that had to be cancelled, as well as capacity building needs identified in the assessment and not yet integrated into the project could be considered in the next phase (subject to assessment of continued relevance).

Initially, it was expected that the new Law on Asylum and Law on Foreigners would be adopted at the beginning of the project implementation period and a major aim of the project was to prepare national institutions for the planned changes. However, adoption was delayed and the laws only passed in an amended version in March 2018, to be effective from June 2018. Hence, the project had to refocus, concentrating on international and EU standards and best practices. The envisaged second phase of the project will be an opportunity to implement some of the initially considered activities related to the new laws. It is important, however, to re-assess the situation in terms of content of the laws, analysis of existing capacities, beneficiaries' expressed needs and existing/planned initiatives by other actors.

The project's expected outcomes and outputs are and will likely remain widely valid and pertinent in terms of beneficiaries' and other stakeholders' needs. Interlocutors emphasized that the project has laid important foundations, but more will need to be done in the future to further develop them. Since the de-facto closure of the Western Balkan route, large-scale emergency interventions are not pertinent anymore, but many of the capacity gaps of the migration and asylum management system exposed through the mixed migration flows of 2015 remain. Furthermore, thousands of migrants are stranded on the territory of Serbia with few possibilities to continue their journey, which exposes new challenges, particularly related to asylum as well as integration and social cohesion. In 2017, only 25 out of 236 asylum applications have been decided on (3 refugee status, 11 subsidiary protection, 11 rejected)<sup>3</sup>. The pertinence of further support to increasing efficiency and quality of asylum decisions was also confirmed in stakeholder interviews. The products developed within the project, such as handbooks and curricula, are expected to remain useful, although it will be important to update them regularly when new standards become available.

### 3.2 Effectiveness

As research for this evaluation had to be conducted before project completion, final data was not available on all indicators specified in the project's results matrix. Precise numbers will hence be specified only in the final project report which will be drafted by IOM upon completion. Stakeholder interviews and document review indicate that the project is likely to widely achieve its planned activities and outputs, though with some delays. Due to the short timeframe, many activities are only about to be completed and hence it is too early to say whether expected outcomes will be attained and how much the project contributed towards them, but some early indications and directions could be identified. A wide range of relevant stakeholders were involved and frequently consulted, particularly when changes to the initial plans were proposed. Interviewed stakeholders expressed their satisfaction regarding the level of involvement in the project implementation. The remainder of this section will further elucidate these findings for each of its outputs and outcomes.

#### Output 1.1: Governmental officials have increased their skills and knowledge on writing legal asylum decisions

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<sup>3</sup> Asylum Information Database: <http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/serbia/statistics>, accessed on 31.03.2018

At the time of the evaluation visit, the on-the-job training programme planned under this output had been finalized. The mentoring plan consisted of several groups of activities: 1) individual online mentoring, 2) group mentoring session with guest speakers on topics recognized within the mentoring process, 3) preparation of reports on country of origin, 4) discussion on harmonization of the national jurisprudence on asylum, including counselling on amendments to the Law on Administrative Procedure, and 5) evaluation meeting. These activities were not planned in the initial proposal but added during the revision, based on needs identified in the introductory session. While the number of participants and evaluation meeting results are not available to the evaluator at this point, interviews and desk review indicate positive effects and suggest that the planned output is likely to be achieved.

Most activities under this component were directed at employees of the Asylum Office, representing the first instance within the asylum decision process. However, a member of the Asylum Commission – the second instance – was involved as guest speaker at a group mentoring session and employees of the Asylum Commission took part in the discussion on harmonization of the national jurisprudence on asylum. Several interlocutors mentioned that this had been the first time that employees of the two instances got together and that they appreciated the exchange and learned how their work is important for each other as well as the functioning of the asylum system in general. More common trainings were requested by stakeholders and are also expected to contribute to harmonization of practice and quality and efficiency of the asylum system. This could be envisaged in future phases of the project. As one interlocutor highlighted, the common trainings should not involve current cases that employees work on but could include broader topics such as changes in the new Law on Asylum and Law on Foreigners, as well as EU and international law. Judges of the Administrative Court – the third instance – could not be reached with the trainings as they have a limited annual training quota which is usually filled well in advance. In the future, it will be beneficial to plan an adequate timeframe for planning and preparation of trainings in order to ensure all beneficiaries can be reached.

The group mentoring sessions were more appreciated and deemed more effective than the individual online mentoring. Participants felt more comfortable in the group setting and appreciated the exchange with the guest speakers and their colleagues. It was mentioned, that with at least one guest speaker a fruitful working relationship beyond the session could be established. The exchange with a former European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) judge was also described as particularly interesting. Individual mentoring could become more effective once sufficient trust and confidence is built.

As Serbia is not a European Asylum Support Office (EASO) member, it does not have access to the agency's country of origin information. Furthermore, not all employees of the Asylum Office are fluent in English which makes collection of information even more difficult. There usually is one employee at the Asylum Office for collecting country of origin information but the position has been vacant for some time, leaving an important gap. The project reacted to this gap within its revision by establishing a working relationship between the Asylum Office and the Belgrade Faculty of Law/Centre for Human Rights. Two postdoctoral students were contracted to deliver reports on countries of origin (Afghanistan and Pakistan, as well as additional information on several other countries). The cooperation has been described as mutually beneficial – the students gained valuable practice and the Asylum Office received high quality reports. Several interlocutors stressed that they would like to continue and expand the cooperation, while one added that it would be ideal if all employees of the Asylum Office were capacitated to collect country of origin information themselves. Some activities to approach this goal are underway, including English language classes provided in the framework of a UNHCR initiative.

UNHCR was involved in asylum-related project activities, including invitation to comment on the developed products, participation in panel discussions and use and dissemination of their

methodologies, such as the Asylum System Quality Assurance and Evaluation Mechanism (ASQAEM) which served as basis for trainings under this output.

Output 1.2: E-curriculum on the application of asylum-related jurisprudence of the ECHR is available for distant learning

The E-curriculum on the International and European Standards in the Field of Asylum and Migration and their Applicability and Relevance to the Republic of Serbia (in this report referred to as e-curriculum on asylum ad migration) was developed by UK-based implementing partner AIRE Centre, in cooperation with an IT company. It was launched at an event that the evaluator assisted, bringing together practitioners from Asylum Office and Asylum Commission, Faculty of Law/Centre for Human Rights, NGOs and international organizations. While the e-curriculum had not yet been passed by anyone at this point, participants indicated that they appreciate its development and are looking forward to using it. The content covers topics such as definition of the basic terms in the field of migration and the legal framework of the international protection system in Europe; enforcement of prohibition of torture in cases pertaining to asylum; the principle of non-refoulement; the principle of safe third country; and collective expulsion.

In addition to the e-curriculum, which had been planned from the beginning, it was decided that a handbook on the same topic would be published. The resources can be used individually or complement each other. This should ensure that the developed content would reach a higher number and variety of beneficiaries and can be used for different purposes. Interlocutors indicated that they expect that the e-curriculum will be useful for building capacities of newly hired Asylum Office employees (the number of employees was recently doubled) as well as legal assistants of the Administrative Court, students/academics, qualified NGOs and other interested parties. The handbook is envisioned to lie on practitioners' desks who can consult individual chapters, where needed, to inform their work. As handbook and e-curriculum are based on the same content, it seems not only effective but also efficient to provide both.

The Migration Training Centre website, serving as online platform on which the e-curriculum and other products established within this project shall be stored, has also been developed under this output. It is already online and available in both Serbian and English, featuring news about the project. Other than the e-curriculum, no products had been available online at the time of the evaluation, most likely because they are still under review, and they should be added as soon as possible. The website will also benefit from further improvements and expansion, as well as offline promotion. The Glossary of Migration and Asylum Terminology initially planned under this output does not seem to have been developed and the reasons for this do not seem to be well documented.

Outcome 1: Governmental officials provide high quality asylum services to persons of concern as a result of their strengthened understanding of effective processing of asylum claims

It cannot be established at this point whether the quality of asylum services has improved as a result of the activities and outputs under this project component. First, the project's timeframe is very limited and trainings have just been completed and products launched and their potential effect on the outcome level is only likely to be seen after some time. Second, the scope and available methodologies of this evaluation do not allow for reliable impact measurement. However, desk review and interviews indicate a positive direction and likelihood of at least some improvements of the quality of asylum services that may be attributed to the project. As the planned outcome is a mid- to long-term goal that is not expected to be reached with a few trainings, it will be important to further build on results of this first phase, with a particular focus on ownership and sustainability.

### Output 2.1: Governmental officials have increased awareness on non-discrimination of migrants

Output 2.1 is referred to in different manners in the project documentation – either as “Governmental officials have increased awareness on non-discrimination of migrants” or “Stakeholders have a better understanding of roles, tasks and responsibilities of institutions in relation to returns”. Sometimes even both forms are used in a single report. In this evaluation report, effectiveness is assessed in relation to the first definition which is the one used in the project document’s results matrix.

