



# Country-Level Localization Strategy: Morocco

2025 - 2028



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IOM Morocco supports local authorities and civil society to foster social cohesion between Moroccan and migrant communities. Tangier, November 2024. © IOM Morocco

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At Fondation Orient Occident, IOM's partner, migrant children access inclusive early education opportunities. Rabat, May 2024.  
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## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Localization is IOM's effort to shift resources and decision-making closer to the communities it serves by working through local partners. This includes strengthening the leadership and response capacities of local and national actors (LNAs) through its crisis response, preparedness efforts, and humanitarian coordination and leadership roles. IOM is firmly committed to the localization agenda, not only by enhancing the capacities of LNAs but also by increasing funding transfers to them. This commitment is reflected in IOM's Strategic Plan 2025–2028, its Global Appeal, and its institutional Grand Bargain commitments, as further detailed in its Localization Framework and Guidance Note.

IOM's Localization Framework centers on five interrelated pillars: (1) partnerships and funding, (2) capacity strengthening and mentorship, (3) participation, (4) coordination, and (5) visibility and advocacy.

IOM Morocco has contextualized IOM's global Localization Framework by developing a country-level localization strategy through extensive consultations with the IOM Morocco program members and key donors present in the country. This consultation process also included the local partners who are recipients of IOM's grants and support. This document builds upon IOM's progress to date in working with local and national actors to set a strategic vision for how it contributes to locally led efforts and improved outcomes for the communities and people IOM serves.

## PART I: BACKGROUND

### 1.1. Migration context in Morocco

Morocco holds a strategic position, acting concurrently as a country of destination, transit, and departure, with migration flows that are internal, cross-regional, and cross-border.

- As a destination country, Morocco was home to 148,152 international migrants in 2024 according to the General Census of Population and Housing . This includes individuals in regular and irregular situations, as well as refugees and asylum seekers. The primary countries of origin were Guinea, Nigeria, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, and Cameroon, with more recent arrivals from Sudan and Yemen. Migrants in Morocco may face challenges related to access to basic services and socio-economic opportunities, which can affect their integration and well-being.
- Morocco also serves as a key country of transit for individuals seeking to reach Europe through irregular maritime routes. While over 80% of migrants from West Africa remain within the region—primarily in search of economic opportunities or as a response to conflict, insecurity, or environmental pressures—approximately 19% continue beyond, often transiting through Morocco. According to IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix, 185,863

individuals arrived irregularly by sea to Europe in 2024 . The Atlantic route, in particular, continues to be used by nationals of sub-Saharan African countries, with Mali (36%) and Senegal (19%) representing the most common countries of origin along this route according to Spanish national authorities .

- Morocco is also a country of departure, particularly in the context of migration along the Western Mediterranean route. According to data from the Spanish national authorities, the main nationalities reported upon arrival in Spain via this route were Algerians (57%) and Moroccans (32%) .

It is estimated that approximately 50% of migration flows in Morocco occur through irregular channels, increasing the risks of exploitation and abuse. In 2024, Moroccan authorities reported preventing 78,685 irregular migration attempts, dismantling 332 criminal networks, and rescuing 18,645 individuals at sea within Moroccan territorial waters . Furthermore, they face vital risks throughout their itineraries. Hence, it is crucial to continue raising awareness on the risks of irregular migration, but also to promote alternatives, especially with the youth and potential migrants.



## PART II: CURRENT LOCALIZATION STATE OF PLAY IN MOROCCO

In Morocco, the concept of localization is gaining increasing importance, particularly in light of natural disasters (earthquakes, floods), migratory flows, and socio-economic issues.

- The European Union (EU), for instance, within DG NEAR and DG HOME, implements the localization policy through indirect funding (often via international NGOs with the obligation to include local partners). The EU in Morocco supports capacity strengthening and co-financing initiatives for local actors and encourages the use of localization monitoring tools (financial trackers, equitable partnerships).
- Many bilateral donors working in Morocco, (Germany, Sweden, Norway, etc.) also advocate for a strong localization strategy.
- Some companies from the private sector and foundations are more likely to get engaged with projects that involve local CSOs, among which are Fondation Décathlon, Fondation Attijariwafa Bank and the Open Society Foundations.

