

MINUTES

of the 3rd Operational Committee for the North of Africa Window of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing the root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa (the EU Emergency Trust Fund)

I. Introduction

On 23 May 2017, the Operational Committee for the North of Africa Window of the EU Emergency Trust Fund held its third meeting. The meeting was initially chaired by [REDACTED], and later by Michael Köhler, Director of Directorate B (DG NEAR).

The objective of the Operational Committee for the North of Africa Window was to adopt four (4) Action Documents for a total amount of €79.4 million submitted by the Trust Fund Manager. The Committee was also updated on the state of play after the second operational committee held in December 2016. Finally, an Information Point on the Libya Action Document approved in April 2017 provided room to discuss the main points raised by the Members of the Operational Committee during the emergency written procedure. The agenda of the meeting is enclosed in Annex 1.

II. Agenda Items Discussed

The Chair opened the session with an overview of the developments that have followed since the Operational Committee of December 2016 by providing an update on financial situation of the North of Africa Window as well as the new political context that has fed the Window since the beginning of 2017. The Chair introduced the points to be discussed with the agreement of the representatives of EU Member States and Partner Countries.

The Trust Fund Manager reported on the state of contracting for the North of Africa Window. She announced the signature of the contract covering component 3 of the programme *Favoriser la mise en oeuvre de la stratégie nationale migratoire de la Tunisie* (EUR 2.5 million), the signature of the contract covering the programme *Vivre ensemble sans discrimination: une approche basée sur les Droits de l'Homme et la dimension de genre* (EUR 5.5 million) both adopted in December 2016 and the signature of the first contract under the programme *Managing mixed migration flows in Libya through expanding protection space and supporting local socio-economic development* adopted in April 2017, benefitting UNICEF for an amount of EUR 11 million. Correspondingly, the Trust Fund Manager also provided an update on the developments of the Reporting, Monitoring & Evaluation Facility presented in December 2016 and commented on an indicative pipeline of programmes that could be presented in the next Operational Committees including a number of bilateral, regional and cross-window programme suggestions.

II.2. Presentation of projects for approval

The Trust Fund Manager presented the four (4) Action documents on the Agenda submitted for the approval of the Operational Committee. Individual action fiches are enclosed in annex.

A. Coopération Sud-Sud en matière de migration, EUR 8 613 500 million

Summary

The action aims to strengthen South-South cooperation on migration and to support the implementation of Memoranda of Understanding between Morocco and Senegal, Ivory Coast and Mali respectively. The Action Document is articulated along three specific objectives that aim to strengthen:

- 1) South-South cooperation on migration and development, especially in regards to the mobilisation of diaspora at national, regional and local level.
- 2) South-South cooperation on aspects related to the rights of migrants and their integration or reintegration.
- 3) South-South mobility of professionals, students, trainees and volunteers.

Comments

As regards to the component on the development of diaspora, the French representative commented on the need to ensure coherence and complementarity with the regional programme MEETAfrica.

The Malian representative underlined the importance of this programme in the promotion of South-South cooperation acknowledging the role of Morocco in this effort.

The Italian representative appreciated the efforts to ensure fluid cross-window cooperation.

As regards to the Specific Objectives, the Belgian representative commented on the need to ensure complementarity and synergies with bilateral programmes between Belgium and Morocco. As regards to absorption capacity, she suggested to add a clear mapping of the role of each actor during the implementation.

The Danish representative commented on the importance of addressing additional demands of migrants to public services and ensuring proper coordination between the different actions and actors involved.

The Moroccan representative strongly welcomed this programme and recalled the need to coordinate this type of action with the Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Swedish representative stressed the importance of addressing the situation of children and adopting a stronger gender approach in the programme.

The Czech representative highlighted the need to ensure EU visibility in the four countries.

The Trust Fund Manager informed that the EU Delegation to Morocco was already working on the prioritisation of the activities. As regards to the focus on gender, she informed that implementing partners were in charge of the necessary gender analysis and that specific needs for women are also taken into account in the programme. She also informed that the programme also includes a focus on Unaccompanied Minors.

Conclusion

The Action fiche is approved by the Operational Committee.

N.B. In order to harmonise the denomination of all cross-regional programmes across the different windows of the EU Trust Fund for Africa, this decision will be referred as T05-EUTF-REG-REG-04

instead of T05-EUTF-NOA-MA-02. A modified version of the Action Document has been included as annex to the minutes.

B. Enhancing the Response to Migration Challenges in Egypt (ERMCE), EUR 60 000 000 million

Summary

The Action aims to enhance the response to migration challenges in Egypt and it is articulated along three specific objectives that will be covered by seven projects with the aim to, first, enhance Egypt's migration management; second, to address the root causes of irregular migration in Egypt; and third, to support Egyptian communities hosting migrants and refugees.

The proposed Action responds directly to the approach put forward by the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in the non-paper “Egypt Framework Paper on Cooperation with EU on Migration”, which was presented by the Government of Egypt (GoE) to the EU during the technical mission on migration held on February 2017.

