



PRESS RELEASE

IOM is an agile, entrepreneurial organisation, but with fragile foundations

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Geneva – The way organisations are funded can help UN agencies focus on delivering results on the ground, but can also undermine key central functions – as appears to be the case for the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

The 2023 assessment of IOM’s business model and results – released today by the Multilateral Performance Network (MOPAN) in Geneva, in conjunction with IOM’s new Director General Amy Pope and MOPAN members Belgium, Canada and the Netherlands – looks closely at what other UN organisations, funders, and other key stakeholders can learn from IOM, one of the most heavily earmarked organisations in the multilateral system.

“Our assessment shows that IOM is an agile, entrepreneurial and delivery focused organisation, highly valued by MOPAN members” said Suzanne Steensen, Head of the MOPAN Secretariat. “But it also shows the limitations of IOM’s business model – for example IOM has little capacity to back up its operations with technical advice, or wiggle room to respond to new crises or support action before crises hit”.

MOPAN’s assessment shows that IOM is strong on the ground: in crisis response, providing value for money, contributing to overall response efforts, targeting vulnerable people, supporting national governments, as a partner to other organisations, and in providing durable solutions for internally displaced people.

Unsurprisingly, the MOPAN assessment also identifies key areas for improvement that include working with funders to ease reliance on earmarked funds; finalising, operationalising and consolidating the rollout of IOM’s ambitious programme of institutional and business process reforms; further empowering IOM to deliver its cross-agency lead role on migration; scaling up work to be accountable to the people IOM serves, and working more closely with local actors – who are often the first responders in crisis settings.

The dilemma for DG Pope, as she settles into office, will be how to achieve all this without compromising IOM’s entrepreneurial DNA – indeed MOPAN recognizes that nearly all of IOM’s organisational capacity challenges are in many respects the flip sides of its core strength of agility and responsiveness.

And for other UN organisations – who are all facing an uptick in earmarked funding – IOM provides good learning about how to deliver the right results while coping with difficult funding environment, while also sounding the alarm about what can happen when there is only limited funding for central capacities and functions.

The Multilateral Performance Network (MOPAN) is an independent network of 22 member states who have a shared vision to promote an effective multilateral system trusted to deliver solutions to evolving global goals and local challenges. Together, MOPAN members and collaborators provide nearly USD 70.6 billion in annual contributions to and through the multilateral system – the majority of the system’s official development assistance (ODA) funding.

For further information on MOPAN, or about this [MOPAN Assessment of IOM](#), please contact: Cara.YAKUSH@mopanonline.org