Addressing root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement. What works and what does not?

Lessons learned from the European Union Emergency Trust Fund in the Horn of Africa

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Abstract

This report presents the findings of an analysis on the effectiveness of European Union Trust Fund (EUTF) projects in addressing migration and displacement drivers in the Horn of Africa (HoA) region. The study examined 47 projects across seven countries, focusing on key drivers such as lack of employment, conflict and social tensions, and poor migration management. Through a meta-analysis of project documentation and expert exchanges, the research identified promising and less effective approaches to addressing these drivers. The findings provide valuable lessons learned and good practices for informing the design of future interventions. As the EUTF implementation nears its end, this study aims to support the Directorate-General for International Partnerships in capitalising on the results and enhancing the legacy of EUTF-HoA actions. The insights generated will be crucial in designing effective and sustainable interventions, ultimately contributing to more informed programming and policy decisions.

Empowering women for peace in Somalia
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Executive summary

The Horn of Africa (HoA) region has faced persistent challenges over the past decade, including political instability, security threats, environmental degradation, and humanitarian crises, which have collectively hindered stability and development. With a rapidly growing population, where approximately half are of working age, the region's economies are largely driven by rain-fed agriculture and pastoralism, employing 71% of the workforce, but are highly vulnerable to climate change. **The prevalence of conflict, instability and economic fragility have severely constrained the labour market, limiting the creation of formal job opportunities**. The described situation is intertwined with large-scale population movements, including forced and internal displacement as well as mixed migration flows, both within and from the region. **Today around 10% of the population is forcibly displaced.** Besides forced displacement, the region's migratory flows are diverse, driven by various factors including economic opportunities, education, climate change, and environmental degradation. Regular movements mix with irregular migration, people smuggling and trafficking in human beings.

The European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa (EUTF for Africa) was established in 2015 to address the root causes of instability, forced displacement and irregular migration and to contribute to better migration management. Since then, **the EUTF has supported activities in 26 countries across three regions of Africa** - the Sahel and Lake Chad, the Horn of Africa and North of Africa - **allocating a total budget of almost 5 billion euros for approved programmes**. In the Horn of Africa (HoA) region, EUTF interventions have addressed pressing challenges that go beyond national borders, such as climate change, forced displacement, demographic pressures, environmental stress, various forms of conflict, human trafficking and migrant smuggling, as well as organised crime and violent extremism.

With the final months of the EUTF implementation approaching, attention is turning to analysing the effects of the interventions and identifying lessons learnt. In this context, this study aims at supporting the Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) in capitalising on the results and enhancing the legacy of EUTF-HoA operations. It does so by **assessing what types of intervention have worked and what have not** in addressing key drivers of irregular migration and forced displacement in the HoA region, and by **generating evidence-based insights for future programming**.

The study examined 47 projects across seven countries and the regional level, focusing on three key drivers of migration and forced displacement in the HoA region: lack of employment and livelihoods, conflict and social tensions, and poor migration and forced displacement management. Using a meta-analysis of project documentation, **the research identified key approaches and evaluated their effectiveness in the project context**. The findings come from a thorough desk analysis and exchanges with experts, practitioners, and policymakers.

In terms of creating employment and livelihood opportunities, key findings highlight promising approaches that increase, improve, or diversify employment and income-generating opportunities, as well as those that are less effective. **Successful approaches include community-based initiatives, such as Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) and producer associations,** which promote self-management, community resources, and financial inclusion, particularly for women. **Holistic approaches that address complex barriers to employment, including technical, economic, social, and legal obstacles, have also proven effective.** These often involve providing technical and vocational education and training (TVET) combined with financial support for new businesses. **Targeted support for youth, such as skills enhancement and labour market connection, has shown positive results,** boosting their confidence and sense of direction. In contrast, some approaches have been less successful. Short-term employment initiatives, like cash for work programs, have only met basic needs without lasting impact on income. Efforts **to support institutional processes, such as national policy development and cross-border cooperation, have been hindered by limited government commitment and capacity.** The underdeveloped private sector and limited labour demand in the region remain significant challenges, underscoring the need for continued investment.

In terms of supporting migration and forced displacement management, the strengthening of government capacity through creating of tools, standardised procedures, and information management systems led to significant improvements in institutional operations at both national and regional levels. **Regional approaches, such as shared protocols and cross-border cooperation, have proven particularly effective in addressing challenges like promoting cross-border mobility, supporting voluntary returns, and combating human trafficking and migrant smuggling.** Inclusive governance interventions have also had a positive impact, contributing to improved local governance, social cohesion, and access to services for both refugees and host communities. **In protection, return, and (re)integration projects, a holistic approach combining direct assistance and**

capacity building has been crucial for achieving sustainable (re)integration of displaced persons. This involves providing immediate humanitarian assistance while building local government capacity in host countries, promoting shared responsibility and increasing the long-term sustainability of actions. **Less effective approaches included isolated capacity-building initiatives, such as trainings and direct institutional support, which had limited impact.** However, when combined with other initiatives, like developing manuals and procedures, these interventions enhanced effectiveness. Additionally, developing migration policies and programs in partner countries, although not always ratified or implemented, has contributed to advancing the national agenda and shifting governments' understanding of and commitment to migration issues.

Effective and less effective approaches have been identified also in relation to promoting resilience and social cohesion in conflict-affected areas. **Effective approaches include delivering justice services through community-based and informal mechanisms**, such as alternative dispute resolution and mobile courts, which have been successful in mitigating conflict and providing access to justice for marginalized communities. Targeted training on conflict, peace education, and conflict resolution, which prioritizes both duty bearers and rights holders, has proven more effective than general human rights and justice training. **Combining dialogue and mediation with economic support, such as livelihood programs, has also been shown to address the root causes of tensions and foster social cohesion.** Additionally, creating safe spaces for discussion, like inter-community and inter-generational dialogues, has helped address community concerns and traumas, and find joint solutions, particularly in post-conflict interventions. On the other hand, some approaches have had limited impact on social cohesion. While training institutional actors and supporting victims of violence raises awareness and challenges cultural norms, it has not directly contributed to significant improvements in social cohesion.

The analysis also identified **several challenges that hindered the implementation and impact of actions, including external events** like political instability, inflation, and environmental shocks, as well as internal factors like lack of local ownership, marginalisation of certain areas, and short project cycles.

As the EU looks to the future and the implementation of migration and forced displacement programmes under the present Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) and the future Multiannual Financial framework (MFF), the lessons learned from the experiences of the EUTF in the Horn of Africa will be crucial in informing the design and implementation of effective interventions. The detailed analysis and findings presented in this Technical Report leads to four general conclusions:

1. **Overall positive but limited impact of interventions:** While many EUTF projects had a positive impact, many had a more limited impact than expected, as the effects were more modest than planned or as the effects were not fully measured. Contextual challenges, such as conflicts, COVID-19, climatic shocks or new inflows of displaced people, as well as weaknesses in project design, implementation, as well as weaknesses in project design and implementation contributed to this limited impact. To mitigate such factors it is essential to conduct thorough situational assessments and incorporate contingency plans into programme design. Furthermore, **measuring intermediate or partial results can help to capture the nuances and levels of impact of interventions.** This is particularly important for policy support interventions, where progress is often incremental and multifaceted, and understanding the complexities of the process and where impact can be achieved is necessary to assess the effectiveness of actions.

2. **Success of interventions combining hard and soft support, while creating local ownership:** The most successful projects took an integrated approach, combining hard and soft support to address the complex needs of communities. For example, skills training was more effective when paired with material support, such as funding or equipment, to help beneficiaries start their own businesses. Similarly, training programs in migration governance and conflict resolution were more effective when accompanied by assets like technology or infrastructure. This integrated approach helps bridge the resource gap in communities and increases the likelihood of long-term success. Additionally, **involving local stakeholders is crucial**, as they provide valuable insights, resources, and networks, and help build trust and ownership, essential for sustainability and success.

3. **Strengthening institutional and human capacity ensures long-term sustainability:** Interventions that strengthened institutional and human capacity had a lasting impact, enabling benefits to be sustained over time. Community-based initiatives, such as Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) and alternative justice mechanisms, **showed promising sustainability prospects by empowering local communities to drive their own development.** Engagement with local businesses was also crucial, facilitating market expansion and job creation. These approaches can help overcome institutional challenges, including limited government capacity and resources, and promote sustainable development.

4. **More inclusive targeting of interventions can contribute to social cohesion:** Targeting interventions to both refugees and host communities was crucial for promoting inclusivity and social

cohesion. **By balancing support for both groups, projects helped shift host community attitudes and address discriminatory social and cultural norms,** ultimately fostering a more peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities.

Two observations on project design and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems emerged. Firstly, **a more** **effective and collaborative approach to designing and implementing interventions is needed,** with a focus on expanding the evidence base and strengthening institutional and human capacity. Secondly, this should be supported by the **development of more robust M&E systems.** A clear commitment to expanding the available evidence base and integrating it into programme design, implementation, and monitoring is necessary.

Promoting peace and conflict resolution
through education in Uganda
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1. **Introduction**

The *European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa* (EUTF for Africa)[1] was established in 2015 to address the root causes of instability, forced displacement and irregular migration and to contribute to better migration management. In the Horn of Africa (HoA) region, EUTF interventions have addressed pressing challenges that go beyond national borders, such as climate change, forced displacement, demographic pressures, environmental stress, various forms of conflict, human trafficking and migrant smuggling, as well as organised crime and violent extremism.

With the final months of the EUTF implementation approaching, attention is turning to analysing the effects of the interventions and identifying lessons learnt. In this context, this study aims at supporting the Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) in capitalising on the results and enhancing the legacy of EUTF-HoA operations. It does so by **assessing what types of intervention have worked and what have not in addressing key drivers of irregular migration and forced displacement in the HoA region, and by generating evidence-based insights for future programming.** This emphasis on lessons learnt is fully in line with the conclusion of the recent special report of the European Court of Auditors (ECA) on the EU Trust Fund, which flagged limited use of research and evidence to inform the design and implementation of EUTF initiatives. The study's insights – and specifically best practices and lessons learnt – can inform future actions under present and future cooperation instruments; which are expected to dedicate an important percentage of its budget to migration and forced displacement-related activities.[2]

This report presents the results of the Commissions Joint Research Centre's (JRC) analysis of the effectiveness of EUTF projects in addressing migration and displacement drivers through interventions focused on access to employment and livelihoods, conflict prevention and social cohesion, and better migration governance. The findings come from a thorough desk analysis and exchanges with experts, practitioners, and policymakers.

