

# From the broken dream of Europe to a meaningful life in Morocco



## EU Trust Fund for Africa - North of Africa

**T05.1479:** For sustainable protection of migrants at the regional and national levels, with respect for their dignity.

**T05.1481:** Assistance to migrants in situations of vulnerability.



### EUTF PARTNER:

Handicap International.

Fun. Entreculturas Fe y Alegría.



**COUNTRY:**  
Morocco



**BUDGET:**  
EUR 1.805M



**T05.1479:** 12/2020  
to 11/2023

**T05.1481:** 12/2020  
to 02/2024

## Objective of the project

Improve vulnerable migrants' access to legal support, emergency assistance, mental health services, and other essential services for protection and tailored support.

## Key successes

### T05.1479

- 35063 services provided (emergency aid, legal assistance, mental health care).
- 3740 people registered with project partners benefiting from personalized support
- 41 active "Community Peer" migrants (Pairs communautaires).

### T05.1481

- 11847 people referred and assisted with their most basic needs (information, hygiene services, emergency aid).
- 11870 people benefited from a support process (physical and mental health, access to rights, creation of social support networks) that reduced their vulnerability.
- 35 active "Community Leaders" migrants (Relais communautaires).

## The story of transforming lives

Bath, originally from Cameroon, and Lassana, from Côte d'Ivoire, experienced journeys marked by hardship, uncertainty, and the hope for a better life. Both initially shared the same dream: reaching Europe. But the paths they took proved perilous and often disappointing, forcing them to make decisive choices about their future.

Bath recalls the trials of his unsuccessful crossing attempts. *"I tried the sea, the fences, even the small boats... but it has never worked"*. He remembers walking for days in the desert, sometimes abandoned by smugglers without food or water. These extreme experiences led him to a realization: continuing to risk his life to reach Europe likely meant never arriving. *"I chose life. I chose to stay"*, he says, recalling that decisive moment when he decided to settle in Morocco.

Lassana, who arrived in Casablanca in 2003, also faced difficult beginnings. *"For months, I walked the streets of Casablanca looking for work"*, he recalls. He eventually found a low-paid job in a bakery, which

offered him his first stability. But every day he saw other migrants struggling to survive in the streets. *"Seeing my African brothers begging in the street touched my heart"*, he explains. That image pushed him to think of another path: not only seeking his own stability, but also creating opportunities for others

Both men went through periods of isolation and discouragement. Bath recalls: *"I knew what it was like to sleep outside, to have no one to guide you"*. These painful memories became a strength: he wanted to prevent other migrants from going through the same. Thanks to training and engagement as a community peer with Handicap International, he gained skills in awareness-raising, first aid, and psychosocial support. This role deeply shaped him and reinforced his commitment to helping others.

Lassana, on his part, relied on his training as a pastry chef to build a sustainable project. Gradually, he set up pastry and catering training activities for vulnerable migrants. Later, he founded ASSIRIDA, an association that also offers Arabic language courses and social support.





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Their journeys show that perseverance and mutual support can transform trials into opportunities. They not only changed their own lives, they became role models for other migrants. Bath co-founded the association Coopération Panafricaine pour le Développement (CPD) in Agadir, bringing together migrants from several African countries to design projects adapted to their community's needs. Lassana, in Casablanca, continues to train young people and provide social and human support.

Today, their initiatives impact hundreds of migrants. The path they have chosen was not the one they had originally dreamed of, but it allowed them to find meaning in their journey. What was supposed to be a wandering towards Europe became an experience of resilience and solidarity, turning a broken dream into a promising reality.

## How did the EUTF help?

**Training and guidance.** Through the EUTF projects, migrants in Morocco accessed training that built practical skills for daily life and community action. Bath trained as a community peer, learning first aid, psychosocial support, and awareness-raising. Lassana used support to strengthen his skills in pastry and catering, which later enabled him to train others and set up his association.

**Support for basic needs and stability.** Alongside training, vulnerable migrants received assistance such as health services, food, and safe spaces. This immediate support helped reduce stress and gave them the stability to focus on building their future.

**Backing for community initiatives.** The EUTF projects encouraged migrant-led groups to emerge and grow. Associations like CPD in Agadir and ASSIRIDA in Casablanca are direct results of this support, giving

migrants the space, resources, and confidence to organise, train, and advocate for inclusion.

## Keys to Success

**Personal determination.** Bath and Lassana's stories show that personal motivation, courage, and the willingness to adapt were crucial to overcoming initial challenges. Their decision to invest in learning, contributing, and staying in Morocco helped turn hardship into new opportunities.

**Networks and partnerships.** Collaboration with local NGOs and international partners gave their initiatives technical guidance, visibility, and credibility. This ensured that what started as individual efforts could expand into structured programmes.

**Practical skills with community focus.** The skills they acquired — from catering to community mobilisation and first aid — directly addressed real needs in migrant communities. This practical relevance made their initiatives meaningful and sustainable.

## Building on Success

**Expanding initiatives.** Today, Bath's and Lassana's associations continue to grow, offering training, social support, and community engagement. Their projects reach hundreds of migrants, increasing employability and reducing vulnerability.

**Migrants as agents of change.** Migrants like Bath and Lassana, once facing exclusion, now play active roles in shaping positive change. Their work shows that with support, migrants can become leaders, role models, and drivers of resilience.

**Bridge with countries of origin.** The skills and leadership gained in Morocco are not only valuable locally but also create opportunities for future contributions back home. Many migrant leaders now see themselves as bridges between Morocco and their countries of origin, with the potential to drive development and offer alternatives to irregular migration.



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### Disclaimer

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