

# EVALUATION OF THE IOM MIGRATION DATA STRATEGY 2020-2025

**Case Study: IOM Asia-Pacific Regional Data  
Hub 2020–2025**

9th July 2025

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## 1. Background: Regional Data Hubs and the Asia-Pacific RDH Focus

**What are RDHs?** *Regional Data Hubs (RDHs)* are IOM's regional focal points for migration data, which were significantly built upon during the 2020–2025 Migration Data Strategy (MDS) period. These hubs were envisioned to improve internal data coordination and serve as regional knowledge centres. In practice, RDHs convene Country Offices (COs) to share best practices and coordinate data efforts, which interviewees noted has started to “reduce deviation and increase coherence” across countries in some regions. Each RDH is aligned under its Regional Office (RO) structure (typically under the Deputy Regional Director for Operations). During the evaluation data collection period, RDHs worked in close alignment with the Global Data Institute (GDI) in Berlin. Following the closure of the GDI, RDHs work under the guidance of the Department of Humanitarian Response and Recovery (DHRR), and in coordination with the Department of Data, Insight and Policy (DDIP).

They address the gap between IOM’s numerous disparate data initiatives by providing a **regional structure** for data management that did not exist prior to the Migration Data Strategy (MDS). Each RDH typically comprises a few data specialists who support multiple country missions, given that many IOM country offices lack dedicated data staff or statisticians. Externally, RDHs have also taken on a convening role with partners: for example, regional hub teams have started to engage regional bodies and governments on migration data. In sum, RDHs are **decentralized units** that bridge IOM’s headquarters data functions and country-level operations, while also linking IOM with regional stakeholders on data issues.

**Asia-Pacific RDH:** The Asia-Pacific Regional Data Hub, based in the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (Bangkok), was established in 2020 as part of the MDS initiative. Its thematic and operational focus is broad, reflecting the diverse migration dynamics in Asia-Pacific. According to its terms of reference, the Asia RDH’s mandate is to strengthen the regional evidence base on migration by **providing technical data support and capacity development** to IOM offices, regional bodies, member states and other stakeholders. In practice, this means the Asia-Pacific RDH offers expertise in data analysis, GIS and information management, research, and the **coordination of regional migration data activities**. It supports the uptake of migration data evidence in policymaking, conducts regional trend analyses, forges data partnerships, and connects global and country-level data initiatives. In essence, the Asia-Pacific RDH serves as a regional knowledge hub that helps shape IOM’s regional migration narrative with evidence-based insights. Key thematic areas of focus have included migration and displacement trends, migrant protection data, and emerging issues like climate-related displacement, reflecting regional needs. The Asia-Pacific RDH also emphasizes capacity-building for governments – aligning with IOM’s developmental approach in Asia-Pacific – in contrast to some other regions where humanitarian data (e.g. displacement tracking) might dominate. In summary, the Asia-Pacific RDH operates as a *regional centre of excellence* on migration data, providing both data products and direct support to stakeholders, in line with the MDS objectives.

## 2. Development Timeline of the Asia-Pacific RDH (2020–2025)

**2020 – Establishment:** The Asia-Pacific RDH was launched in 2020 as part of the MDS rollout. Initial institutional funding (Operational Support Income) was allocated by IOM Headquarters to create standard RDH staff positions in the region, in addition to the one pre-existing Regional Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Officer P3 position already funded. By late 2020, a small team was in place in RO Bangkok, including a core-funded Regional Data Hub Coordinator, a core-funded Regional Migration Data Analysis and Research Officer (MIDARO), a data analysis and statistical consultant and

an information management officer, marking the first time the Asia-Pacific region had dedicated regional data personnel beyond DTM. This foundational step – directly influenced by the MDS's advocacy for more data resources – filled a structural gap: previously, regional data activities were ad hoc or project-funded with no permanent hub.

