



Report on IOM Development Fund
2019 Ex-post Evaluations

IOM Development Fund
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Abbreviations

CREST	Corporate Responsibility in Eliminating Slavery and Trafficking
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development / Development Assistance Committee
PRIMA	Project Information and Management Application, used to record and access information on IOM projects
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SMART	Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound
TWG/SC	Technical working group / steering committee

Executive summary

Introduction

The IOM Development Fund has completed a review of all ex-post evaluations (internal and external) of Fund projects that were carried out between 2013 and 2017¹ and for which evaluation reports were submitted during the 2019 calendar year. The purpose of the review was to collate and analyse the main evaluation findings, identify lessons learned and make recommendations. This report on the review will be shared with project developers, managers, technical specialists and any other relevant stakeholders in order to better equip IOM staff to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of current and future Fund projects. It is intended to promote transparency and accountability, which will in turn facilitate the Fund's decision-making in respect of future project funding approval. The review is evidence of the IOM Development Fund's ongoing commitment to results-based management.

This report constitutes a brief assessment of 26 ex-post evaluation reports on 28 projects.²

Key findings

This section presents the key findings of the data collection and analysis process. It is organized according to the OECD/DAC main evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact.

Relevance

- The projects were highly relevant to the needs of the beneficiary countries.
- The initiatives evaluated were taken in direct response to needs assessments carried out using a participatory approach.
- The projects were aligned with national priorities and regional strategies.
- The projects demonstrated good levels of flexibility.
- Inconsistencies were found in most results matrices (e.g. poorly worded outcomes/outputs; use of non-SMART indicators that made it difficult to monitor progress and/or capture certain impacts).
- Explicit theories of change were generally speaking absent. As a result, explanations of how and why a set of activities and intended results would bring about the changes the project sought to achieve were weak. Projects were nonetheless logically developed overall, with activities leading to the delivery of outputs and outputs leading to achievement of outcomes.
- All the projects were aligned with the IOM Migration Governance Framework and the United Nations SDGs.
- The projects were found to be closely aligned with the IOM Development Fund's overall objective of supporting developing Member State efforts to strengthen their migration management capacity.

¹ The review did not include the external ex-post evaluations carried out by OWL RE, a research and evaluation consultancy.

² In two instances, two projects actually constituted one overarching project; hence only one ex-post evaluation report was delivered, for a total of 26 ex-post evaluation reports (instead of 28). In addition, 22 projects were assessed in 2018 and 9 in 2017.

Effectiveness

- The projects achieved their intended outputs and outcomes.
- The beneficiaries' early involvement and active participation in project planning and implementation were essential for effective and successful project implementation.
- Interministerial coordination mechanisms and working groups proved to be of paramount importance when it came to keeping partners engaged and active.
- In line with the above, a clear definition of individual roles and responsibilities (e.g. TWG/SC) was found to be crucial for projects to deliver results.
- The projects were found to be highly adaptive to external conditions.
- When project objectives were not achieved, it was often because they had been formulated too ambitiously.
- In some cases, failure to communicate and share information with target government institutions led to misunderstandings on the intended project objectives and challenges during implementation.
- Objectives and outcomes proved to be more difficult to achieve in regional projects involving more than two countries.
- Project design quality was found to affect project effectiveness.
- Measuring project effectiveness gave rise to many concerns, especially in the frequent absence of a results monitoring framework.

Efficiency

- There was good evidence of project efficiency.
- The projects created synergies and collaborated with key partner institutions to avoid duplication of efforts, reduce costs and maximize impact.
- Technical coordination mechanisms/working groups were particularly useful for creating synergies.
- Most of the projects (and especially regional projects) had unrealistic time frames.
- Monitoring procedures were found to be weak.
- Robust results monitoring frameworks, coupled with effective technical coordination bodies, were found to be very useful for achieving results within a specific time frame.
- Savings, when there were any, did not negatively affect the attainment of outcomes.
- Most delays in implementation were related to political turmoil, staff turnover, remote management, inadequate planning and the absence of monitoring tools.

Sustainability

- Projects that consulted extensively with stakeholders, from inception and throughout implementation, were more likely to be sustainable.
- The limited availability of financial resources, political factors, government staff turnover and lack of coordination among key institutions were reported as the four main factors negatively affecting project sustainability.
- Sustainability and/or resource mobilization strategies were found to be lacking.
- Website sustainability was often jeopardized by a lack of financial and technical resources.

Impact

- In most cases, it was too early to assess the projects' long-term impact.

- Numerous positive changes were nonetheless identified. The projects mainly helped strengthen government migration management capacities, paving the way for wider initiatives.
- For regional projects, the level of impact often differed from one country to another.
- The projects could have significant long-term impacts if they received further support in the form of sustainability measures.

Cross-cutting issues

- Most project results reflected adherence to a rights-based approach, even though this was not explicitly stated in most of the project concepts.
- Gender mainstreaming was often limited to disaggregation by sex.
- Other factors and further analysis of how gender roles, relations and inequalities were addressed were often missing or not sufficiently developed.

Key recommendations

The review findings resulted in recommendations that are set out below according to the OECD/DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact.

Relevance

- Establish a coordination mechanism/stakeholder working group to strengthen ownership and sustainability prospects.
- Develop robust results matrices, formulate outcomes and outputs correctly, and establish a clear and logical causal relationship between activities, outputs and outcomes; make specific assumptions that hold true and use SMART indicators.
- Avoid overly ambitious objectives (e.g. objectives that cover several thematic areas) and be mindful that their achievement may depend on other, external factors.
- Clearly articulate expected results in results statements (e.g. formulation of outcomes and outputs), making sure that they reflect the underlying theory of change.
- Conduct an external environment analysis to develop an accurate risk mitigation strategy
- Involve key project partners in project design using a participative and coordinated approach.
- Carefully assess the viability of regional projects (e.g. number of countries involved, time frame, challenges related to remote management).

Effectiveness

- Regularly monitor project progress with a view to the continued alignment of intended results and stakeholder priorities.
- Develop robust results monitoring frameworks and detailed work plans to ensure proper monitoring of activities; use PRIMA for All, in particular the Results Monitoring and MS Project modules, and track progress for every single indicator.
- Draw up detailed terms of reference when establishing technical working groups.
- Ensure active participation and ownership of all stakeholders, from inception and throughout implementation, by holding regular meetings/working groups (ideally, once a month).
- In line with the above, organize frequent meetings with the project staff and key partners to monitor progress on activities, identify potential challenges and update risk-mitigation strategies and activities as required.

- Review the scope of regional projects to make sure that results can be achieved in all the beneficiary countries.