A handbook on migrant protection and separate glossary on related terminology have been drafted within this output and are currently under review. In the initial project document, a handbook on non-discrimination of migrants was foreseen under Output 2.1 and a separate handbook on migrant protection under Output 3.1. However, the two were merged into one product and the handbook on migrant protection covers and supports the principle of non-discrimination. The use of two different handbook titles within and between documents can be misleading and should be avoided to enhance clarity. The broad and comprehensive approach has been welcomed by interviewed stakeholders as it is expected to provide a useful overview. It includes national and international legal frameworks as well as explanation of existing practices in Serbia, along with relevant stakeholders, instruments and procedures. Several interlocutors highlighted their appreciation of the fact that the handbook is built on and compiles existing national and international good practices and resources, including standard operating procedures (SOPs) and coordination/referral mechanisms. Several governmental institutions and international organizations contributed by sharing useful materials to be taken into consideration during development of the handbook. This is seen as a major value added as many relevant materials already exist but are dispersed and not easily accessible. Summarizing and compiling them is widely preferred to development of new ones. In addition, this approach is also likely to contribute to the quality of the publication, as it is built on extensive knowledge and experience of many relevant actors. In order to contribute to achievement of Output 2.1, it will be important to promote and disseminate the handbook among relevant governmental officials.

A panel discussion was organized to further support the development of the handbook and glossary. It reportedly brought together more than 40 participants from international organizations, NGOs, government decision-makers and service providers as well as donors, sharing views on the main challenges, obstacles and solutions which could improve everyday practice of assistance to migrants, irrespective of status. In addition to increasing relevance and quality of the products developed within this component, the panel discussion is also likely to have raised awareness among participating government officials on protection, and potentially to some extent non-discrimination of migrants, thus contributing to Output 2.1.

### Outcome 2: Governmental officials apply in their daily work good practices related to assisted voluntary return, identity verification, immigration detention and alternatives to detention, and combatting irregular migration

As the handbook and glossary developed under this component have not yet been officially published, it is too early to say whether relevant government officials will be reached and whether it will lead to application of good practices. However, they do contain relevant protection-sensitive procedures and practices related to areas such as assisted voluntary return, identity verification, immigration detention and alternatives to detention, and combatting irregular migration and many more. It can be expected that the products, provided that they are promoted and used accordingly, will contribute to the expected outcome in the future. Some interlocutors suggested the implementation of further trainings or workshops for field workers based on the handbook, as they may have little time to read the entire book and it would be helpful to learn how to use it in practice. This would also be a good

promotion/awareness raising opportunity and is one of many potential activities that could be looked into in the next phase of the project.

Initially, two more outputs had been planned under this outcome, namely: Output 2.2 – “Staff at detention centre have increased skills on management of emergency situations in detention centres and on coordination mechanisms with other agencies, including protection of migrants rights in such situations”, involving training and SOPs on management of emergency situations; and Output 2.3 – “Staff of the Prosecutor’s Office increased knowledge on counter-migrant smuggling intelligence/human trafficking”, involving a study visit for public prosecutors to the UK. However, these were cancelled due to various reasons, among others due to difficulties in obtaining visa for participants.

### Output 3.1: Field workers in asylum and reception centers have increased skills for working with migrants

To support increased skills of field workers in asylum and reception centres, the project envisaged development and implementation of a multi-modular training curriculum as well as a corresponding fieldwork manual, both based on the handbook on migrant protection. Due to the short timeframe and delays of the project, the breadth of topics and the number of trainings implemented had to be reduced. The two topics chosen were child protection and protection of women. Furthermore, it was decided to train trainers through a TOT course instead of training individual field workers. This approach promises to enhance sustainability of the project’s benefits as well as efficiency, as the trainers are expected to disseminate the knowledge and skills gained to their colleagues or other actors. The evaluator assisted the last day of the three-day TOT. Most (though not all) participants, who work in reception centers either as CRM camp managers or in IOM mobile teams, appeared to be appreciating the course. Those interviewed expressed their satisfaction with the content and delivery, although some felt that the focus on women was too narrow, which will be further discussed in Section 3.6. There have been some early indications of improvements of participants’ attitudes, knowledge and training skills (presenting, giving feedback, etc.). However, beneficiaries agreed that there is still much left for them to learn which requires more than a three-day training and that they do not yet feel ready to conduct trainings themselves. It also seems that a deeper transformation of values and overcoming certain stereotypes and prejudice will be necessary. The next phase of the project should build on the achievements of the TOT so far and further train the group of trainers so that they are capacitated to pass the gained knowledge and skills on to other field workers. Furthermore, expanding the range of topics of the training curriculum and fieldwork manual will also be important and has been welcomed by interlocutors.

Other trainings foreseen in the initial project document were also amended, due to limited time and in consultation with the donor and relevant national partners. Namely, trainings on child protection - in cooperation with UNICEF - and mixed police patrols - involving border police of Serbia and Croatia - were conducted, while the planned induction sessions for newly appointed staff at reception centers were cancelled. Overall, about half of the initially planned 200 field workers were reached through the different trainings thus far. While it cannot be established within the framework of this evaluation whether their skills for working with migrants have increased, it seems likely that there may have been at least some improvement regarding awareness and knowledge.

### Output 3.2: Serbian reception staff have a greater awareness of challenges and operating procedures associated with operating a large reception center

In December 2017, 25 CRM reception center staff took part in a study visit to some of the largest reception centers in Northern Greece. The visit was hosted by their Greek counterparts - Ministry of Migration Policy - thus allowing for exchange of experiences as well as policies and procedures regarding migration and operating reception centers. IOM Athens was also consulted and involved in the implementation of the study visit. Interviewed participants mentioned that they appreciated the opportunity and found it interesting and their awareness of challenges and operating procedures associated with operating a large reception center may have increased to some extent. At the same time, desk review and interviews could not reveal concrete examples of how the insights of the study visit were or could be used to improve reception conditions in Serbia and hence to achieve the expected outcome. One interlocutor mentioned that the limited timeframe and large size of the group may have impeded discussion and critical reflection which would be necessary to identify good practices and lessons learned as well as potential steps forward in terms of improving reception conditions.

Outcome 3: Rights of migrants are upheld as a result of improved reception conditions, identification of vulnerabilities and referrals to specialized services

Similarly to previously discussed outcomes, it is not possible to establish whether Outcome 3 has been or will be achieved as a result of the project's activities and outputs. The developed products, implemented trainings as well as the study visit seem to have laid some foundation and raised awareness. However, further support will be required in order to transform values and build the knowledge and skills necessary for field workers to improve reception conditions, identification of vulnerabilities and referral to specialized services and thus uphold the rights of migrants.

Output 4.1: First phase reconstruction of Migration Training Centre carried out

Under this output, parts of an existing government-owned building in the town of Plandište were reconstructed to serve as Migration Training Centre. Despite some challenges and delays, the construction works and procurement of furniture and equipment could be finalized before the end of the project. Interviews and desk review indicate that the standards of the refurbished training rooms and facilities could be substantially increased, although confirmation of the quality and usefulness will remain to be seen. Planning and monitoring of the reconstruction happened in close coordination with CRM - the owner and main user of the center. CRM reportedly also fundraised their own grants for repairing the roof, windows and doors before initiation of reconstruction supported through the project.

Outcome 4: Technical conditions for delivery of high quality, standardized migration management trainings to Serbian officials by the newly set up Migration Training Centre are improved

The Migration Training Centre has been refurbished to serve as sustainable structure at which Serbian officials shall receive migration management trainings. While the ultimate use of the centre will remain to be seen, it can be said at this point that most necessary technical conditions seem in place. A pending issue that has been raised by several interlocutors is that suitable accommodation in the proximity of the Training Centre does not seem available which may impede implementation of trainings that last longer than a day. As for the quality and standardization of trainings, there seems to be understanding of its importance but no clear indications of improvement yet. The next phase of the project should further encourage and support establishment of a centralized institutional training system as well as institutionalization and operationalization of the developed products (handbooks, curricula, etc.).

### 3.3 Efficiency

Document review and interviews indicate that, overall, the project has been implemented in an efficient manner, compared to potential other means of implementation, and was good value for money. The planned activities have been widely completed within the allocated resources, although some changes to the initial project plan were necessary, as described in the previous section. It is remarkable, how much the project could achieve within the given funds and particularly the very short effectively available timeframe.

Project implementation was delayed due to various factors, notably due to delays in availability of funding. The project manager could only be hired several months after the planned inception of the project and start work in July. As the project manager had not been involved in the inception phase and project development, getting acquainted with the plans and requirements also took some time. Additionally, during the summer months, it has reportedly been impossible to conduct activities due to the holiday period and thus the time was used for their preparation. By the end of December, i.e. within less than four months of effectively conducting activities, the majority of funds had been spent, as agreed with the donor. This is a remarkable achievement that can be attributed to the hard and efficient work of all involved. There has been unanimous feedback that the limited timeframe was one of the major challenges within the project, leading to often hectic and stressful activities, thus limiting scope for a more long-term view and potentially impeding greater impact. Not all beneficiaries could be reached due to the last-minute nature of some activities, including judges of the Administrative Court who have to decide on which trainings to attend well in advance.

