



# **Evaluation of the Migration Governance Indicators Programme**

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**OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL**

## Acronyms

CCA	Common Country Assessment
CD4MM	Capacity Development for Migration Management
CO	Country Office (of IOM)
CoM	Chief of Mission (of IOM)
CSO	Civil society organisation
EIU	Economist Intelligence Unit
GCM	Global Compact for Migration
GMDAC	Global Migration Data Analysis Center (of IOM)
ICP	International Cooperation and Partnerships Department (of IOM)
IOM	International Organization for Migration
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MiGOF	Migration Governance Framework
MGI	Migration Governance Indicators (programme)
MPD	Multilateral Processes Division (of IOM)
MPTF	Migration Multi-partner Trust Fund
OIG	Office of the Inspector General (of IOM)
RO	Regional office (of IOM)
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
ToC	Theory of Change
UN	United Nations
UNCT	UN Country Team
UNSDCF	UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
VNR	Voluntary National Reviews

## Executive Summary

This report is an evaluation of the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) Migration Governance Indicators (MGI) programme. The overall objective of the evaluation was to assess to what extent the objectives of the MGI programme have been met and if the MGI process empowered IOM Country Offices (COs) to help governments take concrete steps towards the improvement of certain aspects of their migration policy.

The evaluation was included in the biennial evaluation plan 2019-2020 of the Office of the Inspector General (OIG), following a proposal from the International Cooperation and Partnerships (ICP) Department and carried out by a team of five consultants of Owl RE, evaluation and research consultancy, Geneva, Switzerland. It was completed remotely due to COVID-19 restrictions from April to June 2021. The evaluation focused on 19 countries that had carried out the MGI with the following research methods used: a document review; an online survey of IOM CO MGI focal points (61 responses); semi-structured interviews and group discussions with IOM staff and key stakeholders (90 persons).

In 2015, IOM developed the MGI programme with the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) as an instrument to help countries implement and provide support in the assessment of their alignment to the Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF) principles and objectives. The MGI programme has two desired outcomes: (1) More governments assess their migration management structures using the MGI methodology and (2) Governments establish migration management priorities through a coordinated whole-of-government approach. The MGI consists of a set of 94 standard indicators organised around the six dimensions of the MiGOF. The MGI programme is managed by the MGI team, part of ICP and is comprised of staff from both the Global Migration Data Analysis Center (GMDAC) and the Multilateral Processes Division (MPD). The MGI is a voluntary process and between 10–16 countries participate annually.

## Findings

**Relevance:** The MGI programme was considered relevant in meeting the needs of governments in migration governance. Efforts over time have improved its utility in terms of identifying and subsequently addressing needs at different levels, such as the regional and local levels. The MGI was seen as strongly linked to both the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Global Compact for Migration (GCM). The lack of stakeholder involvement in the set-up phase of the MGI in countries was seen as creating some challenges during the implementation, notably for Phase 1 (pilot) countries, which has consequently improved in later phases.

**Coherence:** The MGI programme was found to be coherent with IOM policy initiatives (internal coherence) and with inter-state processes (external coherence) although there were possibilities to improve both internal and external coherence. The extent of adaptability of the MGI programme to country and context level priorities varied. Critical factors in ensuring coordination and coherence between relevant national institutions included the appointment of a government MGI focal point and the establishment of cross-government working groups.

**Effectiveness:** The MGI programme was successful in achieving its two intended outcomes with the programme improving migration governance through adoption of a whole-of-government approach, providing migration data and policy reform and/or development. There was a general consensus that support provided by the MGI team was consistent and a key enabling factor. Negative factors that impacted on the outcomes included the lack of follow-up by IOM COs following completion of MGI,

fragmentation of migration information, services and data across government ministries, in addition to developing ownership of MGI amongst stakeholders.

**Efficiency:** Overall, the MGI managed partnerships, as well as human and financial resources efficiently. Coordination was also found to be managed efficiently between the various entities involved, with challenges seen in situations lacking a central government focal point. The EIU was seen as a valued partner for the MGI programme with the collaboration both efficient and cost-effective. For resource mobilization, a concern expressed was the reliance on one main donor for the MGI and the need to diversify funding sources. While resources available to the MGI enabled for the production of high-quality products, where resources were scarce was at the country level, with the use of non-funded focal points within COs.

**Impact:** The MGI programme was seen as having a potential impact on national migration management with increased knowledge, capacities and improved collaboration, policies and structures, both at the institutional and individual levels. Positive unintended consequences included the creation of new relationships, multi-stakeholder processes and partnerships. Negative unintended consequences included raised expectations and some disappointment from the authorities in the lack of funding and follow-up from the IOM and creation of tensions due to limited consultations.

**The cross-cutting themes** of a rights-based approach, gender and the environment are considered within the MGI programme to varying degrees according to stakeholders and IOM staff, and as reflected in the different weight given to them in the MGI Matrix. Overall, there was broad support from government representatives and stakeholders of the consideration of rights-based approach and gender, but the dominant view was that environmental issues were weakly integrated within the MGI approach.

**Sustainability:** The MGI programme was found to have elements that contributed to sustainability, particularly in providing government entities with a stronger network with other government and migration actors. Limitations in sustainability were linked to the programme design, ownership and follow-up.

## Conclusions

Since its official launch in 2016, the MGI has successfully grown as a programme with a global footprint, making it an IOM project with one of the greatest reach across regions. This evaluation found that the MGI had contributed to improved migration governance in almost all countries where it was implemented with potential for long-term impact. At the same time, the MGI faced some limitations largely linked to the “one-off” nature of the MGI process, its perception as an IOM-EIU led process and the lack of systematic follow-up from COs. This was also due to one-year funding cycles and the projectisation nature of IOM’s activities. After six years, the MGI programme was found to be at a crossroad with the question of what path to take: continue along the same path as done to date which has produced results – or adapt to increase the potential longer-term impact?

## Recommendations

(Please see full report for all proposed action points).

**A. MGI operational model:** The MGI’s current operational model is a “one-off” process completed over 12 months, which once concluded then moves to other countries, with the MGI team available to support follow-up activities. This has the advantage of being a project with a manageable scope for COs but also has the disadvantage of being perceived as a “open-closed” project, leading to issues of ownership and sustainability. Stakeholders and staff suggested that the MGI could have an even

greater impact through the adaptation of its operational model. The MGI team are encouraged to reflect on the operational mode of MGI considering the proposed directions in coherence with the overall strategic priorities of the IOM in migration governance.

**B. MGI design and process:** The MGI programme has demonstrated considerable progress in its implementation with COs and has clearly built on the learnings from its earlier phases where, for example stakeholder consultation was less present. The MGI team still needs to focus further on ensuring the process is inclusive and participatory and links well to other relevant internal and external migration initiatives/processes or programmes. A series of actions are proposed for consideration by the MGI team to improve the MGI design and process.

**C. Follow-up, ownership and sustainability:** Although this evaluation found many examples where the MGI had successfully influenced changes in migration governance, a missed opportunity and limitation identified were the weak follow-up, ownership and sustainability of the MGI programme. It would be important to find ways to involve stakeholders earlier in the process and the assessment steps rather than as simple validators in the final steps; this could imply carrying out fewer MGIs but more in-depth and with greater potential for long-term impact. The MGI team is encouraged to consider the proposed actions to improve MGI follow-up, ownership and sustainability.

**D. Roles and responsibilities:** The implementation of the MGI involved multiple roles and was found to function well overall. It faces challenges with under-resourcing of COs by using non-funded focal points. The respective roles of the national consultants, EIU researchers and Regional Offices could be further refined. The MGI team is encouraged to consider the proposed actions to clarify roles and responsibilities.

**E. Transparency and use of MGI:** The results of the MGI in the form of a Matrix are shared only with the authorities based on the agreement to ensure confidentiality and build trust. The methodology for MGI is not publicly available nor are the 90 plus indicators and Matrix. Sharing the methodology and more data and results would encourage a greater use of the MGI results and possible uptake of the methodology by authorities. There were also limited opportunities for both stakeholders and IOM staff to share best practices and experiences on the MGI. The MGI team is encouraged to consider the proposed actions to strengthen transparency and use of MGI.

**F. Funding:** The MGI has been successful in securing funding since 2016 and doubled funding commitments since. However, the funding has largely relied on the US Government as the main donor and further diversification would support greater stability for the programme. IOM should continue its efforts to secure additional donors for the MGI programme and encourage multi-year funding commitments of donors.

The report concludes with key lessons and good practices identified by stakeholders and IOM staff.

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ANNEX 1: Evaluation matrix

ANNEX 2: List of Documents Reviewed

ANNEX 3: List of Interviewees

ANNEX 4: Evaluation Terms of Reference

## 1. Introduction

This report is an evaluation of the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) Migration Governance Indicators (MGI) programme. This evaluation was included in the biennial evaluation plan 2019-2020 of the Office of the Inspector General (OIG), following a proposal from the International Cooperation and Partnerships (ICP) Department.

The evaluation was carried out by a team of five consultants<sup>1</sup> of Owl RE, evaluation and research consultancy, Geneva, Switzerland. It was completed remotely due to COVID-19 restrictions from April to June 2021.

## 2. Evaluation Background

### *2.1. Objectives and focus of the evaluation*

The overall objective of the evaluation was to assess to what extent the objectives of the MGI programme have been met and if the MGI process empowered IOM Country Offices (COs) to help governments take concrete steps towards the improvement of certain aspects of their migration policy. This objective was supported by a series of 20 evaluation questions, as per the Terms of Reference (annex 4), and 54 sub-questions, developed in the evaluation matrix, organised on the basis of seven criteria: the six OECD-DAC evaluation criteria in addition to cross-cutting issues. The evaluation questions and sub-questions are detailed in the evaluation matrix (annex 1).

The evaluation covered the MGI programme implementation period from 2015 – 2020, integrating information from the period January to June 2021 as relevant. This was a global study with a geographical coverage of 68 countries in the nine IOM regions where the MGI programme has been completed. Of these 68 countries, nine were selected as case study countries and an additional ten as sample countries.<sup>2</sup>

### *2.2. Evaluation methodology*

The evaluation findings are based on the data and information collected through the following research methods:

- A document review of all relevant documentation, including an analysis of budget information. A list of the main documents reviewed can be found in annex 3.
- An online survey of IOM CO MGI focal points which received 61 responses from 67 offices who received the survey.
- Semi-structured interviews and group discussions with IOM staff and key stakeholders: 90 persons in total. A list of persons interviewed can be found in annex 2.

The evaluation covered the 19 case study and sample countries. The intention was to focus more on case study countries with additional interviews and research with a larger group of stakeholders which would include United Nations (UN) entities, academia or migrant associations as relevant in addition to IOM and government interviewees and then sample countries with interviews with IOM MGI focal

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<sup>1</sup> The evaluation team was comprised of Glenn O'Neil (team leader), Lois Austin, Patricia Goldschmid, Anita Leutgeb and Sharon McClenaghan.

<sup>2</sup> Case study countries: Brazil, Costa Rica, Djibouti, Ghana, Iraq, Malawi, Portugal, Timor Leste and Ukraine. Sample countries: Cabo Verde, Ecuador, Lesotho, Mexico, Republic of Moldova, Morocco, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka and Uganda.

points and government officials involved in the MGI. However, ultimately a similar number of interviews was carried out for both case study and sample countries as explained below under Limitations. Both the survey results and interviews also highlighted other countries as examples that are featured in the evaluation findings where relevant.

The following table details the number of persons interviewed by type of stakeholder.

**Table 1: Overview of persons interviewed**

Stakeholder group	No.
IOM HQ	13
IOM COs	35
National governments	30
IOM regions	3
UN agencies	3
Migrant associations	2
Academics	2
Donor	1
Economist Intelligence Unit	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>

**Data analysis:** A combination of qualitative (interviews and discussions) and quantitative data (survey responses and budget breakdowns) was collected. The qualitative data was analysed thematically to understand trends linked to the different issues and areas covered by the surveys, interviews and group discussions. A qualitative data analysis software, Deedose, was used to code the responses of the participants, which made it possible to explore the trends and tendencies linked to the issues covered by the evaluation questions. Summary tables and graphs were used to provide an overview of the results from any quantitative data collected.

**Limitations:** The following limitations were faced by the evaluation:

- The evaluation was initially started in 2020 but the process had to be stopped for some months in 2021 due to problems with the initial company selected and resumed with a different consulting firm, Owl RE. Although the inception report was adjusted slightly, the evaluation matrix and the data collection tools were redesigned. Some of the information initially collected was used but most of the data collection was re-started. This implied that there was less time available for the data collection and analysis than originally foreseen. For this reason, a five-person evaluation team was used (enabling more data collection to be carried out in parallel).
- The differentiation anticipated between case study and sample countries did not materialise as foreseen. In practice, for some case study countries it was extremely difficult to secure interviews (e.g. Timor Leste) and for some sample countries more interviews were secured than foreseen (e.g. Cabo Verde). Therefore, throughout the evaluation findings, case study and sample countries are given equal weighting, largely dependent upon the information available.
- There was a difficulty to access stakeholders, such as migrant associations, and donors. This was partially due to the relatively short period available for data collection (four weeks) and also because some stakeholders, such as migrant associations, were not heavily involved in the MGI process in most countries examined.
- As the evaluation covered a five-year period, there was considerable staff turnover both for IOM staff and stakeholders implying that not all the relevant persons were accessible to the evaluation and there could be a lack of knowledge of the MGI process. Further, there was some “recall bias”

as IOM staff and stakeholders tended to speak of more recent activities rather than those in past years.

### 3. Background to the MGI Programme

In 2015, IOM developed the MGI programme with the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) as an instrument to help countries implement and provide support in the assessment of their alignment to the Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF) principles and objectives. The MGI programme has two desired outcomes: (1) More governments assess their migration management structures using the MGI methodology and (2) Governments establish migration management priorities through a coordinated whole-of-government approach.

