

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROGRAMMES AND FINANCE

Eighteenth Session

REPORT ON IOM RESPONSE TO MIGRATION CRISES

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1. The present report has been drawn up pursuant to Council Resolution No. 1243 of 27 November 2012, which requested the Director General to regularly update Member States on IOM's application of the Migration Crisis Operational Framework (MCOF). The report outlines IOM's efforts to strengthen its humanitarian programming and partnerships, including by implementing the recently finalized IOM Principles for Humanitarian Action. It provides updates on recent IOM endeavours to respond to major crisis situations, including several Level 3 emergencies, and to increased calls for resettlement programming; it also provides an update on the Migration Emergency Funding Mechanism.

Application of the Migration Crisis Operational Framework

2. Activities to institutionalize the MCOF, which was adopted in 2012, continued throughout 2015. Two training sessions at Headquarters (February, March) focused specifically on strengthening the Organization's strategic planning and contextual analysis capacity. These were pilot sessions aimed at refining strategic planning tools and helping to lay the groundwork for future MCOF programmes. Online training modules developed in 2015 will be rolled out in 2016; they will provide IOM with a platform to introduce new staff to the MCOF, serve as a refresher course and promote continuous learning. MCOF internal roll-out activities were also pursued at the country level. Over 170 staff members across six countries received MCOF training in 2015, mainly in South-East and Central Asia.

3. The MCOF was also rolled out to a broader audience in 2015, reaching more than 130 government staff and United Nations employees. The roll-out was an integral part of IOM activities to help set up a consular crisis centre in Viet Nam. In Central Asia, MCOF training for government officials in five central Asian States (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) was a notable success, as it brought the States together for the first time in over a decade to discuss common interests and priorities in respect of the issues and provided a point of departure for considering regional contingency planning. As a result of the meeting, the officials agreed on the need to establish a regional working group oriented towards the MCOF approach, specifically on disaster risk reduction and emergencies.

Development of humanitarian policies

4. The Principles for Humanitarian Action endorsed by the IOM Council in November 2015 are the outcome of a two-year multi-stakeholder consultation process, during which the draft principles were tested in six active response settings (El Salvador, Iraq, Libya, Nepal, South Sudan and Ukraine). Although the Principles were only recently developed, 59 of 145 IOM offices, or 41 per cent, reported that adherence to humanitarian principles already featured in their strategic plans.

5. To complement the Principles for Humanitarian Action, IOM also developed an internal guidance note, issued as Instruction IN/232 in January 2016, for integrating existing principles on humanitarian protection mainstreaming into all of its crisis and post-crisis responses. IOM is thus better able to articulate its responses in line with the recognized principles of its key humanitarian partners and to strengthen its accountability in this regard. It has made available tools to help staff ensure that protection is mainstreamed throughout the life-cycle of all IOM crisis-related programming, and developed a training package to help them use both the guidelines and the tools. Both the training package and the tools have been

piloted by several IOM country offices and operations, including three implicated in the Syria crisis response (Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey) and Ukraine. Staff members in the Central African Republic and South Sudan have also benefited from inter-cluster training on the same topic. IOM's Emergency Response Induction Training and the *IOM Project Development Handbook* now include a module on mainstreaming protection. IOM has also launched outreach material on the subject, including a brochure and a video.

6. As part of its efforts to develop humanitarian policies, IOM is currently finalizing a new framework, on the progressive resolution of displacement situations, and associated tools. Grounded in international law and IOM's existing policies and frameworks, the framework applies a resilience approach to resolving displacement situations. It sets forth three key strategic objectives: to identify and strengthen coping capacities weakened as a result of displacement situations; to foster self-reliance by responding to the longer-term consequences of displacement situations; and to generate conducive environments by addressing the root causes of crisis and displacement. Under all three objectives, and in recognition of the mobility dimensions of crises, IOM seeks to maximise the opportunities mobility can offer, while ensuring appropriate safeguards are in place to mitigate mobility-related risks. A pilot training session on the framework held in October 2015 served to refine various tools, such as training modules, a compendium of activities and good practice, and a short educational video.

Emergency preparedness and response

Global outlook of IOM operations

7. The past year was, like those before it, characterized by a multitude of crises and soaring humanitarian needs. IOM, for its part, responded to six Level 3 emergencies,¹ including, in March 2015, the Level 3 emergency declared in Yemen as the fighting intensified and the humanitarian situation took a rapid turn for the worse.