Comments

The Egyptian representatives confirmed their support to the action and recalled the importance of the programme, considering it as a first step leading to greater cooperation in order to address the growing challenges in Egypt in migration matters.

The Spanish representative confirmed ongoing discussions on the identification of activities. She also called on other Member States to contribute their expertise to the programme.

The Swiss representative appreciated the programme's link to the Horn of Africa Window and the Khartoum process especially concerning access to employment. He also suggested reporting on the implementation progress on a regular basis.

The German representative requested further clarifications on the evaluation criteria adopted for the programme.

The British representative asked for a clearer overview of the programmes' time table and the coverage of Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration activities in Egypt.

The Dutch representative inquired on the selection of implementing partners and suggested involving Member States in the development of the proposed actions.

As regards to the priorities, the Belgian representative suggested finding the right balance taking into account the Valletta Action Plan and the EUTF strategic priorities.

The Swedish representatives recognised the challenges in Egypt and stressed the importance of proper coordination on the ground.

The Dutch and British representatives noted a lack of focus on migration-related issues.

The British, Dutch, German and Belgian representatives inquired on the current state of the EU-Egypt High Level Dialogue on Migration and the adoption of its Terms of Reference stressing the importance that the operational and political processes go together.

As regards to the balance between migration challenges and root causes, the Chair recalled the context in which the EUTF operates which requires going beyond what is expected and agreed that today's programme will require other actions to address emerging challenges in Egypt.

As regards to the implementing partners, the Chair recalled that the selection of implementing partners is based on strict qualitative assurances and management analysis taking into account both international organisations and Member States' development agencies.

As regards to the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration of vulnerable migrants in Egypt, the Trust Fund Manager clarified that these are covered by the Return and Reintegration Facility under the Horn of Africa window. She took the occasion to inform the Members about early reflections for the set-up of a similar Facility under the North of Africa Window.

As regards to monitoring and evaluation, she clarified that it is not included in the budget as it will be covered by the Technical Cooperation Facility that will be presented later. As regards to coordination, she informed that this will be ensured through the relevant committees, notably the Development Counsellors Meeting.

During her intervention, the EEAS representative highlighted the positive cooperation between the EU and Egypt underlining that the programme comes four months after the adoption and referendum of the Partnership Priorities. In this sense, she recalled the momentum and the importance of ensuring that both operational and political channels go hand in hand and, therefore, the need to move forward in the formalisation of the EU-Egypt High Level Dialogue on Migration and its Terms of Reference.

The Egyptian representative informed that Egypt is currently studying the Terms of Reference and that Egypt looks forward to the adoption of a final date for the Association Council.

Conclusion

The Action fiche is approved by the Operational Committee.

C. Mediterranean City-to-City Migration (MC2CM) – Phase II, €5 550 000

Summary

The Action capitalises and builds upon the trajectory of the first phase of the MC2CM programme which began on 1 February 2015. The Action aims to contribute to improved, rights-based migration governance at local level in cities in the North of Africa, notably Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco and Libya, notably through partnership with cities in Europe, with a specific focus on integration and inclusion. The Action Document is articulated along four components:

- 1) **Dialogue:** Improve mechanisms for multi-level governance on migration and migrant integration and inclusion in the 5 Countries of the North of Africa and enhance horizontal and vertical inter-institutional cooperation and coordination
- 2) **Knowledge:** Generate and disseminate knowledge about the local dimension of migrant integration in the Euro-Mediterranean region and within the Southern Neighbourhood
- 3) **Action:** Reinforce the capacity of the targeted local authorities to address migrant integration and inclusion, including socio-economic opportunities for the wider population
- 4) **Positive narrative on migration:** To counter the negative perception of migration at the local level and promote a human-rights approach through targeted communications actions

The Trust Fund Manager informed the Operational Committee about an inconsistency in the text where it had been initially foreseen to include two cities in Egypt. After consultations with Egypt, it was decided to drop the reference to these cities and wait for a more thorough consultation with the Egyptian authorities before including any Egyptian location. An updated Action Document taking into account the abovementioned amendment has been included in the Annexes.

Comments

As regards to the deliverables and outcome of the programme, the Danish representative recommended to include strategies on how to better address irregular migration.

The Belgian representative suggested expanding the geographical scope to cities along the migratory routes (e.g. Niger) and the inclusion of a Belgian city (possibly Malines).

The German representative requested more information on the selection criteria used for the municipalities covered under the programme. She also underlined the importance of involving national authorities especially in those partner countries that are not fully decentralised.

The Trust Fund Manager confirmed the good results achieved during the 1st phase of the programme. As regards to the extension to cities along the migratory routes, she confirmed that this could be taken into consideration during the implementation. She also clarified that the inclusion of two Libyan municipalities had been based on an ongoing EU programme implemented by ICMPD. As regards to the inclusion of strategies to address irregular migration, she confirmed that these are indeed part of the exchanges that take place between the cities, among numerous other topics.