A lesson learned for the next phase, as well as future projects, is the importance of starting planning and preparations early on, including liaising with and informing stakeholders about the content and timing of planned activities, even before official project activation. The process of hiring the project manager should also be initiated earlier on. This way, it will be possible to start implementation as soon as funds become available and implementing partners and beneficiaries have time to prepare accordingly. As IOM staff and stakeholders involved in project implementation are now acquainted with the project's details and dynamics, it can be expected that planning and implementation of future phases will be smoother and with fewer delays. However, at the time of the evaluation visit, concrete plans for the next phase were still not in place, even though there reportedly would be potential to start it immediately after completion of the first phase (i.e. 1 April 2018). It will be important to discuss the challenges and achievements of the current project phase as well as needs and gaps to respond to in the next phase with relevant stakeholders and draft an according plan as soon as possible. Seamless continuation of the project is important to ensure that stakeholders remain engaged and initial achievements can be built on and expanded without interruption.

Interlocutors praised the effective and efficient communication with IOM staff and implementing partners, as well as their flexibility and responsiveness to needs and challenges. In several cases, activities were amended to further increase efficiency. For example, TOT was chosen instead of training individual field workers. Trainers can, once sufficiently capacitated, disseminate the knowledge and skills gained to their colleagues or other actors, thus potentially reaching more beneficiaries within the given funds. The holistic approach of the project – developing capacity building materials, conducting capacity building events and providing suitable infrastructure to support continuous roll-out of the curricula and use of the materials - has been widely appreciated and seems to have contributed to efficiency due to synergies between components and activities which are interlinked and benefit from each other. In several instances, stakeholders engaged within one activity contributed to or commented on other activities, too. Finally, the fact that many of the project's

activities and products build on existing resources also contributes to efficiency, as fewer time and funds need to be invested as compared to development of completely new products of similar quality.

### 3.4 Impact

The project's overall aim was to build relevant capacities of government officials and institutions to engage in protection-sensitive migration management and thus contribute to strengthening migration and asylum management systems in Serbia. Capacity building takes time, especially regarding institutional capacities, and the impact is often only fully seen after several months or even years. It is too early at this stage to assess the project's impact and predict whether it will achieve its objective and the limited scope of this evaluation does not allow to establish causal attribution. However, some directions in which results may be developing, as well as potential amplifiers of and challenges to impact can already be identified. Stakeholders' feedback has been widely positive and optimistic throughout and many believe that the project's benefits would be further apparent in the coming months and years, once the developed products are used and gained knowledge and skills disseminated and applied. They also highlighted, however, that many of the activities and outputs can only be regarded as a kickoff and further support within all project components will be required to build sustainable capacities and achieve long-term strengthening of the migration and asylum management system.

The activities implemented within the asylum component (Outcome 1) seem to have had some positive by-products, including newly established or improved working relationships between different stakeholders, such as Asylum Office, Asylum Commission and Belgrade Faculty of Law/Centre for Human Rights. These may persist and be further strengthened beyond the project's cessation and give rise to more formal and long-term cooperation, for example regarding country of origin information. Supporting exchange of knowledge and experience as well as sustainable and mutually beneficial partnerships is a good practice that should be replicated in future programming, where possible. The handbook and e-curriculum on asylum and migration have only been launched and thus little can be said about their impact, but interviewed beneficiaries are looking forward to using them as resources to improve the quality of their work. Further tracking of data such as online course completions and a survey regarding beneficiary satisfaction, knowledge/skills gain and application within the upcoming second phase could deliver more conclusive insights. Encouragement of and support to institutionalization of the developed products could further enhance impact, for example inclusion of the e-curriculum in the official induction for new Asylum Office staff. In that case, regular update of the content will be of particular importance.

Arguably the greatest achievement of the capacity building interventions for field personnel is the improved individual and institutional commitment to and positioning of capacity building, particularly within CRM. This could be observed, among others, in TOT participants' motivation, eagerness to learn and requests for further trainings, as well as CRM management's expressed understanding of the need for a sustainable and centralized institutional training system and committed cooperation. This is a very important basis for further support to establishment of such a system as it is likely to be more successful when led from within than imposed by an external actor. Training participants highlighted that the interactive exercises helped them to better understand the situations of different groups of migrants, opened their eyes regarding potential sources of vulnerabilities and challenged certain stereotypes and prejudice. It will be important to further build on and enhance these preliminary achievements to transform values and to translate them into positive impact on reception and referral of (vulnerable) migrants. While there could possibly already be some improvement in the day-to-day work of TOT participants, impact could be multiplied once they further disseminate knowledge and

skills. As explained previously in this report, this will require further capacity building as trainers do not feel sufficiently qualified to conduct trainings yet. Furthermore, participants explained that they have no own plans of disseminating knowledge and skills within the reception centres they are managing but rather wait for an official order from CRM management to implement trainings. In the future, it will be important to both encourage own initiatives and institutionalize the developed curricula to establish sustainable opportunities to conduct trainings.

The Migration Training Centre reconstructed within the framework of the project has great potential to serve as a basis for development of sustainable training structures within CRM, as it provides the necessary physical infrastructure. It may also enhance recognition and importance of capacity building through dedication of such a premise to trainings. CRM has signed an MoU with IOM agreeing to ensure primary use of the Training Centre for training professionals and other individuals engaged in the system of migration and asylum and interlocutors have been optimistic that it will regularly serve as training venue. However, no clear plans for its future have been mentioned. Its use should be further monitored, if possible, to assess its likely impact. This is particularly important in case further material support to the Training Centre is considered in the next phase of the project. The online platform of the Training Centre can contribute to increasing the number and variety of users of the products developed under the project, thus multiplying their potential for impact. It will be important that it is owned by CRM and maintained, updated and promoted appropriately in order to have long-term positive effects.

### 3.5 Sustainability

Several of the project's benefits are likely to continue to some extent once external support ceases. This particularly includes the physical products as they will remain available to beneficiaries, such as the refurbished Training Centre as well as handbooks and curricula. In fact, their benefits may only be seen after the end of the current phase of the project as they were just about to be launched at the time of the evaluation. A possible challenge to sustainability that has become apparent in interviews and desk review is a certain lack of vision and strategy for their future use. The short timeframe of the project left little time to support institutionalization and operationalization of curricula and handbooks. It also seems unclear from document review and interviews whether and how the online platform will be maintained and updated and the Training Centre used, particularly in light of commitment and financial capacity of the project partners concerned. The second phase of the project will reportedly focus on further development and support. Clearer and more transparent plans regarding sustainability of project benefits should be developed already before its inception, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, and guide project development and implementation. In the following paragraphs, sustainability of the benefits of selected individual project activities/components will be discussed in more detail.

As indicated earlier in this report, field workers who participated in the TOT are motivated and committed but reportedly neither feel sufficiently capacitated nor have opportunities to disseminate the learned content. This may impede sustainability and it will be important to further train the group of trainers, potentially also expanding the breadth of topics, as well as to support the actual implementation of trainings for their colleagues and other actors. One possibility is that trainers, many of which are reception centre managers, teach their colleagues at their respective reception centres on their own initiative. Additionally, central support from CRM through establishment of training opportunities, ideally at the newly renovated Migration Training Centre, will be crucial. It could be considered to make future TOTs conditional on commitment of the trainers' institutions to establish opportunities for them to implement trainings and thus disseminate the knowledge and skills. Once

they start conducting their first trainings, supervision and mentoring of trainers could further strengthen their skills and confidence and thus enhance sustainability, as pointed out by interlocutors.

There seems to be awareness that donor support is limited and may cease and that governmental institutions, particularly CRM, should not rely exclusively on external actors to provide training to their staff. However, to date, there is no centralized institutional training system, including no clear definition of levels of competences and ToR for specific positions, and trainings that officials receive through external sources are not sufficiently mapped. Due to this circumstance, officials receive substantially differing amounts, content and quality of trainings, some reportedly being “overtrained” and receiving several courses on similar topics, while others are not trained at all in important areas. A centralized institutional training system, which could be built on available resources such as curricula developed under this and other projects, will be important for CRM to take over ownership and responsibility for training their staff. It can ensure continuous education of officials, allow for monitoring and quality control, set standards and thus harmonize services and procedures. This is also highlighted as a need in the capacity building needs assessment report drafted in the inception phase of this project. There are reportedly already some plans in place to achieve such a training system and future IOM programming, including upcoming phases of this project, should further support it, for example through development of curricula, TOT, relevant infrastructure and others (based on prior evaluation of needs, commitment and financial capacities). IOM Serbia already has experience in implementing such efforts, for example the IPA II programme on protection-sensitive migration management, working closely with the Ministry of Interior of Serbia to adopt a longer-term training plan to ensure systematic approach to capacity building in the ministry. A first step could be development of a general induction course for new staff, in light of high turnover and frequent redeployment, as also suggested in the capacity building needs assessment report and originally planned within the project.

The Migration Training Centre and online platform supported in this project have the potential of being an important foundation for development of a sustainable institutional training system. Desk review and interviews showed that a large number of relevant tools and resources have been developed by different actors that risk getting “lost” or forgotten once the respective project ceases. The online platform can serve as a repository where such products are stored in a single place and accessible to a wide range of stakeholders, thus enhancing their effectiveness and sustainability as well as possibilities for mapping of existing resources and identification of potential gaps. As of now, only few materials developed within the framework of the project are (or will soon be) available online. Expansion of the platform, as well as regular maintenance and updates, will be important to enhance its continued relevance and thus sustainability. Ownership of the platform is planned to be passed on to CRM, but it has not become clear from desk review and interviews what their capacities and commitments are in this regard. There is a certain risk that developed products, particularly the e-curriculum on asylum and migration, may not be accessible in case the online platform is not maintained appropriately after cessation of external assistance. It will be important to further support and develop the platform, with a focus on enhancing a sense of ownership and sustainability, as well as to have a strategy and vision for its future. This should also include promotion of the platform among relevant stakeholders to inform about its existence and enhance its recognition, gain their inputs on how to make it as useful as possible, and collect relevant resources for upload. Relevant stakeholders may include government institutions, international organizations, NGOs, civil society organizations and academics active in the area of migration and asylum.