### 2.1. Main profile of the LNA's partnering with IOM Morocco

#### 2.1.1. Government of Morocco

The Government of Morocco (GoM) has already engaged in a comprehensive migration policy by establishing a National Strategy on Immigration and Asylum (SNIA). IOM Morocco contributes to SNIA's objective of achieving the integration of migrants and refugees, as well as strengthening the positive impact of migration on Morocco's development. Despite SNIA and the efforts deployed by the GoM and LNAs, the protection service supporting migrants

is limited by the lack of a comprehensive response, sometimes due to relative gaps in the coordination between stakeholders.

#### 2.1.2 Civil Society Organizations

In Morocco, IOM receives funds from several donors each year to implement activities on the ground. In 2024, IOM worked with 27 civil society partners, channeling 4,147,939.26 USD to these organizations (between IOM's direct implementation and its indirect implementation through joint programs), which accounted for 51% of IOM's total programmatic funding.

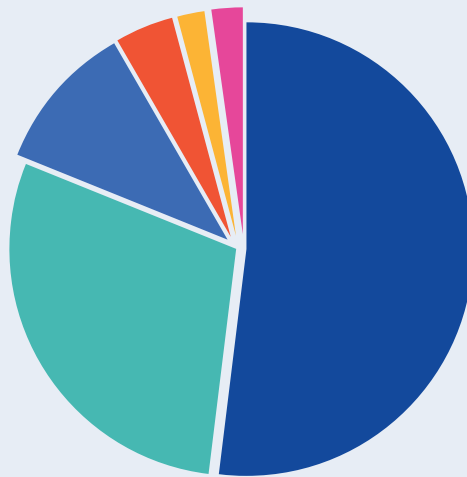
In Morocco, CSOs have strong local involvement and influence over beneficiaries. They are very strongly rooted in their territory of influence. The structural issues faced by national CSOs are significant, and they face many challenges in terms of internal and external governance. Nevertheless, IOM has chosen to work with these CSOs in order to strengthen the network and the national structures of civil society.

When contracting with implementing partners (IPs), at each stage of the partnership between IOM and the IP, several levels of risk management will be established. This will optimize proper management of funds, ensure the proper development of the activities by IOM's implementing partners, but also guarantee total transparency of expenditure and minimize the risk of fraud by the CSO. Both in the selection process and in the implementation process, control levels and tools will be put in place, aimed not only at preventing fraud but also at strengthening monitoring and evaluation and building the capacities of implementing partners.

### Comparison between the budget allocated to LNAs and the total IOM Morocco budget

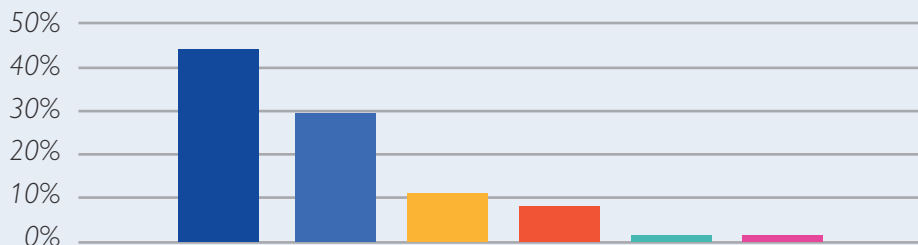


### 48 partnerships with LNAs in IOM Morocco 2024-2025



- Local NGOs/Civil Society Organizations
- Local and National Authorities
- Educational Institutions
- Women led organisations
- Media/journalist organization
- Private Sector

### Sectors of partnership with LNAs in Morocco 2024-2025



- Direct assistance
- Unaccompanied and separated children
- Counter-trafficking
- Mental health
- Health
- Social Cohesion



Capacity-strengthening on child protection and counter-trafficking for Moroccan institutions and CSOs, facilitated by IOM. Nador, 2024. © IOM Morocco

## PART III: IOM MOROCCO'S LOCALIZATION STRATEGY 2025-2028

### 3.1. Goal

The overarching goal of IOM Morocco's Localization Strategy is to advance locally led efforts in Morocco to achieve more effective, efficient, and sustainable outcomes for affected populations across protection and development. If achieved, this goal will contribute to the longer-term impact of empowered local communities and actors being at the forefront of addressing the challenges that affect them, with greater self-reliance in responding to their self-identified needs.

### 3.2. Rationale

The localization strategy is rooted in the belief that sustainable and impactful change is best achieved when local and national actors lead the efforts. In the context of Morocco, localization offers a pathway to more meaningful, enduring, and contextually appropriate solutions.