Introduction

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1   Although the acronym "EUTF for Africa" is the one normally used in communications from the European Commission to indicate the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa (see: https://trust-fund-for-africa.europa.eu/index_en), please note that throughout this report, the acronym "EUTF" will also be used with the same meaning
2   An indicative 10% for the ongoing Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI)

Migrants in Djibouti eating shuro, a traditional ethiopian food.
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2. **Context**

2.1 The Horn of Africa

Over the past decade, the Horn of Africa has faced political, environmental, humanitarian and security challenges that transcend national borders. Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan have consistently featured among the world's top 10 most fragile countries, while Ethiopia and Eritrea are in the top 20.[3] A series of concurrent and mixed crises have been ongoing.

Intra-state violent conflicts and military coups have been rampant, with many insurgent and resistance groups in the region fighting against the ruling governments. Between 2020 and 2022, the Tigray region of Ethiopia was shaken by an ethnic armed conflict, causing an alarming humanitarian situation, human rights abuses and large-scale displacement, which are still visible today. In Sudan, in October 2021, the military leadership dissolved the government, interrupting the transition to a civilian government and undermining international confidence in the country's democratic reform process. This caused a power struggle between military leaders that evolved into a full-blown conflict in April 2023. Since then, increasing violence has caused significant loss of human life and the displacement of millions of Sudanese, especially in the Darfur region and to neighbouring countries. In Somalia, the electoral process has been marked by political turmoil, set against a complex security landscape dominated by the rising threat of al-Shabab, and further complicated by unresolved disputes with Somaliland and Puntland over territorial claims and autonomy.

The widespread political instability, civil unrest, and humanitarian crises have had a significant impact on neighbouring regions, both in the Sahel or Central Africa and in North Africa. At the same time, the region's internal dynamics have been influenced by broader supra-regional dynamics, such as the increasingly active involvement of the Gulf States and the consequences of global crises. These include the social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the impacts of Russia's war against Ukraine, especially on food security in the region.

With an estimated total population of 294 million, the Horn of Africa countries are among the world's youngest, with about 70% of the population under 25 years of age.[4] The World Bank classifies all the economies in the region as low-income countries, with the exception of Djibouti and Kenya.[5] In terms of human development, the most recent UNDP ranking places Kenya and Uganda among the countries with medium human development, while Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan are in the low human development category.[6] The political and economic instability strongly affects the labour markets, limiting the creation of formal job opportunities. The high rates of unemployment, the widespread informal sector and the difficult access to quality education or training programmes lead to general and widespread discontent, especially among the youth.[7]

The livelihoods of the majority of the **region's population are heavily dependent on rain-fed agriculture and pastoralism**, even though around 70% of the area consists of arid and semi-arid land.[8] Competition for the limited natural resources is an important factor fuelling conflict, ethnic clashes and insecurity.

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3   https://fragilestatesindex.org/global-data/
4   UNDP, 2024 Horn of Africa Human Development Report: Enhancing Prospects For Human Development Through Regional Integration, available at: https://www.undp.org/africa/publications/2024-horn-africa-human-development-report-enhancing-prospects-human-development-through-regional-integration
5   World Bank, https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/536711634241110141/pdf/Horn-of-Africa-Regional-Economic-Memorandum-Overview.pdf
6   UNDP, 2024 Horn of Africa Human Development Report: Enhancing Prospects For Human Development Through Regional Integration, available at: https://www.undp.org/africa/publications/2024-horn-africa-human-development-report-enhancing-prospects-human-development-through-regional-integration
7   On the evidence of unemployment, lack of access to education and other drivers of discontent and irregular migration for young people, see:
-    IOM and Altai Consulting (2016), Youth, Employment and Migration in Mogadishu, Kismayo And Baidoa available at: https://www.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl486/files/country/docs/IOM-Youth-Employment-Migration-9Feb2016.pdf
-    Dibeh, G., Fakih, A., & Marrouch, W. (2018). Labor market and institutional drivers of youth irregular migration in the Middle East and North Africa region. Journal of Industrial Relations, 61(2), 225-251. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022185618788085
-    REACH (2017), Youth on the move: Investigating decision-making, migration trajectories and expectations of young people on their way to Italy, available at: https://reliefweb.int/report/italy/youth-move-investigating-decision-making-migration-trajectories-and-expectations-young
8   Farole, T., Von der Goltz, J., Sahr, T. & Viollaz, M. (2021), Horn of Africa Regional Economic Memorandum Background Paper 2. Jobs In the Horn of Africa: Synoptic Brief, The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, available at: https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/339521634240760556/pdf/Jobs-in-the-Horn-of-Africa-Synoptic-Brief.pdf

Additionally, the region has faced increasingly **recurrent and intense climatic events,** such as the El Niño-induced floods in 2023 and the severe and prolonged drought of 2021-2023, the worst in recent history. In a context of resource scarcity and low coping capacities, both at community and national levels, natural hazards have caused significant crop and livestock losses, pushing millions of people into food insecurity.[9] The World Food Programme (WFP) estimated that in January 2024, 58.4 million people in the region were severely food insecure. In addition, disease outbreaks, including cholera, malaria, measles and yellow fever, continue to pose a growing threat in the region, particularly in the context of severe food insecurity, malnutrition and overcrowded areas with limited access to water, sanitation and poor living conditions. The combination of natural hazards, conflict and economic shocks leads to important humanitarian needs. **In 2024, 64 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance and protection in the region**, representing almost 22% of the global humanitarian burden. Sudan and Ethiopia alone account for two of the five major humanitarian crises in the world.[10]

The described situation is closely linked to large population movements, in the form of both forced displacement and mixed migration. In fact, the countries of the HoA are origin, transit and destination of significant mixed migratory flows, mainly within the region, but also towards Europe via the western and northern routes, the Gulf countries and the Middle East via the eastern route, and South Africa via the southern route. While forced displacement figures have generally been high over the last ten years, they reached a record level in 2024. **The region currently hosts 24.6 million refugees, asylum seekers, returnees, and internally displaced persons (IDPs),** with Sudan alone accounting for the highest number of forcibly displaced people in the world.[11]

Uganda continues to host the highest number of refugees and asylum seekers in the region, almost 1.68 million. Ethiopia and Kenya have also continued to see increases in the population of refugees and asylum seekers.[12] Regarding internal displacements, the East and Horn of Africa (EHoA) sub-region[13] recorded more internal displacements than any other sub-region between 2009 and 2023, with 56.3

million or 46 per cent of the African continent's total.[14] In 2024, the number of IDPs has increased sharply due to the conflict in Sudan, reaching approximately 18.4 million persons across the entire region. This includes over 9 million in Sudan,[15] 3.5 million in Somalia, 3.2 million in Ethiopia, and 2 million in South Sudan.[16] Besides forced displacement, the region's migratory flows are diverse and have included people moving in search of work and education opportunities, seasonal and temporary movements of pastoralists and nomadic herders in search of pasture and water for their livestock, but also irregular migration, people smuggling and trafficking in human beings.

2.2. The EU approach in the Horn of Africa

The EU's policy for the Horn of Africa initially focused on development before tackling political and security issues. In November 2011, the EU adopted a strategic framework for the Horn of Africa[17] to align existing programmes and instruments and guide its engagement in the region. In October 2015, the Council adopted the Regional Action Plan for the Horn of Africa 2015-2020,[18] which outlines the EU's comprehensive approach to addressing key issues across the region, upholding the framework's objectives and focusing on enhancing regional cooperation on security, migration and forced displacement.

The challenges identified at the time have remained relevant over the years. In May 2021, the Council approved conclusions establishing a new strategy for the Horn of Africa,[19] reaffirming the EU's commitment to continuous and close cooperation with partners across the region. The strategy emphasizes preventing and resolving conflicts, promoting lasting stability through strengthening security capacities, combating terrorist groups, supporting African-led peace processes, and enhancing cooperation with regional actors such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Additionally, the strategy prioritizes development and good governance, based on the democratic principles of inclusion, and the promotion of rule of law and respect for human rights. In October 2022, the European Parliament issued a recommendation.[20] It

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9   WFP, https://www.fsinplatform.org/report/global-report-food-crises-2024/

10 UNDP, https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2024-07/11th_jra_draft_9_july.pdf

11 UNDP, https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2024-07/11th_jra_draft_9_july.pdf

12 UNDP, https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2024-07/11th_jra_draft_9_july.pdf

13 In the context of the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre study, used as a reference, the region of Eastern and Horn of Africa includes the following countries: Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda.

14 IDMC, 2024, Internal Displacement in Africa: An overview of trends and developments (2009-2023), available at: https://www.internal-displacement.org/regional-reports/internal-displacement-in-africa/

15 https://dataviz.unhcr.org/product-gallery/2024/04/sudan-one-year-of-spiralling-conflict-and-displacement/

16 UNHCR, https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/rbehagl

17 https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2012/433799/EXPO-AFET_ET(2012)433799_EN.pdf

18 https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/24468/st13363-en15.pdf

19 https://www.europarl.europa.eu/legislative-train/carriage/eu-strategy-in-the-horn-of-africa/report?sid=8801

20 https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2022-0345_EN.html

highlights the strategic importance of the Horn of Africa for the EU and the need to strengthen the EU's role in the region in integrating the trade, development, humanitarian, and conflict prevention approaches in coordination with other international players, local communities and civil society.

