

Evaluation of the Global Assistance for Irregular Migrants Program (GAIM)



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Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

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Executive Summary

Background

This report presents the findings of the Evaluation of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's (IRCC) Global Assistance for Irregular Migrants (GAIM) program. The evaluation was conducted in fulfillment of requirements under the Treasury Board's Policy on Results and covered the period between fiscal years 2015–2016 and 2020–2021.

The primary focus of the evaluation examined the governance structure of the program, with a secondary focus on the results achieved against the GAIM program's stated outcomes.

Summary of conclusions

Regarding the primary evaluation focus, the evaluation revealed that unclear roles and responsibilities within IRCC were contributing to potential governance and management issues that could impact the delivery of the GAIM program.

The evaluation also found that while the program was responsive, met smuggled migrants' basic needs, and provided return and reintegration assistance, it is difficult to determine the full effectiveness of the assistance as this type of outcome data is not available.

In response to the evaluation's findings, and in support of continued improvement of the program, two recommendations are proposed.

Summary of recommendations

Theme 1: Performance Measurement

IRCC would benefit from a review of the GAIM program's performance measurement strategy, as it is currently difficult for the department to adequately communicate the results story. IRCC requires the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to collect and report on output data such as numbers of assessments conducted, services provided, and migrants opting for voluntary return. However, the IOM is not required by their contribution agreement (CA) to collect data that would help determine the effectiveness of the reintegration assistance for these migrants. Though it is not a requirement in the current CA, the IOM does collect some relevant data in this area; however, the data will not be made available until the current CA has ended. As well, the GAIM program logic model includes activities that no longer take place under the GAIM program, such as capacity building, as this work is administered by Global Affairs Canada (GAC).

Recommendation 1: The GAIM program should:

- a) update its performance measurement strategy and program outcomes; and
- b) ensure the reporting requirements in the future third party CA include key performance data/reports on program effectiveness.

Theme 2: Roles and Responsibilities

While the program has been implemented effectively and in a timely manner, evidence pointed to a lack of clear roles within IRCC, which has created potential risks that could impact the future delivery of and timely decision-making for the GAIM program. These unclear roles surrounding program management and governance make it difficult to establish program accountability, particularly at the senior management level. As well, at the time of the evaluation, there was no policy lead associated with the program. It was found that the program could benefit clarifying roles and responsibilities within IRCC.

Recommendation 2: IRCC should clarify and communicate internal governance of the GAIM program, including confirming roles and responsibilities and program accountability, and identifying a departmental policy lead for the human smuggling portfolio.

Evaluation of the Global Assistance for Irregular Migrants Program – Management Response Action Plan (MRAP)

Performance measurement

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) would benefit from a review of the Global Assistance for Irregular Migrants (GAIM) program's performance measurement strategy, as it is currently difficult for the department to adequately communicate the results story. IRCC requires the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to collect and report on output data such as numbers of assessments conducted, services provided, and migrants opting for voluntary return. However, the IOM is not required by their contribution agreement (CA) to collect data that would help determine the effectiveness of the reintegration assistance for these migrants. Though it is not a requirement in the current CA, the IOM does collect some relevant data in this area; however, the data will not be made available until the current CA has ended. As well, the GAIM program logic model includes activities that no longer take place under the GAIM program, such as capacity building, as this work is administered by Global Affairs Canada (GAC).

Recommendation 1: The GAIM program should:

- a) update its performance measurement strategy and program outcomes; and
- b) ensure the reporting requirements in the future third party CA include key performance data/reports on program effectiveness.

IRCC agrees with this recommendation.

IRCC will update its performance measurement strategy and program outcomes for the GAIM Program while ensuring these are aligned with the broader whole-of-government Migrant Smuggling Prevention Strategy (MSPS). GAC is the lead on the broader strategy.

IRCC will ensure that third party CA reporting linked to the GAIM funding agreement includes performance data collection and reporting for measuring program effectiveness.

Action	Accountability	Completion date
Action 1A: IRCC will update the GAIM performance measurement strategy to reflect additional data collection and reporting that communicates the results story.	Lead: International Network (IN) Support: Resettlement and Asylum Strategic Operations (RASO), Settlement Network (SN)	Q2 2023–2024
Action 1B: IRCC will update the program logic model ensuring outcomes reflect the current realities of the program.	Lead: IN Support: RASO, SN	Q2 2023–2024
Action 1C: IRCC, in consultation with the third party organization, will ensure the GAIM contribution agreement requires the collection and reporting of data that measures the effectiveness of reintegration assistance,	Lead: RASO Support: SN, IN	Q2 2023–2024

Roles and responsibilities

While the program has been implemented effectively and in a timely manner, evidence pointed to a lack of clear roles within IRCC, which has created potential risks that could impact the future delivery of and timely decision-making for the GAIM program. These unclear roles surrounding program management and governance make it difficult to establish program accountability, particularly at the senior management level. As well, at the time of the evaluation, there was no policy lead associated with the program. It was found that the program could benefit clarifying roles and responsibilities within IRCC.

Recommendation 2: IRCC should clarify and communicate internal governance of the GAIM program including identifying roles and responsibilities, clarifying program accountability, and identifying a policy lead for human smuggling portfolio.

IRCC agrees with this recommendation.