#### 1. Greater meaningful impact:

- Contextual relevance: Local actors have an intimate understanding of the cultural, social, and political nuances that external actors may overlook. This understanding ensures that interventions are more relevant and responsive to the actual needs of affected populations.
- Trust and community buy-in: Local actors are often more trusted by the community, which facilitates stronger collaboration and participation. This trust is crucial for the success of initiatives across humanitarian and development approaches.
- Geographical proximity: In Morocco, the localization of activities allows IOM, which has staff present in only four regions, to reach eight regions and operate closer to the direct beneficiaries of the projects.

#### 2. Sustainable long-term outcomes:

- Strengthening and sustaining local capacity: Localization focuses on strengthening local institutions and capacities, ensuring that communities and institutions can sustain development gains long after external support diminishes. Capacity strengthening is essential for reducing dependency on international aid and fostering resilience.
- Empowerment and ownership: By leading efforts, local actors develop and maintain a sense of ownership and responsibility, which is vital for sustaining outcomes. Empowered communities are more likely to continue initiatives and innovate solutions that work best for them.

#### 3. Integration across the IOM's Morocco approaches:

- Holistic approaches: Localization promotes a more integrated approach to protection and development. Local actors, by virtue of their position, can work across sectors, ensuring that interventions are complementary and reinforcing.
- Tailored solutions: Local actors are better positioned to adapt interventions to the rapidly changing realities on the ground. This agility enhances the effectiveness of efforts across the nexus.

### 3.3 Duration of IOM's Localization Strategy

The duration of IOM Morocco's Localization Strategy aligns with the period of IOM's Strategic Plan (2025-2028). This localization strategy is a living document, adaptable in response to shifting needs and trends. It is recommended to review the strategy at least twice annually: once after six months to assess progress and make any necessary adjustments, and again at the end of twelve months.