The MGI is a global process managed by the MGI team, part of the ICP and comprised of staff from both the Global Migration Data Analysis Center (GMDAC) and the Multilateral Processes Division (MPD). Following an initial pilot phase (“phase 1”), The MGI was rolled out in four consecutive 12-month phases, in cooperation with the EIU and IOM COs in 68 countries (including phase 1), as seen in the infographic below. The MGI is a voluntary process and countries are selected annually in a collaborative process between the MGI team, IOM regional offices (ROs) and COs. Between 10–16 countries are selected annually for the MGI depending on funding available.



The MGI consists of a set of 94 standard indicators organised around the six dimensions of the MiGOF. Most indicators are formulated as questions to ascertain if a certain policy/strategy is in place. This information is included in what is referred to as the MGI Matrix, a spreadsheet that includes all the responses to the MGI indicators as well as the related justifications and references.

For each country, the completion of the MGI Matrix is led by an EIU researcher in collaboration with the IOM CO.<sup>3</sup> The process includes an MGI focal point in each CO, which is an existing IOM staff

<sup>3</sup> The approach was slightly different in Belize, Nicaragua and Panama where due to a different funding situation, a national consultant drafted the Matrix and EIU prepared the MGI report based on the Matrix.

member often supported by a national consultant, guided by the MGI Handbook.<sup>4</sup> This is carried out through a collaborative process with the authorities and other actors involved in migration (referred to as the “MGI process” in this report). The completed MGI Matrix is shared with the authorities and a shorter Migration Governance Profile (“MGI report”) that contains the most important information collected in the Matrix as it relates to the priorities of the country is created. Once validated by the government, the Migration Governance Profile is published online on IOM’s Global Migration Data Portal and online bookstore.<sup>5</sup> The MGI Matrix and the Migration Governance Profile are the two key deliverables of the MGI process (referred to as “MGI results” or “products” in this report).

The MGI Matrix is completed mainly at the national level, although since 2018 this has been complemented by sub-national or city level MGIs (referred to as the “local MGIs”). Another recent innovation has been that in addition to new countries, MGI assessments are now conducted in countries where a first assessment was conducted at least three years before through “MGI follow-up assessments” that largely replicate the MGI process in countries previously having carried out the MGI (11 countries to date). MGI follow-up assessments identify the migration policy developments that occurred since the countries first MGI assessments, thus helping governments track their progress on national priorities as well as commitments taken at the regional and international level.

Further, as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, an additional module of 12 questions/indicators to ensure that MGI assessments also take the impact of the pandemic into account has been introduced to accompany the 94 standard indicators.

## 4. Findings

The findings are organised around the seven evaluation criteria and the evaluation questions. The evaluation sub-questions are featured when judged necessary.

### 4.1. Relevance

The MGI programme was considered relevant in meeting the needs of governments in migration governance. Efforts over time have improved its utility in terms of identifying and subsequently addressing needs at different levels, such as the regional and local levels. The MGI was seen as strongly linked to both the Sustainable Development Goals and the Global Compact for Migration. The lack of stakeholder involvement in the set-up phase of the MGI in countries was seen as creating some challenges during the implementation, notably for Phase 1 countries, which has consequently improved in later phases.

#### **Is the MGI programme relevant to meet the needs of the governments in terms of generating relevant information and assess the needs in migration governance?**

Since its inception, there has been a gradual improvement in the design of the MGI, building on feedback received from participating countries, ensuring that data collected is increasingly useful for governments. The ongoing adaptation to the design of the MGI has been primarily driven by feedback, inputs and requests from IOM COs.

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<sup>4</sup> *IOM MGI Handbook (for internal use only - undated)* – The handbook explains the background to the MGI; its purpose; and the four steps of the implementation process.

<sup>5</sup> <http://migrationdataportal.org/> and <https://publications.iom.int/>

**Incorporation of the global, regional and national migration governance needs:** The MGI programme was initially designed at the global level, reflecting the perspective of national governments while the regional angle was largely absent. Despite this, both national and regional migration governance needs are central to the MGI with a number of indicators in the Matrix focused on the regional level (particularly in relation to partnerships), recognising the reality of migration across borders.

Discussions with stakeholders and IOM staff revealed that there has been gradual improvement in ensuring that the programme addresses migration governance needs at different levels – globally, nationally and regionally. The MGI results were found to be used to determine the level of migration governance and management, as well as highlighting necessary improvements at a national level (e.g. Honduras (Phase 2), Lesotho (Phase 3), Iraq (Phase 4) and Malawi (Phase 5)).

At a country level, the relevance of the MGI in addressing national needs was largely positive: 79% of surveyed MGI focal points agreed or strongly agreed that MGI was aligned to national migration policies (see figure 1 below). In Sierra Leone (Phase 5) for example, involvement in the MGI led to the identification of a need to harmonise the data of vulnerable migrants in order that they could be included in national development programmes. Elsewhere, there were clear links between national policies and the MGI, as seen in Albania (Phase 3), Lesotho (Phase 3) and Iraq (Phase 4). Nevertheless, examples were seen where the MGI was considered as not fully relevant to country contexts, often as authorities perceived that they had the necessary migration governance in place, e.g. Turkey (Phase 1), Morocco (Phase 1) and Portugal (Phase 2).

The move to add local MGIs (sub-national and city level) in 2018 was considered to be unique and innovative by stakeholders and IOM staff. Assessments to date have shown that there is little in place at this level, and the local level MGIs provided the opportunity to bring stakeholders from different levels together to discuss findings, local to national. It was also seen to be a good tactic to reach the national level by providing concrete results from the local level, as noted by one IOM CO staff:

*“The relevance in terms of local MGI was getting an understanding of the local migration governance frameworks and policies which inform the national picture. What was good was doing both local and national levels as it gave a comprehensive picture.”*

It is acknowledged that the MGI programme and process does not, however, cover all areas of relevance for governments in detail. One such area, which was already highlighted in IOM’s *Migration Governance Indicators – A Global Perspective* (2019), is the identification of processes in place for nationals and non-nationals both during and after disasters, including the availability of humanitarian assistance to migrants. For the MGI team, this was a choice to focus on the long-term governance aspect although the recent addition of questions on COVID-19 illustrated how the MGI could be further adapted to crisis situations. Stakeholders and IOM staff indicated that the following key issues could be further strengthened in the current MGI Matrix:

- Adaptability for migrants in different situations (e.g. mixed migration and complex population flows).
- Adaptability to regional level needs (e.g. commitment to regional migration processes and treaties)
- Issues related to outgoing migration (emigration) (e.g. policies to manage emigration and circular migration).

Some stakeholders and IOM staff also saw the MGI as less relevant as it only provides an assessment of whether or not a policy or strategy was in place; but it does not assess whether or not the policy

or strategy is being implemented or provide a progress score against best practice.<sup>6</sup> However, there are a number of proxy indicators which facilitate an assessment of implementation. Some governments were using the MGI to assess progress as this government official commented:

*“The MGI is more than relevant. It allows us to determine the level of implementation and track and assess progress to see how we are implementing the National Strategic Development Plan and the policies within the country. The MGI makes life easier as we can even set targets to see where we are to meet the goals. It is an excellent planning tool.”*

Overall, feedback indicated that developing countries and emerging economies found the national MGI much more relevant than developed countries<sup>7</sup>. Only six developed countries had conducted an MGI at the time of this evaluation (Canada, Germany, Italy, Ireland, Sweden, Portugal), preferring their own approach in managing migration governance according to stakeholders and IOM staff interviewed.

### **To what extent have the main stakeholders participated in the development of the MGI programme design, methodology and implementation to ensure that it is relevant to their needs?**

The evaluation found that a few governments and other external stakeholders were involved in the initial design of the programme, such as inputs provided from donors and an expert meeting with academics. This was seen as presenting some challenges during implementation linked to a lack of understanding of the MGI process and the perception that it was being imposed on countries with little prior consultation or guidance, notably during the first phase of the programme. As noted by one CO staff of a phase 1 country; *“It was given to us as a ‘done deal’, we could not refuse it.”* In some countries this initial lack of involvement led to a near-rejection of the MGI process entirely (Phase 1 countries: Ghana, Morocco). However, in subsequent phases, inputs provided by IOM COs into the ongoing adaptations of the MGI included feedback from governments.

The MGI team learned from the first phase resulting in increased stakeholder consultation in set-up phase at the country-level in each participating country. In later phases, IOM COs also provided increased input into the assessment Matrix in order to inform adaptations for each phase. The establishment of MGI government focal points in many countries was seen as an important step, which ensured closer collaboration and ownership of the process. Gaps were still prevalent in the consultative process. For example, in Malawi (phase 5) non-government stakeholders felt they were not fully engaged in the data collection and analysis processes, but only brought in at the end to verify the MGI report. Both IOM staff and external stakeholders suggested the use of more multi-stakeholder groups and meetings (government, civil society, UN, migration actors) throughout the MGI process, as this MGI focal point highlighted the importance of stakeholder consultation:

*“Implementing the MGI assessment through an inter-ministerial technical working group, and validating MGI results through a week-long workshop were two key steps in building the basic consensus needed to address migration through a ‘whole of government approach’. The MGI assessment was a core exercise for us and extremely valuable in setting a governance capacity building agenda.”*

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<sup>6</sup> Through follow-up assessments, the new phase of the MGI that started in 2020 will assess whether the gaps identified in the MGI to improve policy or strategy as needed have been addressed (or not), and how. This phase was not part of the evaluation as it had just started.

<sup>7</sup> Based on UN classification of countries, see:

[https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/wesp/wesp\\_current/2014wesp\\_country\\_classification.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/wesp/wesp_current/2014wesp_country_classification.pdf)

A selected number of external stakeholders were involved in the design of new initiatives, such as the local MGI, structured follow-ups or the new additional COVID-19-related questions (the Governments of Ireland and Moldova were involved in this new addition). The Governments of Canada, and the New York City and Montreal mayors' offices were involved in development of the local MGI. In addition, several UN agencies and academic experts were also consulted in order to gather their inputs and a number of IOM experts and MGI focal points were consulted for these new initiatives (e.g. Mexico). In addition, debrief meetings were held with all three cities which took part in the pilot phase of the local MGI in order to gather feedback and insights on how the approach could be improved.

### **Has the programme adapted to recent changes in the management and perception of migration worldwide?**

Critical migration or related frameworks, agreements and goals that were considered relevant for the MGI included the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Global Compact for Migration (GCM), in addition to the MGI being the operationalisation of the MiGOF, as confirmed in the survey of IOM MGI focal points (see below). Nevertheless, there were some challenges in establishing clear linkages between these different instruments. For example, as the MGI was created prior to the GCM, the alignment was not perfect (e.g. at the level of indicators), according to IOM staff.

**Relevance to the SDGs:** Links between the MGI and the SDGs (and specifically Target 10.7) were clear according to IOM staff and stakeholders. As stated in IOM's "Use of Migration Governance Indicators assessments in Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) Guidance note", the MGI was developed as a direct response to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which calls on governments to "*facilitate orderly, safe, and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies*" (SDG 10.7). The MGI was designed to help governments understand what well-managed policies might mean in practice.

The MGI has been successful in supporting governments in the implementation of the SDGs. It has also been helpful in developing indicators to directly inform progress on the SDGs. In addition, the MGI has provided a concrete set of measures towards achieving SDG 10.7, informing Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) for the SDGs, as well as being a useful advocacy tool to help governments assess the how their country is doing in specific areas. In several countries, the MGI report was used as a baseline document to track progress against the SDGs (Sri Lanka, Phase 2, Zimbabwe, Phase 4, for example). Dominican Republic (Phase 2) was another positive example as detailed below under Coherence. In Serbia (Phase 2), the MGI programme has enabled the production of a migration profile, which was useful as a source of information for the government to report on Target 10.7.

The survey of MGI IOM focal points found that 97% strongly agreed or agreed that the MGI was aligned to the SDGs and the GCM, highlighting its high relevance for these instruments, as this government official confirmed:

*"The Government is asked to report for SDGs and other entities as well so being able to refer to the MGI as a source of measuring and reporting is valuable, for example, for Voluntary National Reviews and GCM."*

**Relevance to the GCM:** In most countries, the MGI strengthened the implementation and monitoring of the GCM. In some countries, a lack of clear linkage was compounded where commitments to implement the GCM have not been made, or governments do not want to be explicit about the link or have withdrawn from the Compact (e.g. Brazil).

In Malawi (Phase 5) for example, information gathered through the MGI process was included in the country's first national submission to GCM regional reviews. This was also reported in Sierra Leone (Phase 5), Sri Lanka (Phase 2) and Costa Rica (Phase 1). In Iraq (Phase 5), the link between the MGI and the GCM was seen as explicit and critical. The MGI findings were integrated directly into an action list, which was then used as the basis for Iraq's National Level Implementation Plan for the GCM. The Government of Iraq became a GCM champion and submitted a national submission to the Regional GCM review for its GCM implementation in the last quarter of 2020 – an indication of the level of buy-in and ownership of national stakeholders. Cambodia (Phase 5) was also reported as a country that had become a GCM champion in part as a result of its participation in the MGI.

**Response to COVID-19 and migration:** During the COVID-19 pandemic the MGI data was considered useful in some countries as it provided an overview of the current situation as well as facilitating positive collaboration between relevant institutions and ministries. In Costa Rica (Phase 1) for example, the Ministry of Health worked closely with the Commission of Emergencies, using available MGI data. Similarly, in Malawi (Phase 5), the COVID-19 emergency response was influenced by the MGI through the involvement of the Department of Disaster Affairs, with MGI data highlighting issues that needed to be addressed in relation to the impact of the pandemic on returnees.