**2021 – Staffing and Initial Programming:** By 2021, the Asia-Pacific RDH team was fully staffed (two core positions funded by IOM, plus any project-funded officers). The RDH began formulating its regional workplan aligned with MDS priorities. A notable development around 2021–22 was the **mapping of external partner migration data initiatives in Asia-Pacific, resulting in the publication of the Regional Secondary Data Review**. This comprehensive mapping exercise, conducted by the RDH, surveyed what migration data projects, systems, and capacities existed across governments in the region. It was undertaken to identify gaps and opportunities, directly reflecting MDS Objective 2 (capacity development) by understanding where states needed support. 2021 also saw the RDH providing internal guidance on data governance and contributing to the design of new regional data tools in collaboration with Global Migration Data Centre (GMDAC) — e.g. exploring a regional data platform).

**2021 Milestone: Operational Integration** – the Asia-Pacific RDH became a key regional forum for data: it convened regular coordination calls with IOM missions on data issues and established itself as the regional liaison with IOM's global data bodies (GMDAC).

**2022 – Regional Initiatives and Government Engagement:** In 2022, the Asia-Pacific RDH deepened its external engagement. Building on the 2021 mapping and initial capacity building efforts in Indonesia and Mongolia in late 2021, the RDH extended its **capacity-building collaborations** with national authorities. For example, at the request of IOM Indonesia and national counterparts, the RDH conducted a comprehensive study of Indonesia's migration data landscape, covering “all aspects of migration,” and facilitated a multi-agency workshop in Jakarta to share findings (first engagement of this kind). This helped kick-start Indonesia's efforts to develop an integrated migration data system, a process that had stalled since 2019. Similarly, the RDH supported **regional organizations**: interviewees noted IOM's support to bodies like the **Bali Process and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)** working groups on migration data, analogous to how in Africa the RDH engaged the African Union (evidence on Asia-specific regional forums is implied though not extensively documented). Likewise, the RDH bolstered data expertise at the regional level by organizing the ESCAP SDG Statistics Clinics on leave no migrant behind, which was developed in collaboration with IOM GMDAC, ILO and ESCAP.

**2022 Milestone: First Regional Data Hub Partnerships** – Asia-Pacific RDH partnered with national and UN actors to strengthen data.

**2023 – Flagship Publication and Scale-Up:** A highlight of 2023 was the drafting of the **Asia-Pacific Migration Data Report 2023 (published in 2024)**, a key public report on migration trends in the region. This was the fourth edition of the annual report, providing comprehensive regional data and in-depth analysis of latest migration patterns across Asia-Pacific, drawing on international, regional, and national data sources. The report exemplifies MDS Objective 1 (strengthening the evidence base) by consolidating disparate data into an authoritative reference for policymakers. The RDH also launched the Asia-Pacific Migration Data Portal in August 2023, which consolidates data from diverse sources,

offering insights into publicly accessible information on migration trends in the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>1</sup> Featuring data at regional, subregional and country levels across various migration themes, the Portal helps to identify connections between migration data and the corresponding key global frameworks including the Sustainable Development Goals and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration Objectives. Furthermore, it prioritizes, when available, disaggregated data by sex and age. In addition, the RDH's National Secondary Data Reviews of government statistical capacities reached a total of 22 countries in 2023, from a baseline of 10 in 2021. Two of these Reviews were endorsed by the National Statistical Offices and published during the reporting period. Alongside this, 2023 saw the Asia-Pacific RDH responding to significantly more data requests from IOM offices and partners than in prior years – **81 requests in 2023**, up from smaller numbers in 2021–22. These requests ranged from providing migration statistics for program design, to producing infographics and maps for country missions, to answering queries from governments on migrant population estimates. The rising demand indicated the RDH's growing visibility and utility. Also in 2023, the RDH supported various capacity-building events: for instance it delivered, among others: a two-day training on privacy and data protection to the Maldives' country office staff; participated in the Migration Data/Statistics Sharing and Management session in Kathmandu, Nepal; and conducted a three-day workshop on geographic information systems (GIS), QGIC and Kobo for government officials and others in the Federated States of Micronesia. The RDH also contributed to the **Nepal School of Migration Studies** (Feb 2023) to train researchers on regional migration dynamics and supported the Institute of Research on Contemporary Southeast Asia (IRASEC) Doctoral Winter School on Transnational Migration Southeast Asia (TRIMSEA) in December.