IRCC agrees that the governance of the GAIM program should be clarified and communicated internally and that the program accountability and roles need to be documented, including defining the departmental policy lead for the human smuggling portfolio.

In recent months, IRCC has identified the Asylum Policy Branch as the lead on the human smuggling portfolio to support the important work.

Action	Accountability	Completion date
Action 2A: IRCC will consult, document, and communicate internally the roles and responsibilities of the various implicated areas.	Lead: IN Support: RASO, SN, Asylum Policy Branch (ASB)	Q1 2023–2024
Action 2B: IRCC will confirm the departmental policy lead for the human smuggling portfolio,	Lead: IN	Completed

List of Acronyms

CA	Contribution Agreement
CBSA	Canada Border Services Agency
GAC	Global Affairs Canada
GAIM	Global Assistance for Irregular Migrants
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRCC	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
IRPA	<i>Immigration and Refugee Protection Act</i>
MSPS	Migrant Smuggling Prevention Strategy

Program Profile

Overview of the Global Assistance for Irregular Migrants (GAIM) program

Administered by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and delivered through a Contribution Agreement (CA), the GAIM program manages the consequences of disrupting migrant smuggling events that target Canada.

The GAIM program does this by funding a third party to:

- provide basic needs and medical care to intercepted irregular migrants;
- voluntarily return migrants and assist in their reintegration; and
- deliver information and awareness activities in migrants' countries of origin, with the aim of discouraging participation in irregular migration.

Since its creation in 2013, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has been administering the GAIM program on IRCC's behalf. The first five-year CA was signed in 2013 and renewed in 2018, and the current CA is set to expire in 2023. The GAIM program is designed for readiness by ensuring program funds are always available and ready to be distributed.

The Migrant Smuggling Prevention Strategy

Canada established the GAIM Program in 2013 to fill an identified gap in Canada's Migrant Smuggling Prevention Strategy (MSPS). The MSPS is a whole-of-government strategy that aims to prevent and disrupt migrant smuggling ventures via air, sea or land modes of transportation that target Canada and seeks to dismantle organized criminal networks that target Canada as a destination.

Global Affairs Canada (GAC) is responsible for the overall coordination of the MSPS. Other key federal partners involved in the strategy include the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, and the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA). Supporting departments include IRCC, Public Safety, and the Department of National Defense.

The GAIM program supports the MSPS by assisting intercepted migrants who are being smuggled and by encouraging transit countries to cooperate with Canada's migrant smuggling interception efforts. The GAIM program gains cooperation of these transit countries by ensuring them that Canada will cover the cost of assisting eligible intercepted migrants. This helps to remove a disincentive for transit countries to cooperate in detecting and disrupting migrant ventures before they reach Canada.

As the MSPS seeks to stop smuggling at the source, the GAIM program is intended to respond to the consequences of stopping smuggling ventures in transit countries and is not intended to be used often.

Activating the GAIM program

The GAIM program is activated when there is a trigger event or information identified by GAC's Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) of International Security and Political Affairs that involves irregular migration believed to be destined for Canada¹. When a trigger is identified, the GAC ADM informs IRCC through a letter, known as a trigger letter, which requests activation of the GAIM program activation. This trigger letter specifies the region where the event was identified, and gives IRCC the authority to release funds to the IOM for activation in the specific region.

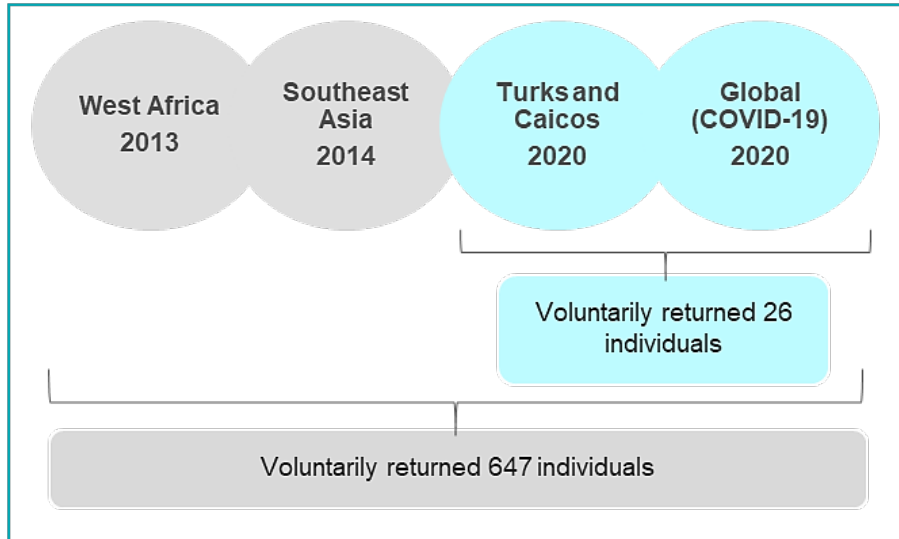
Once GAIM is activated, the IOM will screen, register, and assess intercepted migrants; refer them to other organizations as required (for example, if they meet criteria for refugee status), address their basic needs; and provide them with return, arrival, and reintegration assistance to their country of origin.

¹ An example of a trigger event could be the interception of an illegal marine venture attempting to smuggle migrants to Canada.

Profile of GAIM program activation

Since 2013, the GAIM program has been activated in four regions.