2.2.1. The European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF for Africa)

In 2015, in the context of unprecedented arrivals of migrants and refugees in Europe, European and African heads of state met in Valletta, Malta, to strengthen cooperation on migration between the two continents. The result was an Action Plan,[21] placing development assistance at the centre of the strategy to address the 'root causes' of irregular migration from the African continent. The summit also led to the establishment of the EUTF as a **tool to pool and coordinate the increasing EU funds without multiplying requests on the recipient countries' administration**.[22]

Since then, **the EUTF has supported activities in 26 countries across three regions of Africa** – the Sahel and Lake Chad, the Horn of Africa and North of Africa – **allocating a total budget of almost 5 billion euros for approved programmes**. Interventions have focused on four strategic objectives: i) greater economic and employment opportunities; ii) strengthening resilience of communities and in particular the most vulnerable including refugees and other displaced people; iii) improved migration management in countries of origin, transit and destination; and iv) improved governance and conflict prevention and reduction of forced displacement and irregular migration. The last allocation of funds took place in 2021 while activities on the ground end in December 2025.

In the Horn of Africa region, the EUTF allocated a budget of €1.73 billion,[23] funding 231 projects across 94 programmes.[24] These actions covered eight countries, namely Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda, as well as some neighbouring countries included through regional programmes (Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda).

The actions in the HoA region placed greater emphasis on promoting stability and improving the management of protracted displacement crises in the region through increased protection and support for durable solutions. Programmes have been designed to provide a rapid, holistic and integrated response to the needs of the populations,[25] combining development efforts with humanitarian assistance and aiming to benefit migrants, refugees, displaced populations and host communities alike. Areas of intervention include strengthening climate resilience, improving access to basic services and promoting skills development and job creation for the most vulnerable populations. The actions also aimed to support local governments in enhancing their capacities in the security and justice sectors, preventing radicalisation and violence at community level, as well as improving migration management in the region. This included efforts to combat human trafficking and smuggling, while promoting safe, orderly and regular migration.

2. Context

21　The action plan adopted, the Joint Valletta Action Plan (JVAP), set out a regional framework to address migration governance between Africa and Europe. The JVAP is built around five priority domains for cooperation: i) Development benefits of migration and addressing root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement; ii) Legal migration and mobility; iii) Protection and asylum; iv) Prevention of and fight against irregular migration, migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings; and v) Return, readmission and reintegration. See: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/21839/action_plan_en.pdf

22　https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/sites/euetfa/files/original_constitutive_agreement_en_with_signatures.pdf

23　https://trust-fund-for-africa.europa.eu/our-mission/state-play-and-financial-resources_en

24　https://trust-fund-for-africa.europa.eu/document/download/c67c3504-ab93-42ed-b085-1f159ef2e254_en?filename=EUTF%20MLS%20HoA%20S1%202024%20Report.pdf

25　For the purpose of this study, the term "displaced persons" and "displaced population" are used regardless of status, and therefore includes refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons and returnees.

Supporting small enterprises in South Sudan
©ITC/Peter Caton

3. **This study**

This study aims at supporting the Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) in capitalising on the results and enhancing the legacy of EUTF-HoA operations. It does so by **assessing what types of intervention have worked and what have not** in addressing key drivers of irregular migration and forced displacement in the HoA region, and by generating **evidence-based insights for future programming.**

Although this study takes into account the EUTF's underlying hypothesis – i.e. that successfully addressing the above-mentioned issues would lead to a reduction in irregular flows and in the number of displaced persons – it does not analyse the impact that selected projects had or may have had on migration dynamics in terms of numbers, flows or aspirations. Before exploring the potential correlation between EUTF interventions and potential changes in migration and displacement dynamics, it can be useful to first examine the available evidence on the effectiveness of different types of interventions in addressing the underlying drivers of migration and displacement. Doing so would constitute an important intermediate step that can help inform the analysis of such a potential correlation. Hence, the study sought to assess the effectiveness of the various interventions in their primary objective of addressing the root causes of migration and forced displacement. In particular, the analysis focused on three of the main drivers of (irregular) migration and forced displacement from and within the HoA region identified during the first phase of the study (see Annex 1 on Methodology), namely the lack of employment and livelihoods opportunities, conflict and social tensions, and poor migration management.

The steps of analysis undertaken are:

1. **Identify and categorise the types of key interventions implemented by EUTF projects** in the areas of access to employment, vocational training, business creation, rural livelihoods, social cohesion and conflict resolution, and migration management;

2. **Examine and evaluate their effectiveness** in improving access to employment and economic opportunities, preventing violence and conflict, and strengthening local governments' capacities in the area of migration governance;

3. **Explore positive and negative results** and draw lessons and policy implications for future programming in this context.

The study covered a sample of 47 EUTF projects carried out in seven countries[26] and at the regional level. The methodology consisted of a meta-analysis, i.e. an in-depth analysis of the documentation available for each project to identify key approaches and evaluate their effectiveness in the project context. Each type of intervention was assigned a rating according to the following criteria: i) positive impact in the case of long-term effects of development interventions; ii) mixed evidence, in the case of activities that showed promise but had limited impact or mixed results; iii) output effects, in the case of the activity having successfully achieved the objective of the logical framework, with a short to medium-term impact; and iv) no impact or no evidence, when the intervention is unsuccessful or no information is available to assess the impact or effectiveness of the activity. The results of the meta-analysis were then validated with a selected number of practitioners and experts. For more details on the methodology applied, see Annex 1 on Methodology.

The study's results are bound by two limitations. First, the analysis focused on a sample of 47 projects out of 231, representing 20% of the total HoA project portfolio. Secondly and more importantly, data collected and reported by the projects was limited, with only 31 out of 47 projects having both baseline and end-line surveys, and with only 9 projects collecting impact-level data. Consequently, some of the findings may be affected by data gaps rather than a lack of actual impact, or may not be generalizable to other EUTF projects that were not included in the analysis.

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26 Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda.

Tina Yange, a first-time vegetable farmer in Rhino Camp Refugee settlement.
©Tumuhairwe Diana Sharone

4. Findings

4.1. Access to employment and livelihoods opportunities

4.1.1. EUTF approach to access to employment and livelihoods

Improving economic and employment opportunities is one of the four strategic objectives of the EUTF. Programmes under this strategic objective have aimed at addressing the employability of youth and vulnerable groups through the enhancement of their social and vocational skills and the creation of effective jobs or income opportunities.

The intervention logic for these programmes is that by supporting enterprises and filling skills gaps for young people and the most vulnerable groups, additional employment opportunities will be created, thereby promoting stability, inclusive economic growth, social cohesion and development in the intervention areas, generally identified and chosen as areas of migration origin and untapped growth potential. The underlying assumption is that economic exclusion and poor job opportunities are significant drivers of migration and displacement in the region. The EUTF therefore set out to provide local

communities with economic and livelihood opportunities and ultimately decrease the number of people embarking on (irregular) migration journeys. In some instances, interventions also pursue the idea of making the prospect of returning/remaining an attractive option for refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons.

4.1.2 Our analysis

The analysis sample consists of a total of 17 projects addressing employment and livelihood opportunities, including 2 regional and 15 across six countries, namely Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda. Sixteen types of interventions were identified, divided into five categories (see Figure 2).

Types of activities included are education and vocational training, direct access to employment, support for existing and new SMEs, strengthening agricultural businesses with local and regional value chains and market access, as well as improving the policy framework and the business environment, financial inclusion of communities, stimulating livelihood diversification and self-employment, particularly for youth and vulnerable groups.

FIGURE 1. EUTF SO1 portfolio in HoA, as of June 2024[27]
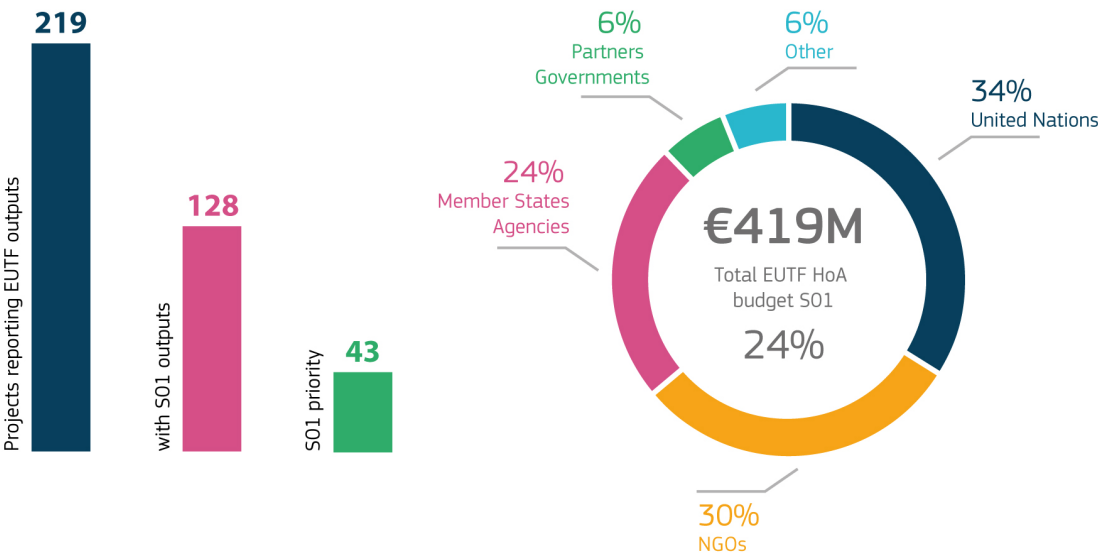
27 EUTF Horn of Africa Infographic Strategic Objective 1, June 2024, available at: https://trust-fund-for-africa.europa.eu/library_en

FIGURE 2. Overview of category and intervention classification

DIRECT ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT

Formal employment (incl. traineeships)

Screening and matching activities / job placement

TRAINING AND SKILLS CREATION

TVET, soft skills and training on specific professions

IGAs AND RURAL LIVELIHOODS

Public works/ cash4work

Community- based initiatives

Value chains creation and access to markets

Capacity building on green IGAs, agricultural productivity & climate sustainable agriculture

Provision of tools / inputs / seeds / community infrastructure

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mentorship / capacity building / start-ups training

Access to finance / start-up packs /grants funding / microfinance

SYSTEM STRENGTHENING

Support to national policy / programmes

Public infrastructures

Cross-border interventions

4.1.2.1. Direct access to employment

Direct access to employment interventions refer to activities that help workers reach different labour markets, enhance their skills and training pathways. These include interventions that develop direct links with the private sector for the job placement of young people, screening and matching interventions, coaching services and communication of job opportunities, etc.