**2023 Milestone: Flagship Data Report & Increased Demand** – the RDH demonstrated tangible output (the regional report) and its services were in high demand within IOM and by governments.

**2024 – Peak Activity and Consolidation:** The year 2024 saw the Asia-Pacific RDH receiving the highest levels of demands from national and regional actors yet. It processed **161 data service requests region-wide**, *a record high* and roughly double the previous year's volume. This surge underscored growing reliance on the RDH's support for evidence-based programming. Numerous capacity-building engagements with governments took place in 2024, often in partnership with Country Offices: e.g. a **training and inter-governmental consultation on migration statistics for the inter-ministerial Technical Working Group of the Lao PDR Government** in March 2024 (to include migration indicators in the 2025 census), technical support to **Pakistan's Balochistan province** in June 2024 on displacement data collection, and ongoing advisory to **Vietnam's Ministry of Public Security** (with GMDAC) on migration data management systems (started with a study visit to GDI in early 2024). These activities align with Objective 2 (building national capacity). Internally, the RDH continued regular **regional data briefings** for IOM stakeholders – by 2024 it had institutionalized weekly or bi-weekly coordination calls where the RDH team and country focal points share updates, new data analyses, and identify needs. This routine indicates a maturation of internal processes for data-driven planning (speaking to Objective 3 on evidence-based programming).

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<sup>1</sup> See: <https://ap-migrationdata.iom.int/en>

**2024 Milestone: Institutionalization** – the RDH’s role became firmly embedded: it was the hub for regional data inquiries, and its guidance was feeding into both national policy support and IOM’s own program cycle (e.g. input to the Regional Strategy and country program designs). Notably, **challenges also peaked**: staff noted constraints like working “mostly solo due to funding challenges” in some initiatives, reflecting that the RDH’s capacity was stretched by 2024’s demands.

**2025 – Transition to Minimum Capacity Levels:** By early 2025, the Asia-Pacific RDH had become a comparatively “mature” **regional data hub**, offering lessons on success and challenges. But the phase-out of MIRAC support led to a significant reduction in staffing from 10 in December 2024 to three at the time of writing. This has significantly reduced the RDH’s ability to respond to Country Office requests for support and produce regional data analysis. While the Asia-Pacific RDH has clearly expanded the evidence base and capacity in the region in the period since 2020, it remained vulnerable to sustainability issues common across IOM (e.g. heavy reliance on short-term projects), which impacted its resilience in the face of funding cuts in early 2025. Plans were underway to integrate the RDH’s function into IOM’s new Strategic Plan (2024–2028), which emphasizes data mainstreaming. But longer-term sustainability must be revisited in light of the evolving funding landscape for IOM’s work as a whole.

### 3. Achievements of the Asia-Pacific RDH (2020–2025) and Alignment with MDS Objectives

The Asia-Pacific RDH delivered a range of outputs and services over 2020–2025. Broadly, its achievements fall into two categories: **(a) building capacity of states/partners** to improve migration data, and **(b) generating and disseminating migration evidence** (data, analysis) on flows and trends. Table 1 below summarizes key achievements in each category, indexed against the three core objectives of the Migration Data Strategy:

**Table 1. Asia-Pacific RDH Key Achievements Mapped to MDS Objectives (2020–2025)<sup>2</sup>**

MDS OBJECTIVE (2020–2025)	ASIA-PACIFIC RDH ACHIEVEMENTS (EXAMPLES 2020–2025)
<b>Objective 1: Strengthen the Global Evidence Base on Migration</b> Enhance the availability and quality of migration data and analysis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Regional Data Analysis &amp; Products:</b> Produced the <i>Asia-Pacific Migration Data Report series</i> (on an annual basis from 2020 to 2023), a comprehensive analysis of international, regional and national migration trends drawing on multi-country data to provide a regional reference piece. This report filled critical information gaps and provided reliable evidence for policymakers.</li> <li><b>Monitoring of Migration Flows:</b> Expanded data collection on previously under-monitored migration routes. By mid-decade, routes that once had “little information and no quantitative data” were being tracked such that “we basically have most of the movements” mapped, reflecting growing capacity. For example, the RDH leveraged IOM’s Displacement Tracking Matrix and</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> The achievements listed in Table 1 are drawn from the documents and interviews listed in the Case Study Annex. They illustrate outputs and activities; however, evidence of downstream *impact* (e.g. how a training improved a country’s data quality, or how data inputs changed a policy) is limited. The MDS lacked a monitoring system for such outcomes. Thus, the Asia RDH’s contributions are presented in terms of delivered support and products, indexed to the relevant MDS objective. In many cases, achievements supported multiple objectives simultaneously (for instance, a capacity-building workshop often also contributes to building the evidence base and vice versa).

MDS OBJECTIVE (2020–2025)	ASIA-PACIFIC RDH ACHIEVEMENTS (EXAMPLES 2020–2025)
	<p>Missing Migrants data to document irregular maritime movements (e.g. Rohingya flows in the Bay of Bengal) – in 2022 it recorded the highest number of migrant deaths on these routes (275) ever, highlighting emerging trends for action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Data Services for Evidence:</b> Responded to a rising volume of data requests from IOM missions and external partners (161 requests in 2024, double the 81 in 2023). These included providing customized datasets, technical guidance, analytical briefs, infographics and GIS mapping to inform country programs, governments and UN reports. The efficient handling of these requests indicates an improved regional evidence base accessible to stakeholders. Notably, IOM's global flagship reports also drew on Asia-Pacific RDH contributions (e.g. the UN Trafficking in Persons report now incorporates much more data that IOM helped generate, some of which came from Asia-Pacific contexts).</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 2: Develop Capacity of States and Partners to Enhance Migration Data Build the skills, systems and cooperation for better migration data at national/regional levels.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Training &amp; Workshops for Governments:</b> The Asia-Pacific RDH conducted numerous capacity-building sessions for government agencies. For instance, in 2024, it delivered multiple training sessions including on migration statistics to Lao PDR's national statistical office to include migration in the 2025 census (mentioned above), and presented IOM data methodologies to Vietnamese officials during a study visit to GDI. It also provided expert lectures (e.g. guest lectures at the United Nations – AIS and University of the Philippines) to build academic and institutional knowledge. These trainings addressed technical skills (data collection, indicator development, analysis) and raised awareness of international standards, thereby empowering states to manage migration data more effectively.</li> <li>• <b>Technical Assistance &amp; Data Partnerships:</b> The RDH has directly supported national efforts to improve data systems. A prime example is <b>Indonesia</b>: in 2022–23, at the request of Statistics Indonesia, the RDH helped design and review an integrated migration data platform. The RDH team conducted a study mapping all migration data sources in the country and advised on data harmonization. RDH staff travelled to Indonesia for workshops, demonstrating hands-on partnership. While detailed outcomes are not fully documented, government counterparts credit these engagements with accelerating their progress on data collection protocols.</li> <li>• <b>Convening Multilateral Dialogues:</b> The Asia-Pacific RDH has begun to <b>foster regional cooperation on data</b>. It supported forums under the Bali Process and facilitated technical discussions within ASEAN on standardizing migration definitions. One partner from an ASEAN Member State described the RDH as a valuable “body in IOM specifically working with data” that they could turn to for guidance and peer examples. By convening such dialogues and providing a neutral technical perspective, the RDH contributed to Objective 2's aim of fostering cooperation among states on data.</li> </ul>