In other countries, the IOM support was considered as positive, including the addition of a set of 12 COVID-19-specific indicators. Where MGI assessments had been planned, smaller consultations took place and the MGI team was seen as providing flexible support and quick approval of budgets for COs, for example in Sierra Leone (Phase 5). IOM COs also facilitated coordination with the government, for example in supporting the development of pandemic-related standard operating procedure (SOPs) for reception and re-integration, as this government official commented:

*“The MGI in 2018 gave us a template to build on. We felt that everything from that helped us, especially in the current [COVID-19] crisis. It gave us a general picture of the situation.”*

Surveyed MGI focal points were less positive about the adaptation of MGIs to COVID-19; only 37% agreed or strongly agreed that the MGI had adapted to COVID-19 with a further 33% neither agreeing nor disagreeing. Fourteen per cent (14%) of respondents strongly disagreed (2%) or disagreed (12%) and 17% also responded not applicable (see figure 1 below). These mixed results possibly indicate that some COs did not see the relevance of the MGI for the COVID-19 pandemic, likely due to the other challenges faced in responding to the pandemic. Several respondents mentioned a strong focus on health and the economy during the pandemic, with other priorities, such as policy-development, secondary. In this respect, some of the COs were disappointed that they could not progress the MGI or follow-up its results but understood authorities were focused on the COVID-19 response. As noted above, Phase 6 of the MGI cycle included 12 additional COVID-19 questions but the timeframe was outside of the evaluation.<sup>8</sup>

**Irregular migrants and asylum seekers:** In a number of countries, where large-scale movements of irregular migrants and asylum seekers is a reality, the MGI assessment was seen as important in terms of providing a focus and an informed response. For example, in Djibouti (Phase 4), which is a transit country for migrants, the global approach of the MGI supported the creation of an IT system to regulate entries, connect all entry points to the country, as well as creating digital passports and visas, while simultaneously developing a strategy to address irregular migration and provide training on how

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<sup>8</sup> MGI annual cycles run from October to September and this evaluation covers reports that should have been completed by September 2020. Most countries finished their annual cycles later than September due to the pandemic although their data collection process was already quite advanced when the pandemic broke out globally in March/April 2020.

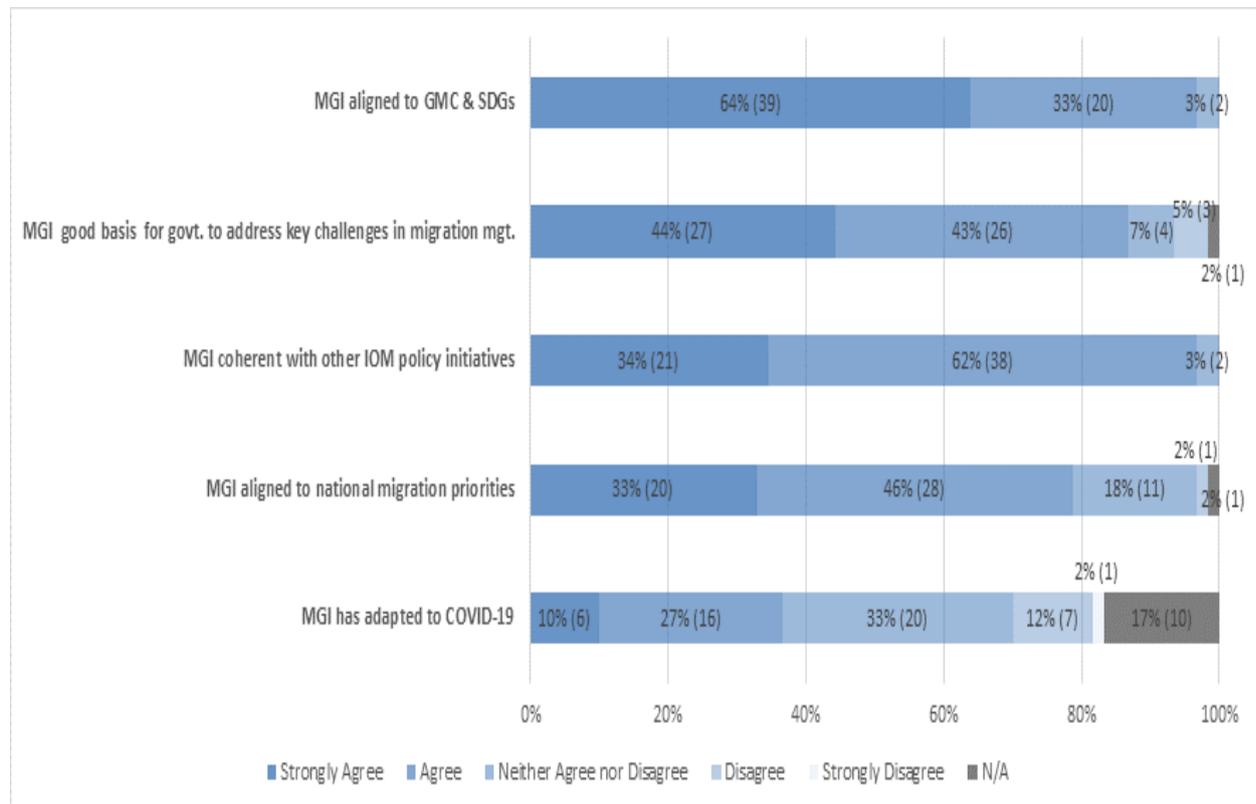
to manage trafficking. All these actions were said to result out of the MGI consultations, in order to ensure a structured migration process as advocated by the process.

Another example was reported in Costa Rica (Phase 1), where as a result of the MGI, a tracing mechanism was established to track the irregular movement of workers between Costa Rica, Panama and Nicaragua. Similarly, in Lesotho (Phase 3), the MGI was helpful in addressing the issue of irregular migration from South Africa, through the perspective of civil society and to develop advocacy actions to ensure that government policies were developed accordingly.

Iraq (Phase 5) provided a positive example of how the MGI assessment was used as a critical tool to shift perspectives on migration from an issue of security to being more migrant-centred, identifying challenges they may face and mapping the institutional mechanisms required to manage all those dealing with migrants. The establishment of an inter-ministerial/departmental working group to support the MGI process in Iraq helped to secure a migrant centred perspective, an approach which was also noted as effective elsewhere, for example in Ghana (Phase 1) and Ukraine (Phase 5).

While there were positive examples of relevance as described above, the MGI was seen as less relevant in situations of humanitarian crisis according to stakeholders and IOM staff. This was seen as partially due to the fact that agencies dealing with irregular migrants in such situations tended to be humanitarian organisations and not the government and/or government action was seen as creating displacement. This was seen as creating challenges for collaboration with IOM and engagement with the MGI. A suggestion from COs was to strengthen the links with existing IOM humanitarian initiatives such as the Displacement Tracking Matrix. Others suggested that the MGI was limited in its ability to cover humanitarian crises as it went beyond migration governance and management.

Figure 1: Relevance and coherence elements (IOM MGI focal point survey – 61 responses)



## 4.2. Coherence

The MGI programme was found to be coherent with IOM policy initiatives (internal coherence) and with inter-state processes (external coherence) although there were possibilities to improve both internal and external coherence. The extent of adaptability of the MGI programme to country and context level priorities varied. Critical factors in ensuring coordination and coherence between relevant national institutions included the appointment of a government MGI focal point and the establishment of cross-government working groups.

### **Is the link between the MGI programme and other relevant IOM policy initiatives and inter-state processes coherent?**

**IOM policy initiatives:** At country level, although the MGI was seen as a unique type of assessment, it was also complementary to other IOM initiatives. For example, for country migration profiles, as seen with Ghana (Phase 1), where the data collection developed for the MGI process supported the 2019 country migration profile.<sup>9</sup> This coherence was also noted in the survey where 97% of surveyed MGI focal points strongly agreed or agreed that the MGI was coherent with other IOM policy initiatives. Ukraine (Phase 3) provided a positive example of clear links between the MGI programme and a number of other IOM policy initiatives, which have been developed either partially or fully on the basis of recommendations emanating from the MGI.<sup>10</sup> However, despite the positive views of MGI focal points, there was a weaker link found between the MGI and the global IOM policy work. Some IOM staff spoke of the challenges to translate the MGI results to advance policy priorities and advocate for them in the broader contexts of the sustainable development agenda; others, such as Zimbabwe (Phase 5), mentioned in the survey specifically that the MGI was seen as a means to track progress on SDG 10.7.<sup>11</sup> Although different HQ departments were engaged in the formative phases (in terms of providing inputs into the questions included in the MGI Matrix), there was potentially a limited awareness of the MGI across all IOM HQ departments and associated field colleagues. This in turn limited the use of MGI results for project development, capacity building and training initiatives, with some exceptions seen such as for the Capacity Development for Migration Management (CD4MM) initiative, as described in the next paragraph.

**The CD4MM initiative:** The level of coherence between the MGI programme and the CD4MM was seen as positive. IOM staff reported that the MGI was being used by the CD4MM to help identify the capacity building needs of governments and consequently supported setting joint priorities. The MGI was also well integrated within the CD4MM operational guidance.<sup>12</sup> Ensuring that the MGI focal points were CD4MM staff was also a positive step to ensuring greater coherence according to IOM staff.

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<sup>9</sup> See; Migration in Ghana: A Country Profile 2019: <https://publications.iom.int/books/migration-ghana-country-profile-2019>

<sup>10</sup> This includes New Face of the Border-3 (IB.0180); Enhancing Training Capacities of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine (IB.0156); Consciously Made in Ukraine (LM.0415); Multi-sectoral community-driven action to mitigate the exacerbating impact of COVID-19 pandemic on main drivers of instability in conflict-affected areas of Ukraine (DP.2182) and Contribution for Humanitarian Activities included in IOM Global Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan Coronavirus Disease 2019 (DS.0045).

<sup>11</sup> The new 2020 phase may address these concerns on advancing the development agenda to an extent but was not subject to this evaluation.

<sup>12</sup> See: IOM (2020). CDMM: A guidance note for IOM country offices.

**IOM Migration Data Strategy:** The level of coherence between the MGI programme and the IOM Migration Data Strategy was also positive, with the MGI process considered to be in alignment with the strategic goal of enhancing the availability and promotion of the use of data to achieve stronger governance outcomes and positive impacts for migrants and societies. However, the strategy only makes one mention of the MGI, risking making the link and coherence between the two more difficult to identify (of note, according to the IOM, the drafters of the strategy had a rule of only citing once other IOM initiatives).

**UN processes:** Diversity was also found in relation to coherence with UN approaches, for example, in some countries there was alignment whilst in others alignment was lacking. For example, in Timor Leste (Phase 4) and Tajikistan (Phase 5), the MGI provided input into the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and several COs reported inputting into the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). Another example was Serbia (Phase 2) where previously there was a limited connection, IOM became more active in the UN Country Team (UNCT) and there was a broader interest within the UNCT on migration issues in 2020. This was seen to have led to the creation of a UN working group on the topic. The UN Mainstreaming Accelerated Policy Support missions were mentioned by IOM staff as another opportunity for alignment although no examples were seen in the countries examined. Ukraine (phase 3) was an example where CO staff said alignment was lacking with UN processes, such as greater consultation with UN agencies, mainly due to staffing limitations. The alignment with UN processes was seen as improving over the phases, for example in the 2021 structured follow-up in Ukraine, a reinforced consultation with the UN agencies is being carried out.

### **Is the MGI programme intervention aligned to the priorities of national development strategies and policies?**

The prioritisation of migration within national development strategies differed from one country to another, and this affected the extent of alignment with the MGI programme. In a number of countries, the MGI assessment data was used to feed into national development plans and included a focus on migration (Sierra Leone's 2019-2023 National Development Plan for example). Malawi, Ghana, Lesotho, and the Dominican Republic provided similar examples.

In several cases, the MGI was aligned with the establishment of national development strategies in terms of timing. For example, in the Dominican Republic, IOM worked with the government to identify migration-related indicators that would contribute to measuring SDG targets in line with the country's own national development strategy. The MGI was then used to measure SDG indicator 10.7.2 in that context.

**Adaptability of the MGI programme:** The extent of adaptability of the MGI programme to country and context level priorities varied. A number of countries, such as Morocco (Phase 1), Sri Lanka (Phase 2), Ukraine (Phase 3), and Cabo Verde (Phase 5) found the MGI to be inflexible and not adaptable to their contexts, as highlighted by this government representative:

*"The MGI contains a broad range of issues but the questions are the same for all countries, so it doesn't take into account the specificities of the issues countries face."*

This perception of lack of flexibility does not appear to be linked to the phase of implementation. However, some countries in later phases, such as Lesotho (Phase 3) and Iraq (Phase 5), did find the MGI to be sufficiently flexible to adapt to their country specificities. From the perspective of authorities, what appeared to be absent was an understanding as to the flexibility possible within the

MGI process; the possibility to adapt, add or not use indicators. This may need further clarification for the future roll-out of MGI.

**Coordination and coherence between related national institutions:** Critical factors in ensuring coordination and coherence between relevant national institutions have been the appointment of a government MGI focal point and the establishment of cross-government working groups.

For example, in Iraq (Phase 5), the creation of an inter-ministerial technical working group was a key factor in terms of coordination and the existence of the group allowed IOM to carry out collaborative technical exercises, such as the development of a migration profile, as well as implementing a training programme. Once the MGI assessment had been undertaken, the IOM country office spent significant time with each entity represented in the working group (30 people approximately), validating the assessment results and grouping the key findings of the assessment into four strategic strands/pillars which are now addressed through the country's first national migration strategy.

However, gaps were identified. For example, in Sri Lanka, (Phase 2) there was no government focal point appointed due to a reticence in terms of taking responsibility for the transversal topic of migration, and as seen in Brazil, (Phase 3) at the local level, or where there was no coordination between the entity leading the MGI process (the City Hall (Municipality) of Sao Paulo, Secretariat of Human Rights) with the federal government as the political context was not optimal for more engagement with the federal government on migration issues.

In addition, maintaining momentum and interest, particularly over the 12-month timeframe of the MGI process was seen as potentially challenging, particularly with staff turnovers in national institutions and the IOM, according to stakeholders and IOM staff interviewed.