Efficiency

- Regularly monitor progress and the use of financial resources to ensure adherence to IOM/IOM Development Fund financial guidelines and allow for forecasting and any adjustments needed.
- Develop a detailed work plan for all specific activities and any related tasks well in advance, in order to avoid delays.
- Draw up realistic time frames for all projects, but especially regional ones.
- Remain attentive to partners' evolving needs and respond flexibly (always in coordination with the Fund).
- Encourage contributions from partners by establishing partnerships/creating synergies.
- Include dissemination/visibility strategies in the project design, to avoid any delays related to translation or publication of final products.
- Assess whether certain activities can take place before expenses are charged/the project code is issued (e.g. setting up coordination mechanisms before the project is activated to avoid delays during the first months of implementation).

Sustainability

- Strengthen project ownership by encouraging key partners to take the lead in activities.
- Reiterate the importance of frequent working group meetings during implementation and after project completion.
- From inception onwards, involve a multitude of stakeholders (private sector, academia, NGOs, etc.) in order to encourage synergies and maximize the possibilities to secure further funding and/or continuity of activities.
- From inception onwards, encourage the development of a more holistic programmatic approach, to allow synergies with broader processes and to attract external donors.
- Update the project deliverables to ensure that they are relevant in the long run.
- Develop and implement a robust risk management plan, to mitigate negative impacts and promote project resilience.
- In the case of regional offices, consider setting up a monitoring unit and allocating human and financial resources with a view to providing ad hoc technical assistance to partners in need.

Impact

- Develop robust results matrices with SMART indicators for impact assessments, especially with regard to increases in knowledge, changes in behaviour and numbers of beneficiaries.
- Involve all stakeholders and communicate the project's objectives, to avoid any misunderstandings and/or unintended negative consequences for project partners.
- For regional projects, establish smooth and regular communication systems with all countries, including those without an in-country management site, to maintain a close relationship with key stakeholders and ensure effective implementation.
- Include sustainability measures from the design phase, to allow synergies to emerge during implementation and help strengthen project impact.

Cross-cutting recommendations

- Whenever possible, conduct a needs assessment involving all gender groups during the design phase.
- Strive to further mainstream gender and a rights-based approach in the project proposals, interim and final reports, and any deliverables (e.g. use correct terminology).
- During implementation, include all gender groups in activities and ensure representativity among decision-makers.
- Report not only sex-disaggregated data but also the implications of project activities/deliverables for different gender groups.

Overall recommendations

- **For regional offices:** Strengthen IOM project development capacity, especially with regard to the design and formulation of robust results matrices and SMART indicators.
- **For regional offices:** Strengthen IOM monitoring capacity.
- **For regional and other offices:** Develop a readiness assessment tool that provides a comprehensive analysis of the capacity of each country and of IOM staff to undertake a given project.
- **For regional and other offices:** Encourage the use of PRIMA so that IOM offices are fully aware of programming continuity and institutional memory is maintained at the country and global levels.
- **For project developers:** During the project development phase, carefully assess, with key project partners, the human and financial resources needed to ensure continuity of activities and develop a sound and feasible approach to sustainability.
- **For project developers:** For regional projects, factor national contexts and socioeconomic conditions into project design and align the budget accordingly.
- **For project developers/endorsers/IOM Development Fund:** Ensure that there is a clear dissemination/visibility strategy for research and investigation projects. The ultimate purpose of any research/feasibility studies should be explicitly stated and accompanied by a dissemination strategy, which should itself be supported by a strong theory of change explaining the place of product dissemination in the causality chain to ensure the achievement of project objectives.
- **For project managers:** Good migration governance requires partnerships to broaden understanding of migration and develop comprehensive and effective approaches; ensure, therefore, that a variety of stakeholders provide input for and participate in project implementation (e.g. civil society organizations, private sector, NGOs, academia).
- **For the IOM Development Fund and Office of the Inspector General:** Make it mandatory to use the standard Final Evaluation Report Template,³ to avoid variations in scope/quality and to ensure a more standardized and systematic approach to results-based management.
- **For the IOM Development Fund and Office of the Inspector General:** Encourage ex-post evaluations by thematic area within regions, in order to promote a more holistic programmatic approach.

³ IOM, *IOM Project Handbook* (second edition) (Geneva, 2011), p. 476.

Objective

Ex-post evaluations of all IOM Development Fund projects within 6 to 12 months of project completion have been mandatory since 2017. The evaluations enable the Fund to provide information on what worked, what didn't, and why, and more systematically to identify good practices and lessons learned with a view to building on project achievements for potential future interventions. They play a crucial role in holding the Fund, IOM offices and project partners accountable for project results.

The objective of the review conducted in 2020 was to assess all the ex-post evaluations (internal and external) of projects carried out between 2013 and 2017 for which reports were submitted to the Fund during the 2019 calendar year.⁴ This report, in turn, summarizes the review's key findings, identifies lessons learned and provides recommendations to be taken into consideration by IOM staff when developing, implementing and monitoring Fund projects, with a view to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of current and future projects, and by the Fund itself during the disbursement decision-making process.

The report will be shared widely with IOM practitioners engaged in project activity.

Methodology

The project sample for the review comprises all projects funded by the IOM Development Fund from 2013 to 2017 for which ex-post evaluation reports were submitted during the 2019 calendar year.

The 28 projects reviewed spanned multiple geographical regions and thematic areas (see Figures 1, 2 and 3 below). The total number of ex-post evaluation reports considered by the review was 26.⁵ The list of all target projects is provided in Annex 1.

The review was conducted in conformity with international evaluation standards, in particular the OECD/DAC principles and guidelines.

The conclusions reached are those of the evaluator, based on the findings and evidence collected from the target projects.

⁴ The review did not include the external ex-post evaluations carried out by OWL RE, a research and evaluation consultancy.

⁵ In two instances, two projects actually constituted one overarching project; hence only one ex-post evaluation report was delivered, for a total of 26 ex-post evaluation reports (instead of 28).

