

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROGRAMMES AND FINANCE

Thirty-third Session

**NINTH UPDATE ON THE APPLICATION OF THE
INTERNAL GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK**

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Introduction

1. This report provides an update to the information provided by the Administration to the Thirty-second Session of the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance on its progress in applying the IOM Internal Governance Framework (IGF) (document S/32/INF/1).

2. The Administration remains committed to a dialogue with Member States regarding the progress made in applying the Framework, as well as funding needs and priorities, as appropriate. The Administration will continue to report on progress made in this regard, including key achievements, at each session of the Standing Committee.

3. This report follows the structure of the IGF Workplan (*Application of the Internal Governance Framework Work Plan*) to simplify and standardize the reporting process, which will also facilitate monitoring of progress. As such, this report is presented using the four workstreams:

- (a) Workstream 1: Foundational components
- (b) Workstream 2: Strengthening existing business processes
- (c) Workstream 3: Business Transformation (including the introduction of a new enterprise resource planning system)
- (d) Workstream 4: Internal justice

Recent key achievements

4. IOM continues to pursue organizational reform through the execution of the IGF Workplan. As of August 2023, 66 out of the total of 73 work items had been completed or fast-tracked for completion under the Business Transformation. Of the seven remaining work items, four are expected to be completed by the end of 2023. The largest outstanding item is the Business Transformation, including the development of a new enterprise resource planning (ERP) system. This work will be completed in 2024.

5. This update outlines a selection of recent key achievements that are contributing to the realization of a modern, fit-for-purpose internal governance system. It does not reflect the full scope of work; a comprehensive progress report on the application of the IGF was provided to Member States in December 2022 and another report will be shared later in 2023.

Outcome of external governance and performance reviews

6. Over the past twelve months, IOM has engaged in a number of important external assessments of its performance and institutional capacity, notably by the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN), the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, which observed that IOM had become “materially stronger” as an organization. These assessments commend IOM for its substantial programme of institutional reforms – many of which have been delivered through the application of the IGF Workplan – and confirm that the Organization is moving in the right direction. In addition, they recognize the significant investment that IOM has made in recent years to improve project and financial management, and to develop a more integrated enterprise resource planning system. The findings point to the need for further work to embed the reforms made thus far and

address outstanding gaps in governance, characterizing IOM as being at a midpoint in its reform journey. The Organization will use the recommendations from these assessments, together with findings from other relevant assessments and evaluations, to formulate and structure a new reform agenda for implementation commencing in 2024.

(a) Workstream 1: Foundational components

Work item 1.1.1: Strategic planning, taking a results-based approach

7. Designed to encompass all programmatic areas, cross-cutting priorities and management focus areas of the Organization, the Strategic Results Framework reached a significant milestone in its operationalization with the launch of a pilot in February 2023. By the end of July 2023, the Framework had been applied to over 139 IOM projects, and it is now in use at a total of 92 country offices. Initial feedback from country offices has been very positive about the relevance of the Framework and its ease of use for project development, reporting and strategy development.

8. In order to prepare for the global roll-out of the Strategic Results Framework in January 2024, extensive feedback has been collected, including through an external evaluation of results-based management at IOM, which contained several recommendations regarding the Framework. The technical update of the Framework is due to be completed by the end of 2023, which will allow full alignment with the forthcoming strategic plan for the period 2024–2028. In another positive development, IOM Member States are showing an interest in using the Strategic Results Framework to shape their strategic engagement with the Organization.

Work item 1.2.1: Implementing the evaluation and monitoring strategy for IOM

9. As the 2021–2022 biennial evaluation plan nears completion, five central evaluation reports have been published:

- Evaluation of IOM’s Institutional Approach to the Implementation of the Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus (2022)
- Evaluation of IOM’s Institutional Approach and Contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2022)
- Evaluation of IOM’s Strategic and Operational Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic (2023)
- Thematic Evaluation of IOM’s Labour Migration and Mobility Strategy and Initiatives (2023)
- Evaluation of Results-Based Management at IOM (2023)

10. Two final evaluations from the biennial evaluation plan are expected to be published by the end of 2023: an evaluation of IOM approaches and initiatives to counter xenophobia and discrimination and enhance social cohesion, and the midterm evaluation of the IOM East and Horn of Africa regional strategy for 2020–2024.

