

FINAL INTERNAL INDEPENDENT EVALUATION
OF THE AWARE MIGRANTS PROJECT

EVALUATION BRIEF

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

Evaluator(s):

- Zahoor Ahmed, Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, RO Cairo, MENA
- Wardia Hamadi, Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Assistant, IOM Algeria, Algiers

Field visit dates:

Mauritania (mid March) Italy (mid March)
Egypt and Algeria (end of March, first week of April 2023)

Final report date: September 2023

Commissioned by: IOM Mission in Italy

Managed by: JERBI Shiraz, Project Manager

Evaluation purpose: The overall purpose of this evaluation is to assess the project performance, overall design, management, and implementation. The evaluation explored details on the project's Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, Sustainability, Lesson learned, and project contribution towards key project results.

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

Evaluation methodology: The evaluation used a mixed method approach (Desk Review, KIIs) with review and assessment of both Primary data and Secondary data through Development Assistance Criteria (DAC).

Documents reviewed were; Project proposal documents (all 3 phases) including M&E frameworks, Project Progress and Monitoring reports, and beneficiary and stakeholders lists. Key Informants Interviews: A total of 38 Key informants' interviews were held in all 5 countries (Algeria, Mauritania, Egypt, Niger and Italy). Both the KII and desk review data were brought together with themes and discussion points clubbed to form a narrative analysis using an evaluation matrix and thematic analysis as well as country analysis.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project type: PX - Protection and Assistance to Vulnerable Migrants

Project code: IT10P0523 /PX.0246

Gender marker: 1

Project period: 2016 - 2023

Donor: MOI - Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration (with contribution from other EU Member States, see below)

Budget: 1,441,093.20 euros (last phase)



PROJECT SUMMARY

The implementation of the project “Aware Migrants- Informing on risks of irregular migration and promoting safe migration through the strengthening of community engagement in transit countries along central and western Mediterranean routes” (Jan 2021 – March 2023) funded by the Italian Ministry of Interior, which aimed to address irregular migration along the main routes from Eastern and Western Africa across the desert and the Mediterranean, through informing those who intend to continue the journey on the risks of irregular migration, improving social cohesion between migrant and host communities, and informing migrants in transit of safe migration opportunities if available as well as about assistance and protection services in host countries and in their countries of origin.

The Aware Migrants campaign has been implemented through different phases:

- 2016-2017: Mainly focused on the design of the identity of the campaign including testimonies and spots, with few dissemination activities in Egypt, Niger and Tunisia.
- 2018-2020: Proper implementation of the project in countries of origin, specifically in Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Senegal, and Tunisia.
- 2021-2023: Upon request of the Italian Ministry of Interior, IOM has put efforts into supporting RDPP NA transit countries to cope with the migration challenges amid several political and economic crises. The objective of the current phase of the Aware Migrants project is to contribute to supporting the governments in transit countries along the main routes from Eastern and Western Africa across the desert and the Mediterranean to promote more informed migration and more effective support to migrants in vulnerable situations and to affected communities. Specifically, the project was implemented in Algeria, Egypt, Mauritania and Niger.

KEY FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

Relevance: The project was very relevant to national efforts, to donors' priorities, and to IOM's global strategies, being a request of MOI to IOM and designed to fulfill the needs and priorities of countries of transit and countries of origin.

Coherence: This project is overall coherent with IOM's/national other information campaigns and protection and assistance programmes implemented in the same countries. The synergies and interlinkages were found at country and global levels.

Effectiveness: Aware Migrant's campaign has produced the desired results and greatly contributed to project objectives in spite of some challenges at different phases. The project used diverse communication channels to reach different levels and profiles of beneficiaries, and activities were tailored to gender and to age categories.

Efficiency: The project was overall quite efficient in its financial management and spending, as well as its staffing structure. Donor reporting was well on time and with quality narrative reports.

Impact: On the positive side, national and international stakeholders working on irregular migration topics had quality tools to continue awareness-raising. One impact that could have been improved was the gap between the expectancy for better opportunities and the economic and legal realities in both countries of origin and destination.

Sustainability: The project did not have a concrete sustainability strategy during its design; however, several elements of sustainability were identified from the beginning along with the implementation of the project from both collective and individual levels through partnerships, knowledge gained, information, tools, and equipment provided.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

The project shows evidence of good attention to gender balance, youth integration, and human rights mainstreaming. As for gender, the project ensured an equal involvement of stakeholders. At the heart of the project, there was a significant focus on youth, as future agents of change of behavior and mentalities. Finally, the project focused on the protection of migrants' vulnerabilities along the journey highlighting risks of death, loss of family, exploitation, and physical and sexual abuse.

GOOD PRACTICES

- The collection and sharing of migrant's real stories and the peer-to-peer approach in the dissemination.
- The unbranded approach for more credibility and possible use of the material in different contexts beyond the closure of the project.
- Different dissemination methodologies including online/ in person, small scale/big scale, digital/community base, entertainment/educational, etc.
- A country-tailored approach including an assessment phase at the beginning of the project which ensures adjustments to the context/the priorities. Flexibility was also given to be able to adapt to changes along the implementation.
- Establishment of a network of various local actors strongly engaged in the sensitization.
- Reaching out to the target directly in their living/learning environments

LESSONS LEARNED

- Need to reinforce dissemination of information on possible alternatives for the migrants to migrate regularly or to support in-house economic opportunities.
- Need to elaborate a sustainability strategy from the design and the early stage of the implementation of the project.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Stronger component on M&E: Although an M&E plan has been elaborated and a data collection mechanism has been established, it is recommended to have a stronger component on M&E.
2. Advocacy: It is important to dialogue with stakeholders (National & International) on the possible alternatives for the migrants to regularly migrate or support for in house economic opportunities.
3. Stronger risks mitigation strategy to ensure a significant outreach: A risk mitigation strategy is important to understand any internal and external factors that could affect a campaign outreach
4. Sustainability strategy: This is to be elaborated from the design and early phase of implementation.
5. A more comprehensive proposal: Combining awareness raising with other activities promoting capacity building and economic empowerment.
6. Mobilization of funds by partners: Empowerment activities could include trainings in mobilization of funds for partners to be able to ensure continuity of actions.
7. Creation of formal networks: It is recommended to establish a communication cell made of several journalists with expertise on migration to ensure a steady flow of articles on migration and associated investigations in the targeted countries.
8. Continuity: The efforts done by the Aware Migrants' campaign in the last seven years in raising-awareness on the risks of irregular migration should continue building on lessons learned and recommendations.