As regards to the selection of municipalities, the Project Manager informed that it has taken into account the situation of migrants in the city, the level of urban development and the size and regional importance of the city. As regards to the involvement of national authorities, the Project Manager informed that the selection of the cities has been consulted with national authorities and will be reinforced if necessary.

Conclusion

The Action fiche is approved by the Operational Committee.

D. Technical Cooperation Facility for the North of Africa window, €5 200 000

Summary

The Action aims to increase the effectiveness of the EUTF North of Africa Window on migration and international protection by strengthening the identification and formulation of Actions, monitoring and evaluation of such Actions as well as improving communication and visibility on the results achieved through the EUTF at national, regional and cross-window level.

This Action is articulated along three components that aim at:

1. Supporting the European Commission services in the implementation of a monitoring and evaluation framework specifically devised for the programmes implemented under the EU Trust Fund North of Africa Window:

2. Supporting the European Commission Services in identifying and formulating Actions to be funded under the EUTF NAW as well as scaling up Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM), including third party monitoring in areas with limited humanitarian access.
3. Strengthening the communication and visibility of the EUTF North of Africa Window at national, regional and cross-window level.

Comments

The Dutch representative requested further information on the Communication component of the Facility.

The British representative offered UK's expertise in these lines and suggested including a clear theory of change in the formulation. Additionally, he also requested to improve cross-regional cooperation and inquired on the possibility to provide a mid-term evaluation.

The Chair appreciated UK's offer and called on other Members to do the same where relevant.

The German representative requested information on any activities already taken with implementing partners and Member States. As regards to the Specific Objective 2, she also requested for further clarifications on the nature of such.

The Swiss representative commented on the importance of setting up a common communication framework to address both internal and external criticisms both at EU level and in partner countries.

The Trust Fund Manager shared Member's concerns on the need to better communicate on migration and highlighted that this is being addressed through three EU programmes: EUROMED IV, Mediterranean City-to-City Migration and the Technical Cooperation Facility.

As regards to the aim of this Facility, the Trust Fund Manager highlighted that it will take over such activities country, regional and cross-regional level both aiming to support EU Delegations and Donors. Primarily, by addressing gaps where there is a lack of means through expertise.

The Trust Fund Manager clarified that the TCF will encapsulate the Monitoring, Evaluation and Communication budget of programmes already adopted.

Conclusion

The Action fiche is approved by the Operational Committee.

III. Any other business

State of play of the programme "Managing mixed migration flows in Libya through expanding protection space and supporting local socio-economic development" (T05-EUTF-NOA-LY-03), adopted by written procedure on 12 April 2017.

The Chair opened the last point of the session by recalling the context that has followed the adoption of this programme in April 2017 via an emergency written procedure. He took the occasion to thank the Members of the Operational Committee for their timely contributions and recalled the political context framed by the EUR 200 million pledged to the North of Africa window under the Joint Communication on the Central Mediterranean Route of January 2017 and the Malta Declaration of February 2017. Taking this context into account, he explained the different steps and factors that had been taken into account in order to ensure an adequate formulation and allocation of resources.


The Trust Fund Manager supported by her team provided a succinct presentation of the programme *Managing mixed migration flows in Libya through expanding protection space and supporting local socio-economic development*. This included a specific section where the team addressed the main points raised during the emergency written procedure, notably the need to develop a strong Monitoring, Accountability and Coordination mechanism; the selection of the implementing partners and geographical locations; and finally the importance of mainstreaming a rights-based approach over the programme.

Comments

The Dutch representative requested further information on the coordination with other ongoing activities, especially those targeting the Libyan Coast Guards.

The French representative commented on the need to reinforce coordination with activities under the Regional Development and Protection Programme and stressed the importance of fostering cooperation with countries neighbouring the southern borders of Libya.

The British representative requested more information on the time tables of the programme implementation in order to avoid duplications with other bilateral programmes. As regards to the second pillar, she highlighted the importance of including a theory of change in order to better link the different interventions. She also highlighted that the EU Delegation should be reinforced accordingly to the financial scale up in terms of support for Libya.



The Italian representative commented on the necessity to allow more time for internal discussions among the relevant national institutions.

The Belgian representative suggested holding discussions within the Council Working Group formats in future occasions.

As regards to future proposals under the North of Africa Window, the Chair recalled the emergency context in which the EU Trust Fund operates. For this reason, he stressed that procedures have to be adapted accordingly to the urgency of the actions to be adopted.

As regards to Coordination, the Project Manager clarified that this has been reinforced in the revised version of the Action Document. As regards to the security situation, she clarified that any redeployment in Libya is subject to relevant UN assessments.

The Chair concluded this point by recalling the *sui generis* conditions that characterise the situation in Libya and underlined that the appealing situation of migrants does not allow the luxury of not acting. He called on Members to support the EU Trust Fund in achieving its objectives.

With no other items to discuss, the Chair thanked the EU Member States and Partner Countries for their participation and called the operational committee to close at 13:30.