Figure 1. Number of target projects by region

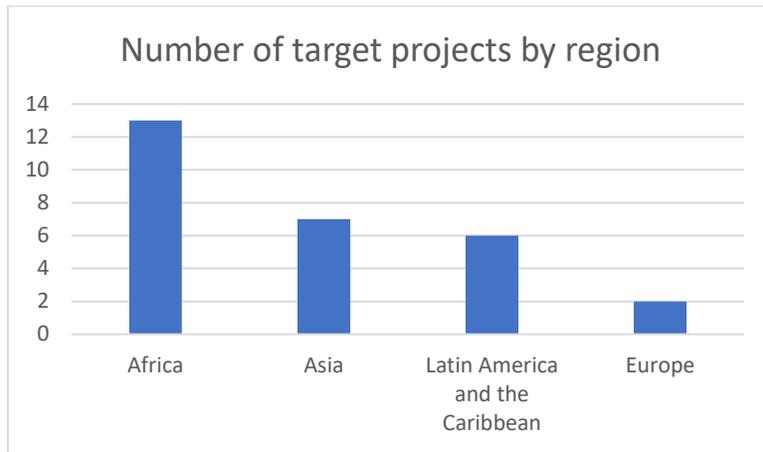


Figure 2. Target projects by geographical coverage

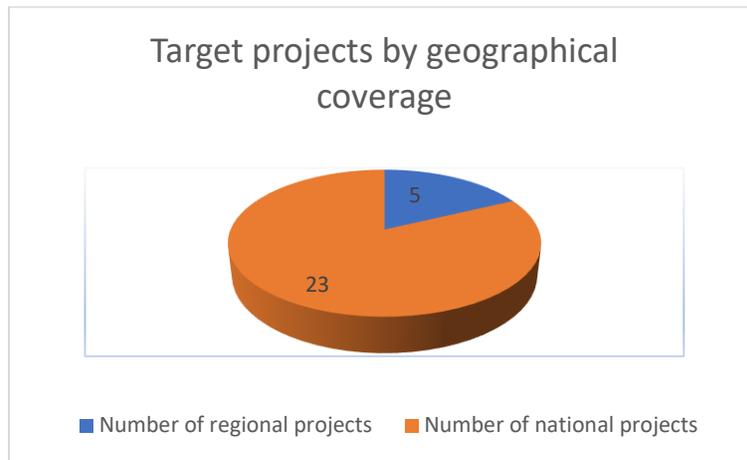
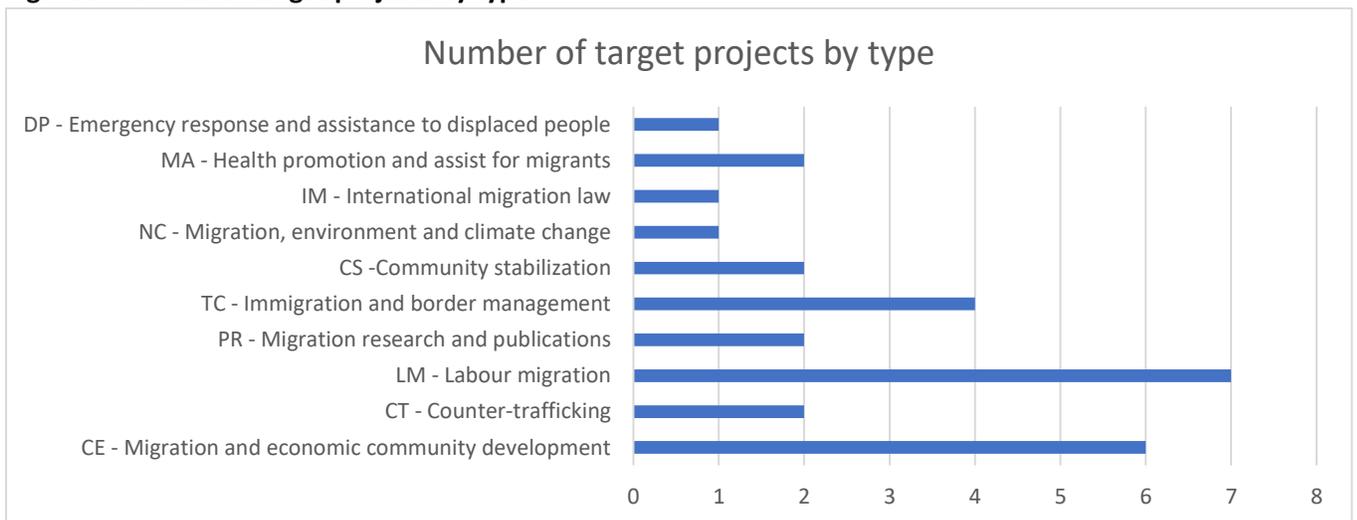


Figure 3. Number of target projects by type



Data sources and collection method

Data were collected by reviewing all ex-post evaluation reports received throughout the 2019 calendar year and the final narrative and financial reports of all relevant projects. The input provided by beneficiaries⁶ in the course of consultations carried out during the ex-post evaluations was also considered.

A master database was developed to collect data and organize the findings according to the OECD-DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact. Cross-cutting themes of gender mainstreaming and a human rights-based approach to programming were also included.

Data analysis

Quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to analyse the findings of the document review. Triangulation (reviewing two sources of data) was used to confirm and substantiate findings and bring to light any weaknesses in the evidence.

By consolidating the collected inputs from the master database, the review produced a qualitative analysis per OECD-DAC criteria and a quantitative analysis of trends across the target projects. In addition, lessons learned were identified and summarized in order to formulate recommendations.

The findings were analysed by evaluation criteria based on the scale set out in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation criteria scale and explanation

Rating		Explanation
5	Excellent (always)	There is evidence of strong collaboration and/or contributions exceeding the level expected by the intervention.
4	Very good (almost always)	There is evidence of good contributions but with some areas for improvement remaining.
3	Good (mostly, with some exceptions)	There is evidence of satisfactory contributions but requirement for continued improvement.
2	Adequate (sometimes, with many exceptions)	There is evidence of some contributions, but significant improvement required.
1	Poor (never or occasionally, with clear weaknesses)	There are few or no observable contributions.

⁶ Given the nature of the IOM Development Fund, which aims to support developing Member State efforts to strengthen their migration management capacity, the term “beneficiaries” refers essentially to government officials.

Limitations and mitigation strategies

The following limitations were identified:

- The review was conducted rapidly, over a short period of time (15 days);
- The evaluations varied in scope (while some covered the five OECD-DAC criteria, others only covered three or four, making it difficult to compare all the findings in a consistent manner);
- The evaluations varied widely in quality, making it difficult to identify comparable findings;
- Ex-post evaluation reports were the main source of information, as time constraints precluded the inclusion of project management teams/key stakeholders.

While the above-mentioned challenges made it difficult to ensure data coherence and consistency across the reports, efforts were nonetheless made to implement a consistent and systematic review methodology. In addition, final narrative and financial reports, along with previous reviews carried out by the IOM Development Fund⁷, were analysed in order to corroborate findings, cross-check their plausibility and identify common trends.

Findings

Overall, the target projects were found to be highly relevant, responding to the priorities and needs of the benefiting Member States and effectively helping to strengthen their migration management capacities. In general, the projects' long-term impact could be reinforced and/or significantly strengthened by sustainability measures taken by the main partners and relevant stakeholders.

Relevance

Score: 4/5

IS THE INTERVENTION DOING THE RIGHT THINGS?⁸

Relevance is the extent to which the intervention design and objectives respond to beneficiaries' global, country and partner/institution needs, policies and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.

"Respond to" means that the objectives and design of the intervention are sensitive to the economic, environmental, equity, social, political economy and capacity conditions in which it takes place.

Relevance assessment involves looking at differences and trade-offs between different priorities or needs. It requires analysing any changes in the context to assess the extent to which the intervention can be (or has been) adapted to remain relevant.