As clearer strategy and vision for its future use will also be important for the Migration Training Centre to ensure its sustainability. This will be closely related to and interlinked with the development of an institutional training system of CRM. External actors implementing trainings for CRM employees,

including other IOM projects, should be encouraged to conduct them at the Training Centre (e.g. as opposed to hotel conference rooms), as this can contribute to a sense of institutional ownership over capacity building as well as ensure further use of the premise. An issue that has been raised by several interlocutors is the lack of suitable accommodation in the proximity of the Training Centre. As the facility is not in the capital city but in a small town, one and a half hours from Belgrade, it seems more suited for trainings of a full day or more. Accommodation will be an important factor and arguably should have been thought of earlier on. It has been suggested that the remaining floors of the building could be transformed to host participants and trainers. This could be considered in the next phase of the project but will need more thorough prior assessment. Possibilities of reaching a co-financing agreement with CRM should be sought in case of further renovation or procurement through IOM programming. This can further contribute to a sense of ownership and responsibility and thus sustainability of project benefits. A strategic vision for the Training Centre, ideally linked to establishment of an institutional training system, could also be made a condition for further material support to the Training Centre.

The handbook and e-curriculum developed within the project's asylum-component (Outcome 1) have only been launched and not used yet. Their success will partly depend on the online platform on which the materials will be featured. Similarly to the products developed within the field work component, it will also be beneficial for sustainability of the handbook and e-curriculum on asylum and migration to be institutionalized. Interlocutors suggested, for example, that the e-curriculum could be made mandatory component of the induction of new Asylum Office staff. Interviews and observations indicate that project partners/beneficiaries, including Asylum Office employees, are motivated and committed to using the developed products and what they learned through the mentoring programme in their daily practice as well as continue established partnerships and cooperation. As the situation of asylum is dynamic, it will be critical that materials are regularly updated. Most importantly, the new Law on Asylum and Law on Foreigners that just passed and will be effective from June 2018 already make parts of the handbook and e-curriculum outdated a day before their official launch event. It is not clear who will be responsible for updates and it could be something to be further looked into in the next phase of the project. Ideally, national institutions such as the Asylum Office or CRM, as the (future) owner of the platform on which the materials are featured, will commit to organizing such updates.

### 3.6 Cross-cutting Issues

While there seems to have been no explicit strategy for mainstreaming gender and human rights, much attention has been given to these issues throughout the project and several activities and products specifically focused on them. These include, for example, e-curriculum and handbook on the application of asylum-related jurisprudence of the ECHR; panel discussion, handbook and glossary on migrant protection; and field work manual and training on protection of children and women. In the latter, potential sources of vulnerability that women are particularly prone to or may face in different ways than men, such as human trafficking and gender-based violence, are discussed. Some training participants mentioned that they felt that women were depicted as victims and men as perpetrators, which does not necessarily mean that trainers did so but may also stem from individual misunderstanding, stereotypes and prejudice. In any case, it is important to consider a differentiated and comprehensive model of vulnerability. It should be emphasized that women are not a vulnerable group per se, as this feeds into problematic stereotypes of the "weak" and "dependent" sex, as well as to highlight that they have been showing in many situation extraordinary strength and resilience, including on the migration route. At the same time, women and men, girls and boys may find

themselves in different vulnerable situations under specific circumstances, experience certain situations differently, and have specific needs that reception staff should be able to recognize and respond to. In order to enhance buy-in from training participants, it could be considered to discuss these relationally, for example looking at a specific situation and discussing whether gender, among others, may contribute to a different experience.

Project development, including the needs assessment, did not contain explicit rights and gender analyses and data collection mainly focused on governmental institutions and their capacity building gaps and needs. It could have been interesting to give a voice to migrants and refugees as well, particularly the most vulnerable ones. In the future, the project's responsiveness to gender and human rights could be further increased through a systematic and comprehensive mainstreaming strategy, spanning the entire project development and implementation cycle. This should also involve consistent collection/publication of data disaggregated by relevant factors (e.g. sex, age, etc.).

## 4. Conclusions

The fact that the project was based on prior thorough assessment of capacity building needs has enhanced its relevance as well as a sense of ownership from beneficiaries as they received the kind of support they explicitly asked for. Despite of the short timeframe, which was further limited by delays due to various reasons, the project has implemented most of its planned activities and widely achieved its outputs. It has generally used resources efficiently and has been good value for money. As for the achievement of outcomes and likely impact of the project, it may be too early at this stage to draw conclusions, but interviews and desk review suggest that several of the project's benefits may last beyond its cessation. Further engagement is recommended, as some gaps and needs still persist. A focus should be on enhancing sustainability, among others through supporting institutionalization of the project's products. It will be important to develop a clear vision and strategy for the future of the project and its benefits. The following sections highlight some of the good and promising practices identified in this evaluation as well as lessons learned and derived recommendations to further improve future programming.

### 4.1 Good and promising practices

**1) Needs assessment and validation workshop:** The inception phase involved a comprehensive capacity building needs assessment, involving a variety of methodologies and stakeholders. Based on the assessment results, a capacity building plan was developed as a response strategy to identified needs and re-confirmed by the Government of Serbia in a validation workshop. This is a good practice that should be replicated in future IOM projects, where possible, as it has many important benefits, including:

- Ensuring that existing capacities are analyzed and the most pertinent needs identified and responded to;
- Mapping of related activities conducted by other actors can help avoiding overlaps/duplication and reveal potential for synergies;
- Identification of existing resources generated in previous similar interventions (such as manuals, training curricula, available trainers, partnerships, training approaches, operationalization of recently developed procedures) can serve as input/basis for products developed under the project;

- Beneficiaries' sense of ownership of the project benefits is enhanced as they are consulted and involved from the very beginning.

**2) Thorough consultative process:** A wide range of stakeholders, particularly governmental institutions involved in asylum and migration management, were consulted at the needs assessment stage. Existing coordination mechanisms, such as the Working Group on Mixed Migration, were used to regularly consult and share details on the implemented and planned activities with the relevant governmental stakeholders. Additionally, issues related to project implementation seem to have been thoroughly discussed with the donor, partners and beneficiaries, especially regarding changes to the initial plan, thus enhancing joint understanding on what the most urgent needs and preferable response strategies are. This is an important practice that helps ensuring that the proposed activities are fully in line with local needs and priorities as well as increasing engagement and ownership.

**3) Involvement of many relevant actors:**

A wide range of relevant actors were involved in project implementation as beneficiaries, implementing partners or to provide comments and inputs. These include central government and specialized governmental institutions of Serbia, Greek and Croatian counterparts, UN sister agencies (particularly UNHCR, UNICEF and UNFPA), NGOs, academia as well as independent experts. Furthermore, IOM-internal structures and resources were involved and provided feedback in many instances, including different units of the Regional Office in Vienna, Headquarters in Geneva and Country Offices in Greece and the UK. This has helped enhancing quality and reach of activities and products. The practice should be continued and can possibly be further expanded in future phases as not all relevant actors could participate in the current one. For example, judges of the Administrative Court could not participate in trainings as they were reached out to too late. As the migration and asylum situation is dynamic, continuous mapping of relevant actors and initiatives will be important.

**4) Bringing together stakeholders and supporting establishment of fruitful working relationships:**

In addition to involving a large variety of actors, the project team frequently put them in touch with each other, thus supporting establishment of working relationships and synergies that may last beyond the project's cessation. Examples include the cooperation between the Asylum Office and Faculty of Law/Centre for Human Rights on country of origin information, bringing together different instances of the asylum decision procedure, as well as connecting teams of consultants working on different products to provide feedback to one another. Supporting exchange of knowledge and experience as well as sustainable and mutually beneficial partnerships is a good practice that should be replicated in future programming where possible.

**5) Developing products based on existing resources:**

The products developed within the framework of the project are built on and compile existing national and international good practices, standards and tools. Many relevant actors contributed by sharing useful materials to be taken into consideration. This has been seen as a major value added by interlocutors and the approach is likely to contribute to the quality and relevance of the publications, as they include vast knowledge and experience. It may have also contributed to efficiency, as fewer time and funds need to be invested as compared to development of completely new products of similar quality.

