

FINAL EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT: STRENGTHEN BORDER MANAGEMENT AND SECURITY IN MALI AND NIGER THROUGH CAPACITY BUILDING OF BORDER AUTHORITIES AND ENHANCED DIALOGUE WITH BORDER COMMUNITIES

This evaluation brief presents a summary of the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations, as identified by the evaluator(s) for use by key stakeholders, including internally by IOM staff and externally by project partners. More details can be found in the full evaluation report.

Evaluation type:	Final Internal Evaluation
Evaluator(s):	Mr. Abderrahim El Moulart
Field visit dates:	November 2022
Final report date:	February 2023
Commissioned by:	IOM Mali, Niger
Managed by:	Lavinia Lys Brera

Evaluation purpose: To assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the project and the extent to which it achieved its objectives as set out in the project documents. The evaluation also needed to identify key lessons and good practices.

Evaluation criteria: Relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability as well as gender & human rights.

Evaluation methodology: The evaluation used a combination of methods: (1) Review of project documentation and reports submitted by IOM; (2) forty (40) Interviews with the project's main stakeholders, including direct beneficiaries; and (3) Six focus-groups with the project's direct beneficiaries (68 participants).

PROJECT SUMMARY

Border security and management remains a main priority in the Sahel and, more specifically, along the border between Mali and Niger and the tri-border area. Assessments and studies conducted in different regions of Mali and Niger, including by IOM, have highlighted that communication and coordination between border authorities, security forces and border communities remain weak and unstructured. In the framework of ongoing projects implemented by IOM that are addressing capacity building needs in border management in Mali and Niger, the further enhancement of border management and the engagement of communities have been stressed as a priority by the national authorities.

Funded by the Canadian Government (nearly 2.8 M CAND) and implemented by IOM in Mali and Niger, the project "Strengthen Border Management and Security in Mali and Niger through Capacity Building of Border Authorities and Enhanced Dialogue with Border Communities" (thereafter referred to as "The project") focused on the administrative districts of Gao, Ansango and Menaka (Mali), and Banibangou, Ayerou, Bankilare, Ouallam, Téra, Gothèye and Tillabéri (Niger). This cross-border zone at the heart of Liptako-Gourma is affected by a number of security, political, social and climatic crises.

The ultimate objective of the project is to ensure that

Project information:

Geographical coverage:	West and Central Africa
Project type:	Immigration & Borders (IB)
Project code:	IB.0238
Gender marker:	N/A
Project period:	04 MAR-2019 to 30-NOV-2022
Donor:	Global Affairs Canada
Budget:	(CAD\$) 2,749,046

"The borders between Mali and Niger are better secured in the administrative districts of Gao, Ansango and Menaka in Mali, and in the districts of Banibangou, Ayerou, Bankilare, Ouallam, Téra, Gothèye and Tillabéri in Niger". To attain this ultimate outcome, the project focused its interventions and activities to contribute to the following Intermediate Outcomes:

1. Increased capacities for communities, law enforcement forces and local authorities to dialogue and exchange;
2. Increased engagement of community members, civil society, particularly the women's group, in improving border security and preventing radicalization in border areas of Mali and Niger; and
3. Increased border management capacities of the authorities and law enforcement forces along the borders or in neighboring areas between Niger and Mali.

KEY FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

Relevance

- The project was universally endorsed as being aligned to urgent national priorities, both in Niger and Mali.
- The project Logframe and implicit theory of Change (ToC) were too complex and ambitious with regards to its resources and duration, leading to difficulties in monitoring its results and in reporting on its achievements.

Coherence

- The project is aligned with IOM key global and regional frameworks, directly or indirectly contributing to their strategic objectives and priority engagements.
- The project contributed to relevant SDGs related to migration governance and management and is aligned with the African Union Agenda 2063 and its aspirations related to peaceful prevention and resolution of conflicts.

Effectiveness

- Through to the creation and reinforcement of CPCs in the targeted areas, the project was able to induce a relative improvement in communication between the communities, the security forces and the local authorities.
- The political and security conditions in Mali seriously hindered the implementation of cross-border activities, resulting in limited creation of dialogue forums and platforms.
- The project supported women groups in Gao and Ménaka to increase their material and technical capacity to provide services and engage with women in their communities.

Efficiency

- The project was, overall, well-managed, with security issues and the closure of the borders being the most important encountered implementation challenges.
- The project's financial resources were generally deemed enough to produce its main outputs and contribute to its desired outcomes.

Impact

- Some early impacts are reported by the project's

beneficiaries and partners such as the improved communication between the communities and the security forces, some improved social and security services or the economic and social benefits due to the supported RGAs.

Sustainability

- The project is well integrated to its immediate institutional environment, and possesses, in the IBSM, a strong and coherent strategic planning tool to ensure the continuity and the sustainability of its results.
- The increased capacity and engagement of the CPCs can allow the observed benefits and immediate impacts of the project to be sustainable on an intermediate term.

GOOD PRACTICES

- Community Perception Studies provided valuable information on the community needs and expectations, as well as to scope and target the project's activities.
- The IBSM Mechanism provided a coherent and consistent framework to guide the project's design and implementation and ensure complementarity with other interventions.
- The targeting and empowerment of women groups can potentially lead to enduring and sustainable results.

KEY-RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Consider and assess targeting other border zones in Mali and Niger, such as south of Mali or Dosso in Niger .
2. Continue positioning gender mainstreaming and women empowerment as a central component of any future similar projects
3. Develop a multi-year action plan for the IBSM framework, with detailed implementation and monitoring plans.
4. Continue logistically and technically supporting CPCs and strengthening their relationships with the local authorities and defense & security forces.
5. Implement a comprehensive and integrated monitoring and accountability system to follow-up on the results of the projects' activities.