### 4.3. Effectiveness

The MGI programme was successful in achieving its two intended outcomes with the programme improving migration governance through adoption of a whole-of-government approach, providing migration data and policy reform and/or development. There was a general consensus that support provided by the MGI team was consistent and a key enabling factor. Negative factors that impacted on the outcomes included the lack of follow-up by IOM COs following completion of MGI, fragmentation of migration information, services and data across government ministries, in addition to developing ownership of MGI amongst stakeholders.

#### **To what extent have the intended outcomes of the MGI programme been achieved?**

The MGI programme was successful in achieving its two intended outcomes with greater progress seen on outcome 1, rather than outcome 2, towards its overall objective to support evidence-based migration management through MGI assessments.

**Outcome 1: More governments assess their migration management structures using the MGI methodology:** The MGI programme has been successful in achieving this outcome in most countries it engaged with, according to stakeholders and staff interviewed/surveyed. By going through the MGI process, governments were assessing their migration management structures, knowingly or not. MGI focal points surveyed were also very positive on this outcome; 90% agreed or strongly agreed that governments could assess their migration management structures through the MGI methodology (see figure 2 below). Examples were provided in countries across all phases where the migration management structures had been assessed by governments during the MGI process including Ghana

(Phase 1), Sri Lanka (Phase 2), Brazil (Phase 3), Iraq (Phase 4), Malawi (Phase 5), Sierra Leone (Phase 5), as this government official commented:

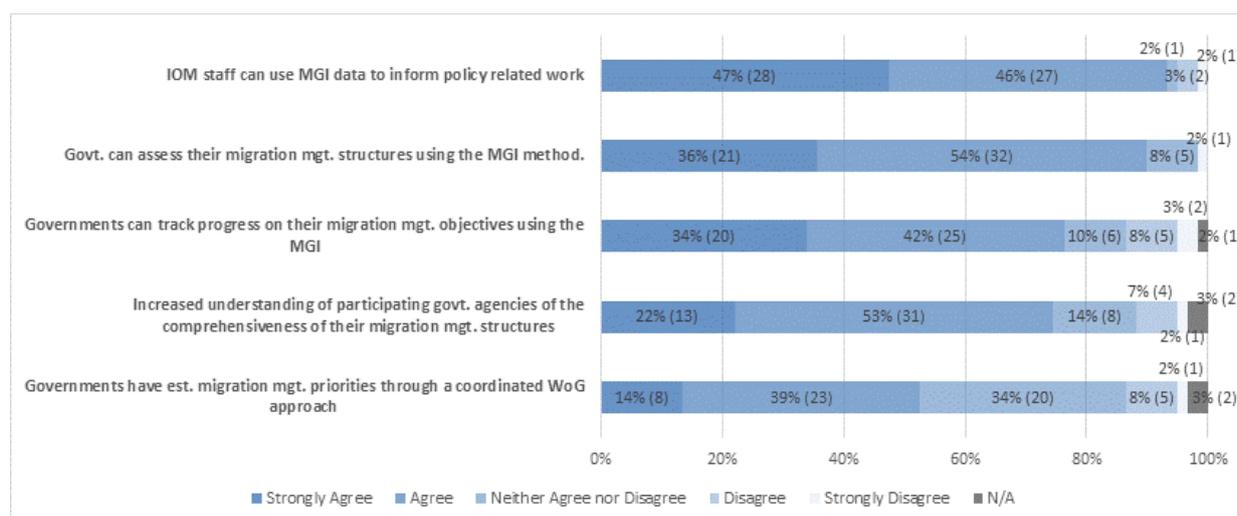
*“We used MGI as a baseline document...to give a holistic view of the migration governance structure.”*

At the same time, IOM staff cautioned that although the MGI was successful in encouraging governments to assess their migration management structures, it did not necessarily mean that they acted upon it to reform their structures in all countries, as this IOM MGI focal point commented:

*“In our country, there is currently no structure where all relevant governmental stakeholders get together to debate migration policies in general...The MGI is a unique opportunity for these authorities to sit together and assess policies and actions. However, in the current context of our country, this has not generated the political understanding or will to develop a more durable broad coordination body.”*

**Outcome 2: Governments establish migration management priorities through a coordinated whole-of-government approach:** The MGI programme has been successful in encouraging a coordinated whole-of-government approach with the countries it engaged with. Although, stakeholders and staff indicated that it was less successful than outcome 1; of the MGI focal points surveyed 53% agreed or strongly agreed on this point with one third (34%) neither agreeing nor disagreeing (see figure 2 below). The challenges seen were in moving from an assessment, as per outcome 1 to actual action of outcome 2. Nevertheless, examples were provided from countries across all phases of where they had moved towards a whole-of-government approach to varying degrees, as detailed further below.

Figure 2: Effectiveness elements (IOM MGI focal point survey – 61 responses)



### How does the MGI programme support governments’ efforts in working toward improving their migration governance?

In nearly all of the 19 countries reviewed by this evaluation, results show that the MGI supported government efforts in working towards improving their migration governance to varying degrees. As described below, migration governance was improved in a number of aspects, mostly in adopting a whole-of-government approach, providing migration data and policy reform and/or development.

Where little progress was seen, this was thought to be due to a number of reasons including limited consultation with the authorities in the design phase (e.g. Morocco, Phase 1), changes in government that meant lost momentum (Cabo Verde, Phase 5), loss of institutional memory within IOM due to

staff changes (e.g. Uganda, Phase 2), or that the perception that there is little to learn from the process (e.g. Portugal, Phase 2). As described in the section on sustainability below, the lack of systematic follow-up by IOM COs after completion of the MGI also undermined potential progress.

**Whole-of-government approach:** As an intended outcome, the whole-of-government approach was an area where engagement with the MGI supported progress. This could range from different ministries and stakeholders developing an understanding of each other’s respective activities and roles in migration management to adaptation of structures and the establishment of new mechanisms, as illustrated by the following examples found in the box below.

**Examples of whole-of-government approach**

- Ghana: The MGI brought institutions together which used to work in isolation and harmonised work between ministries leading to a greater sharing of data.
- Iraq: An inter-ministerial working group on migration was created.
- Djibouti: The government established a new coordination unit to manage migration as a result of the MGI.
- Sierra Leone: Following the MGI, the government created a Directorate of Diaspora Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (with a director and three staff).
- Sri Lanka: Through the process of completing the MGI, the relevant ministries and other stakeholders, such as civil society organisations (CSOs), came together for discussions and contribution to policy-making.
- Costa Rica: The reinforced collaboration resulting from the MGI completed in 2016 was seen as helping in providing a more coordinated response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.
- Brazil: The *MigraCidades* initiative was developed bringing together with 27 local government agencies engaged and still ongoing.

Other countries also reported positively on the promotion of a whole-of-government approach including Moldova (Phase 1), Serbia (Phase 2), Lesotho (Phase 3), Malawi (Phase 5), Sierra Leone (Phase 5) and Cabo Verde (Phase 5).

**Evidence base:** The MGI process was seen as supporting countries in developing an evidence base in three respects. First, the completed MGI Matrix served as an evidence base in itself; many stakeholders spoke of the MGI serving as a “baseline”, providing the first ever overview of migration management in their countries, as this MGI focal point commented:

*“The MGI was an eye-opener and a good starting point. It gave a ‘360 degree view’ of the migration-related problems. People in the government started to get a better understanding of the size of these problems. Before there were many attempts by the government to reform or address migration issues but based on anecdotal evidence.”*

Second, through the MGI process, it motivated authorities to collate and publish specific data points/sets for the first time, for example on migration nationalities (local MGI-Brazil), records of person trafficked (Malawi), outward migration (Sri Lanka), border crossings (Sierra Leone) and migration services (Cabo Verde).

Third, the MGI supported governments in identifying gaps in migration data and information; this was reported in virtually all countries that carried out the MGI.

**Policy and strategy reform/development:** A key area where the MGI supported improved migration governance was in the reform and/or development of a migration-related policy and strategy.

Examples were seen in the majority of the countries reviewed (including those highlighted in IOM MGI focal points survey) as found in the box below.

**Examples of policy and strategy reform/development**

- Iraq: The MGI led directly to the development of the country’s first national migration strategy.
- Malawi: The MGI supported the development of a national migration policy (awaiting approval). The government is also now considering ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families and developing a national action plan for the GCM which the MGI supported.
- Sierra Leone: Lessons learnt from MGI were incorporated into the draft Migration Policy (awaiting approval). Based on gaps identified by the MGI, the government launched a national action plan 2020-23 to combat human trafficking in 2020.
- Ghana: MGI contributed to the development of a toolkit on mainstreaming migration into local development by the National Development Planning Commission.
- Lesotho: MGI supported the national migration development policy and the development of a migration scoring methodology to be used for the UN Development Assistance Framework 2019-2023.<sup>13</sup> (now replaced by the UNSDCF).
- Sri Lanka: The MGI contributed to the update of the national migration policy for employment.
- Brazil: The local MGI for Sao Paulo supported more evidence-based policy-making for migrants in the city, including language promotion, combatting xenophobia, migrant service centres and professional orientation.
- Honduras: Based on the results of the MGI, the need to develop a national policy for migration was prioritised by the government.

***What factors have affected (positively or negatively) the achievement of the outcomes?***

The following table provides a ranking of the positive and negative factors that affected the achievements of the outcomes mentioned by stakeholders and IOM staff (in the interviews and survey), with the most frequently mentioned factors listed first. Factors are also indicated by MGI outcome 1 and outcome 2 (abbreviated as O1 and O2)<sup>14</sup>.

**Table 2: Positive and negative factors**

Positive	Negative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Interest of the governments to participate in the MGI programme (O1, O2)</li> <li>• The level of support offered by the IOM COs (O1, O2)</li> <li>• The level of support provided from the MGI team (MPD and GMDAC) (O1, O2)</li> <li>• IOM’s programmatic support for areas covered by MGI (O2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of follow-up by IOM COs following completion of MGI (O2)</li> <li>• Fragmentation of migration information, services and data across government ministries (O1, O2)</li> <li>• Challenges in developing ownership of MGI amongst stakeholders (O1, O2)</li> <li>• Changes in governments implying delays in the process and validating MGI products (O1)</li> <li>• Limited consultation with stakeholders (earlier phases) (O1, O2)</li> </ul>

<sup>13</sup> See UN Lesotho, UNDAF for Lesotho 2019-2023, p. 54, where the MGI result is used as an indicator: <https://lesotho.un.org/en/21758-united-nations-development-assistance-framework-lesotho-undaf-2019-2023>

<sup>14</sup> MGI outcome 1: More governments assess their migration management structures using the MGI methodology and MGI outcome 2: Governments establish migration management priorities through a coordinated whole-of-government approach.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MGI consultative process that built strong ownership of MGI (later phases) (O1)</li> <li>• Quality of MGI products produced jointly by MGI and EIU (O1, O2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MGI process perceived as a too short timeline (O1, O2)</li> <li>• Lack of transparency of MGI methodology and access to results (O2)</li> <li>• EIU researchers sometimes did not have sufficient knowledge about the country context (O1)</li> </ul>
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These factors are further discussed in the relevant chapters of this report.

### **To what extent has the MGI programme managed to provide consistent support to IOM offices engaged in the project?**

There was a general consensus from the IOM CO staff that the support provided by MPD and GMDAC was consistent and a key enabling factor (as listed in the above table). CO staff commented that the support and guidance provided was important for their understanding of the MGI programme and to advance it with the governments and other stakeholders. The presence (virtual or in-person) of the MGI team in inter-ministerial meetings and presentations was also appreciated. The ability of the MGI team and EIU researchers to communicate in the languages of the countries was also appreciated (e.g. Portuguese for Cabo Verde).

There were no major factors identified that hindered the support provided. One point highlighted was that the MGI focal points in each CO varied in their ability to support the MGI programme, notably in any follow-up required following completion as detailed below in Sustainability. A number of CO staff pointed out that the MGI focal points were for the large part not funded for their work on MGI and supported the programme in addition to their other funded work activities.

### **To what extent has the current COVID-19 pandemic affected the MGI programme implementation and how has the programme adapted to the pandemic?**

The COVID-19 pandemic slowed the implementation of the MGI programme, notably for those countries in Phase 5 (October 2019 – August 2020). IOM staff members commented that challenges were seen in securing the participation of stakeholders for consultations due to lockdowns and shifting of priorities to COVID-19 response.

IOM CO staff estimated that the COVID-19 pandemic implied a delay of up to three months for the completion of the MGI process. However, staff were mixed in their feedback on the flexibility of the MGI programme to adapt the need for an extended timeline, with some indicating they would have liked extra time to adjust for COVID-19, although not all did request formally for any extension. In agreement with the main donor (US Government), the MGI team did provide a one year no-cost extension for the MGI process due to delays caused by COVID-19.

As described in the section on Coherence, the MGI programme added a set of COVID-19 questions/indicators for Phase 5 onwards that was appreciated by stakeholders.

#### **4.4. Efficiency**

Overall, the MGI managed partnerships, as well as human and financial resources efficiently. Coordination was also found to be managed efficiently between the various entities involved, with challenges seen in situations lacking a central government focal point. The EIU was seen as a valued

partner for the MGI programme with the collaboration both efficient and cost-effective. For resource mobilization, a concern expressed was the reliance on one main donor for the MGI and the need to diversify funding sources. While resources available to the MGI enabled for the production of high-quality products, where resources were scarce was at the country level, with the use of non-funded focal points within COs.

**Have the coordination structures between the two managing divisions at IOM, and the regional offices and country offices, worked efficiently?**

The coordination between the two managing divisions, MPD and GMDAC, was seen as efficient. It was also seen as having improved since the programme launch, according to IOM HQ and CO staff. As described above, CO staff were very positive on the support provided by MPD and GMDAC, with their respective roles clear for the COs. Of the surveyed MGI focal points, 74% agreed or strongly agreed that coordination amongst IOM entities for MGI was efficient (see figure 6 below). A limitation identified was the involvement of the Regional Offices (ROs), which were considered as not informed or involved enough in the MGI process, even for Phase 5 countries. According to IOM CO staff, all contact was established directly between the HQ teams and the COs with the ROs rarely involved or in copy for email exchanges. Of note, the roles and responsibilities for the COs and the MGI team are explained in the MGI handbook (p. 21), but no specific role is stated for ROs, aside from involvement with the selection process of the countries.

