

**EVALUATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION EXTERNAL ACTION  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

---

**EVALUATION OF DG ECHO'S PARTNERSHIP  
WITH THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR  
MIGRATION (IOM) (2018 – 2022)**

---

*December 2023*

**EVIDENCE  
MATTERS**



Euro  
Civil P  
them  
Civil Protection &  
Humanitarian Aid  
on  
and  
Aid

Prepared by:



ICF S.A.  
Avenue Marnix 17  
B-1000 Brussels (Belgium)

Framework Contract ECHO/E2/FWC/RC/2021/SI2

Contract No ECHO/ADM/BUD/2023/01201

Contract title: Evaluation of DG ECHO's partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM)  
(2018 - 2022)

---

#### Authors

Maurice van der Velden

Vittorio Furci

Miranda McMinn

Sofía Esteves

Rocío Naranjo Sandalio

Massimo Spinelli

#### Contact information:

European Commission  
Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations – DG ECHO  
Unit ECHO.E.2 Programming, Control and Reporting  
Email: [ECHO-EVAL@ec.europa.eu](mailto:ECHO-EVAL@ec.europa.eu)  
B-1049 Brussels, Belgium

European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations:  
[Evaluations | European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations \(europa.eu\)](#)

## **LEGAL NOTICE**

This document has been prepared for the European Commission as part of the evaluations of the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations. However, it reflects the views only of the authors, and the European Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this document, and is not liable for any consequence stemming from the reuse of this publication. More information on the European Union is available on the Internet (<http://www.europa.eu>).

The reuse policy of European Commission documents is implemented by the Commission Decision 2011/833/EU of 12 December 2011 on the reuse of Commission documents (OJ L 330, 14.12.2011, p. 39). Except otherwise noted, the reuse of this document is authorised under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC-BY 4.0) licence (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>). This means that reuse is allowed provided appropriate credit is given and any changes are indicated.

For any use or reproduction of elements that are not owned by the European Union, permission may need to be sought directly from the respective rightholders.

© European Union, 2023

**Evaluation of DG ECHO's partnership with the International Organization for Migration  
(IOM)  
(2018 - 2022)**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>Table of Contents .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Methodological approach.....	5
Overview of the context.....	5
Coherence.....	6
Effectiveness .....	6
Efficiency .....	7
Recommendations .....	7

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In 2023, ICF was asked to undertake an evaluation for the European Commission's Directorate General for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid (DG ECHO). The aim of this work was to conduct an independent evaluation covering the period of 2018-2022 of DG ECHO's partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), covering the period 2018-2022. The specific purpose of the assignment was to provide:

- a retrospective assessment of DG ECHO's partnership with IOM globally, with a focus on identifying lessons learned; and
- a maximum of five prospective, strategic recommendations to support DG ECHO's partnership with IOM. These strategic recommendations could possibly be supported by further, related, operational recommendations. Successful 'de-facto' models/approaches were also to be identified – based on good practice – for possible, wider application in the region.

The work was carried out by ICF, with inputs from an expert panel, between June and November 2023.

### **Methodological approach**

The evaluation, which seeks to assess past performance based on an Evaluation Framework and a Theory of Change, but which also strives to provide recommendations, is ex post and theoretical but includes formative elements. Process evaluation elements are incorporated to better capture the causal links. The evaluation was designed to answer five evaluation questions covering three evaluation criteria (coherence, effectiveness, and efficiency). A variety of methods was used to collect and analyse primary and secondary data, followed by triangulation. The evaluation team carried out a desk review, a portfolio analysis, a social media analysis, and a review of documentation of IOM funded actions following a three-step approach (a brief analysis of FichOps for all 108 actions; an in-depth review to extract data from both Single Forms and FichOps for 26 selected actions; and a further in-depth analysis of IOM actions funded in the case study countries). Data from relevant stakeholders was collected through an online survey for DG ECHO and IOM staff at HQ/regional/country levels (100 responses, 69 DG ECHO and 31 IOM), Key Informant Interviews (35) with DG ECHO and IOM staff in HQ/regional/country offices and staff from other European Union institutions and other donors, and two (remote) field missions in Ethiopia and Iraq informing country-focused case studies (25 and 12 interviews respectively).