8. As in the past, IOM mobilized and deployed considerable resources to respond to Level 3 emergencies. In all contexts, it faced increasingly complex logistical, operational and security challenges. Deteriorating operating conditions on the ground and diminishing respect for international humanitarian law affected IOM staff in virtually all settings, including Bangui (Central African Republic), Juba (South Sudan), Hodeidah (Yemen) and Bujumbura (Burundi). In June 2015, IOM de-activated its Level 3 designation of the outbreak of Ebola virus disease in West Africa and the response in the Central African Republic, in line with decisions made by the Principals of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC).

9. In 2015, IOM also stepped up its operations in response to crises designated as Level 1 and Level 2 emergencies, including in Burundi, Libya, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria and Ukraine, focusing in particular on meeting its responsibilities within the cluster system. In the second half of the year it began to respond to the escalating and unmet humanitarian needs of migrants arriving in the Western Balkans and southern Europe after perilous land and sea journeys.

10. In 2015, the core of IOM's emergency response operations continued to focus on camp management, shelter, water and sanitation, displacement tracking, and transportation assistance for mobile populations. In Yemen, IOM evacuated over 4,000 stranded migrants,

¹ The Central African Republic, Iraq, South Sudan, Syria, Yemen and the Ebola virus disease outbreak.

including large numbers of Ethiopian and Somali nationals, in extraordinarily complex circumstances. It carried out camp coordination and camp management activities in 41 countries and led or supported coordination in this sector in 33 countries, reaching over 6 million internally displaced persons. Over the course of the year, IOM's shelter and settlement activities reached over 5.2 million individuals affected by various types of disaster in 40 countries overall. In addition, IOM played a formal role in the sector's coordination in 20 countries. Its Displacement Tracking Matrix was used in 22 countries, allowing IOM to track the needs and locations of over 14.4 million displaced individuals in 2015. The Matrix was used not only in emergencies, but also in preparedness and transition/recovery efforts, and related tools and methodologies were adapted to enable tracking across borders, including in the context of the European/Mediterranean migration crisis.

Enhanced emergency preparedness and response capacity

11. IOM's rapid response mechanism supports country operations across all sectors of humanitarian intervention. In 2015, IOM rapid response teams conducted over 67 field missions in 28 contexts, providing support in relation to camp coordination and management, shelter, the Displacement Tracking Matrix, protection, humanitarian evacuations and contingency planning. In addition, IOM continued to build regional rapid response capacity through its Emergency Response Induction Training, which targets staff members located in regions currently affected by migration crises and/or vulnerable to natural disasters. To date, 50 staff members have received the training, which will be continued in the foreseeable future. IOM also revamped its emergency roster, in order to improve the reliability of the mechanism, limiting it to staff members with established and vetted skills that are required in emergency settings. Over 200 IOM staff members are currently on the emergency roster. The Organization also conducted multiple sector-specific training initiatives, both in-house and in coordination with partner institutions, in camp coordination and management, shelter, and information management. In all, close to 11,000 individuals – IOM staff members, representatives of partner organizations, and national authorities – participated in such initiatives in 37 countries.

12. IOM has invested in new global programme priorities, so as to maintain the Organization's adaptability, nimbleness and flexibility in rapidly changing operational contexts, and in global humanitarian reform. It has established new reference groups on cash-based programming, supply chain management, accountability to the populations concerned, protection against sexual exploitation and abuse, and reducing gender-based violence in emergencies². Each of these groups will be responsible for spearheading the development of new guidance and policy frameworks. IOM also revised its Level 3 standard operating procedures, which will be incorporated into the Organization's *Emergency Operations Manual*, and introduced new guidelines in relation to Levels 1 and 2 emergencies.

13. IOM established its first regional pre-positioning hub in late 2014, in Nairobi, Kenya, enabling it to deploy relief items swiftly and efficiently to Yemen (twice) and Malawi (twice) in 2015. Given the success of the first hub, IOM established a second regional hub in Manila, Philippines, in December 2015 in order to bolster the speed and effectiveness of its emergency responses in Asia and the Pacific, particularly with respect to sudden onset disasters.

² IOM is committed to the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies and the related Safe from the Start initiative.