- 6) Publishing content in several formats (e.g. curriculum and handbook):** This measure ensures that developed content can reach a higher number and variety of beneficiaries and can be used for different purposes. For example, the e-curriculum on asylum and migration is accompanied by a handbook on the same topic. It is expected that while the first will be useful for training purposes, the latter is envisioned to lie on practitioners' desks who can consult individual chapters, where needed, to inform their work. A similar approach has been used for the field work manual and curriculum. As both handbook and curriculum are based on the same content, it seems not only effective but also efficient to provide both.
- 7) Holistic approach and synergies between project components:** The holistic approach of the project – developing capacity building materials, conducting capacity building events and providing suitable infrastructure to support continuous roll-out of the curricula and use of the materials - has been widely appreciated. It also seems to have contributed to efficiency due to synergies between components and activities which are partly interlinked and benefit from each other. In several instances, stakeholders engaged within one activity contributed to or commented on other activities, too.
- 8) Satisfaction questionnaires and discussion at end of trainings:** Feedback has been collected after most trainings to inform and improve future activities and phases of the project. Several mechanisms were used for feedback collection, including anonymous questionnaires, discussion rounds and observations of trainers. It will be important to follow up on the feedback accordingly.
- 9) Flexibility of project to adapt to changing circumstances:** Interlocutors praised the flexibility and responsiveness of the project to changing circumstances, emerging needs and challenges. Initially, a major aim was to prepare national institutions for the new Law on Asylum and Law on Foreigners that were expected to be adopted at the beginning of the project implementation period. However, adoption was delayed and the project thus refocused, concentrating on international and EU standards and best practices. In several cases, activities were amended to further increase efficiency. Trainings for field workers was changed to TOT format as trainers can, once sufficiently capacitated, disseminate the knowledge and skills gained to their colleagues or other actors, thus potentially reaching more beneficiaries within the given funds. All changes were thoroughly discussed with the donor, partners and beneficiaries, as explained previously.

## 4.2 Lessons learned and recommendations

The following recommendations for development and implementation of the second phase of the project have been derived from the findings of the evaluation (some will also be valid for future programming more generally):

- 1) IOM, beneficiaries and donor to develop a clear strategy and vision for the future of the project's products and benefits when designing the next phase:** The first phase of the project mainly focused on developing products such as handbooks, curricula, Migration Training Centre and online platform. However, it was not clear at the time of the evaluation what will happen to these benefits in the mid- and long term, including whether and how they will be used, maintained and updated, as they have not been institutionalized or operationalized. Clearer and more transparent plans regarding sustainability of project benefits should be

developed already before inception of a potential next phase, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, and guide project development and implementation.

- 2) IOM project staff to further promote newly established project outputs and products as part of the second phase:** As the project's outputs and products have only been finalized, their promotion will remain important in the months to come to ensure that they are used and the target beneficiaries are reached. A ribbon-cutting event for opening of the Migration Training Centre could bring together relevant stakeholders and potentially the occasion could be used to discuss ideas, needs and challenges for its future. The online platform could also be promoted at the same event to inform about its existence and enhance its recognition, gain stakeholders' inputs on how to make it as useful as possible, and collect ideas for relevant resources for upload.
- 3) Future owner of the online platform, supported by IOM within the second phase of the project, to develop a vision for the platform, expand it and commit to its regular maintenance and update:** At the time of the evaluation, only the materials developed within the framework of the project were (or soon would be) available online. As pointed out in Recommendation 4, a clear strategy and vision for the future content, audience and use of the platform will be crucial. Expansion as well as regular maintenance and updates will be important to enhance its continued relevance and potential for impact. Ownership of the platform is planned to be passed on to CRM, but it has not become clear from desk review and interviews what their capacities and commitments are in this regard. To ensure sustainability, it will be crucial that ownership of the platform is clarified, including plans and potential needs for its use, maintenance and update beyond the project's cessation.
- 4) IOM project staff and relevant national institutions (particularly CRM and Asylum Office) to clarify responsibilities and seek possibilities for future updates of handbooks and curricula developed within the project as part of the second phase:** As the situation of migration and asylum is dynamic, it will be critical that developed handbooks and curricula are regularly updated to remain relevant. It is not clear who will be responsible for this and possibilities should be evaluated. Ideally, national institutions such as the Asylum Office or CRM, as the (future) owner of the platform on which the materials are featured, will commit to organizing it. The next phase of the project could also look into updates as well as expansion of products. Interlocutors highlighted the importance of expanding the field work manual and curriculum, which currently only include protection of women and children, as well as update of the handbook and e-curriculum on asylum and migration to reflect the recently adopted new laws.
- 5) IOM Mission, in consultation with CRM and the donor, to consider further reconstruction of the Migration Training Centre as part of the second phase of the project to provide accommodation for trainers and participants:** An issue that has been raised by several interlocutors is the lack of suitable accommodation in the proximity of the Training Centre. It has been suggested that the remaining floors of the building could be transformed to host participants and trainers. This could be considered in the next phase of the project but will need more thorough prior assessment. Possibilities of reaching a co-financing agreement with CRM should be sought, thus contributing to a sense of commitment, ownership and responsibility and thus enhancing sustainability. A strategic vision for the Training Centre,

ideally linked to establishment of an institutional training system (Recommendation 10), will be crucial and could be made a condition for further material support to the Training Centre.

- 6) Second phase of the project and potentially future IOM programming to support establishment of a centralized institutional training system in institutions benefitting from the project, particularly CRM:** A centralized institutional training system is critical to reduce dependence on external support, improve monitoring and quality-control and set clear standards for training of employees. There seem to be already some plans in place to achieve such a training system within CRM. Future IOM programming, including the next phase of this project, should further support it where possible, for example through development of curricula, TOT, relevant infrastructure and others (based on prior assessment). It will be important to have clear definitions of levels of competences and ToR for specific positions. Trainings that officials receive through external sources should be mapped and integrated accordingly. A first step could be development of a general induction course for new staff, in light of high turnover and frequent redeployment, as also suggested in the capacity building needs assessment report. Experiences from other IOM programmes should be consulted, for example from the IPA II programme on protection-sensitive migration management, working closely with the Ministry of Interior of Serbia to adopt a longer-term training plan to ensure systematic approach to capacity building in the ministry.
- 7) IOM team, together with TOT participants' institutions (particularly CRM), to explore possibilities and reach commitment to establish opportunities to deliver trainings as part of the second phase of the project:** Interviewed TOT participants explained that they have no own plans of disseminating knowledge and skills but rather wait for an official order from their institution's management to implement trainings. It will hence be important to encourage establishment of such opportunities, ideally at the newly renovated Migration Training Centre. It could be considered to make future TOTs conditional on commitment of the trainers' institutions to establish opportunities for them to conduct trainings and thus ensure that knowledge and skills are disseminated.
- 8) Second phase of the project to further capacitate and support TOT participants:** While field workers who participated in the TOT are motivated and committed, they reportedly do not feel sufficiently capacitated yet to disseminate the learned content. It also seems that a deeper transformation of values and challenging stereotypes and prejudice will be necessary which cannot be achieved in a three-day training. It will be important to further train the group of trainers, potentially also expanding the breadth of topics, as well as to support the actual implementation of trainings for their colleagues and other actors (see also Recommendation 11). Once they conduct their first trainings, supervision and mentoring of trainers could further strengthen their skills and confidence and thus enhance sustainability.
- 9) IOM project staff to encourage institutionalization of products developed within the project as part of the second phase:** In order to enhance impact and sustainability of the handbooks and curricula developed within the project, their institutionalization and operationalization should be encouraged or potentially even made a condition for their provision. For example, it has been suggested that the e-curriculum could be a mandatory component of the induction

of new Asylum Office staff. Such efforts will be easier where a centralized institutional training system is in place (Recommendation 10).

**10) IOM team to assess and respond to capacity building needs related to the recently passed new Law on Asylum and Law on Foreigners as part of the second phase of the project:**

Initially, a major aim of the project was to prepare national institutions for the planned changes related to the new Law on Asylum and Law on Foreigners. However, adoption was delayed and the laws only passed in an amended version in March 2018, to be effective from June 2018. Hence, the envisaged second phase of the project will be an opportunity to implement some of the initially considered activities related to the new laws. It is important, however, to re-assess the situation in terms of content of the laws, analysis of existing capacities, beneficiaries' expressed needs and existing/planned initiatives by other actors.

**11) IOM team to continue monitoring of project benefits six to twelve months after completion of the first phase to gather more conclusive evidence regarding their impact and sustainability:**

It is too early at this stage to determine the project's impact and whether it has achieved all of its outcomes and objective. Further monitoring of project benefits will be important for more conclusive insights. This could be part of the second phase and involve, among others: tracking of online course completions and implemented trainings based on developed curricula; surveys regarding beneficiaries' satisfaction, use of developed products and application of gained knowledge and skills, as well as potential challenges and persisting gaps and needs; monitoring visits, e.g. to the Migration Training Centre and Asylum Office to jointly review the practices.

The following lessons learned and recommendations should be considered for future programming more generally:

**12) Donor to ensure the timely delivery of funds to launch the project according to the agreed timeframe:** Late availability of funding was major factor that contributed to the delay of project inception and thus less time to implement activities appropriately as well as need for cancellation of activities and outputs.

**13) Mitigate negative consequences from delays of funding availability in future projects through IOM team starting preparations already before official project inception, particularly the staff hiring process and liaison with key stakeholders:** Key stakeholders should be informed about the content and timing of planned activities as soon as the (initial) work plan is developed. This way, implementing partners and beneficiaries have time to plan their schedule and prepare accordingly, which was not always possible in this phase of the project. The process of hiring the project manager should also be initiated earlier on, clarifying in the vacancy notice that the position is subject to funding confirmation. This way, it will be possible to start implementation as soon as funds are available. IOM's projectized system is a major challenge in this regard and it will be important to discuss options and find viable solutions internally.

