

## EX-POST EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT “INCREASING THE KNOWLEDGE BASE ON COMMUNITY COHESION AND MOBILITY DYNAMICS IN THE CONTEXT OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION THROUGH SELECT COUNTRY-BASED CASE STUDIES WITHIN THE MENA REGION”

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 evaluation

**Evaluator(s):** Nisreen Abou Mrad, Regional Monitoring, Evaluation & Risk Management Officer, IOM Regional Office for Middle East and North Africa (RO MENA)

**Evaluation dates:** March to July 2024

**Final report date:** 12 September 2024

**Managed by:** Masako Ueda, Senior Regional Thematic Specialist for Migration, Environment, Climate Change and Risk Reduction, IOM RO MENA

**Evaluation purpose:** To support IOM and IOM Development Fund (IOMDF) as the donor in assessing overall project achievements; to ensure accountability to target groups and IOMDF; and, to identify knowledge, best practices, and lessons learned.

**Evaluation criteria:** Relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability.

**Evaluation methodology:** The evaluation was conducted remotely and employed qualitative methods including document review and semi-structured interviews with internal and external project stakeholders.

### PROJECT SUMMARY

The MENA region faces severe climate change impacts, exacerbated by structural issues and conflicts. Migration is a key adaptation strategy. Understanding the connection between climate change, human security, and mobility is crucial, but empirical evidence remains insufficient.

IOM Regional Office (RO) for MENA implemented a 12-month project from 1 March 2022 to 28 February 2023 with an **overall objective** of enhancing the evidence base on how climate change and environmental degradation has impacted on social relationships at the community level and mobility decisions with **Libya and Sudan** as the focus countries.

Key deliverables included literature reviews for Libya and Sudan; a research report; two concept notes; and a regional policy paper.

The project had one outcome and two associated outputs.

**Outcome 1:** Key actors (including states, UN agencies, and civil society organizations) utilize actionable, evidence-based recommendations to support improved policy and programming related to the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation on community cohesion and mobility.

### Project information:

Geographical coverage: Middle East and North Africa Region, with a focus on Sudan and Libya

Project type: Migration, Environment and Climate Change

Project code: NC.0073

Gender marker: 2a

Project period: March 2022 to February 2023

Donor: IOM Development Fund

Budget: USD 100,000

**Output 1.1:** Research documents, which explore the impact of climate change and environmental degradation on community cohesion and mobility dynamics are developed with gender mainstreamed.

**Output 1.2:** Key actors have an increased understanding of the links between climate change and environmental degradation, community cohesion dynamics and mobility patterns and decisions, and can access data and information to support their policy and programmatic responses.

## KEY FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

**Relevance** (Rating: Adequate - 3/5): The evaluation found that the project was largely aligned with national priorities and policies in Sudan and Libya, as evidenced by the desk reviews done and the testimonies of both external and internal stakeholders. Despite limited in-country consultation at the design stage, the desk research done to inform the study and the subsequent consultations in countries with government and other stakeholders have largely compensated for the lack of initial consultation. The project logic was sound at the activity and output level, while missing a key output-outcome link from evidence generation and awareness to utilization of the evidence; specifically, the engagement and advocacy with policy makers was missing.

**Coherence** (Rating: Adequate - 3/5): The project was highly coherent with IOM's global, regional and country level priorities as well as with wider UN and non-UN frameworks on Climate Change and Migration. The project lags on coordination with local stakeholders especially government in all steps of the implementation, whereby coordination seems to be limited to the initial consultation and formulation phase and less so in the following stages. At the local levels, few projects were ongoing at the time by other organizations to contribute to similar objectives, so the project was seen as first of a kind initiative, while it did interlink well with other IOM initiatives and other regional initiatives, in and outside IOM.

**Efficiency** (Rating: Adequate – 3.5/5): The project utilized existing human resources to maximize cost effectiveness of results and invested the limited project resources in necessary and direct costs of the study such as the external lead consultant and the local data collection costs. There is consensus among internal stakeholders that the project was highly efficient in terms of resources, and time albeit to a lesser extent, despite having no cost extensions. The highlight of the project's efficiency seems to relate to the organized coordination and communication structures, which staff claimed to have had a big impact on achieving results.

**Effectiveness** (Rating: Good - 4/5): The project was very effective in accomplishing output level results, with some evidence to contribution to outcome level results through the internal utilization of findings to inform projects and policy work as well as a few instances of external utilization of findings by other UN agencies, less so by the government and NGOs. The partial accomplishment at outcome level can be tied to the missing link in the Theory of Change (ToC) and hence in the Results Matrix with regards to strengthened engagement and advocacy for the purpose of utilization of findings.

**Impact** (Rating: Good - 4/5): The evaluation has identified a significant set of unintended positive changes that have emerged from this project, including increased interest and engagement by donors, governments, offices and other agencies, strengthened capacity of staff and the serious efforts made beyond the project to use research findings for future projects and policy and advocacy engagement at country and regional levels.

**Sustainability** (Rating: Insufficient, but nascent - 2/5): Some of the unintended benefits of the project persist to the time of evaluation including the use of study findings as reference internally by IOM and the interest by some external stakeholders in the research. However, local level external stakeholders do not recognize persisting benefits of the project and did not integrate project results in their strategies and policies, which is tied to the limited engagement they had in the project.

**Cross Cutting Issues** (Rating: Good - 4/5): The project sufficiently mainstreamed gender into research methodologies, questions and approaches to ensure diverse gender dynamics and effects are surfaced and highlighted separately in the final research report as specific findings and recommendations. The project seems to also have mainstreamed rights-based approaches and Do No Harm principles, albeit less concretely evidenced.

## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

### RO MENA, IOM Sudan and IOM Libya

1. Ensure ongoing consultations with government counterparts on issues of priority for IOM in country, to gather government insights, plans and priorities and be ready to inform future projects.
2. Incorporate issues of climate change, environmental degradation and migration in ongoing data collection exercises, to have readily available information for future project designs.
3. Design projects and ToCs in line with IOMDF funding guidelines and ceilings and ensure ToCs are informed and formed based on contextual needs and issues identified in country.
4. Ensure appropriate representation of government counterparts and other stakeholders who have a direct contribution to the objectives of the project.
5. Ensure that projects are more participatory in nature from start to end to the possible extent in conflict-affected settings, and consider stakeholders' ambitions, priorities, capacities and decision-making powers at policy and strategy levels.
6. Ensure that external consultants are contracted under the most efficient terms, whilst not jeopardizing the quality of deliverables.
7. Plan projects with a consideration for local access constraints, such as weather patterns, that might delay or impact activities.
8. Promote the project deliverables with other countries in the region and beyond, to share learning for countries that might be considering similar projects.

### IOM Development Fund

1. Strengthen assessment and review of project Theories of Change to ensure they are contextualized and realistic given the length and funding ceilings of IOMDF.
2. Consider updating available gender guidelines based on lessons learned from IOMDF Evaluations. This can help guide concrete actions that are reflected in project designs, results matrices and implementation approaches.
3. Ensure that project ToCs are reviewed against existing evidence from IOM or elsewhere, since much evidence exists on what works and what does not on the link between evidence and awareness on one hand and utilization or action on evidence on the other.
4. Consider investing in follow up projects that build on the results of IOMDF funded research projects, hence contributing to longer term sustainability of results supported by the fund.