The COs were seen as efficient in their coordination with the national authorities and stakeholders. Results from the surveyed MGI focal points indicate that 77% agreed or strongly agreed that in-country coordination between IOM and stakeholders was efficient (see figure 6 below). Several MGI focal points mentioned that coordination could be complicated when the CO was implementing multiple projects with the authorities in related areas leading to confusion on the side of the authorities. One solution proposed by IOM staff was ensuring that all CO staff dealing with the authorities were briefed and aware of the MGI process (and also that the IOM MGI focal point was aware of all relevant IOM projects), as this MGI focal point commented:

*“There is a lack of a coordination mechanism among IOM departments/divisions and there are similar activities being implemented at the same time, which delays or confuses government counterparts. All migration governances should be coordinated with the national teams before implementing.”*

There were no major coordination challenges seen between the MGI focal point and the national consultants that could be hired to support the MGI process; there were some challenges in working with the EIU researchers as described below. Where challenges were seen for COs was when a central government focal point was not appointed by the authorities, making it difficult to coordinate across the various ministries and institutions involved with migration governance.

Coordination was also carried out with the UN bodies in-country: of the surveyed MGI focal points, 62% agreed or strongly agreed that in-country coordination between IOM and UN programming was efficient, although 22% neither agreed nor disagreed and 12% strongly disagreed or disagreed (see figure 6 below). These mixed results were reflected in the feedback from COs. Although there were positive examples seen of coordination and consequent linkages with UN programming, such as informing the process of development of CCA and UNSDCF as described under Coherence, it was inconsistent across countries and phases. Both UN stakeholders and IOM staff thought that these linkages could be strengthened and made more systematic in the MGI process.

### **Has the partnership with the EIU been efficient and to what extent does this collaboration remain needed?**

The EIU was seen as a valued partner for the MGI programme with the collaboration both efficient and cost-effective. The value of the EIU was in the expertise they could bring globally in establishing and managing indexes, in addition to their global network of national researchers. The EIU were also appreciated for the high quality of the work they produced and their ability to respect timelines.

In the initial phases, challenges were seen in the liaison between the EIU researchers and COs (where the COs felt not involved or informed of their work), which did improve in subsequent phases according to IOM staff. For most countries, the EIU researchers were reported as knowing the contexts and bringing the required expertise. However, for some countries, the COs questioned the quality of the work and commented that they had to re-write the Matrix responses and report to adapt it to the local context and incorporate the views of stakeholders, such as for Phase 1 countries (Ghana and Morocco), Phase 2 (Ecuador) and Phase 3 (Lesotho). These challenges were not reported for Phase 4 and 5 countries.

With all interviews conducted remotely by the EIU researchers, some countries (e.g. Djibouti and Moldova) thought that in-person meetings (pre-COVID) would have been more appropriate. They would have also liked the EIU researchers to be available to participate in the presentations of the findings to stakeholders (as they commented it seemed odd that the person who carried out the bulk of the research was not present to respond to questions). The EIU researchers also relied largely on internet sources that led to using some outdated resources (e.g. Djibouti). Some COs also perceived that the partnership with the EIU was the reason why IOM was not always sharing the MGI methodology and results, due to the shared ownership with the EIU of the MGI methodology (although the MGI team confirmed it was their decision not to share widely the methodology).

The partnership with the MGI was seen as cost-effective with the IOM allocating USD \$13,500 to the EIU for each MGI assessment carried out. This was seen as good value for money compared to other alternatives, such as the hiring of research consultants individually, which was tested for the structured follow-up assessments but found to be more costly in terms of budget and staff time needed (i.e. recruitment and management of consultants).

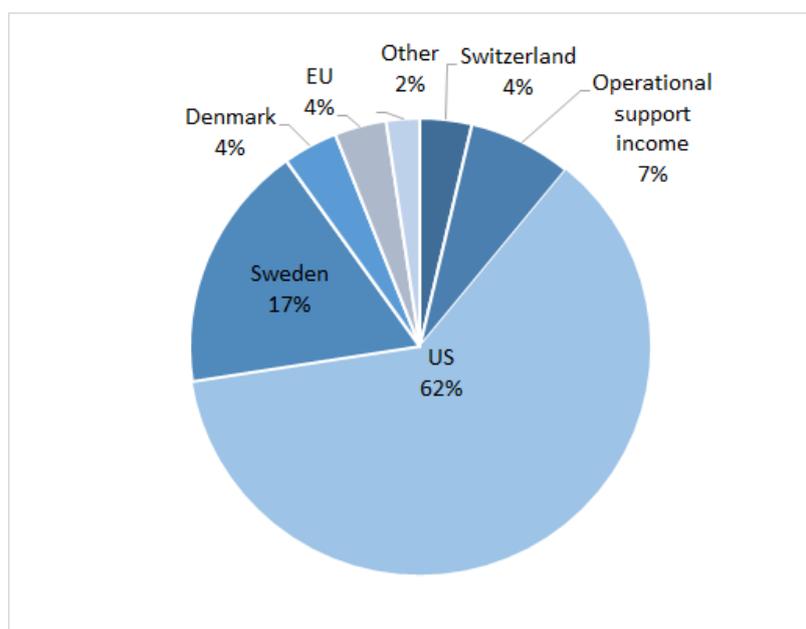
### **What are the systems in place to support resource mobilization for the programming both at the global and field levels?**

Resource mobilisation for the MGI was carried out centrally by the MPD in collaboration with GMDAC and with the support of the IOM Washington DC. Since its launch, the main donor supporting the MGI programme has been the US government<sup>15</sup>, accounting for 62% of all funding, as seen in figure 3 below. Other donors have included Sweden, Switzerland, Denmark, the European Union (Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development) and the Migration Multi-partner Trust Fund (MPTF) (included in “Other” with the IOM Development Fund (US \$50,000) and Germany (US \$30,000)). A concern expressed by IOM staff was the reliance on one main donor for the MGI and the need to diversify funding sources.

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<sup>15</sup> Specifically, the Office of International Migration; Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration; US Department of State.

Figure 3: MGI donors: 2016-2021

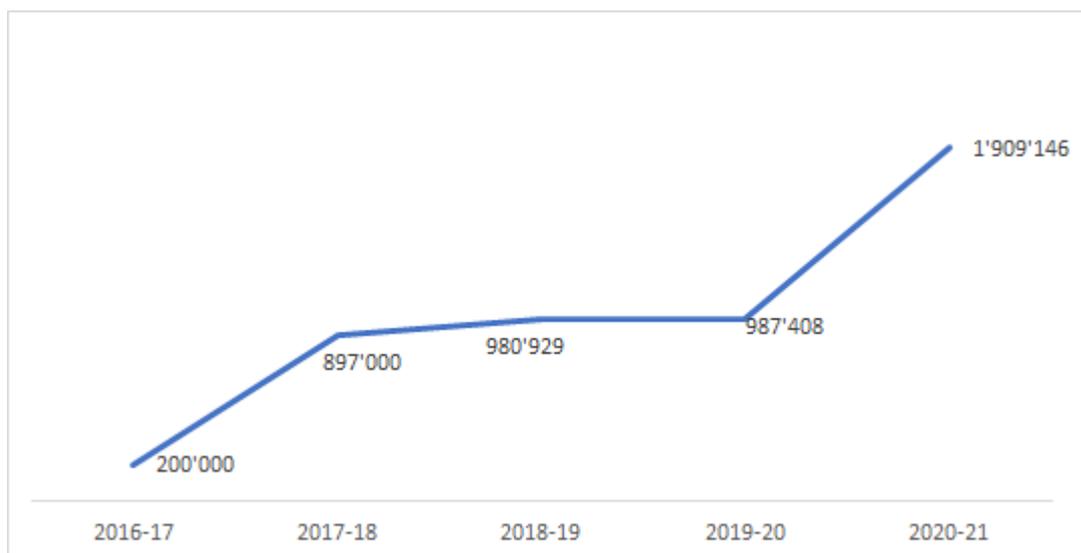


At the country level, funding was provided by the IOM HQ for the duration of the MGI process. This included funding for the EIU researcher, a national consultant, travel and publication costs (n.b. staff costs for IOM MGI focal points are not covered as described above). Therefore, resource mobilisation was not an issue for COs. However, funding challenges identified by COs were linked to resource mobilisation for follow-up projects and initiatives resulting from the MGI findings. IOM CO staff commented that there was no systematic support for resource mobilization for such projects and initiatives, which was needed given the expectations created by the MGI. Only a few COs could provide examples where they had successfully developed funding proposals based on the gaps identified by the MGI, such as in Ukraine as described above and Lesotho where funding was secured from the European Union and the African Union to support the development of a national migration development policy. Examples were also provided where follow-up projects were funded by the IOM Development Fund and the CD4MM initiative.

#### **How well has the MGI programme used its human and financial resources?**

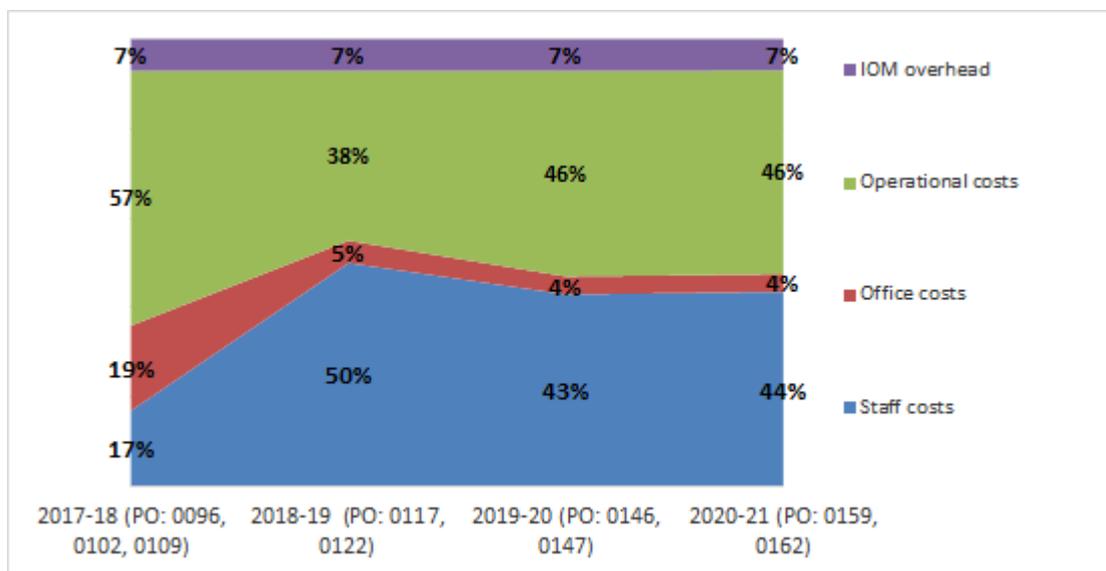
The programme was found to have used its available human and financial resources efficiently. The yearly budget available has increased nearly ten-fold since the programme launch from USD \$200,000 in 2016-17 to USD \$1,909,146 in 2020-21 (see figure 4 below). The number of countries carrying out the MGI has remained constant; from 15 in phase 1 (pilot) to 16 in 2020-21 although the number of MGI assessments has increased with the addition of local MGI and follow-up assessments, totalling 51 in 2020-21 (16 country-level, 24 local MGI and 11 follow-up assessments). The cost per assessment has remained constant over time (USD \$23,500 in 2020-21; 13,500 for EIU and 10,000 for national consultant) with new activities added in later years such as the structured follow-up assessments for previous MGIs (USD\$ 10,000 per country in 2020-21). The increased budget was mainly used for funding additional staff for the MGI team and the new activities mentioned.

Figure 4: MGI annual programme budget



An analysis of budget expenditure by budget element, using some of the largest grants to the MGI programme illustrates that staff costs have doubled from 2017-18 to 2020-22 and operational costs decreased, indicating an increase in the size of the MGI team over time. According to the MGI team, this represented a professionalization of the approach with more staff dedicated to assist the CO with the MGI process (confirmed by the strengthened support seen the latter phases).

Figure 5: MGI programme budget by element (select grants)



The resources available for the MGI enabled the production of high-quality products as described above. However, resources at the country level were considered as more challenging. The MGI programme was managed by IOM MGI in-country focal points, predominantly not funded by the MGI programme. The focal points carried out the MGI tasks in addition to their other funded activities, which was considered as a sub-optimal working arrangement according to IOM CO staff, as this MGI focal point commented:

*“Resources allocated for each mission are inadequate as they do not allow staff costs to be covered. This will inevitably put huge pressures on MGI focal persons, who have to deliver on the MGI process as an additional responsibility.”*

The issue of limited resources for COs was confirmed in the survey of MGI focal points where 14% disagreed that allocated resources were adequate and 24% neither agreed or disagreed, comparatively high neutral and negative survey results. This point was also highlighted in the survey open question responses.

