

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

Evaluation type:	Internal independent ex-post
Evaluator (s):	Angeline WAMBANDA, Regional M&E Officer, IOM Regional Office East and Horn of Africa
Field visit dates:	12-15 November 2019
Final report date:	28 February 2020
Commissioned by:	IOM Rwanda

Evaluation purpose: The evaluation was commissioned by IOM Rwanda with the purpose to assess overall achievements one year after end of the project, and document lessons learned and best practices. It conducted for accountability to intended beneficiaries including the government of Rwanda, and the IDF as primary users. The findings will assist IOM, and the government of Rwanda to better implement similar interventions in the future .

Evaluation criteria: Relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and impact, as well as the extent to which the cross-cutting issues of gender and human rights were addressed by the project.

Evaluation methodology: Qualitative methods were used to obtain information. This was mainly through document review, real-time observation of the functioning of DGIE Integrated Portal, and key informant interviews.

PROJECT SUMMARY

The overall objective of the project was to **improve Rwanda’s migration management and technical capacity for managing its borders effectively**. The project’ was to develop: (1) specification of technology, software standards and smart infrastructure and (2) an ICT strategy of Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration (DGIE) to align their systems with government services’ online system, “Rwanda online.’

The Government of Rwanda introduced a policy and ICT strategy for a “Smart Rwanda,” which required all government services to be accessed through one online platform known as “Rwanda Online or Irembo”.

At the time this policy was launched, the Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration (DGIE), which is the government department that issues travel documents and permits, had some of its services on a DGIE run website but not on the government online platform. In addition, each of the DGIE services were mainly stand-alone.

In close cooperation with the DGIE, IOM ensured that an Information Communications Technology (ICT) integrated strategy was developed. The strategy was to look forward five or ten years and consider international standards and best practices to allow the DGIE to support future changes such as introduction of biometric passports. This therefore required an interface between DGIE and Rwanda online services.

Project information:

Geographical coverage:	Republic of Rwanda
Project type:	IBM
Project code:	TC.0829
Project period:	30 January 2015 – 30 June 2018
Donor:	IOM Development Fund (IDF)
Budget:	200,000 USD

The project therefore aimed to achieve the following outcomes and outputs:

- **Outcome 1: Online passport and visa applications; permit issuing system and a border control system institutionalized/aligned to government online portal-Rwanda online (Irembo)**

Output 1.1: Integrated ICT Strategy developed and adopted.

Output 1.2: Consultant’s report outlining gaps in interoperability of systems available and approved by DGIE.

- **Outcome 2: Improved interoperability of DGIE IT hardware systems .**

Output 2.1: Integrated DGIE Internal Portal for visa/e-passport/ laissez passes passport/permit application launched.

KEY FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

Assessing **relevance**, the project was highly relevant. The project was and results are still in line with the government's migration and ICT strategy and policies. The DGIE has included its services on the government online portal to align with the migration law revision and government e-governance policy requiring all services offered to its citizens by different departments to be accessed through its online portal –Rwanda online. In addition, the DGIE is working with the government to launch a module for visa application upon arrival, including Advanced Passenger Information (API) to align with migration policy of 2018 which requires passenger information before arrival to facilitate application of visa upon arrival.

With regards to **effectiveness**, The evaluation noted considerable progress towards project outcomes and objective. The project achieved the three planned outputs namely: Assessment of gaps in interoperability of DGIE systems; finalization of the ICT strategy and creation of the interface between DGIE systems and Rwanda Online through the launch of the Integrated DGIE Portal. The government has launched, as a way of operationalizing the strategy, several projects outlined in the strategy, that are leading towards achievement of the **first outcome**.

The second outcome of **'Improved interoperability of DGIE IT hardware systems has been fully achieved.'** With the launch of the DIP portal, a foundation has been created upon which future systems for DGIE documents will be based on. Full system and data integration have almost been realized because Visa, laissez passé, permit, electronic archiving of documents, visa processing have all been brought to one portal, eliminating previous stand-alone services.

The project could have been more efficient. Initially planned for 12 months, from January 2015, the project was completed in June 2018 after five no-cost extensions. A lot of challenges were related to capacity gaps of the consultant. Language barrier was the main issue that led to communication challenges in the consultant's understanding of the assignment. This led to significant delays in the submission of expected deliverables by the consultant

The project's overall **impact** is mainly the establishment of a framework for an integrated border management system. The improved communication between DGIE internal systems and internal/external data warehouses, has increased productivity, integrity of issued documents as well as efficiency in processing of documents by the DGIE. **However, lack of funding for most of the projects proposed in the DGIE ICT strategy is the main set-back to reaching the project objective.**

The evaluation noted solid mechanisms that have ensured **sustainability** of the project's results. Key to sustainability of the project is its alignment to the government's migration and e-government policies currently under implementation, ensuring government ownership of the project results. DGIE integrated services are sufficiently interfaced with the Rwanda online services ensuring continuity of project results as the DGIE portal is the main mode of migration service provision.

The evaluation found good evidence on integration of gender and human rights considerations. A module on refugees has been developed which facilitates free movement of refugees by establishing standards of documents that meet ICAO requirements, processing of which will be done through DIP system. The Project implementation had a fair mix of men and women. The project documents, however, do not mention these principles explicitly.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Within the next six months, IOM Rwanda is recommended to:

1. Provide further support to DGIE to implement remaining projects through other complementary projects, to assist DGIE operationalize the ICT strategy.
2. Jointly with GoR, document and share successes and lessons learnt from the project as best practice that other member states and IOM country offices could learn from.
3. Follow up with DGIE for the final copy of the ICT strategy document for knowledge management.
4. Improve knowledge management to facilitate learning from ongoing and completed projects. Strengthen information management and M&E which should include data collection, storage, and establishing guidelines for proper handover of project information by outgoing staff when a project ends, or staff leave the country office..
5. IOM in general could expand its internal capacity in areas of ICT related projects implemented by IOM to ensure its own internal monitoring of implementation and results particularly where IOM staff on such projects are not IT experts. In addition, ensure that consultants are familiar with country contexts.

In development of similar future projects, the IOM Rwanda is recommended to:

7. Set out a clear framework for communication and coordination of project implementation between government and IOM particularly for highly sensitive projects such as this where both IOM and government have implementation roles.