MDS OBJECTIVE (2020–2025)	ASIA-PACIFIC RDH ACHIEVEMENTS (EXAMPLES 2020–2025)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>However, evidence of long-term impact on national data systems is limited; the evaluation found that while capacity activities were appreciated, sustained changes (e.g. new government data units or policies) were not yet fully traced by 2025.</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 3: Ensure More Evidence-Based IOM and UN Programming, Operations, and Policy Advice Embed the use of data in IOM's and partners' decision-making.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Integrating Data into IOM Planning:</b> The Asia-Pacific RDH has functioned as an internal advisory service to improve evidence-based planning. It routinely provided regional trend analysis to inform IOM's strategic documents and country program design. For instance, the RDH's inputs on regional migration forecasts were used in developing the IOM Asia-Pacific Regional Strategy and in country strategy papers (as noted in RO workplans). Additionally, the RDH set up regular coordination calls (weekly/biweekly) with country missions where data updates and needs are discussed. These practices have gradually normalized the use of up-to-date data in operational decision-making – for example, COs in Asia-Pacific now often consult the RDH before launching new projects to get baseline figures or mapping of migrant populations.</li> <li><b>Support to UN Coordination and Policy:</b> Externally, the RDH's data expertise has fed into UN-wide efforts, aligning with Objective 3. The RDH is a regular member of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Data and Statistics Working Group, contributing to UN-wide data coordination efforts, while RDH analysts have supported the UN Network on Migration at regional level by sharing data for joint briefs, and collaborated with UNHCR and UNODC on topics like refugee movements and trafficking data. One concrete outcome was IOM's contribution (through the RDH) to <b>regional migration strategy frameworks</b> – e.g. providing data analysis to the Colombo Process and ESCAP regional reports. An interviewee noted IOM's role in such forums "complemented government-led initiatives" by supplying technical data that partners lacked. Furthermore, by fulfilling data requests from UN agencies (e.g. ICRC's family reunification unit or UNHCR's regional bureau) the Asia-Pacific RDH ensured those agencies' programs were informed by the latest migration evidence from the field.</li> <li><b>Fostering Evidence Culture within IOM:</b> The presence of the RDH itself created a regional culture shift – staff in country offices became more aware that data support is available and increasingly sought it. The evaluation noted that regional units (like the Asia-Pacific RDH) remained "loyal to [the MDS's] three objectives" and tried to cover them in their work, effectively using the strategy as a <i>reference compass</i>. While IOM's internal data coherence still had gaps, the RDH structure did introduce a common vocabulary and some standard practices, making data slightly more "business-as-usual" in daily operations than before.</li> <li>Nevertheless, Objective 3 achievements are somewhat indirect – they manifest as improved processes and anecdotal examples of data-informed decisions, rather than easily quantifiable outcomes.</li> </ul>

MDS OBJECTIVE (2020–2025)	ASIA-PACIFIC RDH ACHIEVEMENTS (EXAMPLES 2020–2025)
	The evaluation found no systematic tracking of how RDH data support changed program results, indicating an evidence gap in this area.

## 4. Influence of the Migration Data Strategy on the Asia-Pacific RDH

A key question is how the IOM Migration Data Strategy (2020–2025) influenced the design, structure, priorities, or functioning of the Asia-Pacific Regional Data Hub. The evidence suggests the MDS had a **significant formative influence** on the Asia-Pacific RDH’s establishment and conceptual direction, but a more limited role in day-to-day operations and evolution.