⁷ IOM Development Fund, *Report on IOM Development Fund 2018 Ex-Post Evaluations* (Geneva, 2019), *Report on IOM Development Fund 2017 Ex-Post Evaluations* (Geneva, 2018) and *IOM Development Fund Sustainability Review* (Geneva, 2019). Available at <https://developmentfund.iom.int/reports>.

⁸ Unless otherwise stated, the texts in the boxes in this section are drawn from the updated set of definitions and principles recently approved by the DAC Network on Development Evaluation for its evaluation criteria (available at <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>).

In evaluating the relevance of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- *To what extent are the objectives of the programme/project still valid?*
- *Are the activities and outputs of the programme/project consistent with the overall goal and attainment of its objectives?*
- *Are the activities and outputs of the programme/project consistent with the intended impact and effects?*

Overall, all the target projects were found to be highly relevant to the needs of the beneficiary countries. In most cases, they were implemented in direct response to prior needs assessments carried out using a participatory approach and therefore addressed identified gaps in migration management governance. They were closely aligned with national and regional priorities and strategies. They were also relevant vis-à-vis national legislative frameworks and the most recent policy developments.

In most cases, the projects led to an enhanced sense of ownership, as the beneficiaries were consulted during the needs assessments (either before the project started or during the first months of implementation) and directly involved in implementation. Projects involving in-depth stakeholder consultation were also found to be more likely to be sustainable in the future. In light of this, and keeping in mind the sometimes difficult dynamics of the target beneficiary groups and the evolving nature of migration-related issues, the projects demonstrated good levels of flexibility. Indeed, their relevance to key stakeholders was often enhanced by reviewing the results matrices (adding one or several activities at the request of the beneficiary agencies and/or modifying the modalities of existing ones).

With regard to logical framework design, although activities and outputs were found almost always to be consistent with the project's intended impacts and effects, inconsistencies were found in almost all of the results matrices. In many instances, the indicators were not SMART, leading to difficulties in monitoring project progress and/or capturing certain impacts. The formulation of outputs and outcomes was not always aligned with IOM Project Handbook guidelines, occasionally causing confusion about what was really expected from the project in terms of institutional and/or behavioural change. In a related finding, explicit theories of change – which serve to explain how and why a set of activities and intended results will bring about the changes the project seeks to achieve, and analyse whether the hypotheses and assumptions are or remain valid – were generally absent. In addition, in a few instances the overall project objectives were found to be formulated relatively ambitiously, creating high expectations from the target beneficiaries and potentially affecting IOM's capacity to deliver. Despite these drawbacks, the projects were logically developed overall, with activities leading to the delivery of outputs and outputs leading to achievement of outcomes.

The projects often responded to the national, regional and global needs of governments and partners, providing capacity-building and opportunities to raise awareness and discuss migration management issues and policy strategies. In addition, all the projects were aligned with the IOM Migration Governance Framework⁹ and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals¹⁰. The projects were most often, and

⁹ Available at https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/about-iom/migof_brochure_a4_en.pdf.

¹⁰ For more information, see <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>.

more particularly, aligned with Principles 2 and 3 and Objective 1 of the Migration Governance Framework¹¹, and with SDG target 10.7¹².

Last but not least, all the projects were found to be closely aligned with the IOM Development Fund's overall objective of supporting developing Member State efforts to strengthen their migration management capacity, in that they implemented an array of activities such as capacity-building workshops, awareness-raising and outreach programmes, and research and feasibility studies.

Effectiveness

Score: 3/5

IS THE INTERVENTION ACHIEVING ITS OBJECTIVES?

Effectiveness is the extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and its results, including any differential results across groups.

In evaluating the effectiveness of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- To what extent were/are the objectives achieved/likely to be achieved?*
- What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?*

Overall, the target projects achieved their intended outputs and outcomes, and the beneficiaries expressed a high level of satisfaction, particularly about capacity-building and awareness-raising activities, and opportunities to discuss migration management issues with other partners (e.g. more synergies created between and with different ministries).

The commitment and active participation of target beneficiaries in project planning and execution were found to be essential for effective and successful project implementation. In this respect, inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms and national committees (TWGs, steering/advisory committees, etc.) were of the utmost importance when it came to strengthening the beneficiaries' sense of ownership; fostering the active involvement of key stakeholders; monitoring project achievements, identifying priority areas and discussing possible adjustment measures, when necessary; creating and/or reinforcing working relationships and synergies within and among key target institutions; and paving the way for sustainable projects. When establishing such coordination mechanisms, it is important to define the roles and responsibilities of each TWG/SC member from the outset and throughout the implementation process. In some cases, the absence of clear terms of reference dampened the sense of government ownership and sparked a reactive rather than a proactive management style.

Overall, the projects' success in achieving their outcomes was often due to their capacity to be flexible with key partner institutions. This flexibility tended to involve changes in certain activities and exceptional approval of no-cost extensions, which in turn led to stronger working relationships and the delivery of higher-quality products, further contributing to the positive impact of certain activities.

¹¹ Principle 2: Formulating policy using evidence and a "whole-of-government" approach; Principle 3: Engagement with partners to address migration and related issues; Objective 1: Advance the socioeconomic well-being of migrants and society.

¹² SDG target 10.7: Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.

When project objectives were not achieved, it was because of their overly ambitious formulation and dependency on many other complex factors, such as the country's overall socioeconomic situation, political stability, levels of health and education, and legislative framework.

In addition, a few governments reported a lack of communication and information-sharing, which, in some instances, led to misunderstandings about project objectives and made implementation difficult.

It was more difficult for regional projects to achieve all outputs and outcomes. While regional projects can be highly relevant, their management can be complicated, for several reasons.

- Not every country has an in-country management site, which makes it difficult to ensure an effective and successful working relationship with key partners in the target countries. This in turn often hampers monitoring of activities and development of timely adjustment measures, causing delays in project implementation.
- IOM lacks the human and financial resources to follow up on project implementation in beneficiary countries in which there is no in-country management site.
- It is difficult to find consensus within and among key stakeholders, leading to extensive reviews of project deliverables and consequent delays.
- The risks of political instability are multiplied by the number of countries involved.
- The existence of different political and socioeconomic contexts precludes a tailored approach to country needs and can therefore lead to delays and/or non-achievement of project objectives (e.g. regional diaspora-related projects where the level of diaspora engagement and related frameworks (existence of diaspora engagement policies) often differs from one country to another).

These factors must be taken into consideration, especially given the relatively small budgets and short implementation time frames of IOM Development Fund projects.

Another factor influencing the non-achievement of projects was linked to the validity of project design. Indeed, project assumptions were often not properly thought through, invalidating any risk-mitigation strategies that had been developed and therefore affecting the delivery of project results.

In addition, the fact that visibility was not always factored into project design and/or envisaged during implementation resulted in poor product dissemination (e.g. not all the stakeholders involved received the key project deliverables), which in turn undermined or slowed the achievement of outcomes and made it difficult for institutional and behavioural changes to take place.