- 14) Facilitate seamless transition from one project phase to the next through IOM team/project developer preparing the logframe and workplan for the next phase already during the last quarter of the current phase and donor working towards timely agreement and delivery of funds:** At the time of the evaluation visit, concrete plans for the next phase were still not in place. Seamless continuation of the project is important to ensure that stakeholders remain engaged and initial achievements can be built on and expanded without interruption.
- 15) Project staff and IOM Mission's senior management to further discuss internally to identify ways to enhance coordination synergies with other IOM programmes in Serbia:** Several of the project's outputs and products can potentially be used and further strengthened within other IOM programmes. Some of them involve trainings for CRM employees and the possibility of conducting those at the Migration Training Centre should be sought, as opposed to hotel conference rooms. This can contribute to a sense of institutional ownership over capacity building as well as ensure further use of the premise. Products developed within IOM projects should also be made available for upload to the online platform. Handbooks and curricula developed within this project can serve as training material or guidance for other projects. Some coordination between projects is already happening and could be stepped up to avoid overlaps and duplication and enhance synergies, thus further synchronizing the support. Several other interesting ideas for cooperation between projects but also risks of duplication, for example regarding training content, have been mentioned by IOM interlocutors and should be further discussed internally.
- 16) Consider conducting future study visits in smaller groups:** 25 CRM reception center staff took part in the study visit to reception centers in Northern Greece. The large size of the group, particularly in combination with the limited timeframe, reportedly impeded discussion and critical reflection which would be necessary to identify good practices and lessons learned as well as potential steps forward in terms of improving reception conditions in Serbia. Future study visits of this kind are likely to be more effective with smaller groups and more time consecrated to discussion. As the issue of integration is becoming increasingly salient, it has been suggested by interlocutors to conduct a study visit to a final destination country to learn about their reception and integration practices. Whether this can be effective will need to be further assessed.
- 17) IOM project staff to discuss the necessary conditions for meaningful evaluation of the project with the evaluator and ensure that they are in place at least one week before the evaluation field visit:** While the project team has arguably made the best out of the very limited time available for organizing the evaluation, several of the potential limitations discussed in Section 2.3 could have been avoided through more thorough planning of the field visit, in close coordination with the evaluator. Particularly, a clearer agenda for the visit, including main interlocutors, should be available prior to the start of the field visit. This way, it will be possible to plan data collection accordingly, including the evaluation matrix and interview guides. Furthermore, IOM staff were present during some interviews to help with translation which could have resulted in bias. In the future, it should be considered to hire an external interpreter, both to ensure independence of the evaluation and professional translation.

## Annex I - List of documents reviewed

### Documentation related to the project provided by IOM Serbia:

- Original Project Proposal “Support to Strengthening Migration and Asylum Management in Serbia”
- Revised Project Proposal “Support to Strengthening Migration and Asylum Management in Serbia”
- Revised Project Budget
- 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> Narrative Interim Report
- 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Interim Financial Report
- 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> Quarterly Report for MRF CSSF Programme and Project
- Overview of new activities
- Letter to the British Embassy regarding revision of the project’s activities
- Capacity Building Needs Assessment Report
- Presentation of the methodology applied for activities within Output 1.1 and 1.2
- Handbook on Protection of Refugees and Migrants
- Handbook on Protection of Migrants in the Republic of Serbia
- Glossary of Terms used in the Handbook on Protection of Migrants in the Republic of Serbia
- Handbook on the International and European standards in the field of Asylum and Migration and their applicability and relevance to the Republic of Serbia
- E-curriculum on the International and European standards in the field of Asylum and Migration and their applicability and relevance to the Republic of Serbia, online version accessed via the Migration Training Centre online platform [www.tcma.rs](http://www.tcma.rs)
- Preface of the Handbook on Asylum and Migration
- Photos of the renovated Migration Training Centre
- Agenda of the study visit to Greece
- Concept note for the panel discussion on migrant protection
- MoU between IOM and CRM on reconstruction of the Migration Training Centre

### External sources:

- Action Plan for Chapter 24 of EU Accession Talks, accessed via [http://www.bezbednost.org/upload/document/akcioni\\_plan\\_za\\_poglavlje\\_24\\_-\\_mart\\_2016.pdf](http://www.bezbednost.org/upload/document/akcioni_plan_za_poglavlje_24_-_mart_2016.pdf) on 31 March 2018
- Asylum Information Database Statistics for Serbia, accessed via <http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/serbia/statistics> on 31 March 2018
- Belgrade Centre for Human Rights. (2017). *Right to Asylum in the Republic of Serbia Periodic Report for April – June 2017*. Accessed via <http://azil.rs/en/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Right-to-Asylum-Periodic-report-April-June-2017.pdf> on 31 March 2018
- Kilibarda, P., Kovačević, N. (2017). *Country Report: Serbia. 2016 Update*. Asylum Information Database. Accessed via <http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/serbia> on 31 March 2018
- Kilibarda, P., Kovačević, N. (2018). *Country Report: Serbia. 2017 Update*. Asylum Information Database. Accessed via <http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/serbia> on 31 March 2018

- The Law on Asylum, *The Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia*, no. 109/2007.
- The Law on Foreigners, *The Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia*, no. 97/2008.
- UNHCR Serbia Weekly Updates from 2017 and 2018 (selection), accessed via [www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)
- UNHCR. (2010). *ASQAEM Checklists*. Accessed via [http://www.unhcr.org/hu/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2016/12/ASQAEM\\_Check\\_lists.pdf](http://www.unhcr.org/hu/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2016/12/ASQAEM_Check_lists.pdf) on 31 March 2018

## Annex II - List of persons interviewed

Ms. Tanja Azanjac – Capacity Building Programme Coordinator, IOM

Mr. Marko Veljovic – Capacity Building Programme Assistant, IOM

Mr. Marko Perovic – Focal Point for Migrant Protection

Mr. Milan Colic – Project Coordinator, Support to the information management, communication and planning capacity in addressing the migration management challenges in Serbia (MICP)

Ms. Jelena Ribac – Project Coordinator, Open Communities – Successful Communities, Joint UN Project (UNDP, IOM, WHO, UNOPS)

Four individual interviews with TOT participants who also took part in the study visit to Greece

Ms. Lidija Milanovic and Ms. Danijela Radic - TOT trainers

Ms. Aleksandra Galonja - consultant involved in field work handbook and curriculum development

Ms. Ivana Krstic – Associate Professor, University of Belgrade Faculty of Law

Ms. Biljana Braithwaite - Programme Manager for the Western Balkans, AIRE Centre

Ms. Milenka Milosevic – Deputy of Chief, Asylum Office of Republic of Serbia

Mr. Dusan Aralica - Associate Protection Officer UNHCR

## Annex III - Evaluation Terms of Reference

### Terms of Reference

For the final external evaluation of the project:

“Support to Strengthening Migration and Asylum Management in Serbia”

*Commissioned by:* International Organization for Migration (IOM), Country Office in Serbia

#### 1. Context of Evaluation:

The migration crisis in the Western Balkan region exposed the need for an effective adjustment of the existing migration and asylum management system in Serbia. As part of its effort to improve its response to the crisis, as well as seeking to fulfil its responsibilities laid down in the Action Plan for Chapter 24, the Ministry of Interior has been working on the revision of Laws on Asylum and Temporary Protection and the Law on Foreigners, setting more targeted legislative responses to asylum issues and irregular migration. Additionally, the migration crisis context also necessitates the operationalization of various dimensions of migration management, in particular reception, identification of vulnerabilities and referral of vulnerable migrants to protection services, for which responsibility rests with the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration and the Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veteran and Social Policy.

Given the expected changes in the legislation and the ongoing effort to achieve full compliance with the best international practices in this field, the governmental institutions will need technical support to build their capacity to enforce the new legislative framework and to ensure protection-sensitive migration management. This includes screening, profiling and registration of migrants regardless of their status, which fully respects the migrants’ human rights.

In early 2017, as an inception phase, an assessment was carried out by IOM Serbia to identify training and study needs of relevant Serbian government institutions in the current migration crisis context, which resulted in a comprehensive capacity building plan proposed as a response strategy to identified needs. This plan was re-confirmed by the Serbian government in a validation workshop on 28 March 2017. A number of areas were identified where targeted capacity development intervention is needed, including in strengthening the capacities of three asylum instances; improving coordination of the management of asylum and reception centers; enhancing identification of vulnerable migrants, such as victims of gender-based violence, torture, forced marriage, trafficking and others; awareness of migrants’ rights; improving cultural sensitivity when communicating with migrants; expanding capacity in assisted voluntary return processes; and furthering capacity of staff working in detention centers.

Based on the needs identified in the inception phase, the project’s objective is to contribute to the strengthening of the migration and asylum management systems in Serbia. The project features four interlinked outcomes contributing to this objective:

- (1) Governmental officials provide high quality asylum services to persons of concern as a result of their strengthened understanding of effective processing of asylum claims;

- (2) Governmental officials apply in their daily work good practices related to assisted voluntary return, identity verification, immigration detention and alternatives to detention, and combatting irregular migration;
- (3) Rights of migrants are upheld as a result of improved reception conditions, identification of vulnerabilities and referrals to specialized services;
- (4) Improvement of technical conditions for delivery of high quality, standardized migration management trainings to Serbian officials by the future Migration Training Centre.