11. Other work in this area has included the transformation of the *IOM Monitoring and Evaluation Guidelines* into a set of user-friendly e-guidelines, which will facilitate updates and allow selected IOM users to personalize them, for example for specific training purposes. The evaluation strategy for the period 2024–2025 is also under development.

Work items 1.5.2, 2.10.2 and 2.10.3: Developing an action-oriented private sector partnerships strategy and action plan, Goodwill ambassador guidelines and Due diligence policy instruction

12. Since the release of the Private Sector Engagement Strategy 2023–2027 in February 2023, significant progress has been made in promoting IOM engagement with the private sector. Numerous webinars have been held to introduce the Strategy to field colleagues, accompanied by the launch of an internal SharePoint site that offers a range of tools and resources to support global private sector engagement. Efforts in this area continue to focus on engaging the business community, foundations and individuals. As of August 2023, the Organization has generated approximately USD 12.5 million in private sector revenue, taking it closer to the target of USD 15.1 million for the year, in accordance with the Strategy.

13. Emergency response remains a key priority for private sector engagement and has attracted strong interest from the private sector. Approximately half of this year's private sector revenue has been allocated to earthquake response efforts in Türkiye and the Syrian Arab Republic. Targeted outreach efforts by IOM offices in Türkiye and Romania, in collaboration with IOM Headquarters in Geneva, have played a pivotal role in establishing connections and securing additional financial and in-kind support.

14. The surge in private sector engagement has led to an associated increase in due diligence requests from IOM field missions to vet potential engagements with private sector partners. This work has been supported through the development and release of the IOM due diligence instruction. Between 1 January and 31 August 2023, a total of 113 due diligence assessments were conducted, already surpassing the previous total of 112 for the whole of 2022. The goodwill ambassador pilot programme also officially commenced in August, with nominations at the global, regional and country levels remaining open until the end of September.

(b) Workstream 2: Strengthening existing business processes

Work item 2.4.4: Development of supply chain standard operating procedures

15. In March 2023, IOM introduced the third revision of the IOM Procurement Manual, which offers more comprehensive instructions and guidelines spanning the entire procurement process. It also provides a clearer overview of delegation of procurement authority and the segregation of duties, while ensuring alignment with relevant United Nations standards. Other notable improvements include the introduction of forecasting and detailed procurement planning, enhanced instructions on vendor ineligibility and wrongdoing procedures, clearer guidelines on cooperation with United Nations entities, and the addition of considerations relating to environmental and social responsibility, and disability inclusion.

16. A three-month transition period was provided for adoption of the new Procurement Manual to facilitate the change for IOM offices. A global training programme was developed to support this process, targeting regional offices, administrative centres and specific missions; this is currently being delivered, with training sessions scheduled throughout the year. As of September 2023, training has been provided to approximately 300 participants in the Regional Offices in Nairobi, Bangkok and Vienna, and the Manila and Panama Administrative Centres, with further training sessions scheduled for the remaining regional offices.

Work item 2.6.3: Global staff survey

17. The third global staff survey was launched in September 2023. The IOM leadership strongly believes in the central role of its dedicated workforce and the importance of soliciting feedback on various aspects of the Organization's performance. This survey, conducted by an external service provider, is fully confidential and offers the opportunity to benchmark responses against those of similar United Nations organizations and non-governmental organizations. Previous survey results in 2019 and 2021 have indicated improvements in areas such as staff engagement, teamwork, collaboration and leadership. For 2023, the survey questions were developed in collaboration with the Executive Office and the Global Staff Association Committee, mirroring the approach taken in 2021. The Organization remains steadfast in its commitment to acting on the survey results; IOM senior management will work with individual missions to analyse the survey findings, assess the progress made to date and pinpoint areas requiring further attention.

Work item 2.8: Enhancing policies and guidance on monetary engagements with implementing partners

18. The Implementing Partnerships Management Handbook, developed by the Working Group on Monetary Engagement with Downstream Partners, was released in March 2023. It outlines the minimum requirements for engagement with implementing partners and offers guidance on establishing and executing successful, equitable partnerships in various operating contexts. The Organization's commitment to channelling more funding through local partners, in alignment with the Grand Bargain on humanitarian financing, aims to enhance sustainability and reduce dependence on international assistance. To promote global compliance with the Handbook, webinars were held in May and July 2023, reaching over 1,250 staff worldwide. Dedicated human resources have been assigned to assist missions during and after the transition period, and the Handbook will also be translated into French and Spanish.