This type of interventions was the least used within the pool of projects examined, resulting present in only 5 out of 17 projects across four countries. When implemented, these interventions yielded positive results, although all the cases analysed involved the creation of temporary jobs, mainly internships and apprenticeships, rather than permanent employment.

Formal employment

In only two cases, **apprenticeship after training has emerged as an effective type of intervention in creating sustainable employment for young people**. For example, a project in Uganda with refugees and host communities found that job placement through apprenticeships led to a 54% increase in employment and a more than 60% increase in the income of participants six months after the vocational training received.

Other projects showed mixed results in terms of effectiveness and impact, managing to activate fewer apprenticeships than planned or simply referring beneficiaries to private employment agencies to find work. Such result is also reinforced by the fact that f**or many training projects, the critical issue remains the possibility for beneficiaries to access apprenticeship and job placement opportunities,** regardless of the

TABLE 1. Overview of rating.[28] Direct access to employment category

	Positive impact	Mixed evidence	Effective at output level	No impact
Formal employment (incl. traineeships)	2	2	n/a	n/a
Screening and matching activities / job placement	n/a	n/a	1	n/a

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28   For explanation of the rating system and criteria, please see Chapter 3. This study, p. 9 and Annex 1 on Methodology.

Recommendation: Involve the private sector from the start.

In order to increase the possibilities and ways for beneficiaries to sustainably access employment opportunities, greater efforts are needed to strengthen the engagement with the private sector in a collaborative and comprehensive manner. Involvement of local companies is necessary in all project phases, and should take place from the early stages to facilitate the joint design of strategies and tools. The inclusion of the private sector in skills and job placement initiatives can, among other things, facilitate addressing the problem of the mismatch between available skills and labour market demand.

level of skills created (see 4.1.2.2). This is mainly due to the lack of companies willing to hire them. **Better involvement and support of the private sector** could therefore help to partially solve this problem. In the case of Kenya, for example, young graduates of a training programme were placed in a business setting to benefit from practical training by employers through a two-month on-the-job placement.

Screening and matching activities / job placement

With regard to job placement and matching activities, only two projects were identified as relevant. For one of them, not enough evidence was collected to demonstrate the effectiveness of the activities. The other one was rated as effective at output level as it implemented activities aimed at increasing the quantity and quality of employment-oriented service offered in the area, including capacity building, Curriculum Vitae writing, coaching and placement offers, but did not monitor the impact of such services in terms of improved access to job opportunities for beneficiaries.

4.1.2.2. Training and skills creation

A large share of the projects examined (13 out of 17) had a training component, across the six countries and at regional level.

TVET, soft skills and training on specific professions

In the 'Training and skills creation' type of intervention, the effectiveness regarding access to employment and livelihood opportunities is rather heterogeneous and difficult to clearly ascribe to a rating. This is partly due to limited evidence at our disposal: in the vast majority of projects the impact of training was in fact not assessed in the medium to long term and in no case linked to an actual impact on employment, whether formal or informal.

A large fraction of the projects analysed (5) were found to be effective **only at the output level,** meaning that the targets set by the project's logical framework in terms of the number of people who received training were actually achieved, and in some cases even exceeded. In most cases,

4. Findings

TABLE 2. Overview of rating: Training and skills creation category

	Positive impact	Mixed evidence	Effective at output level	No impact
TVET, soft skills and training on specific professions	3	5	5	n/a

BOX 1 Youth inclusion: Good practice from Somalia

One of the projects in Somalia, in the area of training activities, not only made new courses available, but also invested resources in renovating and improving the capacity of nine youth centres and initiated the construction of four others. According to available documentation, this support has had a **positive impact on young people's access to safe spaces and opportunities for economic empowerment.** Young people interviewed at the various youth centres said that the centres offered them a safe space to interact with peers, access to computers and the internet, and opportunities for vocational and entrepreneurial training. These results highlight the importance for training interventions to include also the objective of **filling infrastructure and resource gaps in existing facilities**, especially in fragile settings and marginalised areas.

reporting was available on the quality of the trainings and level of satisfaction of beneficiaries on the knowledge acquired, but there was no information on the extent to which those who received training were able to access new or better forms of employment.

For another significant part of projects (5), instead, the results were mixed. This is mainly because it **was observed that the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and soft skills interventions had positive impacts on some aspects related to the work conditions of the beneficiaries, but were more limited with respect to the primary objective of creating access to employment.**

In other cases, even if they did not lead to an actual increase in employment, training interventions showed an important intermediate result, in the form of **improved attitudes**. For example, an evaluation of a project in Ethiopia highlighted how the percentage of households with positive attitudes towards formal employment increased after project implementation. Moreover, many of the projects emphasised participants' **increased perception of employability** as a positive result. This stimulated job search and helped beneficiaries face the labour market with more confidence or, in other cases, find alternative ways of employing the new skills acquired, such as starting a new business. Especially in the case of youth, what emerged from the evidence is that, in addition to providing access to new sources of livelihood, **TVET interventions proved to be effective in increasing young people's confidence in their employability**, providing them with a sense of direction

and promoting a sense of social contribution, in many cases reducing widespread feelings of frustration. In this sense, practitioners stressed the importance to also **work on behaviour change** and focus on changing the mindset of young people to prevent frustration, improve employability and reduce irregular migration.

For some projects, the mixed effects are due to **contextual conditions.** In particular, in many of the countries and areas of intervention, there is still a **significant gap between demand and supply of skills at the local level,** with the private sector unable to absorb new workforce. This was the case, for example, with one project in Uganda, whose final evaluation pointed out that, due to the limited capacity of local employers to absorb all newly trained people, they could only hire workers on a seasonal basis (according to fluctuating levels of activity and demand), resulting in more casual employment opportunities rather than permanent positions. However, beneficiaries were more likely to work as casual workers than non-beneficiaries. In other words, this does not mean that the intervention was not successful, but rather that **the impact is more limited** than originally expected due to the prevalent context.

The three cases marked as having a 'positive impact' refer to three projects in Somalia, Uganda and Kenya, which dealt with different contexts, activities and target populations, yet they seem to have in common a few factors. Of these, three stand out:

1. **Creating training courses relevant to the local context and guided by the labour market demand,**

BOX 2 What is the link with migration aspirations? Evidence from Ethiopia

Some interesting insights into the **interplay between skills creation and mobility aspirations** emerge from a project targeting vulnerable refugees and host community in Ethiopia. In the project's final report, information was gathered on how the activities affected the refugees' desire to leave for a third country. It emerged that despite any economic advancement, increased sense of belonging or a bigger social network, the overwhelming **majority of refugees would still take the chance to move to a third and ideally more prosperous country if they had the opportunity**. The report shows that, in this particular case, economic empowerment seems to have served as a mitigating measure alleviating hardships and improving well-being while refugees wait to leave for a more promising environment. Such position emerges clearly from interviews with TVET graduates of the project, where one can read: *'After learning a new skill, I realised that I could find a job wherever I went. This motivated me to look for work in a country where there are more job opportunities than in this one', or also 'As far as I am concerned, I will be going to a new country [...]. Being part of this project in no way affects my plans to stay or return'*. Furthermore, according to project implementers, this does not apply only to refugees, but members of the host communities would also seize the opportunity to emigrate if it was offered to them. This raises **the question of whether skills development interventions for locals and displaced persons should also focus on creating talents that are employable in other countries.** Indeed, skills development alone, without local job creation, may lead to increased frustration among beneficiaries and, consequently, a greater desire for migration, even if only internal migration to areas with greater employment opportunities. The same point was also made by the experts consulted, who, among the recommendations for increasing the effectiveness of skills development interventions, emphasised the importance to identify and work on skills that can be absorbed by the local market but also to include training in skills needed to seek employment elsewhere, both regionally and internationally.

Recommendation: Strengthen the measurement of training to employment benefits.

In order to increase the possibilities and ways for beneficiaries to sustainably access employment opportunities, greater efforts are needed to strengthen the engagement with the private sector in a collaborative and comprehensive manner. Involvement of local companies is necessary in all project phases, and should take place from the early stages to facilitate the joint design of strategies and tools. The inclusion of the private sector in skills and job placement initiatives can, among other things, facilitate addressing the problem of the mismatch between available skills and labour market demand.

based on a market assessment of various skills. Ensuring a sound market assessment, including the analysis of demanded skills and opportunities at the local level to inform the training activities, was found to be crucial for the success of both the training and financial support across many projects. Experts and projects implementers emphasised that this applies not only to all training courses targeted at individuals aiming to integrate into the labour market, but also to support for producers to sell their products and support for the creation of new businesses.

2. **Combining technical training with other types of skills and on-the-job learning is essential to create long-term impact.** The projects analysed show that by combining technical training and soft skills, such as communication or leadership, chances to access formal employment increase and jobs can be retained for longer. In the case of Uganda, for example, it was found that 18 months after the training, beneficiaries were still successfully employed in the sector, compared to non-beneficiaries. In Kenya, young graduates of the training programme were placed in a business setting to benefit from practical training by employers through a two-month on-the-job placement. Along the same lines, the consulted experts also emphasised the need to offer a combination of TVET and business development trainings to equip trainees with both technical and entrepreneurial skills.

