

EU-IOM

Joint Initiative for
Migrant Protection
and Reintegration



Project funded by the European Union
Project implemented by IOM



Migrant returnee Khadeejah and her son in her workshop in Khartoum.
@IOM 2020/Yasir Elbakri

FRAMING BRIEF

IMPACT

Evaluation of the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration in the Horn of Africa region

In March 2020, Itad was commissioned to carry out an impact evaluation (hereafter referred to as IMPACT) of the EU-IOM Joint Initiative in the Horn of Africa (HoA), focusing on Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan.

This brief outlines the rationale and challenges of conducting a study of this kind, as well as the proposed methodology, outlined in the Methodological Report¹.



Migration is a growing reality for millions of people across the globe

272M

IOM estimates 258 million international migrants worldwide²

11,336

Returnees received assistance from the programme in Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan³

1. Itad, 2020 [Link here](#)

2. IOM, 2019 [Link here](#)

3. From the beginning of the programme to Jan 2021



Why a study of this kind?

The EU-IOM Joint Initiative (HoA) supports migrants who decide to return to their countries of origin to do so in a safe and dignified way, in full respect of international human rights standards and in particular the principle of non-refoulement⁴. The support provided to returning migrants and their communities through this programme is the first stepping stone in the long and non-linear process of reintegration.

The current monitoring and evaluation framework in place for the EU-IOM Joint Initiative (HoA) is limited to outcome measures and cannot untangle whether changes observed can be attributed to programme interventions or external influences.

As a flagship evaluation for IOM, IMPACT's objectives are to evaluate the impact of the EU-IOM Joint Initiative (HoA) and provide an accountability mechanism to beneficiaries of the programme, the donor, the humanitarian sector, civil society organisations and academia. Other broader objectives are to:

- deepen the understanding of the concept and measurement of sustainable reintegration
- generate substantial learning on evaluating impact of sustainable reintegration programmes
- Inform future methodological standards.

***Reintegration can be considered sustainable when returnees have reached levels of economic self-sufficiency, social stability within their communities, and psychosocial well-being that allow them to cope with (re) migration drivers. Having achieved sustainable reintegration, returnees are able to make further migration decisions a matter of choice, rather than necessity*⁵.**

Challenges of evaluating reintegration programmes

No precedent exists for conducting impact evaluations of a reintegration programme of the size and complexity of the EU-IOM Joint Initiative (HoA). On top of that, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the existing logistical and access challenges to reaching returnees.

Methodologically, there are limitations that arise from the practical and theoretical constraints faced by this complex evaluation. For example, sampling is a key challenge in a context where programme beneficiaries (returnees) are entering the programme on a rolling basis (especially while the COVID-19 pandemic is disrupting the regularity of return flows), which affects the ability to provide precise sample size estimates at this stage. Additionally, defining and measuring reintegration sustainability is complex and there is currently no universally agreed definition or measurement framework.

To respond effectively to these challenges, methodological innovation and testing is key to the design and effective implementation of IMPACT, and fundamental to driving sectoral learning on the measurement of reintegration and on the conduction of impact evaluations of reintegration programmes more broadly. While the detailed design articulated in the IMPACT Methodological Report is subject to changes due to constraints related to what is technically and practically possible given the current circumstances, the IMPACT team and IOM are working in close collaboration to ensure agreement on the inevitable trade-offs between the scope, precision and resource constraints faced by the evaluation.

4. IOM defines the principle of non-refoulement as "The prohibition for States to extradite, deport, expel or otherwise return a person to a country where his or her life or freedom would be threatened, or where there are substantial grounds for believing that he or she would risk being subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, or would be in danger of being subjected to enforced disappearance, or of suffering another irreparable harm." (IOM, 2019 – [link here](#))

5. IOM, 2016 [Link here](#)

Our proposed approach

To meet the objectives of IMPACT, we have proposed a hybrid, semi-experimental evaluation design with four components, the first of which was to conduct a review of IOM's monitoring and evaluation instruments to gain further insights into reintegration. The other three components are quantitative modelling of impact; natural experiments; and an exploratory qualitative research framework.

1 Review of IOM's instruments, in particular the Reintegration Sustainability Survey (RSS)

WHAT IS IT? The Reintegration Sustainability Index is a collection of indicators used to estimate the level of reintegration based on the survey data (the Reintegration Sustainability Survey, RSS). As the concept of sustainable reintegration is challenging to validate, and requires looking at multiple parameters, we have made suggestions around additional indicators, which would add insight into the process and outcome of reintegration programming.

OUR APPROACH:

We have recommended additional questions to be included in the IOM institutional RSS instrument, which cover the following topics:

1. Information on the migration cycle
2. Skills acquired during migration
3. Family reunification.



IOM staff oversee a film production led by returnee Nour Abdi Garaad.
@IOM 2020/Muse Mohammed



In the IOM-run Migration Response Centre (MRC) in Bossaso a nurse attends to an Ethiopian migrant.
@IOM 2020/Muse Mohammed

2

Quantitative modelling

WHAT IS IT? The quantitative modelling allows the evaluation to test the validity of different ways of measuring reintegration, consider before and after changes, and compare with a group of non-migrant residents. This provides a better understanding of the impacts on returnees that can be attributed to the programme.

OUR APPROACH:

We propose to use a non-migrant resident calibration group. A calibration group refers to a group of non-migrant residents comprised of demographically similar respondents residing in the same, or similar locations as the returnees. The calibration group offers a standard against which the evaluation can assess the progress of migrant returnees towards reintegration.

Where possible, we will also draw on intra-returnee calibration cohorts assisted under the same programme, identifying different groupings of returnees and characterising their differing experiences of reintegration to better understand the extent of reintegration, including what is working and for whom.



IOM staff hand out support items to Ethiopian migrants in the Bossaso MRC. @IOM 2020/Muse Mohammed

4

Natural experiment

WHAT IS IT? A natural experiment uses unplanned changes (either internal to the programme or as a result of external events) to test important hypotheses. Our design incorporates both internal and external natural experiments.

OUR APPROACH:

Through the analysis of internal programme changes we propose to exploit delays in receiving assistance as well as changes in the procurement of in-kind support towards mobile money and cash-based options. This will provide a better understanding of the impact of different programme modalities on returnees' reintegration. We will also carry out a natural experiment based on an external event through the investigation of the effects of COVID-19 on programme implementation and returnees' reintegration across the three countries.

3

Qualitative framework

WHAT IS IT? The qualitative research both supports and complements the modelling and natural experiment components. It will provide in-depth information on how the EU-IOM Joint Initiative (HoA) is contributing to change, including understanding the impact of programme changes or extreme events under the natural experiment.

OUR APPROACH:

Through interviews and focus group discussions with returnees, the qualitative framework will provide an in-depth understanding of how and why reintegration does (or does not) occur. Where possible, we will also incorporate participatory approaches to facilitate detailed discussions and capture rich data on returnees' experiences of return.



A migrant returnee in West Darfur receives cash as part of reintegration assistance. @IOM 2020/Yasir Elbakri

About the Framing Brief:

This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of Itad and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

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