The assessment of the projects' effectiveness also revealed some limitations.

- As explained above, non-SMART indicators, especially at the outcome level (e.g. the absence of a baseline, which is particularly problematic when measuring increases in knowledge) and/or indicators that were not tied to the result they were intended to measure;
- Even when some indicators were SMART, the data were not collected regularly and systematically;

- In line with the above, a lack of results monitoring frameworks to track the progress of each indicator and overall project effectiveness;
- Lack of verifiable and reliable data;
- In line with the above, rotation of IOM/government staff leading to challenges in terms of institutional memory (this was even more problematic in the case of regional projects);
- Lack of dissemination reporting strategies so as to ascertain whether relevant stakeholders were reached as originally planned;
- Too much time between project end and the ex-post evaluation (staff were unavailable and/or institutional memory had been lost, limiting the possibilities to obtain reliable data);
- A security situation that impeded data collection.

Efficiency

Score: 3/5

HOW WELL ARE RESOURCES BEING USED?

Efficiency is the extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.

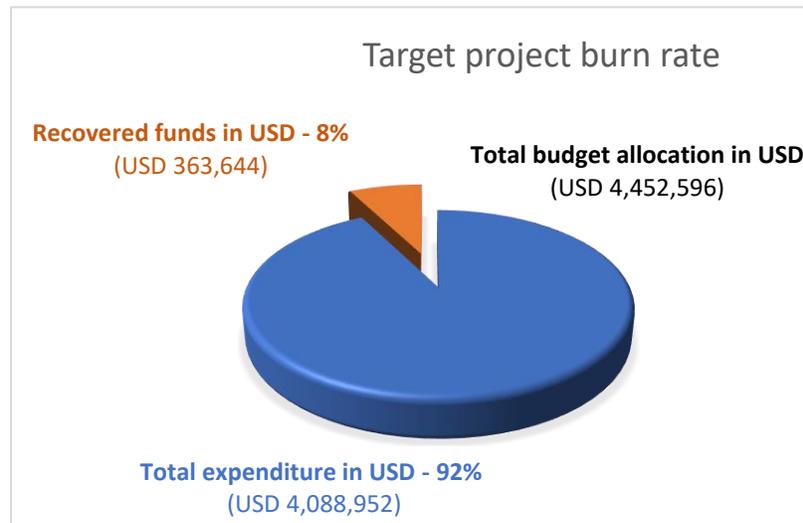
“Economic” is the conversion of inputs (funds, expertise, natural resources, time, etc.) into outputs, outcomes and impacts, in the most cost-effective way possible, as compared to feasible alternatives in the context. “Timely” delivery is within the intended timeframe, or a timeframe reasonably adjusted to the demands of the evolving context. This may include assessing operational efficiency (how well the intervention was managed).

When evaluating the efficiency of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- *Were activities cost-efficient?*
- *Were objectives achieved on time?*
- *Was the programme or project implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?*

For many of the target projects, no systematic cost-efficiency analysis had been carried out; however, in general, there was good evidence suggesting project efficiency, especially in terms of the limited human resources allocated to implement the projects. The 28 target projects had a satisfactory burn rate of nearly 92 per cent (USD 4,088,952) of the total budget allocation (USD 4,452,596, see Figure 4 below).

Figure 4. Target project burn rate



In many instances, projects created synergies and worked with key partner institutions in order to avoid duplication of efforts, reduce costs and maximize impact. This was particularly the case when coordination mechanisms were in place (e.g. interministerial steering committees where each member had a specific role and could use his/her expertise and network for the benefit of the project) and involved a multitude of stakeholders (e.g. the private sector, civil society organizations, academia). The leverage of key partners was extremely helpful and came in various shapes (in-kind contributions in the form of provision of venues, specific expertise, time and resources, use of networks, etc.). Close collaboration was identified not only as a key factor contributing to government ownership, but also as a main contributor to cost-efficiency.

Almost 70 per cent of the target projects requested a no-cost extension, and while this allowed them to achieve the outcomes as defined in the results matrices, it is also indicative of several underlying issues: a general tendency to underestimate the amount of time needed to achieve the project objectives; overly ambitious outcomes/objectives that make it difficult to complete the projects within the agreed time frame; and a general lack of understanding of the sometimes multiple interconnections and interdependencies between the various factors that have to come together for objectives to be met.

There were numerous reasons for delays in project implementation, as this non-exhaustive list shows:

- The time involved in identifying and recruiting high-qualified consultants;
- The consultants' lack of expertise and understanding of local contexts;
- One management site per regional project, with IOM staff therefore being unavailable in the other countries;
- The absence of data monitoring systems, leading to weak planning and forecasting;

- Turnover within IOM/government institutions and lack of human resources;
- Inadequate planning and/or absence of a visibility strategy leading to delays (e.g. translation, publication, official launch of project deliverables);
- Political turmoil and elections;
- National security situation and natural hazards.

The fact that all but one of the regional target projects requested a no-cost extension shows how likely a project was to encounter the above-mentioned challenges, with the absence of IOM staff members in countries without an in-country management site and the difficulty of reaching consensus among multiple stakeholders being those arising most frequently.

In instances where the projects had developed robust results monitoring frameworks and used the results matrix as a project performance tool, with targets and indicators used regularly to measure progress, project efficiency was usually found to be satisfactory (although a direct causal relationship cannot be established, such frameworks certainly appear to have improved monitoring and active follow-up of activities, leading to greater effectiveness). In addition, whenever this practice was coupled with the establishment and proper functioning of technical coordination bodies, project efficiency was more likely to be strengthened, as all stakeholders became aware of any issues and were able quickly to develop adjustment measures and/or timely risk-mitigation strategies.

Whether the project was regional or national, and despite the delays, most project activities gave good value for money. The burn rate was usually low during the first months of implementation, highlighting the need to establish coordination mechanisms, recruit one or several consultants and lay the overall foundations for successful project implementation. Efforts were usually made after the first six months to offset any delays. One of the key success factors was, again, the capacity to be flexible towards partners. As mentioned above, this flexibility took the form of activity adaptation, budget reallocations and/or exceptional approval of no-cost extensions. The result, in most cases, was the creation of synergies that often led to broader project expansion (e.g. additional activities, more media coverage, stronger prospects for sustainability).

Finally, it is worth mentioning that any savings made had no negative effect on attainment of the planned outcomes.

Sustainability

Score: 2/5

WILL THE BENEFITS LAST?

Sustainability is the extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue, or are likely to continue, after donor funding has been withdrawn.

It includes an examination of the financial, economic, social, environmental and institutional capacities of the systems needed to sustain net benefits over time. It involves analyses of resilience, risks and potential trade-offs. Depending on the timing of the evaluation, this may involve analysing the actual flow of net benefits or estimating the likelihood of net benefits continuing over the medium and long term.