3. **Integrating training with subsidies or contributions in kind.** Training alone is not enough: to be effective, grants of adequate size are needed to support new business creation. This was found to be

the case in many of the projects analysed. An interview conducted in the context of a regional project, for example, states: *'TVET trainees are enthusiastic about the new skills and tools/equipment they have received, but their main obstacles to starting their own business have been the inability to save enough money from their current job or to obtain a credit or loan'.*

4.1.2.3. Entrepreneurship

In the category of actions in support of entrepreneurship, 11 projects across six countries have been identified. Interventions under this category include all activities aimed at supporting the establishment, management or growth of entrepreneurial activities, of all sizes and in different sectors. Interventions to support agri-food enterprises in rural settings were also included even when not explicitly intended as income-generating activities within the projects' framework.

Mentorship / capacity building / start-ups training

Mentoring and capacity building activities proved to be quite effective. A positive impact was especially noted in projects across Kenya, Ethiopia and South Sudan, which dealt with small businesses. In such cases, young people and women were trained in business management, entrepreneurship and received coaching and mentoring sessions. Project beneficiaries reported positive changes in their business practices, production and sales as a result of the project's support. There were also **positive signs**

TABLE 3. Overview of rating: Entrepreneurship category

	Positive impact	Mixed evidence	Effective at output level	No impact
Mentorship / capacity building / start-ups training	3	5	2	n/a
Access to finance / start-ups pack /grants funding / microfinance	2	2	3	1
Support to business environment / operations / services	n/a	1	n/a	n/a

of learning and improved financial management skills among beneficiaries, including initiated or improved bookkeeping and cashbook management.

Additionally, **the support enabled them to develop and realise new business ideas,** testifying to the importance of mentoring activities in stimulating entrepreneurship and innovation. A participant in Ethiopia said that the project *"enabled me to think of a business idea and make profit that also led me to expand my shop. [...] Before the support I was here doing this business but with a small amount of money. After the cash support I was able to sell different [i.e. new] women's clothes that were not possible for me before because of my limited financial capability".*

Many projects reported **mixed results in terms of effectiveness**. In some cases, the capacity building was effective in developing the skills of young entrepreneurs, but no data were reported on the impact of such activities on their ability to start, expand and manage their businesses. The available documentation, for most projects, does not clearly indicate whether the businesses were successfully started, or whether they remained sustainable after some months. In others, beneficiaries were satisfied with the mentoring and capacity-building activities, stating that they felt better equipped to run their businesses and increase their income at the end of the training, but further evidence is needed to establish the actual impact.

In terms of supporting the creation of new businesses, it is important to reflect on which type of businesses have the greatest potential to thrive in economically disadvantaged areas, and particularly those affected by conflict and displacement. **Small business that deal with access to services and local products were found to have a higher chance of success in the cases analysed**. However, often, for such businesses the main motivation for setting up is earning a living, rather than generating

a profit. This results in low investment, employment of unskilled labour, poor working conditions, unstructured operations, and many other operational problems. For this reason, **mentoring and capacity-building programmes should include significant assistance to improve the working and employment conditions prevalent in supported businesses**, as well as occupational health and safety standards. Technical assistance should also go hand in hand with adequate funding.

At the same time, **while local job creation may retain people with existing and perhaps not yet utilised skills, this type of intervention may not be viable if the area lacks appropriate skill levels**. In these cases, additional interventions may be necessary to develop the required skills. For example, complementing support for local businesses with training programmes or educational initiatives for the local workforce could ensure the long-term viability and sustainability of local job creation efforts (see 4.1.2.2).

Finally, an important aspect that emerged is that, in some cases, **projects may raise unrealistic expectations for the support of small local businesses**, and end up generating feelings of frustration and exclusion among the local population. This is significant because, as mentioned earlier, together with SMEs, local and small businesses are better positioned to drive market expansion and job creation in the targeted areas. However, their limited absorption capacity and need for technical support to meet funding criteria can be time-consuming and resource-intensive for projects to address, which can exacerbate the mismatch between expectations and reality. In contrast, partnering with large private companies might seem like a more efficient option, but they are often difficult to attract to targeted areas, making them a less viable choice for partnership. This trade-off highlights the challenges of balancing the potential benefits of supporting small, local businesses with the resources required to do so, and the need for projects to manage expectations and provide

BOX 3 Supporting business and service creation in refugee areas: Good practice from Kenya

Direct-to-consumer businesses that support the daily lives of refugees and the host community can be particularly effective in areas of dense and protracted displacement, not only in terms of job creation but also for the benefit of the entire community. Examples of such enterprises are those that provide alternative energy access (e.g. through the construction of mini-grids, energy-saving stoves and solar energy systems), grid-connection services, and agribusinesses. A positive example in this regard comes from one of the EUTF-funded projects in Turkana County (Kenya), home to the two longstanding Kakuma refugee camp and Kalobeyei refugee settlement. The project sought to promote better economic integration and self-reliance of refugees and host communities in the targeted areas by attracting new businesses, supporting existing ones, and developing refugee-owned enterprises to create jobs and improve access to products and services. In terms of results, the project's support led to the creation or expansion of 56 businesses in a densely refugee-populated area, offering a wide range of goods and facilitating access to essential (non-financial) services to more than 70,000 people in the area. Both refugee and host community members interviewed testified that the goods and services provided effectively fill a market gap. In addition, the project-supported businesses created 313 full-time equivalent jobs, including 119 jobs for women and 82 for refugees.

Recommendation: Adopt an employer- and market-driven approach.

Market analysis is key to successful job training, supporting producers, and new business creation. Business support interventions must be aligned with a thorough analysis of the local economy and market, including a mapping of already operating business, in order to strengthen market access and capitalise on existing products and facilities in the area. Context-dependent barriers such as low availability of capital, lack of required skills, and low scalability potential of operations must also be taken into account.

targeted support to ensure meaningful engagement and impact.

Access to finance / start-up packs /grants funding / microfinance

In terms of effectiveness, **subsidies and access to finance interventions have yielded positive results** both in the creation of new small businesses and in supporting the expansion of existing ones, even in rural settings.

In one project in Sudan, for instance, the provision of credit (pre-financing) proved to be a game changer for small producers. By avoiding the high costs of informal financing systems, the beneficiaries found they had more resources to invest in their activities, with a positive impact in terms of the quality of tools and seeds used, agricultural practices and increased profitability. Another project in Kenya has reported very promising results in terms of outcomes. According to the available documentation, the support of the project has led to the entry and/or expansion of 56 commercial activities in the target area, offering a wide range of improved goods and services, appreciated by the community for filling a gap in the market. Three-quarters of participants report that the project played an important role in the performance of their businesses, acting as a catalyst. 'The funding gave us the morale to do it,' reports one beneficiary interviewed.

In addition, projects that have demonstrated a positive impact show that the **combination of grants and business-specific training increases support and success rates for new businesses**. In some cases,

on the other hand, start-up kits provided to beneficiaries in education and vocational training were insufficient to support business launch and growth, and inadequate to sustain them over time, lacking the necessary scale and duration for long-term viability.

Finally, access to finance was found to be more effective when combined with financial education, even basic one. In the projects analysed, financial literacy interventions were consistently implemented in combination with other financial services, such as grants and start-up kits, to support entrepreneurial activities, but also in support of community-based initiatives (see 4.1.2.4). Although it was not possible to isolate the impact of financial literacy interventions alone, the evaluation of these combined interventions suggests that they can lead to better financial outcomes, at both individual and business level. For instance, a participant from a project in Somalia reported that *"Taking part in the financial literacy workshops taught me budgeting and saving strategies that have been crucial in managing my finances as a young adult."* Similarly, a project in Kenya successfully provided support to the youth in setting up their own businesses, helping them to turn their skills into income-generating activities. This included training beneficiaries on business planning, entrepreneurship and financial literacy, as well as providing start-up kits and linking them to microfinance institutions.

Support to business environment / operations / services

Finally, **no evidence was found on the impact of interventions aiming at improving the business**

4. Findings

BOX 4 Financing new businesses through diaspora investment: Good practice from Ethiopia

To support the establishment or expansion of local enterprises, one project in Ethiopia included a system of funding through diaspora investment. According to the final evaluation, such approach was well-designed and very effective, and the impact is already showing in terms of increased livelihoods, with some enterprises having grown and already employing more people.

environment. In most cases, this depends on contextual and political issues. Market interventions can be slowed down by a variety of factors, such as lack of regulations, underdeveloped markets and limited private sector presence. In the case of one project in Kenya, a business support centre was built, but at the close of operations it was not operational due to the **lack of government funding** for maintenance costs. Furthermore, out of 15 planned, only 2 business services were available at the end of the project and those were found to be poorly attended - 'Sometimes two or three days go by without anyone coming in' - due to a **low level of awareness among the local business community**.

4.1.2.4. Alternative Income Generating Activities (IGAs) and rural livelihoods

Alternative income-generating activities (IGAs) and rural livelihoods is the most popular category, with 12 projects across six countries and 2 at regional level (14 out of 17 in total). Interventions in this category aimed to **strengthen and diversify income generating activities (IGAs) and rural livelihood activities**. Among these are the development of local and cross-border trade, rural agriculture and fishery value chains, improved resource utilisation, construction or rehabilitation of strategic community infrastructure.

Public works/ cash4work

Interventions on short-term employment through **cash for work were classified as mixed**. While they yielded mostly positive results, they were considered as limited compared to the overall impact goal of longer-term economic or employment opportunities. Indeed, in all cases analysed, **cash for work activities are described as effective in meeting the short-term basic needs of households,** especially the most vulnerable ones, but had no impact on long-term income. In general, the feedback received from beneficiaries has been very positive. In some cases, these activities enabled community members to get through a difficult period, such as COVID-19 or

droughts. In other cases, **increased purchasing power** was mentioned, which made it easier for families to meet their basic needs, including sending their children to school, accessing better health care, and buying healthier food. In one project in Uganda, it was found that many of the households involved in cash for work used the income generated to invest in new economic opportunities, such as setting up small businesses. Among the positive effects, it emerged that these programmes not only provided employment opportunities for vulnerable families, **resulting in increased income and improved livelihoods, but also helped to create long-term benefits for the community as a whole**. In fact, the type of work assigned mainly included the construction and rehabilitation of public infrastructure, including wells and irrigation systems, roads, agriculture, installation of energy-saving stoves, as well as the maintenance capacity building. On the limitations this is not an effective approach for sustainably supporting the most vulnerable population. One of the projects, operating in rural cross-border settings between Ethiopia and South Sudan, found that **cash for work efforts, while providing short-term benefits to chronically poor households, were less effective in alleviating chronic and structural food insecurity.**

Community- based initiatives

Community-based initiatives such as producer associations and village savings and loan associations (VSLAs) have shown **rather promising results, especially in terms of sustainability**, as they create self-management and oversight systems and community assets that are likely to remain accessible to targeted groups after a project ends.

