

EVALUATION BRIEF

[19-04-2023]



FINAL EVALUATION FOR EU-IOM JOINT INITIATIVE FOR MIGRANT PROTECTION AND REINTEGRATION IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

This evaluation brief presents a summary of the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations, as identified by the evaluators 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:	External independent final evaluation
Evaluators:	PPMI Group, Vilnius, Lithuania
Field visit dates:	November 2022 - January 2023
Final report date:	19 April 2023
Commissioned by:	IOM
Managed by:	Davide Bruscoli, Regional Information Manager Officer

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Evaluation purpose: To assess the achievements of the programme against its key objectives, including re-examination of the relevance of the objectives and of the design. To identify factors that have facilitated or impeded the achievement of the objectives.

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

Evaluation methodology: Desk research, interviews, focus group discussions, final debriefing workshop.

PROJECT SUMMARY

In 2016, the EU and IOM launched the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration, with as overall objective "To contribute to facilitating orderly, safe, regular and rights-based migration through the facilitation of dignified voluntary return and the implementation of development-focused and sustainable reintegration policies and processes". The EU-IOM Joint Initiative in the Horn of Africa (JI-HOA) commenced in March 2017 with a focus on Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Sudan.

The JI-HoA includes various pillars, including **Assisted Voluntary Return** of migrants, and an **integrated approach to reintegration** that supports both returnees and their communities.

The **integrated approach** targets three societal levels:

Individual level: Initiatives to address the specific needs and vulnerabilities of returnees and returning family members.

Community level: Initiatives that respond to the needs, vulnerabilities, and concerns of communities to which migrants return.

Structural/system level: Initiatives that promote good governance of migration through engagement with local and national authorities .

Project information:

Geographical coverage:	Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Djibouti
Project type:	Migrant Protection and Reintegration
Project code:	RT.1354
Gender marker:	1
Project period:	March 2017– September 2022
Donor:	EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa
Budget:	EUR 64.7 million

Additionally, the project approaches reintegration from three horizontal dimensions:

The **Economic dimension** covers aspects of reintegration that contributes to re-entering the economic life and sustained livelihoods.

The **Social dimension** addresses returning migrants' access to public services and infrastructure in their countries of origin, including access to health, education, housing, justice, and social protection schemes.

The **Psychosocial dimension** encompasses the reinsertion of returning migrants into personal support networks (friends, relatives, neighbours) and civil society structures, as well as re-engagement with the host society's values, principles and traditions

KEY FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

The JI-HoA supported migrants in dangerous environments with basic emergency care. It provided returnees (who returned with nothing) with a basis to start their reintegration and enhanced economic opportunities for communities as a whole. Therefore, **the JI-HoA addressed key priorities of vulnerable populations in the region**. Only sporadic examples were found where specific interventions did not meet the needs of the beneficiaries.

While governments were highly interested in the JI-HoA, urgent problems such as COVID-19, security issues and economic crises prevented governments from treating return migration as a priority.

The evaluation found **extensive examples of collaboration and alignment between the JI-HoA and other initiatives**. The JI-HoA aligned with priorities of regional partners (IGAD).

The Programme has in general **met the targets for the specific objectives and their associated results and in many cases even surpassing its targets**.

Specific Objective 1: The JI-HoA achieved increased **use of data in policymaking, strategies, processes and plans for return and reintegration**. However, external factors and staff turnover may hinder the longer-term effectiveness of capacity-building efforts.

Specific Objective 2: The JI-HoA has enabled **safe, humane, and dignified return of migrants** while taking into consideration their needs and vulnerabilities. However, gaps remain with regards to coordination mechanisms and referral partners for specialized services.

Specific Objective 3: **The vast majority of returnees reported sufficient levels of economic self-sufficiency, social stability and psychosocial wellbeing in their community of return**. Community members noted that community projects contributed positively to economic and employment opportunities in the community.

However, **different thresholds to measure the sustainability of reintegration** were used throughout the project, each of which provide a different picture. External factors also affect the level of reintegration.

The **financial and human resources were deemed sufficient** to meet the programme's objectives in terms of achieving the project outcomes and results. The top-up system was necessary to finance services and reach the objectives of the JI. Although there were delays in some activities, almost all final results were met by the end of the implementation period of the programme.

The programme used resources well to achieve its results, and even introduced cost-cutting activities. **Some activities became more efficient** during the programme implementation. Although the JI-HoA was effective in forming partnerships with service providers, additional measures are needed to ensure the stability and financial independence of these actors to increase the efficiency gains created.

Government officials and other stakeholders have reported an increase in their capacity to work on return and reintegration. This has already resulted in the introduction of new policies and processes. However, the current sense of ownership and capacities of the governments do not seem enough to continue work on return and reintegration without IOM support.

The JI-HoA was a **unique effort to support return and reintegration** in a highly complex political and economic context. The scope of the support provided required extensive investment of resources by IOM and stakeholders, but created valuable, even life-saving benefits for beneficiaries.

The complexity of the JI-HoA, and the fragility of existing systems in the Horn of Africa countries, leads to the conclusion that **ownership and sustainability of the programme cannot be expected after five years of implementation**. Important progress has been made, but continued support is needed in terms of capacity-building, but also for wider socio-economic development and security in the four countries in general.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *Enhance efforts with national, regional, and local stakeholders to build capacity and ownership*
2. *Strengthen community-based reintegration efforts to address irregular migration and provide economic opportunities that reduce the necessity to migrate.*
3. *Increase attention to building partnerships with service providers who can function without funding.*
4. *Explore opportunities for the continued (co-)funding of key, effective, and relevant activities in line with those supported under the JI-HoA.*
5. *Explore opportunities to extend the scope of support provided to returnees*
6. *Continue supporting and strengthening safe, humane, and orderly migration pathways.*
7. *Build on the results of the IMPACT evaluation conducted under the JI-HoA by continuing to test and adjust the tools to measure reintegration sustainability*