When evaluating the sustainability of a programme or project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- *To what extent did the benefits of a programme or project continue after donor funding ceased?*
- *What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the programme or project?*

Overall it was found that the actions initiated within the framework of the target projects were not sufficiently integrated into broader processes, and government authorities were not sufficiently committed on project completion to ensure project sustainability. In many instances, moreover, the project partners found it difficult to obtain financial resources to take complete charge of the initiatives immediately after project completion. The limited availability of financial resources, political factors, government staff turnover and lack of coordination among key institutions were reported as the four main factors negatively affecting project sustainability. In this regard, it was found that IOM technical support was often needed to accompany governments after project completion.

Sustainability and/or resource mobilization strategies were often lacking in the project concept and not thought through during implementation. However, thanks to their high relevance and good overall level of effectiveness, the projects tended to act as “seed funds”, igniting interest in key partners and encouraging their involvement in similar activities. Other factors of success were the early involvement and active engagement of key partners throughout implementation, which heightened the prospects for sustainability.

In many cases, the failure to plan and/or monitor product dissemination, to ensure that the project deliverables reached all stakeholders and continued to be used after the Fund’s withdrawal, was also identified as a challenge.

In addition, the sustainability of any website developed by the project was often jeopardized by the lack of human and financial resources needed to keep it up to date, a shortfall in technical capacities, and the absence of government ownership.

It is worth noting that a few projects did demonstrate a very good level of sustainability. One of them, a 2013 national project entitled Education, Training and Knowledge-sharing on Migration in Tunisia, resulted directly in the establishment of a Master’s programme on international migration and a library after project completion. In addition, the summer school established within the framework of the

project itself has become an instrumental hub for partnership and collaboration between government, academic and other institutions willing to contribute to enhanced migration management. The fifth edition of the Summer School for Migration was held in September 2019 (see <https://www.ecole-ete-migration.tn/>).

The following non-exhaustive list contains further examples of activities sustained after project end:

- Continuity of coordination mechanisms (e.g. TWGs, SCs) and of engagement with multisectoral partners for the purpose of reaching consensus on priority areas;
- Migration included in sectorial policies;
- Train-the-trainer capacity-building workshops included in national curriculums, knowledge acquired being used;
- National labour migration policy and implementation plan approved by the Cabinet;
- Continuation of diaspora engagement campaigns and organization of a national event aimed at involving the diaspora in national development;
- Migration profiles used by government to formulate policies;
- Lobbying activities to secure further funding.

Another example of a sustained activity relates to the 2015 project entitled Capacity-building for Diaspora Engagement in Mozambique: “The TWG established during the project has been sustained, and still meets on a quarterly basis, even a year after the project ended. It ensures continued dialogue and institutional coordination, thus contributing to a strong whole-of-government approach.”

National monitoring and evaluation officer

“What one once learns is difficult to forget.”

Border official during a focal group discussion

Impact

Score: n/a¹³

WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES THE INTERVENTION MAKE?

Impact is the extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.

Impact addresses the ultimate significance and potentially transformative effects of the intervention. It seeks to identify social, environmental and economic effects of the intervention that are longer term or broader in scope than those already captured under the effectiveness criterion. Beyond the immediate results, this criterion seeks to capture the indirect, secondary and potential consequences of the intervention. It does so by examining the holistic and enduring changes in systems or norms, and potential effects on people’s well-being, human rights, gender equality and the environment.

When evaluating the impact of a programme or project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- *What has happened as a result of the programme or project?*

¹³ Almost half of the target projects reported that it was too early to assess impact; this criterion was therefore not marked.

- *What real difference has the programme/project made to the beneficiaries?*
- *How many people have been affected?*

While in most cases it was too early to assess long-term impact, the target projects were found to have directly resulted in numerous positive changes, for example:

- Empowerment of and reinforced coordination among key migration stakeholders;
- Migrant workers made aware of their rights;
- Detection of fraudulent documents and greater efficiency in processing documents thanks to reinforced technical capacities;
- Enhanced and coherent understanding of crisis management and assistance to migrant nationals;
- The manual and training tools on crisis management and assistance to migrant nationals made mandatory and used to build capacity in relevant government officials and staff overseas;
- Improved systematic crisis response, enhancing coordination and communication between relevant stakeholders;
- E-learning courses included in trainee programmes and made mandatory for new staff;
- Shift from a security-based approach to a more comprehensive development and human rights-based approach;
- Regular TWG meetings to discuss migration related-priorities and needs, highlighting behaviour change;
- Publication of legacy tools (e.g. Migration Profiles, country assessment reports on the migration and environment nexus) containing good evidence and likely to influence forthcoming policies;
- Development of the CREST programme framework to help public authorities and the private sector reduce the risk of modern slavery in their operations and supply chains by raising awareness and developing practical solutions;
- Institutional structures established (e.g. directorate in charge of the diaspora within the Ministry of External Relations).

An example of project impact is the wide promotion of the CREST programme, which was developed as part of the project entitled Upholding the Rights of Migrant Workers in Special Economic Zones (SEZs) by Ensuring Supply Chains are Exploitation Free: Viet Nam, Cambodia and Lao PDR. The programme, launched as a pilot, became a wide-scale initiative that enabled IOM to secure further funding.

“Keeping in mind its small scale, the project has managed to give its modest contribution to gradually start changing the mindset of local companies on the concepts of migrant workers’ rights. There have been some improvements in terms of understanding some key principles of social responsibilities from the private sector side and especially from the multinational corporations, which, due also to increasing pressure from various institutions, organizations and governments worldwide, are gradually taking steps to reduce exploitation in their supply chains.”

Project evaluator

Out of the 28 projects reviewed, only one had a negative impact, which came to light during the ex-post evaluation process: the private sector looked on IOM as a competitor when it came to recruiting staff. This was reported to the project management team for appropriate action during the follow-up phase.

In line with the challenges observed in respect of the effectiveness criterion, the impact of regional projects is somewhat harder to assess and tends to take longer to become visible. It also often differed from one project country to another, reflecting differences in the level of engagement throughout the implementation process and the non-availability of IOM staff to follow up on activities and monitor the project's progress.

Finally, it was generally agreed that the projects could have significant long-term impacts if they were further supported by sustainability measures.

Cross-cutting issues

Score: 2/5

This section considers only gender mainstreaming and a rights-based approach to programming.¹⁴

*A **rights-based approach** is a conceptual framework and methodological tool for developing programmes, policies and practices that integrate the rights, norms and standards derived from international law. For IOM staff, this means, in practice, the conscious and systematic integration of rights and rights principles into all stages of the project cycle; the rights issues at stake in a particular project must thus be identified and considered throughout each phase of the project.*¹⁵

***Gender mainstreaming** is a strategy designed to address gender roles, relations/dynamics and inequalities in IOM programming and policies, in order to ensure that everyone benefits equally and that inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is gender equality.*¹⁶

In general, while the project documents made no explicit mention of mainstreaming human rights, project objectives, outcomes and outputs were all inherently linked to protecting the rights of migrants.