### **Overview of the context**

IOM is the leading UN related organisation in the field of migration. Since the 1950s, it has supported “*people on the move*” and worked closely with governmental, intergovernmental, and non-governmental partners in 175 Member States, providing advice on migration policy and practice as well as building capacity for a better management of the mobility of people and its impacts. Over the evaluation period, DG ECHO was the second largest donor to IOM's humanitarian aid activities, providing approximately 8% of the humanitarian aid funding to IOM. Overall, DG ECHO provided EUR 410 million to 108 IOM actions.

As IOM is an UN-related organisation, its relations with DG ECHO are regulated by the Financial Administrative Framework Agreement. The partnership between DG ECHO and IOM has evolved (and been reinforced) over the evaluation period. Notably, a dedicated Unit (Unit D1 – Strategic Partnerships with Humanitarian Organisations) was established in 2019 to build and strengthen partnerships with strategic humanitarian partners, including IOM.

DG ECHO funds IOM interventions all over the world and across sectors. Over the 2018-2022 period, the largest share of DG ECHO funding to IOM was for actions in Africa (49%), followed by Europe (23%), and Asia (15%). Europe saw an increase in funding due to humanitarian needs in Ukraine. In terms of sectors, there was a clear emphasis on shelter and settlements (42% of funding). Protection (12%), coordination (12%) and WASH (10%) were the next three main sectors in terms of funding.

### **Coherence**

DG ECHO and IOM were highly complementary in their humanitarian mandates. At strategic level, there was a good degree of alignment in terms of priorities between DG ECHO and IOM although some strategic

priorities diverged due to the specificities of the partners' mandates (e.g., EiE). At operational level, DG ECHO and IOM were also generally well aligned in their priorities and objectives although some differences in prioritisation were also identified in some countries.

Overall, the evaluation also points to good alignment in terms of needs assessments and vulnerability analyses. Nonetheless, the degree of alignment also varied according to the context in which the funded actions were implemented (e.g., depending on the level of humanitarian access). In terms of advocacy priorities, DG ECHO and IOM were generally well aligned both at strategic and operational levels. Nonetheless, some stakeholders consulted reported that there is still room to reinforce joint (and coordinated) advocacy efforts at field level. DG ECHO and IOM were also generally aligned on visibility and communication efforts, although a significant share of DG ECHO staff expressed the need for improvement from IOM in this regard.

### **Effectiveness**

Over the evaluation period, there was structured, strategic, timely and functional dialogue and information exchange (formal and/or informal) between DG ECHO and IOM at all levels. The partnership contributed to improved dialogue between the partners on key developments and challenges at regional and country level. Nonetheless, the links between strategic-level and field-level dialogue could be improved. Dialogue under the partnership also contributed to mutual understanding of each other's policy and operational objectives (particularly at HQ level). The high quality of dialogue and information exchange between DG ECHO and IOM at field level, as well as DG ECHO's presence on the ground, also contributed to a common understanding between the partners on how to operationalise their cooperation.

Although patterns in budget allocation to IOM were also consistent with dialogue and information exchange between partners over the evaluation period, it was not possible to establish a definitive causal link between discussions and the allocation of funds to specific regions and/or sectors. Nonetheless, the qualitative findings indicate that discussions at strategic level may have indirectly shaped trends in funding allocation.

In addition to the above, evidence collected shows that the DG ECHO-IOM partnership enhanced the quality of each partner's humanitarian response and contributed to reinforcing the humanitarian response system. The development and sharing of tools and approaches (in particular the DTM) was one of the main benefits of the partnership. The partnership also strengthened the efforts linked to needs-based approaches, people centred approaches, and better coordination and information/data sharing with other stakeholders.

The impact of the partnership on localisation and on MPCA was rather limited and very much context-dependent. DG ECHO's financial (and advocacy) support to IOM's coordination efforts contributed to better coordination and information/data sharing with other relevant stakeholders. When it comes to the partnership's contribution to the HDPN approach, even though both partners were committed, evidence collected shows that exchanges in this context did not always lead to concrete actions to operationalise the nexus. Both DG ECHO and IOM were committed to the delivery of humanitarian assistance in full compliance with the humanitarian principles.

The Strategic Partnership approach positively influenced cooperation at HQ/Brussels, particularly through the establishment of the Strategic Partnership Unit and the role of IOM contact point for relations with DG ECHO. Even though the HLDs and Directors Meetings provided opportunities to discuss issues of common interest to the partners at strategic level, there were divergent views as to whether those positively impacted the DG ECHO-IOM cooperation. The Strategic Partnership approach had a rather limited impact on DG ECHO-IOM cooperation at field level.

