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UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

EVALUATION

AT A GLANCE



International Migrants day 2024, The Gambia. ©OHCHR

Protection of Migrants: Independent Mid-term Evaluation of UNODC/OHCHR Project, PROMIS Phase III

The PROMIS Project: Strengthening the Capacities of West African States to Develop a Human Rights-based Response to Smuggling of Migrants and to Effectively Respond to Human Rights Violations related to Irregular Migration, launched in 2016 with support from the Netherlands and Italy, is the first joint initiative by UNODC and OHCHR in West Africa.

With a total budget of USD 12.4 million for 2020–2024, it aims to strengthen the capacities of West and Central African countries to address smuggling of migrants (SOM) and trafficking in persons (TIP) through a human rights-based and gender-sensitive approach.

In line with the funding agreement with the Kingdom of Netherlands, OHCHR and UNODC conducted an independent mid-term evaluation of this project between June 2024 and March 2025.

See more:
Evaluation Report (English);
Evaluation Brief (English 2-pager)
Evaluation Report (French);
Evaluation Brief (French 2-pager)

Highlights of achievements

- The PROMIS project strengthened inter-agency collaboration between OHCHR and UNODC on **smuggling of migrants (SOM)** and **trafficking in persons (TIP)** across West Africa.
- Through joint legislative support, research, capacity-building, awareness raising and regional coordination, key achievements include;
  - A *more integrated, multidisciplinary, and human rights-based* response to irregular migration across the region.
  - *Stronger collaboration* with National Human Rights Institutions and civil society leading to improved early identification and support for victims.
  - *Enactment of the anti-trafficking and anti-smuggling laws aligned with human rights standard* in Niger and The Gambia.
  - *Development of national strategies and subsequent action plans* in Mali and Senegal to advance a human rights-based response to TIP and SOM.
  - *Improved investigative capacities* of frontline SOM and TIP agencies in Nigeria, including the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), the Nigeria Immigration Service, and border-control units.
  - *Accelerated judicial proceedings* against perpetrators of TIP and SOM operating between Nigeria and Niger and Italy and Spain, through the Liaison Magistrates Initiative in collaboration with the respective Ministries of Justice.



Training of border officials on human rights at international borders leaders in Nigeria . ©OHCHR

CONTACTS

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Resources: Evaluation guidance, tools and templates (ohchr.org

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REFLECTIONS FROM THE PRESENCE

OHCHR West Africa Regional Office (WARO)

How was your experience engaging in the evaluation process?

The evaluation process was collaborative and inclusive. Beyond the quality of the evaluation and recommendations, the collaborative approach and ability to foster a climate of trust significantly enhanced stakeholder engagement and ensured the evaluation was conducted under optimal conditions. The evaluators were receptive to feedback, and that fostered a sense of ownership over both the findings and the recommendations.

Are there findings/recommendations from the evaluation that stood out to you the most?

The findings on what worked across different country contexts, eg (the effectiveness of joint coordination between protection and justice actors, and the relevance of the route-based approach), and where improvements were needed, such as deepening collaboration with regional actors, strengthening victim follow-up support, enhancing data collection on groups in situations of vulnerability, ensuring more consistent application of HRBA&LNOB and enhancing coordination structures and joint project practices, among others.



OHCHR research publication on Multiple and intersecting harms:

What are some lessons you'd share with other teams implementing similar projects?

One key lesson is the importance of early and continuous engagement with both protection and justice actors which creates a stronger, more coherent response to SOM and TIP. Another lesson is to ensure flexibility in project design, adapting to fast-changing migration dynamics and protection needs was critical to staying relevant on the ground. In addition, investing in community-based approaches and listening to the voices of migrants themselves made the interventions more impactful. Lastly, structured coordination mechanisms are very crucial for joint projects.



Painting the Silence: Stories of Disability and Trafficking


School sensitization on migrants rights & prevention of irregular migration in Senegal ©OHCHR

Integration of Gender, Disability, HRBA and LNOB

From the outset, we made a deliberate effort to integrate Gender Equality, Human Rights-Based Approach, Leaving No One Behind principle into PROMIS. The project placed the rights of victims of trafficking and irregular migrants at the center of its design and implementation. This translated into targeted, rights-based interventions that addressed the specific needs of groups in situations of vulnerability, including children, youth and persons with disabilities.

Through this lens, we were also able to confront systemic barriers like discriminatory practices and governance gaps that often prevent migrants from fully realizing their rights. The evaluation affirmed the value of this integrated approach and gave us clear guidance on where to deepen our efforts, particularly around intersectionality and participation.



Awareness-raising workshop for Defense and Security Forces and community leaders ©OHCHR

Did the evaluation contribute to discussions with partners or donors?

The evaluation gave us credible, evidence-based messages to take to partners and donors. It helped validate our approach and demonstrated the impact of joint human rights and criminal justice interventions. Having concrete findings and recommendations made it easier to advocate for sustained funding and stronger collaboration, especially around regional and cross-border initiatives.

Has the evaluation informed your programming/ next phase of the project?

The evaluation highlighted what had the greatest impact, such as multi-stakeholder coordination and targeted protection for vulnerable groups. It also emphasized the need to move from activity-based indicators to qualitative and results-focused. We've integrated these lessons into the design of PROMIS Phase V which has been extended from May 2025 to December 2028, and will implement the evaluation recommendations during this period. We also plan to apply these insights in our programming and other projects in the region.