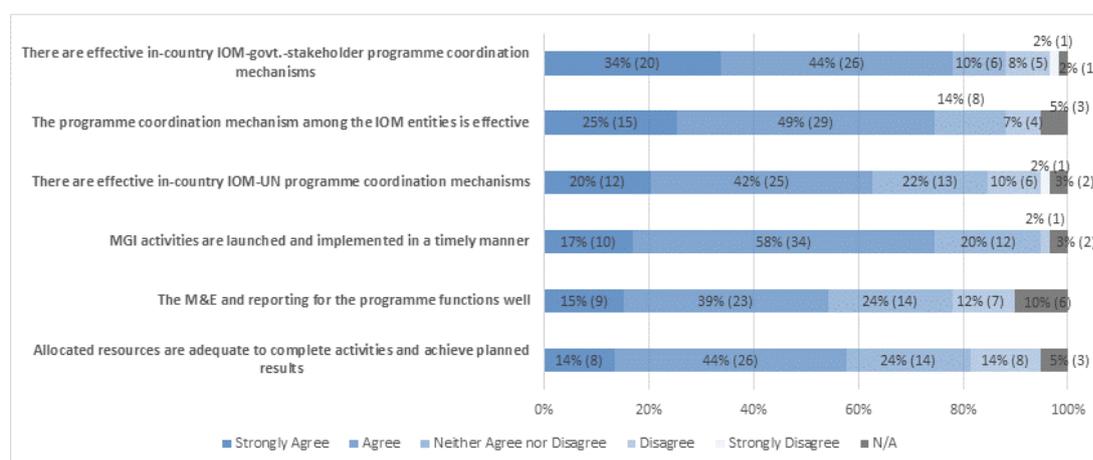
Concerning timeliness, the MGI programme was seen as being carried out in a timely manner as confirmed in the interviews and the survey: 75% of surveyed IOM MGI focal points agreed or strongly agreed that activities were launched and implemented in a timely manner (see figure 6 below). As described above, some COs faced challenges in adapting timelines to the delays caused by COVID-19; other COs thought it was unrealistic to have the same timeline for all countries as this IOM MGI focal point commented:

*“The MGI does not seem to take into account specific country realities. The timeline provided for completion of the process, which is identical to all countries, seems to have been based on IOM's own (and EIU's) speed and in-house capacities.”*

The timeline for the MGI process at the country level runs from October to September, based on the US funding calendar. In theory, this implies that all countries (some 10-15 a year) start at the same time, creating potentially high workloads for the MGI and EIU teams. However, according to the IOM and EIU staff, this does not occur as the countries vary widely in the time taken to launch the MGI process, effectively spreading out the workload throughout the year. As mentioned above, some COs would have liked more flexibility in the timeline.

Concerning monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and reporting for the MGI, government officials and COs are surveyed on the MGI process following its completion and several questions were included in IOM’s institutional questionnaire for COs on the use of MGI results and potential future interest in the MGI. Quarterly progress reports were also submitted to donors. 54% of surveyed MGI focal points agreed or strongly agreed that M&E and reporting for the programme functioned well; with 24% neither agreeing or disagreeing and 12% disagreeing (and 10% - N/A). These mixed results reflect the different views of IOM staff on M&E and reporting for MGI. While the final deliverables were clear, not all CO staff were aware of the M&E and reporting mechanisms that were in place. Some CO staff thought there should be more systematic monitoring of any follow-up to the MGI.

**Figure 6: Efficiency elements (IOM MGI focal point survey – 61 responses)**



#### 4.5. Impact

The MGI programme was seen as having a potential impact on national migration management with increased knowledge, capacities and improved collaboration, policies and structures, both at the institutional and individual levels. Positive unintended consequences included the creation of new relationships, multi-stakeholder processes and partnerships. Negative unintended consequences included raised expectations and some disappointment from the authorities in the lack of funding and follow-up from the IOM and creation of tensions due to limited consultations.

#### What positive or negative unintended changes can be observed as a result of governments having implemented the MGI programme?

The positive and negative unintended changes identified are listed in the following table:

Table 3: Positive and negative unintended consequences of MGI

Positive unintended consequences	Negative unintended consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Created new relationships between migration actors, such as between civil society and government</li> <li>Positive experience of government officials in inter-ministerial and multi-stakeholder processes</li> <li>Dialogue established between local, regional and national levels of authorities (through local MGIs)</li> <li>Strengthened relationships between IOM COs and government agencies</li> <li>Reinforced relationships between IOM COs and broader range of migration actors</li> <li>Increased knowledge for IOM COs of migration-related laws and policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raised expectations of authorities of future IOM funding for migration-related projects</li> <li>Disappointment of authorities in lack of follow-up from IOM</li> <li>Created tensions between IOM and authorities due to limited consultation (Phase 1)</li> <li>Financial implications for authorities in completing the MGI</li> </ul>

#### What indications are there that the MGI programme will have longer-term impacts and what could be those impacts?<sup>16</sup>

The MGI programme was seen as having potential impact on national migration management structures and individual capacities. This was confirmed in the interviews conducted as well as the survey of MGI focal points, where (78%) strongly agreed or agreed that the MGI had contributed effectively to building national capacities for migration governance (see figure 8 below). This evaluation identified several aspects that could positively influence the long-term impact of the MGI programme and are complementary to the outcomes identified in effectiveness:

**Increased knowledge and capacities:** The MGI was seen as having increased capacities for governments to better understand migration governance in terms of the whole-of-government approach as well as increasing knowledge of the activities of migration actors amongst them. The anticipated increased evidence base was also seen as a potential long-term contribution as described under Effectiveness.

<sup>16</sup> This evaluation question has been combined with a similar question under “Sustainability”; *Does the MGI programme contribute to the sustainability of migration management at the government level?*

Individual capacities were also reinforced through workshops and training. In some cases, it was said to have strengthened the ability to have round table discussions at the local level creating awareness about individual and institutional responsibilities.

**Improved collaboration, policies and structures:** MGI's contribution in improving the whole-of-government approach for migration had potential for long-term impact as detailed under Effectiveness. Government stakeholders indicated that this has already had an impact on their work as it allowed them to better assess the priorities and coordinate with other entities, involving more stakeholders in the process than before, as these government stakeholders commented:

*"There is one advantage with the MGI and that is that it makes it necessary to consolidate efforts with other public authorities. Through the participation in the MGI, we really improved our dialogue and that's exactly one of the great advantages of the MGI. The more dialogue you are in the better your relationships, so this is a positive sustainable result."*

*"Yes, it has strengthened collaboration and pointed out shortfalls, which we are now seriously thinking of addressing such as ratifying the conventions on of labour migration and labour export."*

The potential long-term impact was also in the migration or migration-related policies and strategies as described under Effectiveness. Stakeholders commented if put in place and implemented, these policies, and strategies would have long-term impact on improving migration management in their countries.

**Implementation of follow-up on projects/initiatives:** Some examples were seen where governments had built on the MGI with their own initiatives, such as the Quito Process in the Americas (see highlight box below). Some examples of COs building on MGI results to develop new IOM projects were found but to a limited extent as described above under Efficiency.

#### **The Quito process**

In September 2018, 14 Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guyana, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay) met to exchange information and establish a regional strategy to address the Venezuelan migration crisis affecting the region. The result was the creation of a technical working space that sought to deepen the mechanisms to attend to migrants, international financial cooperation and the creation of an institutional mechanisms. This was thought to be partially motivated by the MGI as Costa Rica brought information found through the MGI to the regional conference.

#### **4.6. Cross-cutting issues**

The cross-cutting themes of a rights-based approach, gender and the environment are considered within the MGI programme to varying degrees according to stakeholders and IOM staff, and as reflected in the different weight given to them in the MGI Matrix. Overall, there was broad support from government representatives and stakeholders of the consideration of rights-based approach and gender, but the dominant view was that environmental issues were weakly integrated within the MGI approach.

## How does the MGI programme take into consideration cross-cutting themes such as gender, a rights-based approach and the environment?

Overall, stakeholders and IOM staff interviewed were less informed about cross-cutting issues than other aspects of the MGI process. As described below, of those who responded there was broad support from government representatives and other stakeholders of the consideration of a rights-based approach and gender, (with some noting that this was already part of their standard policy framework approach), but much less understanding for how the environment fits within the MGI approach.

The variation in support for the different themes of gender, rights-based approach and the environment and the extent to which they were considered by the MGI process and informed subsequent discussion and inclusion in the country reports, was also in part determined by the extent that they were already considered priority themes of the country.

**A rights-based approach:** The rights-based approach was well integrated within the MGI process, making up the first of the six dimensions of the MGI Matrix, *Adherence to international standards and fulfilment of migrants' rights* (which includes 24 related indicators), as well as referenced within other questions and guidelines throughout the Matrix. It was described by a number of stakeholders and IOM staff interviewed as “cross-cutting” to the MGI process and the closest or most “intrinsic” of the themes to the existing policy approach of IOM and many participating governments. This view was also supported by MGI focal points, 81% of whom agreed or strongly agreed that a rights-based approach was integrated into the implementation of the programme (See figure 7 below).

Evidence also suggested that the rights-based approach employed by the MGI programme was effective in addressing governments’ consideration of rights-based issues:

*“We have a national plan to address violence against vulnerable populations ... what we tried to do is develop special protocols for vulnerable populations such as minors for example and of course women. There are instruments that had existed created in regions and we are now looking at how to make them transversal.”* Government representative

*“Guidelines have been developed for attention and protection of women in the migration context ... (by) the CRM (Comité Regional de Migración) about transiting migrants. The CRM also presented best practices for vulnerable societies such as migrant women, minors or people with disabilities.”* Government representative

*“African countries that have a lot of migration, they should look at more than just having a place for them, but also do they have the same rights as those who are already there? For example, a [migrant] child born here does not have the right to his or her birth certificate. These are human rights.”* Government representative

**Gender:** Gender was also relatively well integrated into the MGI programme, included throughout the Matrix indicators in questions and guidelines and with respect to the disaggregation of data collected. This view was supported by MGI focal points surveyed, 66% of whom agreed, or strongly agreed, that gender equality was mainstreamed in the MGI programme (See figure 7 below). The integration of gender is also supported by IOM’s mandate to address gender in all areas of work, “*Gender mainstreaming into activities is standard*”, (CO staff) and the assumption by many IOM staff who responded to the question on gender that it was “*taken care of*” (IOM staff).

Consideration given to gender was also found to vary according to differences in the perceived importance and relevance given to it by participating governments. There was an indication that

flexibility in the MGI programme allowed a greater focus on gender where it was prioritised by the Government as important (e.g. Chile and Djibouti). Related to this, a factor also mentioned in the consideration of gender, was the participation of a government ministry or department for women in the MGI process. As noted by IOM staff, the inclusion in one country of the ministry for women in the MGI consultation led to paying greater attention to gender throughout as *“they looked at topics such as services offered specifically to women in migration and large families, among others.”* IOM staff.

A number of governments and other stakeholders noted gender as a key aspect of their work:

*“Guidelines have been developed for attention and protection of women in the migration context. There are recommendations for every aspect of migration.”* Government representative.

*“Yes, gender is a very key aspect in the Migration Policy and the protection of the rights of migrants.... Gender (is) mostly about human trafficking and awareness raising around this. Bit of mainstreaming has been done within the policy itself.”* IOM Staff

*“In the previous strategy there were no indicators focused on gender in terms of balance but it will be integrated into new strategy.”* Government representative

The focus on gender by the MGI process was also noted having *“helped to focus on gender and inclusiveness”* (Government representative) and as effective in highlighting gaps in the collection of gender disaggregated data especially in the context of irregular migrants.

However, while there was evidence that gender was relatively well integrated into the MGI process to a positive effect, this was not the view of all involved:

*“The problem of migration is we lose gender.”* External stakeholder

*“While gender and rights-based approach are mainstreamed in the data collection, it doesn't necessarily result in a gender or rights-based approach report.”* IOM MGI focal point

**Environmental considerations:** Environmental issues were considered by stakeholders and IOM staff as having the weakest integration within the MGI process despite its increasing importance and relevance. Environment considerations are included in the Matrix, twice in relation to the fifth dimension, *Effectively address the mobility dimension of crises*, as a question related to environmental degradation and as guidance referencing environmental crisis.<sup>17</sup>

Climate change and the environment was mentioned by a few governments as part of the MGI process in relation to a number of migration areas including, disaster preparedness, (Sierra Leone and local MGI) and environmental events that cause internal migration (Ghana). A CO staff also highlighted the use of the MGI in relation to helping improve a climate change and migration programme they had with the government.

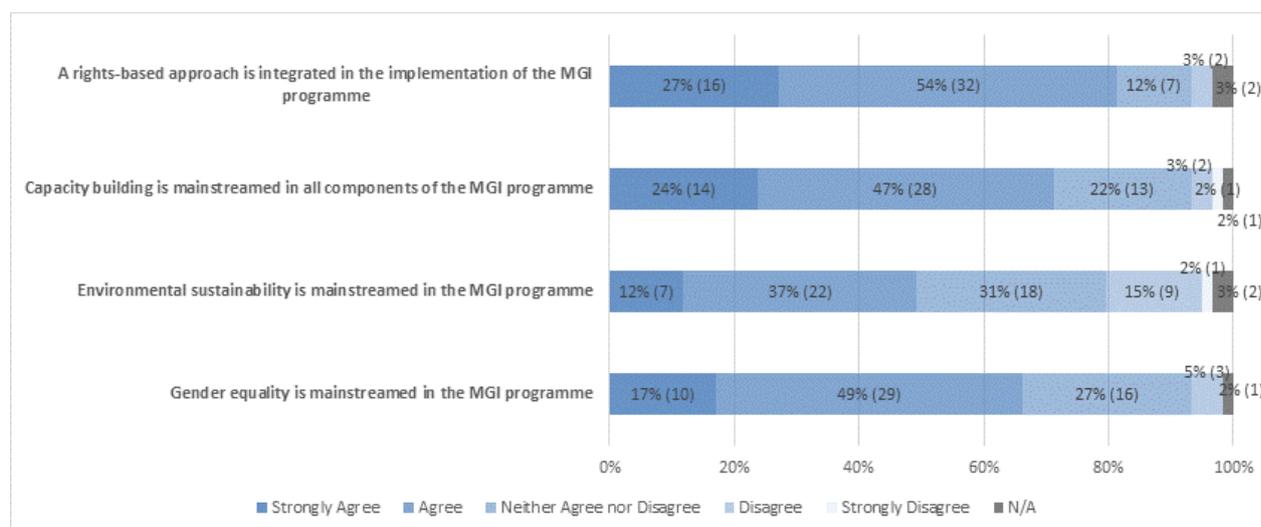
Less than half (49%) of MGI focal points surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that environment had been mainstreamed within the MGI programme, (see figure 7 below). Many CO staff also stated that they were not aware of the environment being included: *“I am not sure I have ever seen anything related to the environment,”* (CO staff), *“there was nothing on the environment”* (CO staff) and *“environmental sustainability is not included under any of the six areas”* (IOM MGI focal point). The weak consideration of environmental issues was underscored by a MGI focal point who noted:

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<sup>17</sup> Environmental issues and gender are also not included in the additional indicators developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, *Temporary addition to Migration Governance Indicators (2020-2021)*.