Among the most promising and widely used practices are the VSLAs, which are self-managed groups who meet to pool their savings and provide their members with access to small loans. They **proved to be effective in promoting financial inclusion and household resilience**, especially when combined with financial literacy and management and community awareness-raising. For example, a project implemented in Uganda that combined the creation of VSLAs with financial literacy training for its members, received high praise from participants in all target areas of the project. Some respondents reported the benefits

TABLE 4. Overview of rating: Alternative IGAs and rural livelihoods category

	Positive impact	Mixed evidence	Effective at output level	No impact
Public works/ cash4work	n/a	4	n/a	n/a
Community- based initiatives (e.g. Producers cooperatives, VSLA, SHG)	4	4	3	n/a
Value chains creation and access to markets	2	2	n/a	n/a
Capacity building on green IGAs, agricultural productivity & climate sustainable agriculture	3	1	4	n/a
Provision of tools / inputs / seeds / community infrastructure	3	3	4	n/a

of the programme as their improved ability to make sound financial decisions regarding earnings, expenses and budgeting. Others cited opening accounts at formal financial institutions, keeping financial records and aligning loans with their savings and other capabilities. In many cases, VSLAs stimulated **better saving and loan behaviours**, increasing participants' ability to save and access affordable credit and thus absorbing economic shocks. The main improvements brought about by VSLAs include increased household access to financial services or loans, increased household income, expansion or improvement of assets, and increased engagement with financial services.

The VSLA approach also shows quite promising results with regard to **women's empowerment**, particularly in terms of financial inclusion and autonomy. By providing women with access to financial resources and decision-making power, VSLAs have enabled them to make meaningful contributions to their families' economic well-being, beyond their traditional domestic roles. This, in turn, has had a positive impact on family living conditions, promoted family ties, and contributed to family needs. Moreover, women's increased financial independence has amplified their voice in society, allowing them to participate more fully in decision-making processes and assert their rights. For instance, a project in South Sudan found that 81.2% of respondents reported that women had gained greater financial independence, control over household assets, and decision-making power, as well as increased time savings. Notably, men in the community also acknowledged the benefits of shared decision-making, with many recognizing the value of collaborating with their spouses.

In one project, it was reported that after the initial project support, some VSLAs expanded and started new businesses that they managed and owned, giving their members a means of economic empowerment and creating temporary jobs. In some cases, beneficiaries were less optimistic, partly due to disappointment that the project support did not include cash injections or grants. However, for projects that differentiated the impact between refugees and host communities, it was found that both populations experienced some benefits, but these were greater for host communities in terms of employment and savings.

Other types of community interventions have been found to have a positive impact on improving rural livelihoods is the creation of **livestock common interest groups (LCIGs).** These groups focus on promoting best practices in livestock management, facilitating the exchange of information and knowledge, providing support and assistance to members, representing members' interests to policy-makers and stakeholders, and supporting and improving members' livelihoods and welfare through the sustainable management of livestock resources. In the projects analysed, such **groups were found to be crucial in promoting better livestock breeding and increasing fodder production**, and as a tool for building resilience during dry seasons.

Finally, some of the projects focused on organising and supporting cooperatives or producer associations to undertake various IGAs, like fishing, agro-processing, milk processing and vegetable production. All these cooperatives received the necessary training courses for capacity development and some of them have been additionally provided with the necessary machinery and inputs. In some of the projects, e.g. in Somalia and Sudan, **the establishment of producer associations proved to be effective in leading to improved livelihoods and increased production**. It was observed that the income of producers organised in cooperatives improved significantly and, in some cases, the cooperatives were also able to increase the income of their members. Furthermore, the creation of trust between the associations and the buyers through contractual agreements reduced transaction costs and risks for both parties.

Value chains creation and access to markets

In terms of effectiveness on **increasing market linkages for small producers** in the agri-food sector, one project in South Sudan organised a trade fair and business-

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BOX 5 Access to credit in conflict area: Good practice from South Sudan

In conflict-affected areas, accessing credit can be a significant challenge due to the lack of traditional financial institutions, which often leave the area due to security reasons. This leaves people and entrepreneurs with limited options for accessing financial services. However, a project in South Sudan revealed that community-driven initiatives can be an effective solution for addressing this gap. **By establishing cooperatives and VSLA groups, the project promoted financial savings and credit among community members, providing them with a vital alternative for accessing credit**. However, process can be slow. Building trust and establishing a stable financial system takes time, as it requires community members to develop a savings culture and learn financial management skills. Additionally, VSLAs often require a period of consolidation, during which members must contribute regularly, manage their finances effectively, and build up their savings before they can access credit.

to-business event to facilitate market linkages for fruit and vegetable producers in the project's target locations, with excellent results. Of these, 35 fruit and vegetable producers, processors and traders were put in touch with buyers in the national markets, while 30 producers and traders made significant sales during the trade exhibition.

Moreover, some of the **projects focused on creating market opportunities for refugees and host communities, connecting and supporting them in value chain activities**, resulting in a positive impact on the businesses and families involved. In some cases, **contract farming systems** - whereby farmers produce according to an agreement with the buyers of their crops - **have proven successful in helping to integrate small farmers into agricultural value chains**, allowing them to benefit from a greater share of the final price, and thus encouraging them to reinvest in their activity and produce better quality products. **In some cases, however, it was found that some interventions supported by the programme were not mature enough to secure benefits or ensure sustainability**. Several factors emerged that have the potential to impact the continuity of the value chain created. By addressing key challenges such as accessing start-up capital, securing certified seeds, meeting production standards, and managing competition over resources, projects can help to strengthen the continuity of the value chain and enhance the effectiveness of interventions. For example, facilitating certification

processes can increase the marketability of products and improve their competitiveness.[29] However, external factors such as crop diseases or lack of local government support can still pose risks to the value chain's continuity, and may require additional support or mitigation strategies.

Capacity building on green IGAs, agricultural productivity & climate sustainable agriculture

Capacity-building interventions on green IGAs, agricultural productivity and climate-sustainable practices were in many cases found effective at the output level. The projects studied implemented various trainings on good practices and quality management for farmers, herders and other producers. The results appeared more in terms of satisfaction with the quality of the training, rather than actual impact on the economic and climate resilience of communities. Moreover, it was not always clear from the documentation whether the trainings led to increased income opportunities through trade or improved agricultural productivity as such.

In three cases, however, **these interventions were rated as having a positive impact, as they were effective in enhancing local production practices**. In some cases, the producers and traders supported by the project stated that they had improved their commercial and agricultural activities, increased competitiveness and in some cases

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BOX 6 The impact of livelihood interventions on social cohesion: Evidence from Uganda and Ethiopia

One of the positive (side) effects shown by IGAs and livelihoods interventions is on social cohesion. This is especially true for interventions aimed at creating diversification of economic income, as well as those aimed at better and more equitable management of local resources (water, land, pastures), as they reduce competition and consequently mitigate conflicts related to them. **Community approaches were also effective in contributing significantly to social cohesion between refugees and host communities**, also acting as a multifunctional social network. In the case of one project in Ethiopia, which created mixed savings groups composed of both refugees and host community members, it was noted that solidarity and mutual trust between the groups formed grew as the group's savings increased. In this regard, one beneficiary stated: *'One person cannot do big things alone, when we got together and got into the habit of saving, I realised that together we can do more because we developed trust among ourselves and combined our thinking skills'*. Another good example of the potential of community practices in uniting communities comes from a project in Uganda, again targeting both refugees and local people. It was observed that when communities come together in various groups, interpersonal and social relationships between members are strengthened, contributing to peaceful coexistence, regardless of nationality, religion or race. Furthermore, the creation of such groups provides safe spaces for women to discuss protection issues and, especially when integrated with income-generating activities (IGAs), improve both sustainability and effectiveness.

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29   ILO (2016), Value chain development for decent work: how to create employment and improve working conditions in targeted sectors, International Labour Office, Geneva: ILO

even created new jobs. Others indicated that they had implemented improvements in relation to environmental sustainability, e.g. climate change mitigation and waste management, and other aspects such as trade relations management, sales and distribution, product quality.

Provision of tools / inputs / seeds / community-level infrastructure[30]

Interventions for the provision of agricultural tools and inputs, including drought-resistant seeds, farm equipment and tillage services, were effective in most cases, with a good number of interventions rated as effective or with mixed results. In terms of positive impact, the provision of inputs contributed to increasing the capacity of agro-pastoral communities to adopt effective production and post-harvest management practices on an ongoing basis, thus ensuring medium- to long-term food supply. In terms of mixed evidence, the most significant obstacle identified in the effectiveness of this approach is in the lack of a competitive market, which is necessary for rural farmers and breeders to access good quality inputs and extension services. The cases of effectiveness at the output level refer to the most fragile contexts, where agricultural inputs and livestock have been provided to most vulnerable households, with the result of alleviating their basic needs but without creating a long-term impact on their precarious condition and resilience to climate shocks in the long term.

4.1.2.5. System strengthening

The category of system strengthening includes all interventions that aim to work on systemic issues, both in terms of policy frameworks and public infrastructures. Only six projects were identified as relevant, including two regional ones.

