

# PROJECT EVALUATION LEARNING

This learning brief is a summary of the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations prepared by the Owl RE consultancy for use by IOM project staff and management and the Fund. Details on all of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations can be found in the full evaluation report.

<b>Evaluation type:</b>	External independent ex-post evaluation
<b>Evaluator(s):</b>	Sharon McClenaghan, Owl RE
<b>Final report:</b>	29 September 2020
<b>Commissioned by:</b>	IOM Development Fund ("The Fund")

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**Evaluation purpose:** To assess the relevance of the project for the stakeholders and beneficiaries, to determine whether the project has achieved its intended objective; the effectiveness and efficiency of project management and implementation; promote transparency and accountability, assist the Fund in its decision-making, better equip staff to make judgments about the project and to improve the effectiveness for potential future project funding.

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

**Evaluation methodology:** Document review and semi-structured interviews (conducted remotely or via email exchanges).

## PROJECT SUMMARY

Facilitating skilled labour mobility is crucial to the furtherment of regional integration in Asia to ensure that the potential economic and developmental benefits are realised and equitably distributed among the ASEAN Member States (AMS). While progress has been made, various challenges remain, such as the effective sharing of labour market information and the varying levels of capacity amongst AMS on managing and facilitating intra-regional migration

This project aimed to enhance dialogue and coordination among AMS, and support the strengthening of capacity, frameworks and mechanisms to facilitate the increased mobility of labour, and its effective management in ASEAN. It focused on key areas which were identified in consultation with AMS and the ASEAN Secretariat as priorities in moving towards the freer movement of skilled labour. These included: the effective collection and sharing of labour market information, ensuring greater complementarity and linkages between existing relevant initiatives and policies, developing common regulatory frameworks to facilitate improved provision of ethical recruitment and employment services for migrant workers, capacity development and concrete tools and that can be used to guide the process of referencing and mutual recognition of skills.

*Strengthening Capacity on Skills Recognition, Recruitment and Labour Migration Information in Support of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Integration*

**Geographical coverage:** Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam\*

**Project type:** Migration management

**Project code:** LM.0301



**Project activity:** Regional Workshop on Labour Market Information for Migration Policy, Bangkok, Thailand, August 2018

\*The five countries which are italicized were not eligible IOM Member States (MS) when the project began and were not financially covered by the project, but as members of ASEAN, they were included in project activities. In June 2018 Lao People's Democratic Republic joined as a 171st IOM MS.

### KEY FINDINGS

The project produced some good results but it was not able to complete all outputs and co-ordination with beneficiary countries was difficult due to the size of the project, which further impacted the effectiveness of project results.

**Relevance (rating: Good - 3):** The project focus was in alignment with the ASEAN economic blueprint but varied in relevance with regard to individual ASEAN AMS. The objective was found to be too ambitious for a regional project, requiring many changes to be made to the project design during project implementation.

**Effectiveness (rating: Adequate - 2):** The project was found to have very mixed results. The objective and two outcomes were assessed as being partially or mostly achieved. Activities such as capacity-building workshops and the three other meetings provided some valuable knowledge and the basis for work going forward (the portal), but one output (the mapping report) was not completed and not distributed.

**Efficiency and Cost Effectiveness (rating: Adequate - 2):** The project had two no-cost extensions (NCEs) extending it to 33 months during which time many changes were made to the Results Matrix (RM) during project implementation, with one outcome changing twice. Activities were changed to become more relevant but not all changes were noted in the RM nor in documentation found on PRIMA. A high turnover of project-related staff and number of consultants who worked on the project over the three year period at times disrupted the results of the project. Project activities were costly, with one output not completed.

**Impact (rating: Adequate - 2):** It was difficult to assess the impact of the project on achieving the objective owing to the number of changes made to the project, which also shared an outcome with another project (funded by the Japan- ASEAN Integration Fund). The short term impact was mixed, producing some useful knowledge and the development of a portal proposal to support LMI.

**Sustainability (rating: Adequate - 2):** Evidence of measures built into the project to ensure sustainability included a detailed action plan but the likelihood of receiving follow up funding was assessed as very low in the current climate. The project demonstrated a high level of dependence upon consultants for country labour market expertise, which further threatened the sustainability of project results.

### Conclusions

A narrower focus would have delivered better results for the project. The project was too ambitious in its design. This was reflected in the outcomes and outputs which were only partially achieved, the overall mixed results of the project and the limited sustainability of results.

### KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

#### A. Project design and documentation

For IOM Thailand:

- Ensure that the basis of country participation in the project is approved by ASEAN before the project begins.
- Narrow the focus of the objective, outcomes and outputs for similar future projects.
- Attention should be paid to documentation/RM to ensure consistent and accurate reporting; all adjustments to the project should be made to the RM and PRIMA.
- For future projects, work closely with ASEC to rationalise the three workshops into a two-day programme, reducing the number of flights required for attendees and ensuring the same AMS representatives attend.

#### B. Project management

For IOM Thailand:

- Update and finalise the mapping document in some form (even a summary) and send to ASEC and AMS and/or ensure that the report and other project results are incorporated /institutionalised in ASEAN work.
- Update participants via ASEC on project outputs; create a repository of the contact details of all project participants and stakeholders.
- Continue post-project follow up with AMS and ASEC.
- Conduct post-workshops surveys to measure the increase in knowledge.
- For all IOM units implementing IDF projects; ensure that there is a clear process with responsibilities allotted to IOM staff for final sign off on project components.

#### C. Sustainability

- All IDF projects should have a sustainability and follow-up plan as part of the final report.
- Where projects overlap on subject matter or are based on a former project, more effort should be made to develop this in order to have stronger sustainability.