*“Environmental sustainability as well as the relation between climate change and migration needs to be further developed among government counterparts.”*

**Figure 7: Cross-cutting elements (IOM MGI focal point survey – 61 responses)**



**Governments priority to cross-cutting issues:** As previously noted, there was a wide variation on the priority given to cross-cutting themes by all stakeholders including governments. However, there was evidence of general support from a number of governments, as well as evidence of inclusion of the issues having helped identify areas for improvement and supporting changes in practice:

*“In the MGI the cross-cutting issues strengthened institutions and programmes.”* External stakeholder

*“Cross-cutting issues are mainstreamed in the indicators...This is very good as the government is then nudged into seeing this and also noticing this in the reforms.”* IOM staff

*“Cross-cutting issues have been taken into consideration in the update of the National Policy on Migration for employment.”* Government representative

*“..migrants are not specifically mentioned in the Disaster management policy. Following MGI (there is a) higher likelihood the Government will include migrants in subsequent plans. Now we have the National Disaster agency and will receive some documents and all the migration stakeholders will ensure that migrants will be included in these documents as the MGI highlighted those areas.”* CO staff

The low response to interview questions on cross-cutting themes, especially related to the environment from all MGI stakeholders may indicate that further work/focus and support is needed to ensure a more effective consideration by governments. The need for further support on cross-cutting themes was also noted by IOM staff:

*“Cross-cutting topics ... the IOM COs themselves can’t deliver this.”* CO staff

*“There is a need to reemphasize the transversal topics in every single stage of the project, to be aware and make efforts to mainstream them, e.g. emphasise always the rights-based approach when we talk with the government or when we promote an event. We need a checklist to do that. We do it by heart, but it would be useful to have a guideline ... Somehow it is a matter of making the cross-cutting topics explicit. The government does not have the UN language. It does not think that they implement a rights-based approach to housing for example.”* CO staff.

## 4.7. Sustainability

The MGI programme was found to have elements that contributed to sustainability, particularly in providing government entities with a stronger network with other government and migration actors. Limitations in sustainability were linked to the programme design, ownership and follow-up.

### **How does the MGI programme ensure that the approach remains sustainable and used beyond the programme cycle?**

The programme was found to have limited sustainability mechanisms integrated in its design, partly as a consequence of its one-year funding cycle and the projectisation nature of IOM's activities. Stakeholders and staff referred to a need for increased involvement of stakeholders at the onset of the programme and potential mandatory action plans as well as more systematic and inclusive follow-up as possible solutions to ensuring a more sustainable approach. The MGI was perceived as a "one-off" exercise largely carried out by the IOM and the EIU, particularly in the earlier phases (1 to 3), that did not facilitate its sustainability and ownership, as this government official commented:

*"The MGI is not self-sufficient. One study is not enough to solve all problems. In particular, the scarce resources are a limitation. There is the need to make regular updates of the exercise."* Local government official

**Ongoing coordination:** The establishment of ongoing coordination including cross-government or cross-ministerial committees and working groups were important elements for encouraging sustainability. Ongoing coordination was seen in Ghana (Phase 1), Brazil (Phase 3), Ukraine (Phase 3), Lesotho (Phase 3), Djibouti (Phase 4), and Iraq (Phase 5), as well as a non-governmental working group established in Lesotho (Phase 4). Also established as a follow-up in Brazil (Phase 3) (and still continuing) was the National School of Public Administration (Ministry of Economy) project, to certify local authorities regarding their migration policies.

**IOM-government relations:** A key factor identified in the maintenance of MGI outcomes was the link between the government and the COs. According to stakeholders and IOM staff, a strong and stable link between these entities was said to facilitate the MGI process as well as ensuring continuity after the programme was completed. Challenges were identified in countries with frequent changes in government. For example, in Ecuador a new administration was elected, and it was not clear what aspects of the completed MGI would be included in the national strategy. Similarly, in Djibouti the report had not been published and there was uncertainty about how the newly elected administration would approach it.

Changes in IOM CO Chiefs of Mission (CoMs) and/or MGI focal points had a similar impact. While some MGI focal points were in place for a longer period of time (for example, Moldova and Mexico), others had moved to new postings. Rotations of CoM also influenced relationships with government entities. The value of contributions from MGI focal points varied depending on the country. For example, in Mexico, the focal point was seen as key to the success of the programme and the continuation after the first MGI was concluded, whereas in Uganda a change in focal point and a new CoM meant that institutional memory on the MGI was largely lost.

**Stakeholder involvement:** The evaluation found that aside from government entities, there was limited involvement of external stakeholders in the MGI process which had an impact on ownership according to stakeholders and IOM staff. Only 48% of surveyed MGI focal points strongly agreed or agreed that there is strong government ownership or leadership of MGI processes (see figure 8). This was seen to evolve in the later phases, starting with Phase 3 where increased participation from and consultations with civil society and UN agencies was noted. However, it was also highlighted that more efforts were required by COs to ensure government ownership beyond the completion of the programme.

While a stronger link to the UN agencies in particular was mentioned as a way to secure sustainability beyond the MGI completion, few examples of this link were found by this evaluation. However, this also varied according to phases and has improved more recently. Serbia is an example of stronger involvement of UN agencies and links to the UNCT. Sustainability was also seen as linked to other initiatives that have mechanisms for measuring progress on the GCM and the SDGs (through NVRs).

A key point mentioned as essential to the sustainability of the MGI results was the availability of financial and human resources, which were lacking often for the follow-up phase, as these IOM MGI focal points commented:

*“Ensure that financial resources are available in terms of long-term to ensure sustainability at any mission that will be working on it. There is a lot of motivation by the government to continue working on these projects so if they provide some resources and the IOM office is able to provide some it will continue.”*

*“There is the need to provide some seed funding to support intervention geared at addressing the gaps identified during the assessment.”*

**Access to MGI Matrix and results:** Another point mentioned by stakeholders and IOM staff that influenced sustainability was access to the MGI results. Both stakeholders and IOM staff mentioned that they did not know how to have access to the MGI methodology and results (such as the MGI Matrix), for example government officials who were not the central focal point or CO staff who were not the focal points. This impacted on their ability to use the MGI results for future activities, as this IOM MGI focal point commented when speaking of improvements needed:

*“Publication of the indicators that compose the Matrix: We have been asked several times for access to this material and, although we understand that it would not be advisable to publish the Matrix filled out for a specific government, publishing the general indicators would be good for transparency and consolidation of the methodology; Promote spaces for peer-to-peer exchanges among participating governments, specially local governments that have less access to counterparts in other countries.”*

The MGI team has shared the MGI Matrix with COs and government stakeholders but were considering new approaches to facilitate access. Some stakeholders also thought that making available MGI results in data sets would make their usage by academics and researchers more likely (and as a further influence on policy-makers), pointing to the example of MIPEX<sup>18</sup> that makes available data sets that are consequently used by academics and researchers.

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<sup>18</sup> Migration Integration Policy Index: <https://www.mipex.eu>

**Exit strategies/ follow-up projects:** This evaluation did not find any specific exit strategies that followed the completion of the MGI programme. However, structured follow-ups have been introduced by the IOM for 11 countries to date, which was seen as a positive development from participating countries (e.g. Sri Lanka and Moldova) as these government stakeholders commented:

*“There is an increase in value (also concerning SDG and GCM) of doing a second assessment[follow-up]. Before there was little clarity on the use and dissemination of the MGI information among stakeholders. The results of the report were not put in practice after the first assessment. No concrete programmes and projects followed although the publication of the second MGI was extensively quoted in government forums, the Foreign Ministry, and others as an evidence-based process.”*

*“The follow-up exercise should be mandatory if we want to measure impact. We understand it depends on funding and decisions in relation to the country and decisions of the government but maybe IOM should think on a way to institutionalise after one year or two years of the MGI being conducted to do the follow-up.”*

However, a limitation of the structured follow-ups according to stakeholders and IOM staff was that it largely reproduced the methodology of the initial MGI process where IOM and the EIU led the process, and it was therefore not seen as a means to encourage greater ownership by stakeholders. Another approach to encourage follow-up of results was in Sri Lanka (Phase 2) where the CO produced a more detailed summary results report that was shared with the authorities and it was on this basis that follow-up actions were planned, according to IOM staff and stakeholders.

**Action plans:** In recent phases, the MGI has encouraged the authorities to complete action plans to map out their post-MGI actions. This was part of the response of the MGI team to address the gaps previously identified in past phases within the new phase added in 2020. Some examples of action plans that were developed included the Ukraine, where the CO established a Policy Liaison and Programme Development Unit to develop an action plan with the authorities for the migration strategy in parallel to the MGI process. Similarly in Cabo Verde it was foreseen that after the validation of the MGI, the CO and the government would evaluate the process and prepare a plan of action. Nevertheless, even countries from more recent phases, for instance Djibouti (Phase 4) commented that there were limited follow-up activities.

More than half (62%) of focal points who responded to the survey agreed or strongly agreed that the MGI programme has a clear strategy for handing over outputs to the government, 18% strongly disagreed or disagreed and 17% neither agreed nor disagreed (see figure 7 below). However, a challenge identified by stakeholders and IOM staff (in interviews and the survey) was the interest and ability of COs to follow-up on any potential projects or initiatives identified by the MGI and the securing of financial support needed as mentioned under Efficiency also. One possible solution suggested was introducing this as a funded activity for the CO, for example, for the national consultant. These MGI focal points commented on the follow-up and action plans:

*“The MGI they should conclude with a joint plan of action with the government to implement the recommendations – not everything that comes out but those that are considered as a top priority by the government. This would give us the opportunity to follow up on a more consistent basis and resolve the issue of funding.”*

*“In general, we see the need for IOM to continue pushing the government to work for addressing the MGI recommendations, some of which may also require engagement of other stakeholders in terms of technical expertise they can provide but also financial resources. This certainly requires the commitment and also support of IOM beyond the end of the MGI process.”*

**Sharing results:** While some countries felt that the MGI process was helpful in allowing them to compare progress with other countries, others highlighted a lack of follow-up opportunities for sharing results with other MGI programme participants (e.g. comparing experiences of local MGI or national MGI across a region). While some had mentioned the value of seeing what other regions were doing in motivating governments to maintain their programmes, several respondents felt that more could be done to create opportunities for sharing learnings and success stories with other countries, as these IOM staff commented:

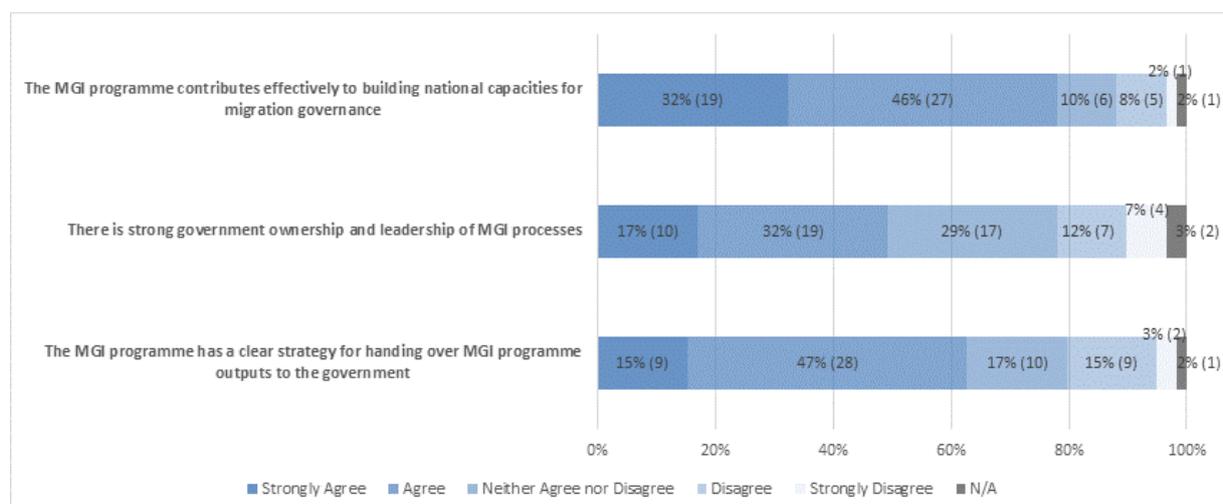
*“Once the MGI assessments get done, there is little promotion as to how the MGI has been used in different countries.”*

*“What also helped us was the high-level political forum in New York. There was a forum on MGI and that was motivating for countries to be able to present what they have done.”*

**Links to IOM programmes:** Links to other IOM programmes also supported the governments in addressing the gaps identified through the MGI but was only seen to a limited extent as described above. For example, Ukraine (Phase 3) developed a number of IOM policy initiatives linked to the MGI programme (as detailed in footnote 10). A number of countries also mentioned the value of the MGI programme in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and linking to the SDGs and GCM. However, some mentioned the missed opportunity in linking the MGI to IOM policy work and the limited awareness and integration of the MGI process with other IOM activities and project development, as this IOM staff highlighted:

*“The MGI is not developed in the wider policy environment. It is developed in combination with research and multilateral colleagues but not linked to the migration sustainable development unit for example.”*

**Figure 8: Sustainability elements (IOM MGI focal point survey – 61 responses)**



## 5. Review of the MGI Theory of Change

The ToR for the evaluation requested that the evaluation team review the MGI theory of change (ToC). The ToC is reproduced on the next page with comments overlaid (in blue speech boxes). The main points of the review of the ToC are summarised as follows:

- The ToC is very government-centric and does not consider either the Problems or Results from the perspective of other migration actors, migrants or the IOM.
- The ToC “undersells” the results of the MGI; it focuses on MGI creating awareness and supporting the establishment of priorities but this evaluation found that the MGI can contribute to a broader range of results.
- Following from the previous point, some of the results not featured include:
  - Creation of whole-of-government processes and structures.
  - A more inclusive approach to migration management.
  - Increased commitments to global agreements/treaties (e.g. becoming a GCM champion).
  - A reinforced ability of governments to monitor their commitments to global agreements/treaties (e.g. SDGs and GCM)
  - An increased capacity of IOM COs to support the government and migration authorities in migration management.
  - Increased expertise of IOM COs in migration management (thus an increased ability to support the government and migration actors).
  - The securing of new funding and projects to support migration management
- The ToC has a Result “*Track progress on their migration management objectives*” but the MGI does not have a specific tool or activity to support this Result; more so the MGI is used by some countries to track commitments to global agreements/treaties.
- The ToC has a lot of space dedicated to Causes and Problems; it may be better to incorporate assumptions, enabling and hindering factors.
- The ToC’s impact remains at the outcome level; a more appropriate impact would be: “*Governments have inclusive migration governance that support a humane and orderly management of migration*”.