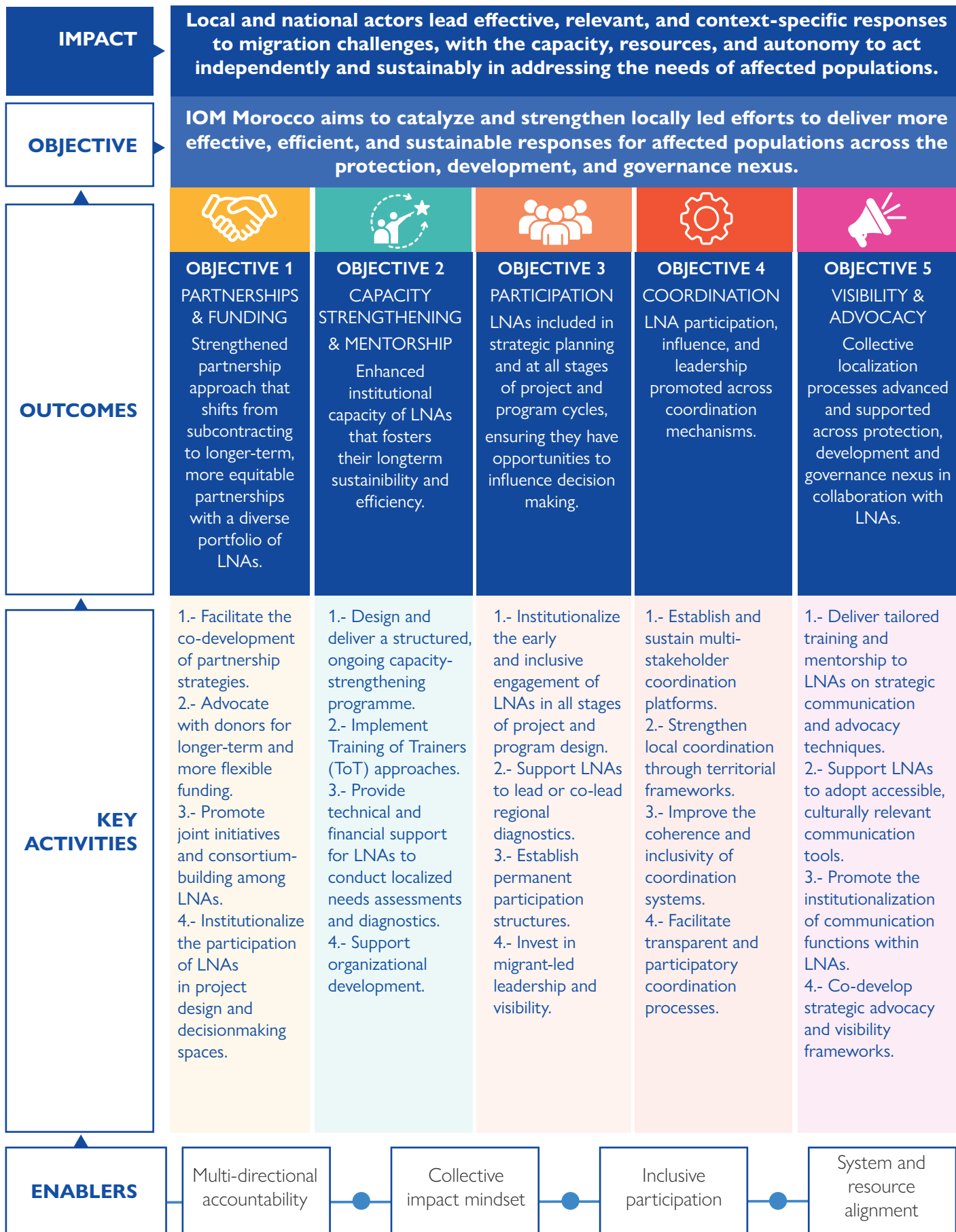
### 3.4. Approaches

Achieving the goal of this localization strategy requires progress across each of IOM's five pillars or outcomes for localization. The approaches outlined below are generalized across IOM Morocco's activities, recognizing that their implementation may differ depending on whether IOM is working on rapid responses and longer-term programs.


- **Pillar 1.** Partnerships & Funding: IOM Morocco commits to a strengthened partnership approach that shifts from sub-contracting to longer-term, more equitable partnerships with a diverse portfolio of LNAs.
- **Pillar 2.** Capacity Strengthening & Mentoring: IOM Morocco commits to enhancing the institutional capacity of local and national actors to foster their long-term resilience.
- **Pillar 3.** Participation: IOM Morocco commits to including local and national actors in strategic planning and at all stages of project and program cycles, ensuring they have opportunities to influence decision making.
- **Pillar 4.** Coordination: IOM Morocco commits to promoting local participation, influence, and leadership across coordination mechanisms.
- **Pillar 5.** Visibility & Advocacy: IOM Morocco commits to advancing collective localization processes in collaboration with local and national actors.




Through its partnership with Baty Association, IOM supports assistance to vulnerable migrants with essential supplies. Casablanca, June 2023. © IOM Morocco



# The 2025-2028 Global Localization Strategy: IOM Morocco

Pillar Objectives	Targeted Results	Proposed Solutions
 <p><b>Pillar 1: Partnerships &amp; Funding</b></p> <p>Strengthened partnership approach that shifts from sub-contracting to longer-term, more equitable partnerships with a diverse portfolio of LNAs.</p>	More balanced relationships grounded in mutual respect, increased ownership, and stronger alignment on goals and outcomes.	<p><b>1.1.1.</b> Promote the co-development of partnership strategies that clearly define shared objectives and values.</p> <p><b>1.1.2.</b> Encourage a change in language that reflects more equitable collaboration, using terms like «partner» or «co-lead» instead of «implementer.»</p>
	Greater stability and continuity for service provision, more sustainable development outcomes, and better staff retention.	<p><b>1.2.1.</b> Advocate with donors for longer project cycles and multi-year funding where possible.</p> <p><b>1.2.2.</b> Explore diverse funding partnerships, including with private sector actors and foundations.</p>
	A more collaborative ecosystem, better coverage of needs, and more efficient use of resources.	<p><b>1.3.1.</b> Introduce thematic or geographic allocation of roles to reduce overlap and promote complementarity.</p> <p><b>1.3.2.</b> Encourage consortia or joint proposals that build on each partner's strengths.</p> <p><b>1.3.3.</b> Promotion of equitable partnerships between international and local NGOs: co-development of projects, sharing of resources, recognition of local expertise.</p>
	Programs that are more context-appropriate, impactful, and embraced by communities, enhancing sustainability.	<b>1.4.1.</b> Create mechanisms to ensure that local actors are involved in project design from the outset, including needs assessments and setting objectives.
	Increased influence of local actors in shaping programs and policies, leading to more relevant, grounded, and sustainable outcomes aligned with field realities.	<b>1.5.1.</b> Institutionalize the presence of local actors in all coordination and decision-making platforms.