**Design and Structure:** The MDS directly **catalysed the creation** of the Asia-Pacific RDH. As noted, no regional data hub existed in Asia or the Pacific prior to 2020; the MDS provided the rationale and advocacy to invest in regional data capacity. IOM leadership, in alignment with MDS goals, allocated core funds around 2021 to establish “standard RDH positions” in each region (2 posts in Asia-Pacific). This structural investment – hiring dedicated regional data staff – was a major shift enabled by the Strategy. One evaluation finding explicitly credits the MDS for prompting “the creation of the GDI and the network of RDHs” as important steps for internal data coordination. The Asia-Pacific RDH’s Terms of Reference were explicitly framed around the MDS objectives, ensuring the hub’s mandate (evidence base, capacity building, internal data use) mirrored the strategy’s three pillars. In summary, the **very existence and design** of the Asia-Pacific RDH (its placement under the RO, its alignment with GDI, its objectives) were products of the MDS vision.

**Priorities and Planning:** At the strategic level, the Asia-Pacific RDH used the MDS as a guiding document to shape its work. The evaluation noted that regional data hub teams “*used the MDS objectives as a checklist to ensure their region’s projects covered the intended areas*”. In practice, this meant Asia-Pacific RDH leadership would reference the three MDS objectives when developing annual workplans or new project proposals – e.g. checking that they had activities for evidence generation (MDS objective 1), capacity building (MDS objective 2), and promoting data use (MDS objective 3). One Asia-Pacific regional coordinator interviewed said they review if activities refer to the MDS objectives – “*it’s more of a guideline to show you the way*,” and if an activity fell outside, they’d ask if a link to MDS could be made. This indicates the MDS influenced **priority-setting**: the Asia-Pacific RDH maintained a balanced portfolio (research products, capacity efforts, internal data services) in line with the strategy’s broad goals. Notably, the Asia-Pacific RDH also undertook specific initiatives *because of* MDS emphasis – for instance, the 2021 mapping of regional data initiatives can be seen as responding to MDS Objective 2 and was reportedly encouraged by Headquarters as part of MDS follow-up.

**Functioning and Operations:** On a practical day-to-day level, the MDS had a more indirect influence on the Asia-Pacific RDH’s functioning. Once established, the RDH largely operated in response to regional needs and funding opportunities, sometimes without explicit reference to the MDS document. Staff on the ground felt the MDS was a “top-down” framework they received rather than a hands-on manual. For example, while the RDH remained *aware* of the MDS, its proactive initiatives (like developing the Migration Data Report or responding to surge data requests) were driven by field realities and donor interests as much as by the strategy. Indeed, the evaluation found that **field offices**

**and regional units continued data work “business-as-usual” and any alignment with MDS was often incidental.** The Asia-Pacific RDH was somewhat an exception in that it did make an effort to align with the MDS (as noted above), but even so, there was no formal mechanism to *enforce* or track this alignment. No dedicated budget was attached to the MDS objectives, and the RDH had to “scramble” for project funds to implement many activities. As a result, some priorities of the MDS – for instance, big data innovation – advanced only if championed by RDH staff or if external funding allowed (in Asia-Pacific, the RDH focused more on capacity building, reflecting both MDS and the Regional Office’s mandate).

**Influence on RDH Priorities:** There is evidence that the MDS’s presence helped keep certain themes on the Asia-Pacific RDH’s agenda. For example, **data protection and ethics** – a cross-cutting deliverable in the MDS – were integrated into Asia-Pacific RDH trainings and the regional data report (ensuring discussions of privacy in data sharing). Also, the MDS’s call for innovative data sources encouraged the Asia-Pacific RDH to pilot at least one new approach (there were attempts in 2024 to use mobile big data for migration trend analysis in the Asia-Pacific region, in collaboration with GDI labs, aligning with MDS innovation aims). These were not purely organic – interviewees suggest that having the MDS “gave a common language” and legitimated proposals to try such initiatives. In essence, the MDS served as a **conceptual compass**: it did not micromanage the Asia-Pacific RDH, but it provided a reference that staff could cite to justify a balanced work program and to garner support from donors (e.g. “*we pitch new data projects to donors using the MDS to signal IOM’s commitment*”, as regional staff noted).