Figure 1: Trigger letter activation regions and individuals voluntarily returned



Source: GAIM trigger letters and quarterly IOM reports.

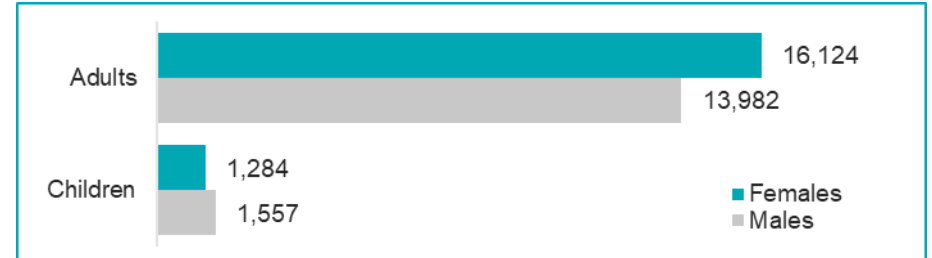
Since its inception in 2013, the GAIM program has voluntarily returned 647 migrants². During the evaluation scope period, the GAIM program was activated twice and reintegrated 26 individuals.

² These numbers represent the total number of migrants returned from the inception of the program to the end of the evaluation scope period.

GAIM program awareness activities

The IOM utilizes the GAIM program to raise awareness of the risks associated with irregular migration among communities with high migration rates. Some examples of awareness activities include competitions, public events, and student and youth awareness events. Between 2018 and 2021, the IOM conducted 211 awareness activities in Sri Lanka and reached 31,106 adults and 2,841 youth.

Figure 2: Adults and children reached by awareness activities



Source: Quarterly IOM reports.

GAIM program structure within IRCC

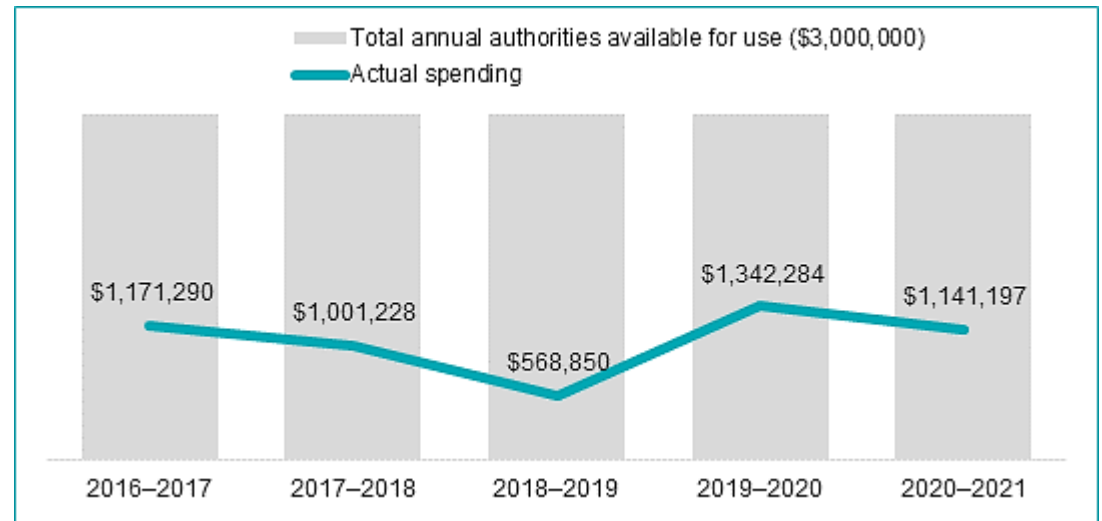
The GAIM program falls under the Asylum Program in IRCC's Program Inventory. Since the program is exercised only when a trigger letter is received, a logic model has been developed in 2017 (Annex A) that is distinct from the Asylum Program and specific to its performance.

The GAIM program does not have a full-time equivalent tagged to the program. Within IRCC, the overall responsibility for the GAIM program rests with the International Network. The Settlement Network is responsible for overseeing the delivery of all of IRCC's grants and contributions programs, including the GAIM program, and the Resettlement and Strategic Operations branch administers the GAIM program's budget.

GAIM program funding

The GAIM Program is funded through Vote 10 contributions. It was renewed in 2018 for the period of 2018–2019 to 2022–2023, at up to \$3M per year for a total of \$15M over five years. The GAIM program CA is solely funded through a Treasury Board Submission, designated as a Special Purpose Allotment. All unused funds at the end of the fiscal years are returned to the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Figure 3: Actual GAIM expenditures, by fiscal year



Source: Government of Canada, Public Accounts. Volume III, Section 6 - Transfer Payments.

Evaluation Context and Background

Overview

Conducted between December 2021 and April 2022 in fulfilment of evaluation requirements under the Treasury Board's Policy on Results, the Evaluation of the GAIM program was designed to assess the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of the program.

The design and approach of the evaluation was determined in consultation with IRCC branches involved in the design, management and delivery of the GAIM program.

Evaluation scope

The evaluation covered activities undertaken by IRCC and IOM for the period between fiscal years 2015–2016 and 2020–2021. Efforts were made to examine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the delivery of the program and the achievement of its outcomes to ensure the program is portrayed in the appropriate context.