14. Ongoing efforts to improve IOM's ability to respond to the emergency needs of migrants and displaced populations continue to depend heavily on core support from IOM's principal humanitarian donors, sometimes referred to the "Friends of IOM". In this regard, in 2015 IOM benefited from support from Canada, the European Union Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO), the United States Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migrants, the United Kingdom Department for International Development, and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

Partnerships

15. IOM contributed to IASC discussions at all levels throughout the year, taking part in inter-agency field missions as part of the Emergency Directors Group and attending to policy matters within the IASC Working Group, in addition to participating in the various task teams and issue-specific forums established by the IASC. In 2015, IOM sought to build consensus within the IASC for greater engagement in meeting the humanitarian needs of migrants. It also intensified efforts to introduce new inter-agency approaches for greater coherence and effectiveness in tackling instances of sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian workers. In this regard, IOM's Director General continued to serve as the IASC Champion, briefing fellow IASC Principals on this topic on multiple occasions.

16. IOM continued to play an active role in preparations for the World Humanitarian Summit, again advocating greater inclusion of mobility and displacement as a key area of focus for the international community when it gathers in Istanbul in May 2016. Thanks to its year-long advocacy efforts directed at partner organizations and Member States, related language now figures in various Summit preparatory documents.

17. In response to the multiple, tragic situations involving mixed migratory flows that snared international attention in 2015, IOM worked closely with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to improve the coordination of humanitarian planning and response at regional level. As a result, jointly coordinated regional response plans were launched for the situations in Europe and Yemen. Closer alignment between IOM and UNHCR in the coordination of such responses brought about greater clarity when it came to the organizations' respective roles and responsibilities, although planned interventions remained severely under-funded.

18. Within the cluster system, IOM, as the lead agency for the Global Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster in natural disaster situations, continued working closely with other global cluster lead agencies; for example, it strengthened operational collaboration in the Field with the Protection Cluster, in particular with regard to gender-based violence, conducting gap analyses and consultations to clarify operational linkages. It also focused on expanding the scope and utility of the Displacement Tracking Matrix, as a service to the wider humanitarian community.

19. To supplement and strengthen its emergency response capacity, IOM continued to expand its roster of standby partners to include the Government of Luxembourg and the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), with which new framework agreements were concluded in 2015. In all, IOM benefited from 45 field deployments in 2015, representing 7,236 days of personnel service in operations in 13 countries. IOM also works with International Humanitarian Partnerships (IHP), a multinational network of eight governmental management agencies in Europe and a platform for international cooperation and resource sharing. IOM has drawn on the IHP to reinforce its operations, particularly in South Sudan

and Iraq. In 2015, the IHP (via MSB) provided IOM South Sudan with a light base camp, equipment and logistical support.

Resettlement and movement

20. Moving vulnerable migrants and refugees out of harm's way to safety is one of IOM's core functions. Whether to mitigate the consequences of forced displacement or maximize the benefits of planned migration, IOM's movement operations continue to grow in complexity and scope. In 2015, over 200,000 people travelled internationally under IOM auspices in various resettlement, return or evacuation operations from several high-risk locations, such as Afghanistan, Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen.

21. In addition to emergency evacuations, IOM is helping some 30 States carry out resettlement, humanitarian admission and relocation initiatives in over 50 countries, with major operations under way in Ethiopia, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon and Turkey. Annual resettlement increased by 54 per cent in five years, from 82,000 refugees and humanitarian entrants in 2011 to over 126,000 in 2015. This is due in large part to the emergency resettlement/admission of Syrians from the Middle East and North Africa and admissions of special immigrants from Afghanistan. The upward trend is likely to continue in the coming years. In these contexts, IOM also faces daunting security, logistical and other challenges, as the trend shifts from large homogenous refugee groups in stable, well-established locations, to caseloads from more diverse, remote and sometimes dangerous contexts.

22. The resettlement process is also under enormous pressure, from higher caseloads and requests for expedited resettlement processing. The second half of 2015 saw an upswing in the resettlement of Syrian refugees, notably to Canada, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and a number of European countries. During the last two weeks of December alone, IOM helped resettle 5,221 Syrian refugees from the Middle East to Canada, as part of a Canadian commitment to resettle 25,000 refugees before March 2016. In November, IOM and UNHCR marked a major milestone: the resettlement of over 100,000 Bhutanese refugees from Nepal to third countries since the programme's inception in 2007.

Migration Emergency Funding Mechanism

23. Established in 2011, the Migration Emergency Funding Mechanism allows IOM to initiate emergency operations for groups of displaced persons affected by crises, making it less reliant on the receipt of donor funding. Since its creation, the Mechanism has enabled IOM to respond quickly in places such as the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Nepal, Nigeria, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. It was used most recently to meet humanitarian needs in Yemen and the Western Balkans. The Mechanism's current funding level is USD 11.3 million from 12 donor countries – well short of the target of USD 30 million.