## 6. Conclusion and recommendations

Since its official launch in 2016, the MGI has successfully grown as a programme with a global footprint, making it an IOM project with one of the greatest reach across regions. The fact that the MGI has grown so significantly since its inception, now being carried out across nine regions in 68 countries is in itself an indication of its success.<sup>19</sup> This evaluation found that the MGI had contributed to improved migration governance in almost all countries where it was implemented. The main contributions included governments developing a better understanding of their own migration governance, encouraging a whole-of-government approach, greater and broader collaboration amongst migration actors and the strengthening of migration data and a contribution to migration policies and strategies. These key outcomes were seen as having the potential for long-term impact.

At the same time, the MGI faced limitations in being able to fully optimize its potential. This evaluation saw that this was largely linked to the “one-off” nature of the MGI process, its perception as an IOM-EIU led process and the lack of systematic follow-up from COs, which implied that there were missed opportunities to build on the MGI and create ownership among government authorities and other stakeholders to sustain results. This was also due to one-year funding cycles and the projectisation nature of IOM’s activities.

After six years, the MGI programme was found to be at a crossroad with the question of what path to take: continue along the same path as done to date which has produced results – or adapt to increase the potential longer-term impact? These points are reflected in the following conclusions and recommendations.

**A. MGI operational model:** The MGI’s current operational model is a “one-off” process completed over 12 months, which once concluded then moves to other countries, with the MGI team available to support follow-up activities. This has the advantage of being a project with a manageable scope for COs but also has the disadvantage of being perceived as a “open-closed” project, leading to issues of ownership and sustainability as described above. Stakeholders and staff suggested that the MGI could have an even greater impact through the adaption of its operational model in four possible (non-exclusive) directions:

- Develop the MGI further in the assessment aspect with measures against best practices (such as a “maturity or tiered model”<sup>20</sup>), further detailed modules and/or actual implementation measures, and develop tools that provide countries with the ability to measure their progress.
- Some stakeholders suggested to develop further the index nature of the MGI to a model like MIPEX<sup>21</sup> that is updated annually across multiple countries and publicly shares progress and gaps (of note, the MGI team highlighted the limitations of the MIPEX model, notably its reliance on experts and a limited role in policy influence).

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<sup>19</sup> 84 countries in July 2021, although this evaluation considered 68 countries in the time-period examined.

<sup>20</sup> A maturity or tiered model assesses a given institution against a level of maturity/ compliance with best practices. On tiered models, see: State Department’s Trafficking in Persons Report: Scope, Aid Restrictions, and Methodology (30 October 2019): <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R44953.pdf>; on maturity models, see: USAID, A Methodology for Assessing the Sustainability of Partner Institutions (January 2012): [https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/pnadz062.pdf](https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pnadz062.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> Migration Integration Policy Index: <https://www.mipex.eu>

- Develop the MGI further into an institutional tool, fully integrated within IOM with a regular budget similar to the Displacement Tracking Matrix.<sup>22</sup>
- Orientate the MGI further in the direction of a capacity building tool for IOM programming.

**Recommendation:** The MGI team (MPD and GEMDAC) are encouraged to reflect on the operational mode of MGI considering the four above directions in coherence with the overall strategic priorities of the IOM in migration governance. This will also impact on the application of the other recommendations.

**B. MGI design and process:** The MGI programme has demonstrated considerable progress in its implementation with COs and has clearly built on the learnings from its earlier phases where, for example stakeholder consultation was less present. The MGI team still needs to focus further on ensuring the process is inclusive and participatory and links well to other relevant internal and external migration initiatives/processes or programmes.

**Recommendation:** The MGI team is encouraged to consider the following actions to improve MGI design and process:

- Adapt the MGI process (and handbook) to ensure that all countries start the MGI with an inclusive consultation involving all migration actors (government, migration associations, civil society, academics, etc.) that would encourage their participation and eventual ownership.
- Support the COs to undertake an internal mapping of which initiatives and processes the MGI can be linked to in their context in order to help engagement with and use of the results internally (and possibly externally).
- Provide more guidance to COs on the potential links between the MGI and external initiatives and processes such as the VNR, the voluntary reviews for the GCM, the CCA, UNSDCF and the UN Mainstreaming Accelerated Policy Support missions.
- Introduce more flexibility into the MGI indicators, while maintaining a core set of indicators, allowing the development of additional specific indicators for a given context (the additional COVID-19 questions was already a positive example of this flexibility).
- Provide further guidance on cross-cutting themes, especially the environment in order to ensure that the rights of migrants and environmental issues are fully identified and addressed.
- Set realistic timelines for the MGI process (including buffer times in case the CO needs to carry out a trust-building process first, re-do interviews, seek further data, etc.).

**C. Follow-up, ownership and sustainability:** Although this evaluation found many examples where the MGI had successfully influenced changes in migration governance, a missed opportunity and limitation identified was the weak follow-up, ownership and sustainability of the MGI programme. Positively, the programme introduced structured follow-ups, however it was still the repetition of the MGI process that maintained the “one-off” and the perception of IOM and EIU ownership. It would be important to find ways to involve stakeholders earlier in the process and the assessment steps rather than as simple validators in the final steps. Given the budget implications for follow-up, this could imply carrying out fewer MGIs but more in-depth and with greater potential for long-term impact.

**Recommendations:** The MGI team is encouraged to consider the following actions to improve MGI follow-up, ownership and sustainability:

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<sup>22</sup> IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix: <https://dtm.iom.int/>

- Review the model of the structured follow-ups to assess how it could be more of a stakeholder-led process rather than an IOM-EIU led process.
- Strengthen the post-MGI action plan as a mandatory (and funded) step that produces an action plan to respond to gaps identified by the MGI.
- Consider a long-form report for the authorities which provides more feedback on the indicators and recommended actions (n.b. Sri Lanka CO produced such a report).
- Collaborate further with IOM initiatives (such as IOM Development Fund) to determine if it would be possible to allocate a funding stream for initiatives identified in the post-MGI action plan.
- Reflect on possible ways for governments to assess their progress against MGI indicators as a means to encourage ownership, while recognising that given the analytical complexity of the MGI, self-assessments with no IOM support can be challenging.
- Encourage COs to carry out post-MGI surveys and studies to assess if policies have been developed and/or implemented and initiatives carried out.

**D. Roles and responsibilities:** The implementation of the MGI involves multiple roles and was found to function well overall. It faces challenges with under-resourcing of COs by using non-funded focal points. The respective roles of the national consultants, EIU researchers and ROs could be further refined.

**Recommendations:** The MGI team is encouraged to consider the following actions to clarify roles and responsibilities:

- Introduce a budget to cover the staff costs of the CO MGI focal point *during* the MGI process (e.g. 10% of total salary for 12 months).
- Add an additional funded task for the national consultant to accompany the post-MGI action plan as described in the previous recommendation.
- Clarify the role of the RO (in the MGI handbook) to reflect better their role in the MGI process (i.e. input into the selection of countries; validation of (some) data points; participation in review workshop(s), etc.).
- Broaden the role of the EIU researchers to include participation in initial stakeholder consultation and review workshop(s); where appropriate and possible (COVID-19 restrictions) allow the EIU researchers to visit the countries for in-person interviews.

**E. Transparency and use of MGI:** The results of the MGI in the form of a Matrix are shared only with the authorities based on the agreement to ensure confidentiality and build trust. However, this is an assumption that has been largely untested; that data confidentiality is necessary for a successful MGI process. The methodology for MGI is also not publicly available nor are the 90 plus indicators and Matrix (even in blank format). Sharing the methodology and more data and results would encourage a greater use and of the MGI results and possible uptake of the methodology by authorities. There were also limited opportunities for both stakeholders and IOM staff to share best practices and experiences on the MGI.

**Recommendations:** The MGI team is encouraged to consider the following actions to strengthen transparency and use of MGI:

- Publicly publish a methodology guide including the MGI Matrix of 90 plus indicators (if this is a question of co-ownership with the EIU then it should be re-negotiated in the interests of public goods and transparency).
- For new MGI, ask governments if they would agree that the results (completed Matrix) or parts of them are made available publicly with the aim of eventually making data sets available for all.

- Explore with the EIU possibilities for data visualisation and public sharing, even further at the aggregated global level (where national details are not shown).
- Introduce a mechanism to capture knowledge and lessons on the MGI process and share widely, so countries and other stakeholders can learn from each other.
- Create opportunities to share best practice and exchanges between the MGI participants, for example on an exchange of local MGIs regionally or globally (build into funding proposals also).

**F. Funding:** The MGI has been successful in securing funding since 2016 and doubled funding commitments since. However, the funding has largely relied on the US Government as the main donor and further diversification would support greater stability for the programme.

**Recommendation:** IOM should continue its efforts to secure additional donors for the MGI programme and encourage multi-year funding commitments of donors.

## 7. Lessons identified and good practices

### What lessons were identified by the main stakeholders in the implementation of the MGI Programme?

The key lessons identified and good practices by the stakeholders and IOM staff (interviews and survey) are as following:

#### Design/set-up stage:

- Clarity at the beginning of the MGI assessment on purpose and content (assessment of legal/policy frameworks and not of actual implementation) and how results can be used and embedded in mainstream work increases governments willingness to participate.
- Explanation of the connection of the MGI with the VNR, SDGs, GCM supports implementation.
- Initial advocacy supports the understanding of government and other stakeholders as to what is the MGI and their role.
- In countries where governments change often, a local approach can positively influence the adoption on a national level.

#### Stakeholder involvement/ownership:

- Bringing all relevant stakeholders together at the start of the process, government and non-government actors (e.g. CSOs, private sector, UN, etc.) to discuss the country's migration governance structures, identify gaps and discuss the way forward encourages ownership.
- Involvement of key stakeholders from the beginning of the MGI process is crucial to ensure ownership of the MGI and contributes to its success. People that are involved from the beginning are more likely to make substantial contributions to the report and take ownership of the implementation of follow-up measures than if they are only invited to the final presentation.
- Capacity-building for key stakeholders can ensure clarity of processes and potentially increasing buy-in.

### Methodology/data:

- A central focal point assigned within the government significantly helps to facilitate the MGI process.
- It is easier for governments to accept the results of the report if they understand the data collection and scoring methodology, in particular if they were not involved in the MGI process (for example because of a change in government between the launch of the process and the presentation of the report).
- It is important that local consultants and EIU researchers have a sound knowledge of the country context and on migration in order to have greater acceptance of the results by the government.
- A digital platform to upload data in the Matrix, centralise and store the information gathered and make it available for analysis was found to be useful for some countries.
- A greater balance between inward and outward migration Indicators increases the relevance for different types of countries.

### MGI Report:

- A more detailed report for the government facilitates their use and follow-up of the MGI results (as used by Sri Lanka).

### Sustainability/follow-up:

- Follow-up actions and assessments encouraged the usage of the MGI results.
- Continuation of the process started by the MGI contributes to evidence-based policy making.

### Language:

- The use of the country's official language by the consultant to liaise with governments and the translation of MGI documents, products and publications was valued.

### Opportunities and risks:

The following opportunities and risks were found during programme implementation that can guide future programme design, implementation and coordination:

Table 4: Opportunities and risks of MGI

Opportunities	Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use of MGI for IOM project design</li><li>• Use of MGI for government policy development and areas that need further support</li><li>• Use of MGI for SDG and GCM reporting</li><li>• Use of MGI for academic work that then could feed into policy</li><li>• Creation of a multi- stakeholder groups (government, civil society, UN, including local migration actors)</li><li>• Creation of a formal system for capturing lessons and sharing knowledge (between countries and at the level of IOM)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expectations of governments not met after MGI (as IOM support drops off)</li><li>• Reliance on one main donor</li><li>• Not having EIU researchers on site or who lacks contextual knowledge can create errors/frustrations among governments and IOM</li><li>• Data can become quickly outdated, especially with changing governments/policies</li><li>• Data collected are not enough used by various stakeholders</li></ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Foster exchange between countries, e.g. on the implementation and best practices of the local MGI</li><li>• Have the MGI more often on the agenda in international events so as to increase its visibility.</li><li>• Transfer knowledge to local experts and governments to increase sustainability</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learning from each other's lessons and best practices not used to its full potential</li><li>• The brevity of the report does not give enough space for nuances which might lead to frustration on the government side</li><li>• IOM country offices are overburdened with work, follow the process besides other work without extra resources which influences delivery at the right time and quality</li></ul>
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