Evaluation focus

There were two primary areas of focus for this evaluation. **The first examined the extent to which the current governance structure of the GAIM program provided effective and appropriate oversight on program implementation.** This included examining roles and responsibilities surrounding the program and the extent to which the governance structure met the requirements set out in the program's Terms and Conditions.

The second area of focus was on the program outcomes and the progress made and results achieved against stated outcomes since FY 2015–2016. This included examining the extent to which the program has assisted migrants to return and reintegrate into their countries of origin.

Evaluation questions

1. To what extent is there a need for the GAIM program?
2. To what extent is the GAIM program being managed effectively?
3. To what extent are the basic needs of intercepted migrants met, including assistance returning to and reintegrating into their country of origin?
4. To what extent has IRCC, through the GAIM program, contributed to efforts to prevent organized migrant smuggling ventures from reaching Canada?
5. To what extent and in what ways has the GAIM program responded to the COVID-19 pandemic and ensured continuity of programming?

Methodology

Document review

This included an in-depth review of documents relevant to the GAIM program, including foundational program documents, departmental documents (such as departmental results reports, mandate letters, reports on plans and priorities, presentations), and IOM reports.

Key Informant Interviews

Interviews (n=11) were conducted with representatives from IRCC branches, including International Network, Settlement Network, Resettlement and Asylum and Strategic Operations. Interviews were also conducted with external stakeholders, including representatives from GAC and IOM.

Data Review

An analysis of reported quarterly IOM performance data was conducted, as well as a financial data review of IRCC's information regarding Transfer Payments in the Government of Canada Public Accounts.

Limitations and Mitigations

Although the program is activated only when triggered, efforts were made to fully assess the program. Lines of evidence were triangulated and efforts were made to mitigate limitations where possible.

A limitation of this evaluation is that there were limited contacts for key informant interviews. There is no full-time equivalent employee dedicated to the GAIM program and all of the IRCC employees familiar with the GAIM program have other roles. This meant there were few IRCC individuals actively involved in the GAIM program and a low number of eligible key informants who could participate in interviews. Few key informants agreed to participate, and fewer knew the full context of the GAIM program. Several key informants declined to participate in the evaluation or did not respond to requests for interview. The evaluation mitigated the low participation rate by using a snowball technique to identify additional interviewees and contacting individuals who were formerly involved in the program.

Need for the GAIM Program

Finding 1: The GAIM program continues to align with Canada's Migrant Smuggling Prevention Strategy and helps manage the consequences of migrant smuggling prevention efforts.

Need for the Program

The GAIM program is a tool that allows the MSPS to engage with source and transit countries, encourage them to take preventative action within their jurisdiction and ultimately prevent smuggling ventures from coming to Canada.

Interviewees and documentation confirmed that the GAIM program aligned with the Migrant Smuggling Prevention Strategy (MSPS). Interviewees also confirmed there is a continued need for the GAIM program as it fulfills a strategic purpose in the MSPS. Specifically, the GAIM program removes disincentives for countries with lesser-developed irregular migration strategies so that they will help Canada detect, deter and prevent human smuggling. The program achieves this by helping transit countries manage the consequences of intercepting smuggled migrants by providing eligible migrants with re-integration assistance.

Interviewees noted that the GAIM program allowed Canada to ensure that intercepted migrants were treated in accordance with international refugee and human rights law; that they received appropriate care including lodging, food, and medical attention; and that they had a way to return to their country of citizenship in safe and dignified manner.

Lastly, there is a continued need for the GAIM program as irregular migration events, though infrequent, continue to be identified over time. This is evidenced by several trigger letter activations since the program's creation (Figure 1).

GAIM's alignment with the MSPS

IRCC's contributes to the MSPS through protecting the integrity of Canada's immigration system by encouraging travellers to immigrate via legal means while avoiding the use of dangerous and illegal measures such as smuggling operations.

The GAIM program also contributes to the MSPS by securing and maintaining third country cooperation by providing stranded migrants in that country with financial assistance to support their return and reintegration.. Additionally, through partnership with IOM, GAIM ensures migrants are treated in accordance with international protection principles.

The GAIM program also supports efforts to secure transit state cooperation and action to prevent ventures from departing their territories by providing basic needs of intercepted migrants and returning them, voluntarily, to their countries of origin if they are not found to be in need of refugee protection.

GAIM's alignment within IRCC

Finding 2: IRCC is an appropriate owner for the GAIM program as it aligns with IRCC's expertise in migration and responsibilities that fall within the immigration mandate.

Fit with IRCC

The GAIM program aligns with IRCC's responsibility for and knowledge of migration issues, as well as IRCC's goal of supporting international counterparts on migration issues. Additionally, the program aligns with many pieces of foundational legislation that guides IRCC's work.

Many interviewees agreed that **IRCC is the best fit for the GAIM program as IRCC is the government lead on irregular migration and has the knowledge and competencies to implement the program.**

Additionally, interviewees expressed that IRCC is the best fit for the **GAIM program as it helps uphold program integrity** at IRCC writ large by disrupting irregular migration and upholding the integrity of Immigration and Refugees Protection Act (IRPA).

However, its purpose is unique within IRCC, and some interviewees expressed that the GAIM program does not directly align with or advance the overall objectives of IRCC. Some interviewees perceived the program's focus on prevention and deterrence as not fitting well with the goals of the various IRCC branches currently involved in the file. As well, some interviewees were unclear about the impact on IRCC if the GAIM program were to discontinue.