Between 2013 and 2015, gender was not sufficiently or satisfactorily mainstreamed in project concepts, making it difficult to integrate during implementation. The situation changed from 2016 on, mainly at the Fund's request. In addition, gender mainstreaming was often limited to disaggregation of data by sex, and/or gender-balanced participation in meetings and capacity-building events; insufficient consideration was given to other factors and to how gender roles, relations/dynamics and inequalities were addressed in order to ensure that everyone benefits and inequality is not perpetuated.

¹⁴ Other cross-cutting themes such as environmental sensitivity and sustainability, principled humanitarian action and mainstreaming protection into crisis response were not considered in this review. "Sustainability of project results" is, of course, considered, sustainability being one of the five OECD-DAC criteria.

¹⁵ Fanny Dufvenmark, *Rights-based approach to programming* (IOM, Geneva, 2015). Available at https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/our_work/ICP/IML/rba_manual.pdf.

¹⁶ Informal description used by the IOM Gender Coordination Unit in workshops and capacity-building activities.

Recommendations

Relevance

- Include the establishment of coordination mechanisms in the design phase to encourage ownership during and after implementation (e.g. TWG, SC, advisory committees).
- Focus on the vertical and horizontal logic of the results matrix and make sure that all indicators are in line with the specific results they are intended to measure.
- Develop SMART indicators, which are critical for monitoring and reporting on results.
- Avoid overly ambitious objectives (e.g. objectives that cover several thematic areas) and be mindful that their achievement may depend on other, external factors.
- Clearly articulate expected results in results statements (e.g. formulation of outcomes and outputs), making sure that they reflect the underlying theory of change.
- Conduct a rapid external environment analysis with a view to developing accurate risk-mitigation strategies.
- Continue to involve key project partners in project design, using a participative and coordinated approach.
- Carefully assess the viability of regional projects (e.g. number of countries involved, time frame, challenges related to remote management).
- Include a dissemination and visibility strategy in project design, to ensure that all beneficiaries are reached during implementation and that the project's results are communicated.
- Apply the lessons learned and best practices collected from previous reviews/reports.

Effectiveness

- Regularly monitor project progress with a view to the continued alignment of intended results and stakeholder priorities. A quick assessment of project relevance may help project managers determine whether adjustments to project design are required.
- In line with the above, develop robust results monitoring frameworks and detailed work plans to ensure proper monitoring of activities. Record progress via the Results Monitoring and MS Project modules on PRIMA for All.
- Develop detailed terms of reference when establishing technical coordination mechanisms (TWG, SC, etc.) and define the roles and responsibilities of each team member to encourage activity/project ownership.
- Ensure that all stakeholders participate actively in implementation by holding regular meetings.
- Use the regular meetings to monitor progress on activities, identify potential issues/risks and update risk-mitigation strategies and activities as required.
- Reconsider the scope of regional projects to make sure results can be achieved. Careful attention should be paid to the context in each country in order to maximize project effectiveness.

Efficiency

- Encourage in-kind contributions and active participation from partners to reduce costs.
- Develop robust monitoring frameworks and regularly monitor progress on activities and the use of financial resources to ensure adherence to IOM/IOM Development Fund financial guidelines. Regular monitoring facilitates forecasting and any adjustments needed (e.g. the inclusion of additional activities in the event that there are surplus funds; if coordinated with the Fund well in

advance, the reallocation of resources; steps to avoid delays in implementation and/or overspending of budget lines).

- Develop a detailed work plan for all specific activities and related tasks well in advance, in order to avoid delays.
- Carefully select consultants based on the products that they will have to deliver (e.g. local versus international) and assess the relevance of their knowledge of the local context and language.
- Carefully consider the time frame needed for all projects, especially regional ones.
- Continue to respond flexibly to partners' evolving needs.
- Encourage contributions by establishing partnerships/fostering synergies.
- Include dissemination/visibility strategies in the project design, to avoid delays related to translation and publication of final products.
- Assess whether certain activities can take place before expenses are charged/the project code is issued (e.g. setting up coordination mechanisms before the project is activated to avoid delays during the first months of implementation).

Sustainability

- Strengthen project ownership, encouraging key partners to take the lead in activities.
- Reiterate the importance and advocate for the continuation of frequent TWG/SC meetings during implementation and after project completion.
- From inception onwards, and in coordination with the main partners, involve a multitude of stakeholders (private sector, academia, NGOs, etc.) in order to encourage synergies and maximize the possibilities to secure further funding and/or continuity of activities.
- From inception onwards, think about and encourage the development of a more holistic programmatic approach, to allow synergies with broader processes and attract external donors.
- From inception onwards, carefully assess, with key project partners, the human and financial resources needed to ensure continuity of activities and develop a sound and feasible approach to sustainability.
- Update the project's deliverables to ensure that they remain relevant in the long run.
- During project design and implementation, advocate a whole-of-government approach that engages multiple government ministries and departments.
- Develop and implement a solid risk management plan to mitigate negative impacts and promote project resilience.
- For regional offices, consider establishing a monitoring unit and allocating human and financial resources with a view to providing ad hoc technical assistance to partners in need.

Impact

- Develop robust results matrices with SMART indicators, in order to facilitate impact assessment, especially with regard to increases in knowledge, changes in behaviour and numbers of beneficiaries.
- Involve all stakeholders and communicate the project's objectives to avoid any misunderstandings and/or unintended negative effects on project partners.
- For regional projects, involve all countries according to their specific needs and carefully follow up on all countries (not only the management site). Establish smooth and regular communication

systems with all, including in countries with no in-country management site, in order to maintain a close relationship with key stakeholders and avoid delays.

- Include sustainability measures as of the design phase, to allow the development of synergies during implementation and help strengthen project impact.

Cross-cutting recommendations

- Conduct a needs assessment during the design phase, making sure to involve all gender groups.
- Mainstream gender and a rights-based approach, adequately and explicitly, in project proposals, interim and final reports, and any deliverables. To that end, consult the handbook *Rights-based approach to programming*,¹⁷ the document entitled IOM Gender Equality Policy 2015–2019¹⁸ and any other relevant documents and presentations available on the intranet.
- During implementation, include all gender groups in activities and ensure representativity among decision-makers.
- Report not only sex-disaggregated data but also the implications of project activities/deliverables for different gender groups.