Support to national policy and programmes

Effectiveness of the two interventions supporting interventions to national policy and legislative measures resulted mixed in one case and with no impact in the

other. In both cases, the main problem was found with respect to the possibility of monitoring the impact of these interventions, which proved especially difficult to capture in the short course of projects and with standard monitoring and evaluation tools. Developing national policy and legislature are **very long processes, which require several negotiation steps and are highly dependent on the commitment of government institutions**. The latter, in fragile contexts, have a very high turnover and often lack the resources and capacity to sustain results. In this regard, discussions with experts and practitioners raised a more general comment on the **limitations of assessing the impact of this category of intervention**, emphasising the need for a greater degree of flexibility in defining what is meant by system strengthening and, consequently, for a more comprehensive measurement at the level of specific outputs than at impact level. Mixed effectiveness refers to the fact that some progress was reported, such as the inclusion of migration issues on national agendas or the beginning of negotiation, **but that the specific regulation or policy interventions were not ratified or implemented before the project's end**. This was mainly due to time constraints or external factors, such as change of government and priorities or the emergence of conflicts.

Public infrastructures

With regard to infrastructure support, however, the results are rather promising. The types of infrastructure that were found to have the greatest impact include youth centres, water facilities for both consumption and production, and the rehabilitation of roads, especially for access to markets for small producers. In the case of a project in Somalia, for example, it was reported that access to markets continued to increase during the reporting period. According to the results of the seasonal evaluation after the first year of the project, about 80 per cent of the respondents reported easier access to markets and attributed this increase to **the road rehabilitation interventions,** in which they participated through cash for work activities. In addition, the road rehabilitation made it easier for farmers and business owners to transport goods to markets, allowing beneficiaries to access basic services and new commodities.

TABLE 5. Overview of rating: System strengthening category

	Positive impact	Mixed evidence	Effective at output level	No impact
Support to national policy / programmes	n/a	1	n/a	1
Public infrastructures (roads, schools, etc)	4	n/a	1	n/a
Cross-border interventions	n/a	1	n/a	1

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30 Please note that for the scope of the analysis, we differentiated between community-level infrastructure, which refers to smaller-scale, localised investments (e.g. irrigation systems, community water points) that directly benefit specific groups or communities, and public infrastructure, which encompasses larger-scale, more broadly accessible investments (e.g. road rehabilitation, public buildings) that serve the wider population, categorising the former under Income Generating Activities (IGA) and the latter under System Strengthening.

Cross-border interventions

In the specific case of cross-border interventions, the analysis was hindered by the small number of relevant projects in the sample, with only two projects identified as pertinent. This, combined with the complexity of cross-border contexts and the numerous external factors at play, made it challenging to draw definitive conclusions about the effectiveness of this type of interventions. One project showed mixed results in terms of impact. This was a project implemented in the Mandera triangle, connecting Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. The project worked to create a Tri-Border Economic and Trade Development Committee (TBC), with the aim of improving connections between cross-border markets. However, the final evaluation reports that only 18.5% of respondents said they had benefited from TBC cross-border support activities. In this case, effectiveness was compromised by specific challenges, mainly including the lack of commitment from state and regional actors and the mobility constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic that have long prevented cross-border commercial movements of people and animals. In addition, the project and its beneficiaries suffered several shocks during implementation, including a severe drought and a locust invasion that destroyed thousands of hectares of pasture and crops, as well as general insecurity due to recurrent clashes.

In the second case, a cross-border cooperation project between western Ethiopia and eastern Sudan, one of the project's objectives, to strengthen cross-border cooperation and coordination, was found to be unsuccessful. The relative result was marked as not achieved in the final evaluation. Particularly, the cross-border commission established to address problems related to trade between the border communities has not been institutionalised and currently has no solid legal framework and resources to address cross-border issues. Also in this case, there was a combination of factors that contributed to the lack of impact, at both social and economic level. These include the delayed engagement of IGAD, limited funding, the deterioration of bilateral relations between the two countries due to issues related to the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, the closure of borders due to COVID-19 and the impact of armed conflict within Blue Nile State.

At the entrance of the Association GarGar in Ali Sabieh, one of the Djiboutian associations active in assisting migrants. ©GIZ/Omar Saad

4.2. Migration and forced displacement management

4.2.1. EUTF approach to migration and forced displacement management

Improving the management of migration in countries of origin, transit and destination is the third specific objective of the EUTF, for which approximately 201 million euros in funding have been allocated from 2015 to 2024 in the HoA.

Actions under this objective are diverse and span across different policy areas. Projects have in fact supported specific governance structures, ranging from combatting human trafficking and smuggling, to implementing awareness campaigns on the risks of irregular migration and the opportunities of regular migration, providing support for regional mobility, protection and assistance to forced displaced populations, as well as return and reintegration services. The ultimate objective is to *'improve the management of migration in all its aspects in line with the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility and the Rabat and Khartoum processes, also contributing to the development of national and regional strategies on migration management'*.[31]

The intention is to strengthen, in terms of resources and capacity institutions that manage migration at national and regional level, while stimulating greater cross-border cooperation. Such efforts include creating synergies between migration management and development at local level, the prevention of trafficking of migrants and vulnerable groups by criminal networks, and supporting the implementation of regulatory frameworks that provide durable solutions and protection to migrants and displaced populations, as well as mutually agreed return and readmission arrangements.

4.2.2. Our analysis

The sample analysed consists of 15 projects. Among these, seven were implemented at a regional level, including projects that involved neighbouring countries outside the Horn of Africa window, such as Egypt and Libya. The remaining eight were implemented at a national level, across Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda.

Findings on migration management can be presented in two ways, following an analysis by policy areas or, as for the other two drivers in the chapters above and below, an analysis of the effectiveness by type of intervention. Both analyses are presented below.

4.2.2.1. Analysis by policy areas

The analysed interventions cover five policy areas, with certain findings proving particularly relevant.

FIGURE 3. Overview of EUTF SO3 portfolio in HoA, as of June 2024[32]
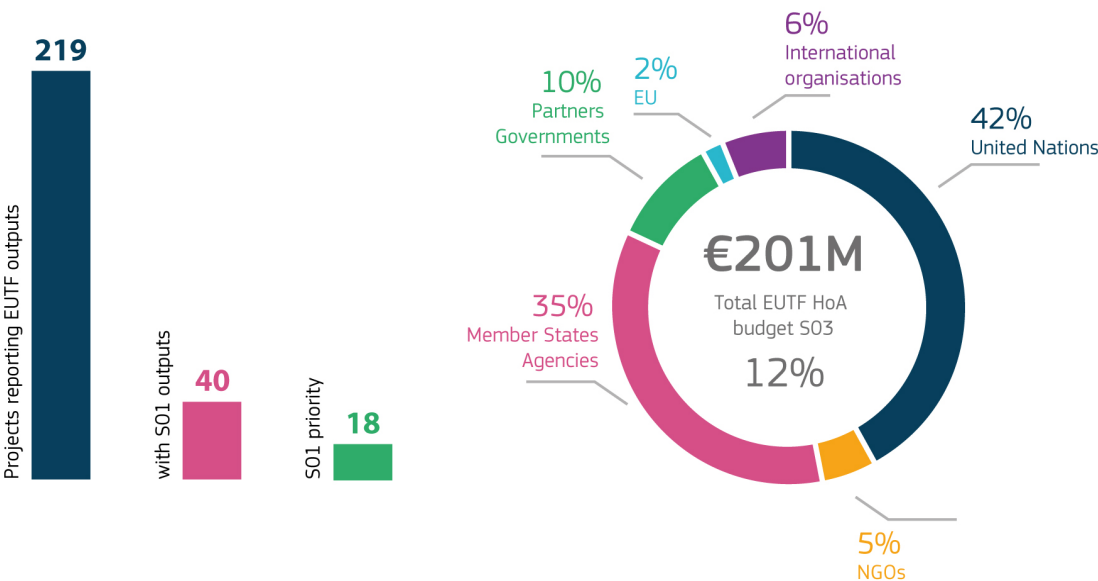
31 The European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Stability and Addressing Root Causes of Irregular Migration and Displaced Persons in Africa. Strategic Orientation Document; available at: https://trust-fund-for-africa.europa.eu/document/download/433626ee-b4d8-4040-a59d-7f49024d2924_en?filename=Strategic%20orientation%20document%20of%20the%20EUTF%20for%20Africa.
32 EUTF Horn of Africa Infographic Strategic Objective 3, June 2024, available at: https://trust-fund-for-africa.europa.eu/library_en

1. **Human trafficking and migrant smuggling**: Four projects were identified in this policy area, implemented at a regional level. In terms of types of approaches, there was a focus on government capacity building and regional cooperation. In terms of effectiveness, the interventions that proved most successful were those aimed at establishing cross-border information systems for sharing expertise, information and data.