Pillar Objectives	Targeted Results	Proposed Solutions
 <p><b>Pillar 2: Capacity Strengthening &amp; Mentorship</b></p> <p>Enhanced institutional capacity of LNAs that fosters their long-term sustainability and efficiency.</p>	More professional, confident, and technically capable staff within partner organizations, leading to higher quality services and improved outcomes for migrants.	<p><b>2.1.1.</b> Establish a structured and continuous capacity strengthening programme that includes thematic modules (e.g., child protection, mental health, administrative procedures) as well as cross-cutting skills like digital literacy and ethics.</p>
	Preserved institutional knowledge, reduced turnover, and stronger, more autonomous organizations with internal training capabilities.	<p><b>2.2.1.</b> Implement “Training of Trainers” (ToT ) models within organizations to build internal capacity and ensure sustainability.</p> <p><b>2.2.2.</b> Encourage career development plans and explore hybrid models like social enterprises to improve retention through more stable income streams.</p>
	More grounded and responsive project design that reflects actual needs and regional specificities, leading to better ownership and results.	<b>2.3.1.</b> Provide technical and financial support for partners to carry out localized assessments before project design.
	Stronger organizational structures, improved efficiency, and enhanced ability to manage projects, report results, and coordinate with other actors.	<p><b>2.4.1.</b> Support the creation of dedicated roles (e.g., legal advisor, social worker, communications officer) within local partners.</p> <p><b>2.4.2.</b> Provide toolkits, budget templates, and logistical support to improve internal organization.</p>

Pillar Objectives	Targeted Results	Proposed Solutions
 <p><b>Pillar 3: Participation</b></p> <p>LNAs included in strategic planning and at all stages of project and program cycles, ensuring they have opportunities to influence decision making.</p>	Stronger alignment between strategic priorities and field realities, improved project relevance, and increased buy-in and ownership from local actors.	<p><b>3.1.1.</b> Institutionalize the involvement of LNAs at the earliest stages of program and project cycles (engagement in problem analysis, theory of change development, and strategic planning workshops).</p> <p><b>3.1.2.</b> Representation should be inclusive, transparent, and reflect the diversity of actors (including regional and migrant-led organizations).</p> <p><b>3.1.3.</b> Cultural and linguistic adaptation of interventions (particularly in Amazigh-speaking or rural areas).</p>
	More grounded and contextually relevant strategies that strengthen the strengthened legitimacy of local actors, and better responsiveness to regional disparities and specific vulnerabilities.	<p><b>3.2.1.</b> Provide targeted support, both financial and technical, for local actors to lead or co-lead diagnostics in their regions (training in participatory research methods, data ethics and community engagement, provision of tools and templates).</p>
	More coherent, continuous, and influential participation of LNAs across sectors and over time, leading to systemic change and stronger local governance in migration responses.	<p><b>3.3.1.</b> Create sustained and institutionalized participation structures, such as permanent civil society advisory councils and regular policy dialogue forums.</p> <p><b>3.3.2.</b> Creation of regional competence centers through the formulation of regional analyses updated every 3 months in co-creation with the LNAs to better respond to territorial specificities (Rif, High Atlas, Saharan zones, etc.).</p> <p><b>3.3.3.</b> Monitoring, accountability, and transparency. Establishment of accountability mechanisms towards communities (suggestion boxes, monitoring committees, participatory evaluations).</p>
	More responsive and dynamic programs that can adjust to the evolving needs and feedback of migrants and communities.	<b>3.4.1.</b> Design participation as a non-negotiable element in project planning, with dedicated time and resources.
	Empowered migrant communities that contribute actively to shaping solutions and are seen as partners in development and protection, not just recipients of aid.	<p><b>3.5.1.</b> Highlight and invest in migrant leadership by supporting community organizing, leadership training, and migrant-led initiatives.</p> <p><b>3.5.2.</b> Promote the visibility of migrant voices in public forums, media, and policy discussions.</p>