**Limitations of MDS influence:** Despite the above, the MDS was not a panacea for the Asia-Pacific RDH. The strategy **did not resolve structural challenges** – the Asia-Pacific RDH still struggled with siloed systems and scarce resources. The evaluation concluded that the MDS “*offered a common vocabulary and goals, but did not prevent disparate approaches... and was not fully internalized at working levels.*” This rings true in Asia: while the RDH embraced the MDS philosophically, it had to navigate the same projectized funding and internal silos as elsewhere. For instance, the RDH’s work with DTM and GMDAC depended more on personal coordination efforts than on any MDS directive. Additionally, many country offices “probably don’t know what MDS is” – so when the Asia-Pacific RDH engaged COs in capacity building, it rarely framed it as “implementing the MDS,” but simply as doing good data work. In short, *the MDS influenced the blueprint and ethos of the Asia-Pacific RDH, but the hub’s actual functioning evolved under a mix of strategic intent and practical constraints.* The Asia-Pacific RDH’s experience supports the evaluation’s broader finding that the MDS was a **useful conceptual catalyst** but not an operational driver.

## 5. Conclusion on MDS influence:

The Asia-Pacific Regional Data Hub is largely a *product of the Migration Data Strategy*. The strategy’s objectives shaped the hub’s creation, staffing and broad objectives, ensuring that regional data activities in 2020–2025 were framed around improving evidence, building capacity, and mainstreaming data use. In implementation, the RDH did contribute to those goals, showing clear links to MDS intents (as detailed in the achievements presented above). However, the MDS’s role was mostly enabling and guiding – it **influenced the design and encouraged certain priorities**, but it did not provide ongoing resources or an explicit roadmap for the RDH’s operation. The Asia-Pacific RDH had to self-direct within the loose MDS framework. Notably, where the RDH did align with the MDS (e.g. using it as a checklist), it was often due to the initiative of regional staff rather than top-down enforcement. This reflects the MDS’s general lack of institutional integration, as found by the evaluation.

Finally, it's important to state where evidence is **insufficient**: The sources reviewed for this case study were unable to provide information regarding some aspects of the RDH's evolution, most notably on exactly how the Asia-Pacific RDH's structure might have been different without the MDS, or specific changes in hub functioning attributable to mid-course MDS adjustments. Nevertheless, it is clear the MDS gave impetus to start the hub and that the hub's aims echoed the strategy. It is also clear that by 2025, IOM was moving to mainstream data in its core plans, effectively absorbing the MDS lesson that a separate strategy had limited practical traction. Thus, the Asia-Pacific RDH will likely continue beyond 2025 under the new Strategic Plan, carrying forward the foundational influence of the MDS but within a more integrated planning framework. In essence, **the MDS's legacy in the Asia-Pacific RDH is real but subtle**: it created the space for the hub to exist and pointed it in the right direction, even if the hub's journey was driven as much by on-the-ground realities as by the strategy itself.

## Annex I Case Study Data Sources

**Table 1: List of persons met**

Name	Role
Gabriela ALVAREZ	Regional Data Hub Data Analyst, IOM
Boon BENJAPORNKULPONG	Missing Migrants Project – Asia Pacific Focal Point. Data and Research Assistant, IOM
Dr. Jonghwi PARK	Academic Programme Officers, United Nations University (UNU), Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (IAS), Japan
Winida ALBERTHA	Regional Information Management Officer, BPS-Statistics Indonesia.
Olga AYMERICH	Regional Data Hub Coordinator, IOM

**Table 2: List of Documentation Reviewed**

Organisation	Year	Title
IOM	2024	Integrated Workplan 2024 (resources, results, and responsibilities): Regional Office Asia Pacific
IOM	2024	List Of All Capacity-Development Activities with Government Engagement in 2024
IOM	2024	Organizational Structure 2024: Regional Data Hub Terms of Reference
IOM	2024	Regional Data Hub Asia-Pacific Achievements in 2024
IOM	2024	Regional Thematic Specialist (Data and Research): Generic Post Description



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