Overall recommendations

- **For regional offices:** Strengthen IOM project development capacity, especially with regard to the design and formulation of robust results matrices and SMART indicators.
- **For regional offices:** Strengthen IOM monitoring capacity.
- **For regional offices:** Consider establishing a monitoring unit and allocate human and financial resources with a view to providing ad hoc technical assistance to relevant partners once the project is closed.
- **For regional and other offices:** Develop a readiness assessment tool that provides a comprehensive analysis of the capacity of each country and of IOM staff to undertake a given project.
- **For regional and other offices:** Apply the lessons learned and best practices collected from previous IOM Development Fund reviews¹⁹/evaluation reports to avoid repeating past errors.
- **For regional and other offices:** Encourage the use of PRIMA so that IOM offices are fully aware of programming continuity and institutional memory is maintained at the country and global levels.
- **For project developers:** During the project development phase, carefully assess, along with key project partners, the human and financial resources needed to ensure continuity of activities and develop a sound and feasible approach to sustainability.
- **For project developers:** For regional projects, factor national contexts and socioeconomic conditions into project design and align the budget accordingly.
- **For project developers/endorsers/IOM Development Fund:** Ensure that there is a clear dissemination/visibility strategy for research and investigation projects. The ultimate purpose of any research/feasibility studies should be explicitly outlined and accompanied by a dissemination strategy, which should itself be supported by a strong theory of change explaining the place of product dissemination in the causality chain to ensure the achievement of project objectives.

¹⁷ See Dufvenmark, op. cit., note 15.

¹⁸ Available at <http://intranetportal/Pages/ControlNo.aspx?controlNo=C/106/INF/00008/Rev.1>.

¹⁹ Available on the IOM Development Fund website, under the “Reports” section: <https://developmentfund.iom.int/reports>.

- **For project managers:** Because good migration governance requires partnerships to broaden understanding of migration and to develop comprehensive and effective approaches, ensure that a variety of stakeholders provide input for and participate in project implementation (e.g. civil society organizations, private sector, NGOs, academia). Always act with due diligence in respect of the private sector, in order to avoid any issues and make sure that the company/foundation concerned complies with United Nations core values (e.g. pre-screen potential partners before making initial contact).
- **For the IOM Development Fund and Office of the Inspector General:** Make the standard Final Evaluation Report Template²⁰ mandatory to avoid variations in scope/quality and to ensure a more standardized and systematic approach to results-based management.
- **For the IOM Development Fund and Office of the Inspector General:** Encourage ex-post evaluations by thematic area within regions, in order to promote a more holistic programmatic approach.

²⁰ See IOM, op. cit., note 3, p.476.

Annex

List of target projects

Funding Year	Project Code	Project Title	Total USD allocation	Total Expenditure	Original Duration (months)	Actual Duration (months)	Number of extensions
2013	PR.0125	Promoting Development-Friendly Migration Policies in Vietnam through Enhancing the Evidence Base for Policy	200,000	188,286.53	24 months	48 months	4
2014	TC.0758	Technical Assistance for the Development of a National Migration Policy in Angola	200,000	199,792.39	18 months	54 months	2
2014	CE.0269	Diaspora Engagement for Migration and Development in Burundi	200,000	189,609.18	18 months	29 months	2
2015	CE.0325	Diaspora Engagement to Develop Medical and Psychiatric Sectors in Burundi	42,596	36,176.07	10 months	10 months	0
2014	LM.0262	Improving Labour Migration Management in Belize	150,000	147,056.48	20 months	28 months	2
2014	CE.0254	Effective and Sustainable Diaspora Engagement for Development in the Caribbean	280,000	210,069.93	24 months	42 months	1
2014	TC.0829	ICT Strategy for Integrated Border Management in Rwanda	200,000	197,746.77	12 months	42 months	4
2015	CE.0308	Mapping Saint Vincent and the Grenadines' Diaspora	100,000	94,457.08	18 months	21 months	1
2015	LM.0288	Developing a National Labour Migration Policy for Namibia	150,000	148,750.00	18 months	25 months	1
2015	LM.0292	Strengthening Knowledge-based Policy Analysis on Labour Migration in the Dominican Republic	150,000	141,104.16	24 months	28 months	1
2015	CT.0921	Upholding the Rights of Migrant Workers in Special Economic Zones (SEZs) by Ensuring Supply Chains are Exploitation Free: Viet Nam, Cambodia and Lao PDR	300,000	257,820.54	24 months	30 months	1
2015	CS.0743	Community Based Tribal Conflict Mitigation and Peace Building in Enga and Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea (COMBAT-COMIT) Phase I	86,415	86,415.00	9 months	21 months	2
2016	CS.0820	Community Based Tribal Conflict Mitigation and Peace Building in Enga and Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea (COMBAT-COMIT) Phase II	113,585	97,151.17	9 months	15 months	1
2016	LM.0304	Strengthening Labour Migration Management in Lesotho	150,000	148,100.42	18 months	18 months	0
2016	LM.0308	Strengthening the Capacities of Local Institutions in Cameroon to Expand the Social Security to include Cameroonian Migrant Workers Living in Belgium	200,000	198,076.00	18 months	18 months	0
2016	NC.0005	Migration, Environment and Climate Change: Evidence for Policy in Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean	300,000	281,216.17	18 months	22 months	1
2016	IM.0040	Promoting the Rights to Freedom of Movement in MERCOSUR	150,000	132,310.71	24 months	24 months	0
2016	MA.0372	Establishing a Migration Health Unit within the Ministry of Health and Sports (MOHS) in Myanmar	100,000	79,233.86	12 months	33 months	2
2017	CE.0396	Promoting the Engagement of the Chadian Diaspora to Support the Development of Chad	75,000	47,445.07	12 months	12 months	0
2013	PR.0135	Education, Training and Knowledge-Sharing on Migration in Tunisia	200,000	175,193.42	16 months	38 months	3
2013	DP.0968	Capacity-Building on Crisis Management and Assistance to Migrant Nationals (CMAN): The Philippines	200,000	169,809.67	24 months	32 months	2
2014	TC.0826	Capacity Building for Migration and Border Management in Burkina Faso	150,000	138,705.98	12 months	38 months	3
2015	CE.0298	Capacity-building for Diaspora Engagement in Mozambique	200,000	198,474.00	18 months	18 months	0
2015	LM.0298	Building the Capacity and Raising Awareness among COMESA Member States on the Free Movement Protocol	100,000	97,400.00	12 months	18 months	1
2015	LM.0286	Piloting Temporary Labour Migration of Georgian Workers to Poland and Estonia	150,000	141,700.98	24 months	24 months	0
2016	CT.0988	Strengthening the Institutional Capacity of the Government of Nicaragua to Promote the Rights of Irregular Migrants in Transit	135,000	133,000	12 months	12 months	0
2016	MA.0373	Technical Support to Global Consultation on Migrant Health – Sri Lanka	70,000	55,352.83	12 months	12 months	0
2015	TC.0870	Strengthening Capacities of Armenian National Security Service and Border Guards in their Response to Migration Crisis	100,000	98,497.2	12 months	23 months	3