By responding to the capacity development needs of the asylum and migration management institutions as a whole, the project reinforces a comprehensive, holistic approach to migration management, one that seeks synergies in services, coherence in policy implementation, under a continued commitment to protection of migrants' rights.

In addition to the initial project description, and due to the delay of the project inception as well as the short-term nature of the project, it was necessary to revise project activities in order to secure the timely implementation as well as the expected level of impact. The main purpose of the extension was the focusing of the project on the development of main resources/products which will serve as capacities for development of human resource in the second phase of the project.

Therefore, as regards the project's content, following interventions were conducted:

<b>Project objective: to contribute to the strengthening of the migration and asylum management systems in Serbia</b>	
<b>Outcome1. Governmental officials provide high quality asylum services to persons of concern as a result of their enhanced understanding of effective processing of claims for asylum</b>	
<b>Output 1.1. Governmental officials have increased their skills and knowledge on writing legal asylum decisions (Asylum Office employees)</b>	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of the on- job training program: inception training, individual mentoring support, group mentoring discussion with guest lectures (national and international) on relevant issues,</li> <li>- <i>Two- day training</i> for representatives of Commission on Asylum and employees of Asylum Office on introduction of new the Law on Administrative Procedure referring to process of preparation of the decision on asylum; In addition, meeting should enable discussion on particularly models of cooperation between intuitions, aimed at strengthening process of harmonization of the national jurisprudence on asylum.</li> <li>- <i>Support to Asylum Office (AO) on collecting data on country of origin</i> (for the most demanded cases of asylum seekers) –to provide support to the work of the Office on preparing reports on country of origin (Afghanistan and Pakistan), in cooperation with Law Faculty. Based on experience, possible/future model of cooperation between institutions should be discussed.</li> </ul> <p>Products: training materials –inception training on writing decision on asylum and introduction of the new Law on Administrative Procedure; Reports on country of origin (Afghanistan and Pakistan).</p>
<b>Output 1.2. E-curriculum on the application of asylum-related jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights is available for distant learning;</b>	<p>Activities/Products/ resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Development of the on – line platform of Migration Training Centre</i>, which should serve as on line resource centre where all products developed in the scope of the project will be stored: Handbook on migration protection, Handbook on application of asylum-related jurisprudence of ECHR, training curricula, materials and filed work manual, etc. E- Curriculum will be available on the platform as well,</li> <li>- <i>Promotion of the platform and products</i>, organisation of the official introduction of the on- line course and other products through various promotional activities (promotional events)</li> <li>- <i>Development of the e-curricula on the application of asylum – related jurisprudence of European Court of Human Rights</i>, on line course is available at</li> </ul>

	<p>the platform; It is based on prepared Handbook on application of asylum-related jurisprudence of ECHR and it enables insight in various resources (overview of the national and international standard and practice, insight in decisions of ECHR which are analysed taking in consideration national legal context, etc.); The course enable opportunity for self-evaluation of gained knowledge, as well as opportunity to obtain on line certification.</p> <p>Products: Handbook on application of asylum-related jurisprudence of ECHR, on-line course (with opportunity to obtain on-line certification).</p>
<p><b>Outcome 2. Governmental officials apply in their daily work good practices related to assisted voluntary return, identity verification, immigration detention and alternatives to detention, and combat illegal migration</b></p>	
<p><b>Output 2.1. Stakeholders have a better understanding of roles, tasks and responsibilities of institutions in relation to returns;</b></p>	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of the Handbook on migrant protection with Glossary</li> <li>- Panel discussion on migrant protection – raising up discussion among governmental officials/ professionals on crucial issues recognized in process of developing Handbook and training curricula for field workers.</li> </ul> <p>Product: Handbook on migrant protection with Glossary</p>
<p><b>Outcome 3. The rights of migrants are upheld as a result of improved reception conditions, identification of vulnerabilities and referrals to specialized services</b></p>	
<p><b>Output 3.1. Field workers in asylum and reception centres have increase skills for working with migrants</b></p>	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of the methodology, training curricula and fieldwork manual for service providers engaged in reception and asylum centers</li> <li>- Delivery of various trainings for field workers aimed at strengthening their skill in work with vulnerable groups of migrants (women and children particularly, victims of violence), Training for trainers based on prepared training curricula and field manual</li> </ul> <p>Products: Training curricula, field work manual, TOT program curricula.</p>
<p><b>Output 3.2. Serbian reception staff have greater awareness of challenges and operating procedures associated with operating a large reception centres</b></p>	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Study visit to Greece is organized for staff of Commissariat for Refugees and Migration</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 4. Improving the technical conditions for the delivery of high quality, standardized migration management training to Serbian officials by the future Migration Training Center</b></p>	
<p><b>Output 4.1. First phase reconstruction of Migration training Centre carried out</b></p>	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reconstruction and refurbishment of facilities that will serve as a Migration Training Center.</li> </ul> <p>Product: Migration Training Center it is reconstruct and equipped.</p>

## 2. Evaluation purpose:

The main objective of the evaluation is to analyze whether the planned activities and outputs of the project were achieved. Furthermore, it is essential that the evaluation highlights lessons learned and best practices for future programming. Additionally, some attention will be given to the relevance and efficiency of the project.

As a secondary objective, the evaluation aims to assess how effective and sustainable the achievements are likely to be in reaching the mid-term outcomes and long-term objectives/impact, which are focused on strengthening of the migration and asylum management systems in Serbia.

IOM will share the evaluation report with the donor of the project and participating institutions to demonstrate the value of the project, lessons learned and recommendations.

### **3. Evaluation scope:**

From April 2017, IOM has been implementing the project *Support to strengthening migration and asylum management in Serbia*, supported by British Embassy in Belgrade. The project is set to be finalized on 31<sup>st</sup> of March, 2018. However, the evaluation is planned for the last month of project implementation and would consist of desk work and three-day evaluation field visit to Belgrade, Serbia.

### **4. Evaluation criteria**

The evaluation will focus on effectiveness, while also assessing relevance and efficiency of the project, in addition to the likely impact and sustainability of the project.

### **5. Evaluation Questions**

The evaluation shall focus on the following specific questions, with integration of rights into the general criteria of the evaluation and in each question to the extent relevant and possible:

#### Relevance

- i. To what extent were stakeholders consulted and involved in designing the project?
- ii. Was the project in line with international and partner government policies and strategies active in domain of migration and asylum?
- iii. Do the expected outcomes and outputs remain valid and pertinent in terms of the beneficiary's and stakeholders' needs to which the project was designed to respond?

#### Effectiveness

- iv. To what extent and in which ways were stakeholders consulted and involved in the project implementation?
- v. Have the project outputs and outcomes been achieved in accordance with the stated plans?
- vi. Are the target beneficiaries being reached as expected?

#### Efficiency

- vii. Was the project implemented in a most efficient way compared to the alternative means of implementation?

#### Impact

- viii. What are the likely impacts of the various capacity building interventions?
- ix. What are the likely impacts of the project in strengthening institutional capacity for supporting vulnerable groups of migrants?
- x. What are the likely impacts of the Migration Training Centre established under the project?

#### Sustainability

- xi. Are the benefits generated by the project likely to continue once the external support ceases?
- xii. Do the project partners have the financial capacity and are they committed to maintaining the benefits of the project in the long run?
- xiii. How sustainable is Migration Training Centre, and what further steps should be taken in future project to strengthen capacity?

#### Cross-cutting

- xiv. To what extent was attention to human rights and gender equality addressed in the design and implementation of the project? (e.g. design informed by needs and interests of diverse

groups and/or by rights and gender analyses; intervention incorporates human rights based approach and gender mainstreaming strategy; etc.)

## 6. Evaluation methodology

The following combination of data collection methods will be used in the evaluation:

- Review of existing documentation (project documents, reports, assessment reports, manuals and handbooks, photos, information presented in the media);
- Collection of data during the evaluation field visit – semi-structured interviews with IOM staff responsible for the project implementation, national partners, government agencies and other stakeholders;

The selected evaluator should develop proposal of evaluation methodology (inception report, consisting of at minimum an evaluation matrix). This should be submitted to the project manager following the document review phase.

Finally, the evaluation must follow the IOM Data Protection Principles, UNEG norms and standards for evaluation and any other relevant ethical guidelines.

## 7. Evaluation deliverables

An **inception report** shall be developed by the evaluator (consisting at minimum of an evaluation matrix), to be shared with IOM Serbia for review and comments prior to the start of the field visit.

The evaluator should prepare a **draft report** to be shared with the IOM Serbia and IOM’s Regional Office in Vienna for comments/feedback and to finalize the report based on the comments/feedback received.

The **final report** shall be written in English and meet good language standards, being grammatically correct, proofread and laid out well, consisting of around 20 pages. The report will follow the same presentation logic and include, at a minimum, the information described in the IOM Project Handbook template for evaluation reports: executive summary, list of acronyms, introduction, evaluation context and purpose, evaluation framework and methodology, findings, conclusions and recommendations. Annexes should include the TOR, inception report or evaluation matrix, list of documents reviewed, list of persons interviewed or consulted and data collection instruments.