## The 2025-2028 Global Localization Strategy: IOM Morocco

Pillar Objectives	Targeted Results	Proposed Solutions
 <p><b>Pillar 4: Coordination</b></p> <p>LNA participation, influence, and leadership promoted across coordination mechanisms.</p>	Sustainable coordination ecosystems that foster continuity, strategic alignment, and long-term partnerships beyond project timelines.	<p><b>4.1.1.</b> Establish permanent, multi-stakeholder coordination platforms at both national and regional levels that function independently of individual project cycles.</p>
	More integrated and coherent local responses, improved service delivery for migrants and host communities, and strengthened collaboration between local stakeholders.	<p><b>4.2.1.</b> Foster territorial-level coordination frameworks that bring together local government entities, public services (e.g., health, education), and CSOs.</p> <p><b>4.2.2.</b> Encourage joint planning and referral systems.</p> <p><b>4.2.3.</b> Dialogue with public authorities to strengthen the legal and institutional framework enabling local humanitarian action (simplification of registration procedures, customs exemptions, etc.).</p> <p><b>4.2.4.</b> Integrating localization into territorial development plans and public policies.</p>
	Greater coherence, reduced duplication, and more effective use of resources, resulting in stronger collective impact and enhanced complementarity between actors.	<p><b>4.3.1</b> Harmonize coordination structures by mapping existing platforms and streamlining participation.</p> <p><b>4.3.2.</b> Implementation of contingency plans at the provincial and municipal levels, in collaboration with local authorities (Civil Protection, municipalities).</p> <p><b>4.3.3.</b> Strengthening early warning systems and regional logistics capacities.</p>
	Increased engagement and trust in coordination mechanisms, more collaborative culture, and improved strategic alignment across actors.	<p><b>4.4.1.</b> Redesign coordination spaces to foster mutual learning, peer exchange, and joint planning.</p> <p><b>4.4.2.</b> Introduce participatory facilitation methods, allocate time for thematic deep-dives, and co-create agendas with LNA input, including feedback mechanisms so local actors can assess the utility of coordination meetings.</p>
	Improved trust, clarity, and equitable access to information across the ecosystem, resulting in stronger collaboration and accountability.	<p><b>4.5.1.</b> Implement open communication mechanisms such as shared information portals, regular multi-actor briefings, and joint planning sessions.</p> <p><b>4.5.2.</b> Monitoring of localization commitments by donors and humanitarian partners (e.g., percentage of budget allocated to local actors).</p>

Pillar Objectives	Targeted Results	Proposed Solutions
 <p><b>Pillar 5: Visibility &amp; Advocacy</b></p> <p>Collective localization processes advanced and supported across Protection and governance Nexus in collaboration with LNAs.</p>	More dynamic and autonomous CSOs are capable of telling their stories, raising awareness, and advocating for change effectively across different platforms and audiences.	<p><b>5.1.1.</b> Provide specialized training in communication strategies, advocacy techniques, audiovisual storytelling, and use of artificial intelligence tools (e.g., for subtitling, editing, or translation).</p>
	Improved community engagement, better dissemination of information about services and rights, and greater visibility for the work carried out by local partners.	<p><b>5.2.1.</b> Adopt accessible and culturally relevant communication formats such as WhatsApp groups, short video clips, oral storytelling, visual materials, and recognizable symbols (e.g., branded vests, business cards).</p> <p><b>5.2.2.</b> Co-create an advocacy strategy that identifies clear messages, target audiences, and desired outcomes.</p>
	More empowered organizations capable of influencing policies and advocating for migrant rights at local and national levels.	<p><b>5.3.1.</b> Organize dedicated training sessions that not only explain what advocacy is, but also tailor strategies for different areas.</p> <p><b>5.3.2.</b> Encourage peer-to-peer learning and mentorship from more experienced CSOs.</p>
	Professionalization of communication efforts, higher-quality content that amplifies migrant voices, and improved ability to influence public opinion and stakeholders.	<p><b>5.4.1.</b> Promote the creation of specific communication roles within partner organizations.</p> <p><b>5.4.2.</b> Invest in training in digital tools such as audiovisual production, artificial intelligence tools for storytelling, and strategic communication planning.</p>
	Sustained and visible advocacy campaigns with measurable impact, greater reach on key issues, and stronger positioning of local actors as change agents.	<p><b>5.5.1.</b> Develop an advocacy and visibility roadmap that outlines yearly goals, key campaigns, partnerships with influencers, and dedicated budget lines.</p>





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