GAIM alignment with foundational legislation

Department of Citizenship and Immigration Act

The powers, duties and functions of the IRCC Minister extend to and include all matters over which Parliament has jurisdiction relating to citizenship and immigration and that are not by law assigned to any other department, board, or agency of the Government of Canada. While CBSA is mandated to support national security and public safety priorities, and GAC is mandated to lead humanitarian efforts, IRCC is the only department that manages migration issues, making the GAIM program an appropriate fit for IRCC.

Immigration and Refugee Protection Act

IRCC's programs are to be applied in a manner that facilitates cooperation between Canada and foreign states, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations; and complies with international human rights instruments to which Canada is signatory. As well, GAIM meets the IRPA objective (af.1) to maintain, through the establishment of fair and efficient procedures, the integrity of the Canadian immigration system.

Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act

The Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act amends IRPA to provide a disincentive to human smuggling and illegal migration, by limiting the rights and entitlements of migrants and imposing stricter penalties on smugglers. One goal of the MSPS is to stop smugglers and migrants before they reach Canada, and the GAIM program contributes to that goal by encouraging transit countries to make interceptions.

Responsiveness

Finding 3: The GAIM program allows Canada to respond to irregular migration and supports well-managed migration.

Supporting well-managed migration

The GAIM program has two primary functions:

1. Respond to the consequences of Canada's role in disrupting irregular migration overseas.
2. Gain cooperation of transit countries and encourages them to protect vulnerable persons and disrupt migrant smuggling.

Through these primary functions, the GAIM program responds to irregular migration by providing transit countries with assistance to mitigate the consequences of intercepting migrant smuggling in their countries.

The IOM provides community-based awareness programming in Sri Lanka through the GAIM program³. This programming intends to further deter human smuggling by raising awareness of the risks associated with irregular migration and improving knowledge of regular migration pathways.

Interviewees indicated that the GAIM program also allows Canada to support well-managed migration and meet international commitments related to migration. For example, Canada is a Champion country of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), which is an inter-governmentally negotiated agreement focusing on international migration and protection. The GAIM program aligns with the several objectives of the GCM.

GCM objectives relevant to the GAIM program

Objective 9: Strengthens the transnational response to smuggling of migrants

Objective 15: Provide access to basic services for migrants

Objective 21: Cooperate in facilitating safe and dignified return and re-admission, as well as sustainable reintegration

Objective 23: Strengthen international cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly and regular migration

Additional value of GAIM

Interviewees also indicated a need for the GAIM program as it works to uphold the integrity of Canada's immigration programs and IRPA in that it:

- provides a positive deterrent for irregular migration to Canada;
- encourages the use of regular pathways to migration; and
- potentially protects against asylum claims from happening at the Canadian border.

Interviewees also indicated the GAIM program has humanitarian value as it gives vulnerable migrants being smuggled, who are not eligible for refugee status, a safe option to return and reintegrate into their home country.

³ Migrants identified through the GAIM program were often of Sri Lankan nationality, resulting in the implementation of awareness programming in Sri Lankan communities.

Finding 4: While infrequently activated, the GAIM program maintains a state of program readiness and is implemented effectively.

Program readiness

IRCC uses information through its involvement in the MSPS to make informed decisions that ensure the GAIM program's readiness when migration events are anticipated.

The GAIM program demonstrated flexibility to increase program readiness and responsiveness by adapting program processes such as creating trigger letters to cover a large region indeterminately. This allowed the program to be responsive, while also reducing the administration of coordinating trigger letter approvals.

Program activation frequency

Interviewees highlighted several reasons for the limited activation during the scope period, including changes in human smuggling methods (from large marine events to small/medium land and air events) and the impact of the pandemic on travel and migration worldwide.

Most interviewees agreed that limited activation of the program is not a sign of failure as the program should only be activated in specific human smuggling cases. Moreover, success of the GAIM program is more implicitly tied to program readiness and implementation when activated.

Relationship with the IOM

As per the Contribution Agreement (CA), the IOM delivers the return and reintegration assistance aspects of the GAIM program. IRCC ensures that the funds are available through the MSPS envelope and are easily leveraged when needed to support the efforts of the GAIM program.

Interviewees confirmed that the relationship between the IOM and IRCC is functioning well.

Interviewees highlighted that the IOM implements the GAIM program in a timely manner and there is effective communication between IRCC and IOM. Additionally, interviewees noted that there is more communication between the parties than required as per the contribution agreement and that this communication is beneficial to those involved.

