



EVALUATION BRIEF

October 2019

INTERNAL FINAL EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT: “ASSISTANCE OF NIGERIEN RETURNEES IN AGADEZ AND ZINDER (ANRAZ)”

This evaluation brief presents a summary of the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations, as identified by the evaluator(s) 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 final evaluation
Evaluators:	Lee Kanthoul, Gender Specialist Fanny Dufvenmark, Migration Law Expert IOM Headquarters in Geneva
Field visit dates:	5-17 May 2019
Final report date:	11 September 2019
Commissioned by:	IOM Mission in Niger
Managed by:	Corantine Groccia, Project Manager

Evaluation purpose: To assess the performance of the project and activities implemented, as defined in the logical framework

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

Evaluation methodology: Desk review of project documents and reports; focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews with project staff, beneficiaries and Nigerien institutions involved in the project during a field visit to Niamey, Zinder and Agadez; and development of an evaluation matrix responding to each evaluation question of the ToRs for data collection.

PROJECT SUMMARY

This return and reintegration project is a key component of IOM Niger’s Migrant Resource and Response Mechanism (MRRM), which aims to provide direct assistance to migrants in transit, promote viable alternatives to migration, inform individuals about safe migration and support activities helping migrants to contribute to the economy in their country of origin.

Since 2014, both Algerian and Nigerien governments have been trying to control migration flows from Niger to Algeria, including through an agreement to repatriate Nigerien migrants from Algeria to Niger. Since then, more than 43,544 Nigeriens have been repatriated to Niger, including 30,716 from the Zinder region. In 2018 alone, 14,919 Nigeriens were repatriated from Algeria. The continued significant number of repatriations raise material, financial and human issues for the Nigerien institutions to organize the reception of these returnees.

During the implementation of the project in 2018, Niger experienced an increasing number of returns in the region of Agadez compared to 2017, which made the relevance of this project even more apparent.

Project information:

Geographical coverage:	Niger
Project type:	Return and Reintegration
Project code:	RT.1410
IOM Gender Marker:	not required at time of proposal
Project period:	12 December 2017 to 11 June 2019
Donor:	Government of Switzerland
Budget:	765,000.65

The overall objective of the project is to assist Nigerien migrants returning from Algeria to Niger through three components:

- Provide direct assistance in the form of non-food items (NFI) kits and shelter to Nigerien migrant returnees in Niger;
- Strengthen the capacity of the Nigerien Ministry of Women Promotion and Child Protection to manage and prevent irregular migration through training and the establishment of a Social Centre for Prevention, Promotion and Protection; and
- Provide reintegration assistance to vulnerable Nigerien returnees and community members in the Zinder region.

KEY FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the project has been successful in meeting beneficiaries' immediate and long-term needs by providing NFI kits as well as reintegration support. The training activities undertaken with governmental stakeholders and the construction of a new Social Centre for Prevention, Promotion and Protection were also relevant in filling gaps in institutional knowledge and capacities, as well as increasing awareness about risks around irregular migration and better addressing root causes.

The findings show that the various target beneficiaries were more than satisfied with the services provided through the IOM activities, with no major complaints reported. In terms of participation, several of the key stakeholders were consulted and engaged throughout the project, including returnees.

In terms of *Impact*, the project has great potential to make a difference in the lives of returnees as well as for their communities, in particular with respect to the reintegration activities. In addition, the trainings carried out for the governmental and protection stakeholders, including social workers, can lead to more awareness of the specific protection challenges in the context of migration and how to best address these. The establishment of the Social Centre will allow for a permanent entity to assist returnees and potential migrants.

The Evaluators believe that with respect to *Sustainability*, the reintegration activities of the project could be used as a best practice as participants received training prior to selecting their business activities, and they were continuously supported through the local Steering Committees as well as by the non-governmental organization CADEL. One area of improvement, from the Evaluators' point of view, is that IOM could have developed more sufficient tools (i.e. exit strategy, critical paths) to facilitate the transfer of activities and responsibilities to its government partners in Niger, in particular with respect to strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Women Promotion and Child Protection to promote long-lasting change.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

Gender

In general, the project did moderately well in incorporating gender considerations, however there is some room for improvement. The project identified and

adequately ensured that direct assistance activities responded to the needs of different gender groups, but it could have done more to include gender issues in the curriculum of the capacity-building activities. The reintegration activities were the strongest in terms of incorporating gender considerations.

Rights-Based Approach

The project was not developed with a rights-based approach in the sense that it did not seek to further the realization of rights of returnees in Niger, neither did it seek out to strengthen the capacities of rights-holders to claim their rights or of duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

For the IOM Mission in Niger:

1. Strategize how to best proceed to improve the situation of returnees in line with international standards as well as to prevent irregular migration out of Niger, without infringing on the right to leave of individuals. Even if future projects continue to respond to immediate needs, human rights need to be considered as part of the intervention.

For IOM and partners in future projects:

2. Ensure a solid results matrix and work plan to lay a stronger foundation for monitoring and reporting on results and activities.
3. Work more closely with the implementing partners to formulate the post-distribution surveys to assess the satisfaction of the NFI kits among the beneficiaries and make sure that IOM also takes part in the result. Similarly, to the extent possible, use existing internal monitoring tools to better be able to assess the general satisfaction of beneficiaries and contribute to the global overview of success of IOM's reintegration activities.
4. Push for gender balance in all consultations and decision-making groups, not only in terms of presence but also in terms of participation and influence.
5. Ensure that all capacity-building activities include tools that can: 1) support sustainable knowledge management among the participants and their colleagues and 2) facilitate the handover process of responsibility from IOM to national stakeholders.
6. Continue to increase the awareness of the mandate and work of IOM to address any misconceptions about the Organization and its activities, which can have a negative impact on the mission's reputation and projects.