A short executive summary / learning brief should be developed in consultation with IOM’s Regional Office in Vienna to promote sharing of key findings and recommendations (optionally, the Regional Office could support converting content into a designed version in Publisher). It should include a brief summary of the project being evaluated, the evaluation methodology, the key findings of the evaluation and recommendations.

## 8. Evaluation work plan:

The work plan of the evaluation will be as follows:

TASKS	TIMEFRAME
Prepare the evaluation methodology/matrix and field visit.	3 days
Conduct three-day field visit to collect data through interviews with IOM staff responsible for project implementation and other partners	3 day visit to Belgrade, Serbia and other sites relevant for project.
Draft the report and submit to IOM Serbia for feedback and further inputs	5 days
Finalize the report and submit to IOM Serbia	3 days

Data collection should take place from 15 March 2018. The evaluation report should be finalized no later than 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2018.

## **9. Evaluation budget**

The costs of the evaluation will be covered by IOM as part of the implementation of the project. The expert fee in the evaluation budget is GBP 4,000, which will be covered by IOM Serbia. In addition, evaluator/team of evaluators; DSA and travel costs will be also covered. The other international and domestic travel expenses incurred by the evaluator (in addition to the fee indicated above) will be covered by IOM Serbia as well.

## Annex IV - Evaluation Matrix

### Evaluation matrix for the final evaluation of the project “SUPPORT TO STRENGTHENING MIGRATION AND ASYLUM MANAGEMENT IN SERBIA”

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions	Sub-questions	Indicators / Data	Document review	Interviews		
					Project staff	Beneficiaries	Implementing Partners
Relevance	1. To what extent were stakeholders consulted and involved in designing the project?	Which stakeholders were identified and how? Have any relevant stakeholders been forgotten/left out?	Stakeholder mapping; any relevant stakeholders not involved	Project document; potentially external documents	X	X	X
		To what extent and how were stakeholders consulted during project design?	Form and extent of stakeholder consultations; examples of specific contributions	Project document	X	X	X
		What, if anything, has been done to avoid overlaps and duplication and to enhance synergies?	Measures taken to avoid overlaps and duplication or enhance synergies	Project document	X		
	2. Was the project in line with international and partner government policies and strategies active in domain of migration and asylum?	What are the international and partner government policies and strategies that are relevant to the project?	Relevant policies and strategies	Project document; needs assessment report; external documents on policies and strategies	X	X	X
		How was the project aligned with these policies and strategies?	Extent to which relevant policies and strategies were identified; whether/how the project was designed to respond to them	Project document	X		
		Have there been any discrepancies between the project and the relevant policies and strategies?	Potential discrepancies	Project document; external documents on policies and strategies	X	X	X
	3. Do the expected outcomes and outputs remain valid and pertinent?	Which of the expected outcomes and outputs remain valid and pertinent? Why/why not?	Valid/pertinent outcomes and outputs	Potentially external documents or data	X	X	X

	in terms of the beneficiary's and stakeholders' needs to which the project was designed to respond?	Have any of the expected outcomes and outputs become irrelevant or obsolete? Why/why not?	Irrelevant/obsolete outcomes and outputs	Potentially external documents or data	X	X	X
		Are there any gaps/needs still pending after the project ceases? What would be the logical continuation of the activities?	Follow-up plans; perceived gaps	Potentially external documents or data	X	X	X
Effectiveness	4. To what extent and in which ways were stakeholders consulted and involved in the project implementation?	To what extent were stakeholders consulted during the project implementation?	Extent of stakeholder consultations	Project document and reports	X	X	X
		How were stakeholders involved in project implementation? What were their roles and contributions?	Stakeholder involvement; examples of specific contributions	Project document and reports	X	X	X
		Are stakeholders satisfied with the extent and ways in which they were involved in the project implementation?	Stakeholder satisfaction	Potentially data collected within project (e.g. beneficiary satisfaction questionnaires)		X	X
	5. Have the project outputs and outcomes been achieved in accordance with the stated plans?	Have all planned activities been implemented?	Implementation of activities	Project interim and monitoring reports	X	X	X
		Have the activities contributed to the planned outputs and outcomes or are they expected to do so?	Logic of results framework; reported changes in participants' skills and behaviour and institutional performance; availability of new products or services	Project documents, interim and monitoring reports; project products such as handbooks; potentially data on results indicators collected within the project	X	X	X
		Have there been variations between the project document and actual implementation? If yes, why? Were all concerned stakeholders consulted on and agreed to the change of implementation plans? Is the project objective still expected to be achieved?	Variations between project plan and actual implementation and the reasons for it	Project document and reports	X	X	X
		How were target beneficiaries identified and reached?	Beneficiary identification and outreach	Project document and reports	X	X	

	6. Are the target beneficiaries being reached as expected?	Have there been any challenges in reaching the target beneficiaries?	Reported challenges and measures to address them	Project document and reports	X	X	
Efficiency	7. Was the project implemented in a most efficient way compared to the alternative means of implementation?	Were any alternative means of implementation explored?	Any reported exploration of alternative means of implementation	Project document	X		
		What concrete steps did the project implementation team, the beneficiary or other stakeholders take to ensure the most efficient means of project implementation?	Concrete steps taken	Project document and reports	X	X	X
		Have the project management structures and processes contributed to the efficient management of the project?	Perceived strengths and weaknesses in project management structures and processes	Project document and reports	X	X	X
		Have there been any expected or unexpected, internal or external challenges to efficiency? If yes, what measures were taken to remedy them? To what extent could they be mitigated?	Existence of challenges and reported measures to address them	Project documents, particularly interim and monitoring reports	X	X	X
Impact	8. What are the likely impacts of the various capacity building interventions?	What long-term effects stemming from the capacity building interventions can be expected (positive or negative, direct or indirect, intended or unintended)?	Expected long-term effects		X	X	X
		What are the perceived challenges regarding impact of the capacity building interventions?	Perceived challenges		X	X	X
		Can the interlocutors highlight any positive or negative by-products/unintended effects of the capacity building interventions?	Reported by-products		X	X	X

	9. What are the likely impacts of the project in strengthening institutional capacity for supporting vulnerable groups of migrants?	Is the project expected to have had an impact on institutional capacity for supporting vulnerable groups of migrants in the long term (positive or negative, direct or indirect, intended or unintended)?	Expected long-term effects		X	X	X
		What are the perceived challenges regarding supporting vulnerable groups of migrants in the long term?	Perceived challenges		X	X	X
	10. What are the likely impacts of the Migration Training Centre established under the project?	What long-term effects of the Migration Training Centre can be expected (positive or negative, direct or indirect, intended or unintended)?	Expected long-term effects		X	X	X
		What are the perceived challenges regarding impact of the Migration Training Centre?	Perceived challenges		X	X	X
		Can the interlocutors highlight any positive or negative by-products/unintended effects of the Migration Training Centre?	Reported by-products		X	X	X
	Sustainability	11. Are the benefits generated by the project likely to continue once the external support ceases?	Is the project being followed up by activities from IOM, other organizations/agencies and/or government initiatives? If yes, which?	Any follow-up plans		X	X
What steps have been taken to ensure that the project's products (handbooks, curricula) can and will be used in the future?			Measures and plans for future use of the products	Project document and reports	X	X	X
Can it be expected that the capacities built through the project will be useful in the future?			Plans for future use of the capacities		X	X	X
What, if any, factors challenge sustainability of project results? What measures have been taken to remedy them?			Reported challenges to sustainability and measures to address them	Project document and reports	X	X	X

	12. Do the project partners have the financial capacity and are they committed to maintaining the benefits of the project in the long run?	Are project partners adequately capacitated (technically, financially and managerially) for continuing to deliver the project's benefits?	Capacities to independently deliver the benefits/services	Project document and reports	X		X
		Are project partners committed to continue to deliver the project's benefits?	Any formal agreements in place; expected commitment	Potential written agreements/commitments	X		X
	13. How sustainable is Migration Training Centre, and what further steps should be taken in future project to strengthen capacity?	Can it be expected that the Migration Training Centre will be used in the future? How?	Expected future use	Project document and reports	X	X	X
		What concrete measures have been taken to ensure sustainability of the Migration Training Centre? Are any agreements or commitments in place?	Concrete measures taken; any formal agreements in place; expected commitment	Project documents; Potential written agreements/commitments	X	X	X
		How can/should the Centre's capacity be strengthened in the future?	Suggested ways to increase capacity in the future		X	X	X
	Cross-cutting issues	14. To what extent was attention to human rights and gender equality addressed in the design and implementation of the project? (e.g. design informed by needs and interests of diverse groups and/or by rights and gender analyses; intervention incorporates human rights-based approach and gender mainstreaming strategy; etc.)	Has the project design been informed by needs and interests of diverse groups and/or by rights and gender analyses?	Needs assessment of diverse groups, gender and human rights analyses	Project document and reports; needs assessment report	X	
Were gender and human rights mainstreamed throughout project activities? If yes, how?			Extent and ways in which cross-cutting issues have been mainstreamed	Project document and reports	X		
Do project-related documents use gender-sensitive and human rights-based language throughout and include data disaggregated by relevant aspects such as sex and age?			Use of gender-sensitive and human rights-based language; absence of stereotypes and discriminatory language; availability and dissemination of disaggregated data	Any document drafted within the project			