Over the evaluation period, DG ECHO and IOM also cooperated in the context of the SCF. A majority of stakeholders consulted (at different levels) did not know, however, whether the EU-IOM SCF positively influenced the DG ECHO-IOM partnership. Those who were able to provide insights into this aspect were divided as to the extent to which the EU-IOM SCF positively impacted the partnership.

## **Efficiency**

With regard to maximising efficiency gains, the regular communication between DG ECHO and IOM in relation to the HLD provided opportunity for substantive operational dialogue that ensured alignment in discussion and priority areas. Generally, the partnership supported maximising efficiency through flexibility of the partnership, funding predictability, the opportunity to provide a crisis modifier in the Single Form and the flexibility and timely response of DG ECHO when modifications are needed.

In-country relationships that included regular communication and open dialogue between IOM and DG ECHO field staff and Joint needs collaboration and coordination also supported efficiency of response through greater coherence with other organisations including national organisations and ensuring a shared understanding of the current situation in country. The EU-wide strategic dialogue at the SOM meetings was also helpful in ensuring alignment in discussions. However, regional level exchanges were not as frequent and increasing dialogue across all staff levels from field to HQ level would enable more opportunities for follow through of actions and cooperation which can support efficiency of implementation.

Collected evidence also shows, that to a good extent, the partnership contributed to improving the cost-effectiveness, timeliness, and relevance of the partners' humanitarian responses. However, there is limited evidence to show that the partnership directly succeeded in decreasing management related costs, including administrative burden. This may point to differences between countries and the extent to which management costs and administrative burdens are reflective of the operating costs in a specific country.

## **Recommendations**

1. DG ECHO should engage with IOM to 1) enhance the links across different levels of cooperation (HQ-regional-country); 2) define common objectives of the Strategic Partnership, assess their progress and communicate them across the organisations. In this context, DG ECHO should further:
  - a) promote the active involvement of field colleagues (both in DG ECHO and IOM) in the discussions on operational and technical aspects at HQ level;
  - b) promote the definition of short-term Strategic Partnership objectives and communicate them across all levels within both organisations; and
  - c) promote ways to improve information sharing with Regional, Country, and Field offices to reduce knowledge gaps between strategic and operational levels.
2. DG ECHO should engage with IOM to organise more regular and structured technical exchanges on specific thematic/policy issues at HQ level, both as a follow-up to strategic meetings or when thematic/ sectoral issues arise in the field.
3. DG ECHO should reinforce its cooperation with IOM on the operationalisation of the HDPN approach (i.e. in countries where the humanitarian and political context allow for this). In this context, DG ECHO should further:
  - a) engage with IOM to better define common objectives and priorities in relation to the operationalisation of the HDPN; and
  - b) seek ways to improve coordination with other EU actors to identify entry points for opportunities towards transitional funding for IOM and to advocate more strongly to mobilise resources from the development side of the EU.

## **GETTING IN TOUCH WITH THE EU**

### **In person**

All over the European Union there are hundreds of Europe Direct information centres. You can find the address of the centre nearest you at: [https://europa.eu/european-union/contact\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/contact_en)

### **On the phone or by email**

Europe Direct is a service that answers your questions about the European Union. You can contact this service:

- by freephone: 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 (certain operators may charge for these calls),
- at the following standard number: +32 22999696, or
- by electronic mail via: [https://europa.eu/european-union/contact\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/contact_en)

## **FINDING INFORMATION ABOUT THE EU**

### **Online**

Information about the European Union in all the official languages of the EU is available on the Europa website at: [https://europa.eu/european-union/index\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/index_en)

### **EU publications**

You can download or order free and priced EU publications from EU Bookshop at: <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publications>. Multiple copies of free publications may be obtained by contacting Europe Direct or your local information centre (see [https://europa.eu/european-union/contact\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/contact_en)).



## The European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations - ECHO

### ECHO Mission

The primary role of the Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) of the European Commission is to manage and coordinate the European Union's emergency response to conflicts, natural and man-made disasters. It does so both through the delivery of humanitarian aid and through the coordination and facilitation of in-kind assistance, specialist capacities, expertise and intervention teams using the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM)

#### Follow us:



:[https://twitter.com/eu\\_echo](https://twitter.com/eu_echo)



:<https://www.facebook.com/ec.humanitarian.aid>



:[https://www.instagram.com/eu\\_echo/](https://www.instagram.com/eu_echo/)



:<https://www.youtube.com/user/HumanitarianAidECHO>