Program Implementation

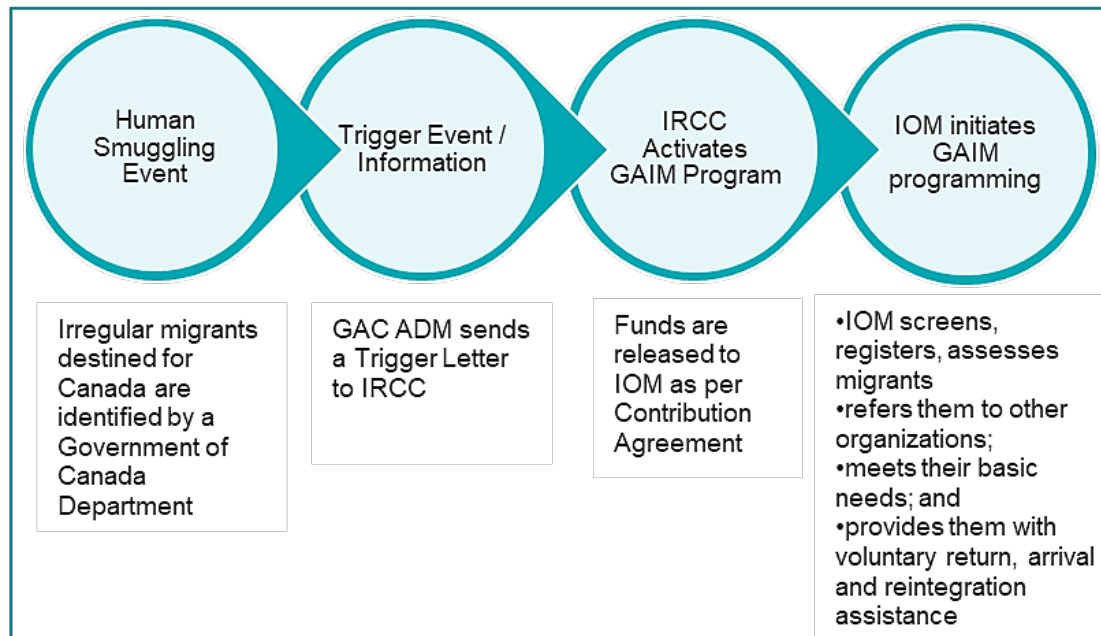
Finding 5: The use of the GAIM program in practice varied from its intended implementation but allowed the program to be responsive.

Intended program activation and implementation

Despite examples of program readiness and effective implementation, some interviewees expressed uncertainty about when the program should be activated or not, and some **inconsistencies related to implementation were found between document review and interviews**. These may be a result of limited overall awareness of the program, out of date documentation, or operational realities.

The GAIM program Terms and Conditions indicate that the program is to be activated when a federal department identifies an event that involves irregular migration believed to be destined for Canada. This event should lead GAC to send IRCC a Trigger Letter, allowing IRCC to release funding to the IOM for the initiation of the GAIM program.

Figure 4: Intended GAIM program activation



Source: IOM Contribution Agreement. Terms and Conditions, MSPS Memorandum to Cabinet and Treasury Board Submission.

Implementation inconsistencies

Program documents indicate that the GAIM program was intended to be activated in response to medium-large scale migrant smuggling ventures targeting Canada, to ensure funding is appropriately invested in sizeable movements rather than individual migrants.

In contrast, interviewees and IOM reports confirm that **no medium or large human smuggling groups were identified in recent years**, and the GAIM program was activated to assist dyads and small groups of migrants. In addition, it was found that **the IOM typically alerts IRCC of human smuggling victims and requests the use of the GAIM program**, rather than being identified through GAC.

As well, GAIM was initially intended to be implemented through a trigger letter each time a migrant event was identified. However, **the program has adapted and now implements trigger letters to cover a large region indeterminately**. This means that while a trigger happens just once, GAIM program assistance can continue to be used by eligible migrants of a particular region even if they are identified during different time periods.

Due to these discrepancies, interviewees highlighted general uncertainty about when the program should be activated and if the program was being activated for its intended purpose. However, **the implementation inconsistencies have allowed the program to be nimble and responsive to the evolving human smuggling patterns**.

Outcomes

Finding 6: The GAIM program is providing smuggled migrants with basic needs and return and reintegration services. However, the extent to which the assistance is effective is unclear as data is not available.

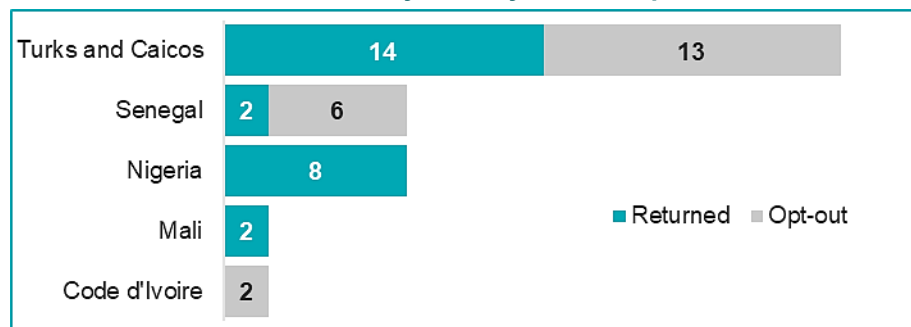
Voluntary returns and re-integration assistance

Through the IOM CA, the GAIM program provides basic services to intercepted migrants such as shelter, food, and medical service, as well as tailored return and reintegration assistance to smuggled migrants in the form of in-kind contributions, vocational and small business support, and business counselling.

During the current CA period to date, 47 migrants were identified and received basic services and support in the transit country where their groups were identified.

However, not all migrants identified and initially assisted through the GAIM program chose to return to their country of origin. Of the 47 migrants intercepted in the countries below, 26 were voluntarily returned to Sri Lanka and were offered reintegration assistance.

Figure 5: Number of migrants who were voluntarily returned or opted out of assistance, by country of interception



Source: IOM quarterly reports.