(c) Workstream 3: Business Transformation (including the introduction of a new enterprise resource planning system)

19. As of August 2023, the Business Transformation remains within its budget of USD 56 million, with the final roll-out of the new enterprise resource planning system to take place in the first half of 2024, rather than January 2024 as planned. This will enable IOM's implementation partner, Oracle Consulting, to complete its work in line with the scheduling and quality requirements of the Organization. IOM has already used the new Oracle platform to deploy human resources solutions for performance management, and learning and recruitment.

20. The Business Transformation team is also making progress in delivering the remaining waves of applications, namely the planning and budgeting modules, and the finance, supply chain, workforce management and payroll, contract, fleet and project management components in Oracle Cloud. Training sessions have been planned to prepare IOM staff for these new ways of working; these will be delivered closer to the go-live date. Data preparation is also progressing as planned, including the transfer and validation of data to ensure a seamless transition to the new system.

21. In addition, the change management plan and operating model for the Business Transformation have been finalized. These elements will provide essential support in achieving project milestones and promoting the adoption of the new enterprise resource planning system, together with the associated working methods.

(d) Workstream 4: Internal justice

Work item 4.1: Review and strengthening of the IOM internal justice system

22. From 1 January to 31 August 2023, the Office of the Inspector General saw an increase in its investigative workload. The number of open cases under investigation decreased slightly, from 101 to 98 (excluding cases referred for investigation by third parties). Notably, only 12 cases predating 2022 remained open by the end of this period, of which just 2 predated 2021. Meanwhile, the number of allegations at the intake stage grew from approximately 276 in 2022 to 501 in the current eight-month reporting period, with 622 allegations received during the last three months of the period alone. This rise is mainly attributable to the substantial increase in allegations reported, which totalled 1,382 in the first eight months of 2023, as compared to 1,409 for the whole of 2022, 986 in 2021, 721 in 2020 and 494 in 2019. At the end of the reporting period, 18 per cent of the cases at the intake stage predated 2023. The rise in allegations is considered to be due to growth in staff numbers and the scale of operations at IOM, in addition to a stronger culture of accountability, integrity and transparency.

23. During the same reporting period, the Office of the Inspector General referred 58 cases to the Department of Legal Affairs for consideration of disciplinary measures, based on investigation reports and referral reports on cases for which sufficient evidence existed after preliminary assessment or investigation. At the end of the reporting period, the investigation function was composed of 23 staff positions, including 2 positions to manage the We Are All In reporting platform, which is now the responsibility of the Office of the Inspector General.

Work item 4.2: Misconduct platform – We Are All In

24. IOM's misconduct platform – We Are All In – allows the confidential reporting of misconduct allegations to the Administration. It is currently available in English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian and Ukrainian. While the platform was initially designed for the reporting of sexual misconduct, it also provides awareness-raising materials on sexual exploitation and abuse, harassment, retaliation, and fraud, corruption and the misuse of resources, among other types of misconduct. In addition, IOM personnel can use the platform to access relevant internal policies, training and other awareness-raising materials.

25. As mentioned under work item 4.1, the growth in staff numbers and the scale of operations at IOM, and a stronger culture of accountability, integrity and transparency have resulted in a steady rise in misconduct allegations against personnel of IOM and its implementing partners, from 205 in the whole of 2017 to 1,382 in the first eight months of 2023. Given this consistent growth in the volume in allegations, it is necessary to continue to increase the Organization's capacity to review and investigate allegations, impose disciplinary measures and manage an increased number of appeals by staff members against disciplinary measures imposed on them.

Conclusion

26. The Administration is fully committed to the continued dialogue with Member States on the application of the IGF. It would like to commend Member States for their continued involvement, in particular those that have provided unearmarked or softly earmarked contributions for this purpose. The Administration will provide another update on the application of the Framework at the Thirty-fourth Session of the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance, focusing on the conclusion of the current IGF Workplan and the transition to the next stage of administrative reforms.