Outcomes of voluntary returns and re-integration assistance

Generally, interviewees felt that the return and reintegration assistance helped return smuggled migrants back into their country of origin, and that the assistance was timely and appropriate. However, several interviewees raised the concern that although assistance is provided in a timely manner, there are uncertainties about the extent to which the assistance helped actually re-integrate smuggled migrants. This is due to the lack of outcomes data required to be reported back to IRCC by the IOM.

The IOM provides financials and quarterly progress reports to IRCC that include narratives of activities, as well as counts of smuggled migrants identified and supported through the program. While anecdotal success stories were shared by interviewees, limited data is available on the long-term success of GAIM's reintegration assistance.

The IOM is currently conducting follow-up surveys with migrants, which will be helpful to assess the effectiveness of the post-reintegration assistance. However, this performance data is not required as part of the current CA and results will not be provided to IRCC until the end of the funding period. This makes it difficult for IRCC to make data-driven decisions to inform the future CA and demonstrate the effectiveness of the assistance provided through the GAIM program.

Program Management

Finding 7: Unclear roles and responsibilities within IRCC has created potential risks for program governance and management.

Impact of Unclear Roles and Responsibilities

Interviewees indicated that there were potential program governance and management issues due to unclear roles and responsibilities, which could impact the future delivery of and decision-making for the GAIM program.

While individuals understood their roles within management of the GAIM program, there was a lack of clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of others involved in the program. Interviewees underscored that there are many roles that have partial responsibilities. Additionally, at the time of the evaluation, there was no identified policy lead for the program and no policy lead on human smuggling at IRCC, thus making it difficult to know who should be accountable for the program.

It was also highlighted that there are several sectors that play a role in the delivery and management of the GAIM program and it is unclear which Assistant Deputy Minister should be responsible for the approval of a GAIM trigger letter and accountable for the program.

Interviewees also indicated that there were many layers of approval for trigger letters and IOM reports, given the size and limited use of the program. Interviewees suggested that the program could benefit from streamlining the process of approvals and clarifying roles and responsibilities within IRCC.

Other Program Risks

It was identified that staff turnover also poses a risk for the program. In-depth knowledge of the GAIM program and its role in the MSPS requires top-secret clearance, and specific knowledge that may not be documented or shared with others may get lost, as well as relationships built, when reorganization or turnover occurs.

As well, there is a lack of program documentation and knowledge transfer within the GAIM program that is contributing to a lack of awareness of the program within IRCC in general, but more specifically related to the program's objectives, activities and outcomes.

Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

The GAIM program continues to align with Canada's Migrant Smuggling Prevention Strategy and it was found that IRCC is the appropriate owner for the GAIM program. The GAIM program allows Canada to respond to smuggling activities intended for Canada by providing transit countries with assistance to mitigate the consequences of intercepting migrant smuggling in their countries. The program also supports well-managed migration by raising awareness of the risks associated with irregular migration among target populations in Sri Lanka through community events and other awareness activities.

Though the GAIM program is infrequently activated, as intended, the program successfully maintains a state of readiness and is implemented effectively. Though effective, it was found that the current program implementation has varied from its intended implementation, but this variation has allowed the program to be responsive to changing human smuggling patterns.

Despite successes, it was found that there were unclear roles and responsibilities that contribute to governance and management issues that could impact the delivery of the GAIM program. While individual roles were clear, not all staff were aware of the roles of others and there was a lack of clarity around program accountability and responsibilities of senior management.

In addition, it was found that smuggled migrants' basic needs were met and they were provided with return and reintegration assistance. However, insufficient data collection and reporting made it difficult to assess the effectiveness of the assistance and services provided to voluntarily-returned migrants.

Recommendations

Recommendation Theme 1: Performance Measurement

IRCC would benefit from a review of the GAIM program's performance measurement strategy, as it is currently difficult for the

department to adequately communicate the results story. IRCC requires the IOM to collect and report on output data such as numbers of assessments conducted, services provided, and migrants opting for voluntary return. However, the IOM is not required by the CA to collect data that would help determine the effectiveness of the reintegration assistance for these migrants. Though it is not a requirement in the current CA, the IOM does collect some relevant data in this area; however, the data will not be made available until the current CA has ended. As well, the GAIM program logic model includes activities that no longer take place under the GAIM program, such as capacity building, as this work is administered by GAC.

Recommendation 1: The GAIM program should:

- a) update its performance measurement strategy and program outcomes; and
- b) ensure the reporting requirements in the future third party CA include key performance data/reports on program effectiveness.

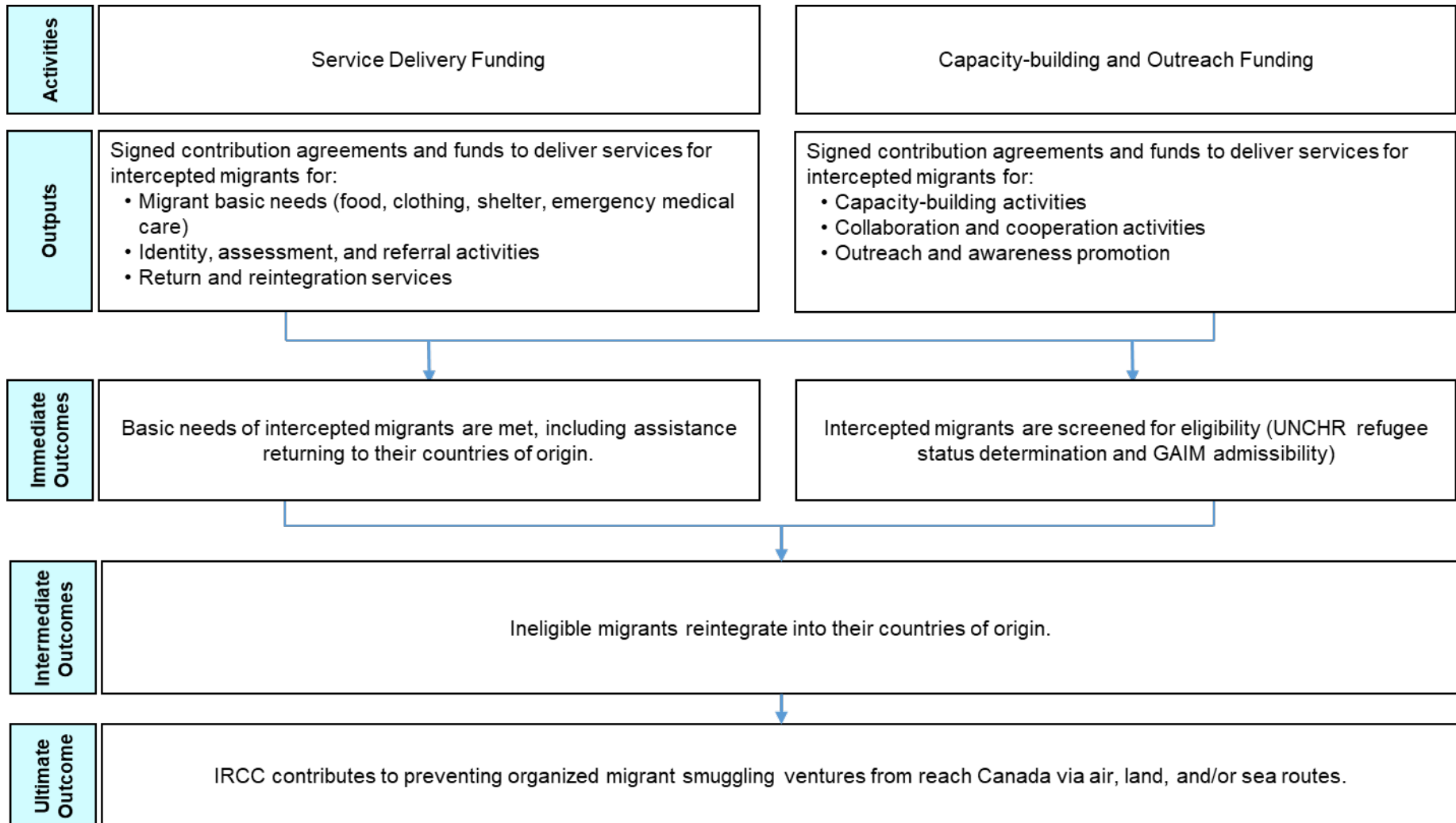
Recommendation Theme 2: Roles and Responsibilities

While the program has been implemented effectively and in a timely manner, evidence pointed to a lack of clear roles within IRCC, which has created potential risks that could impact the future delivery of and timely decision-making for the GAIM program. These unclear roles surrounding program management and governance make it difficult to establish program accountability, particularly at the senior management level. As well, at the time of the evaluation, there was no policy lead associated with the program. It was found that the program could benefit clarifying roles and responsibilities within IRCC.

Recommendation 2: IRCC should clarify and communicate internal governance of the GAIM program, including confirming roles and responsibilities and program accountability, and identifying a departmental policy lead for the human smuggling portfolio.

Annex A: GAIM Program Logic Model (2017)

Figure 6: Logic model



Logic model – accessible text version

Annex A illustrates the logic model for the Global Assistance for Irregular Migrants (GAIM) Program at Citizenship and Immigration Canada, which serves as a visual representation of the activities, outputs and intended outcomes of the Program.

Program activities

The program activities of the GAIM program relate to two groups of activities.

- Activity 1: Service delivery funding.
- Activity 2: Capacity-building and outreach funding

Program outputs

- Activity 1 directly lead to one program output. This output is that there are signed contribution agreements and funds to deliver services for intercepted migrants for: migrant basic needs (such as food, clothing, shelter, emergency medical care); identity, assessment, and referral activities; and return and reintegration services.
- Activity 2 directly leads to one program output. Output 1: This output is that there are signed contribution agreements and funds to deliver services for intercepted migrants for: capacity building activities; collaboration and cooperation activities; and outreach and awareness promotion.

Program outcomes of Immediate and Intermediate Outcomes

Both program outputs lead to the following two immediate outcomes:

1. Basic needs of intercepted migrants are met, including assistance returning to their countries of origin; and
2. Intercepted migrants are screened for eligibility (UNHCR refugee status determination and GAIM admissibility).

Together, these two immediate outcomes lead to one intermediate outcome of Ineligible migrants reintegrate into their countries of origin,

Ultimate Outcome

This intermediate program outcome leads to an ultimate outcome: IRCC contributes to preventing organized migrant smuggling ventures from reaching Canada via air, land, and/or sea routes.