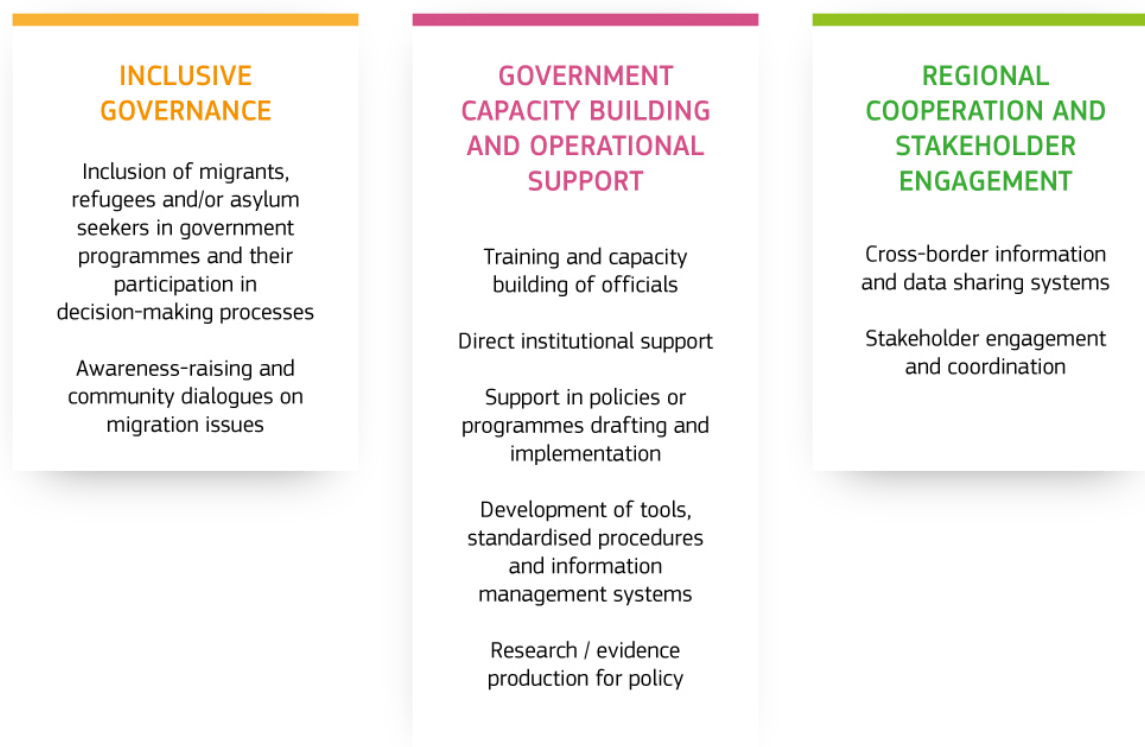2. **Return and reintegration**: In this policy area, two projects were analysed, one regional and one in Ethiopia. In both cases, the project assisted migrants undergoing voluntary return and reintegration processes. In Ethiopia, the project's focus has been on reintegration and direct support to returnees specifically from the EU, showing promising results especially in the area of inclusive governance. At the regional level, the focus has been more on government capacity and support, as well as regional coordination, in line with IOM's integrated approach to return and reintegration, showing effectiveness mainly at the output level.

3. **Protection and direct assistance to migrants and displaced persons**: Four projects were analysed in this area, in Djibouti, Somalia and Sudan and at regional level. The scope and target population of the three projects are very broad, and it is therefore difficult to make a comparison in terms of effectiveness. In general, projects that combined capacity building and policy level actions with direct support to displaced populations were found to be more effective.

4. **Integration of refugees**: Four projects were identified in this area, all implemented at a national level in Djibouti, Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda. Three of the projects followed the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) approach. Even if the projects did not always succeed in implementing integration policies and lasting solutions as planned, they nevertheless contributed to changing the perception, sensitivity and commitment of host governments to work on lasting solutions through legislative, political and institutional measures. Furthermore, a link has been identified between the integration of displaced populations and increased social cohesion.

5. **Regional and labour mobility**. Two regional projects were identified in this area. Despite the lack of evidence on the impact of the actions, a good complementarity between actions was noted, demonstrating a comprehensive approach by working both on the legal framework and regional actors, as well as on job creation.

4.2.2.2. Analysis by types of interventions

Three categories of approaches were identified, divided into nine types of intervention (see Figure 4). Migration

FIGURE 4. Overview of category and intervention classification

INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE	GOVERNMENT CAPACITY BUILDING AND OPERATIONAL SUPPORT	REGIONAL COOPERATION AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT
Inclusion of migrants, refugees and/or asylum seekers in government programmes and their participation in decision-making processes Awareness-raising and community dialogues on migration issues	Training and capacity building of officials Direct institutional support Support in policies or programmes drafting and implementation Development of tools, standardised procedures and information management systems Research / evidence production for policy	Cross-border information and data sharing systems Stakeholder engagement and coordination

Recommendation: Establish continuous training programmes for decision makers and government officials.

In order to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of training activities, instead of providing one-off training courses, projects should work with local institutions to set up continuous training programmes for decision makers and government officials, tailored to the development of necessary skills and knowledge. In addition to greater efficiency, an approach of this kind can lead to long-lasting results, facilitating addressing the problem of knowledge gaps and skills obsolescence, ultimately leading to better outcomes and more effective decision-making.

management interventions are diverse and comprehensive, and include various aspects of support, at both the national and regional level. At the national level, activities include training of officials, direct institutional support such as human resources and assets, as well as support in policy development and programme implementation. In addition, the development of tools, procedures and mechanisms has also been identified as a key component, together with research and the production of evidence to inform policy decisions. Another category of activity concerns those aimed at including migrants and displaced populations into government programmes, facilitating their participation in decision-making processes and raising public awareness on migration issues. At the regional level, activities have focused on the cross-border exchange of information and data, dialogues and consultations, as well as the coordination of anti-crime operations.

4.2.2.2.1. Government capacity building and operational support

This type of intervention was identified in all the projects analysed (15 out of 15). The activities covered included capacity building of authorities, both in terms of training and resources, support for the development of norms, policies, frameworks and strategies for migration management or the integration of migration issues into existing sectoral frameworks, as well as the development of tools, research and data to support government work.

Training and capacity building of officials

Capacity building activities were identified in 13 projects and included training courses on various topics, both technical and soft skills, through workshops, study trips, and participation in conferences.

While for one project it was not possible to assess the effectiveness due to a lack of evidence in the available reports, in most of the cases analysed (10 projects) they were effective at the output level. These results, as in the realm of employment, partly reflect the inadequacy of the monitoring systems to reflect the actual impact of this type of intervention, especially when it is only partial. In this regard, the practitioners interviewed emphasised the need to not underestimate the value of training officials, despite the difficulties that can be encountered during the course of projects, such as frequent personnel changes that require repetitive training.

Two projects showed more promising results, both at individual and systemic level. The main results at the individual level were the **improvement of the knowledge of government officials, who gained a better understanding of migration dynamics and concepts, as well as the skills necessary to lead and manage the necessary change processes in their organisations**. For instance, a survey conducted in the framework of a regional project on return and reintegration, shows that 87% of the stakeholders declared that they are more engaged in the field of voluntary return and reintegration assistance as a result

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TABLE 6. Overview of rating: Government capacity building and operational support category

	Positive impact	Mixed evidence	Effective at output level	No impact
Training and capacity building of officials	1	1	10	n/a
Direct institutional support	1	2	4	n/a
Support in policies or programmes drafting and implementation	1	6	2	n/a
Development of tools, standardised procedures and information management systems	4	n/a	5	n/a
Research / evidence production for policy	2	n/a	3	n/a

of their involvement in the initiative. At a systemic, organisational level, **improvements were noted in the areas of coordination, planning, monitoring and data management, leading to stronger institutions**. In the specific case of a project dealing with trafficking, there was also an improvement at the operational level, both in the ability of first responders to identify and report trafficked and vulnerable migrants, and in the skills of investigators and prosecutors to identify and investigate organised crimes of human trafficking and sexual exploitation.

Direct institutional support

Seven projects included activities in direct support of the institutions, both in terms of personnel and goods, for example through the secondment of integrated experts and the supply of office furniture or IT and investigative technology equipment.

For about half of them (4 projects) this type of intervention was effective in terms of output, in the sense that **the projects achieved their targets regarding materials provided, or resources allocated to strengthen individual offices, departments or government entities involved in migration management**. For instance, in the case of a project in Sudan aimed at enhancing protection, assistance and employment opportunities for refugees and asylum-seekers, the staff interviewed claimed that significant improvements have been made to the system managing Refugee Status Determination (RSD) in two federal states. Among these, the interviewed staff mentioned the application of international standards, better documentation processes, the hiring of more personnel, and the presence of an appeals committee. Equipment for RSD adjudicators, including computers, were also procured. This enabled them to work more efficiently by recording interviews electronically and conducting assessments following interviews. Despite the implementation of the new tools and processes, the implementation has been reported as slow, especially due to context-related challenges experienced in the three years of the project, such as the highly volatile political context, conflict, economic insecurity, recurring internet outages and fuel shortages, as well as COVID-19 pandemic.

The other three projects, on the other hand, showed **more promising results** (1 showing positive impact and 2 with mixed evidence), **with a positive effect on productivity and by making equipment available that would not have been accessible without the project's contribution**. In the case of a project in Ethiopia, for example, significant progress was reported in supporting the establishment and strengthening of the National Coordination Office (NCO) and enhancing technical competencies at the federal and regional levels. The establishment of designated Liaison Officers combined with the provision of technical support to local institutions, through the supply of ICT equipment, vehicles, motorcycles and training, enabled them to effectively lead and coordinate integrated and sustainable development-oriented solutions for refugees and host communities. This especially concerned the capacity of the government and partners to monitor the implementation of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) and related reporting mechanisms, ensuring the tracking of progress and the identification of areas for improvement.

Support in policies or programmes drafting and implementation

In the case of interventions aimed at supporting the development and/or implementation of policies and programmes on migration management across policy areas, the results are rather heterogeneous.

Of the nine projects marked for this type of intervention, only one was assessed as having positive impact. This is the case of a project in Somalia, where **significant changes in government perception and commitment to durable solutions** were reported. The project evaluation shows that the programme has contributed to changing the government's understanding and position, so that the focus on security and the provision of humanitarian assistance has been replaced by a commitment to adopt political and institutional measures aimed at achieving lasting solutions for displaced populations and migrants.

Two projects were reported as effective at output level as, in both cases, **no evidence was found of a direct link between the support provided and the adoption of new policies or protocols**, although the project activities were implemented as planned.

Six projects were assessed as having had some progress. For example, in the case of a regional programme that dealt with anti-trafficking and border management at large, the programme resulted effective at the operational level in terms of **improved cooperation and coordination among the police, civil society and governments**. However, despite extensive advocacy and political engagement efforts by the partners, the programme had little leverage to influence the political positions of participating countries and their actions at the national level. In other cases, the projects successfully supported the drafting of migration policies, but their approval or ratification by the institutions did not occur before the end of the project, which therefore could not support their implementation. In the case of another regional project, on return and reintegration, it was reported that the **current capacities and sense of ownership on the part of governments are not sufficient to allow them to work on return and reintegration without the support of international organisations**. The lack of

operational and financial capacities and resources on the part of governments remains one of the main obstacles to achieving a sustainable capacity of governments to work on migration issues.

Consultation with experts, practitioners and policy-makers, suggested that when it comes to policy **interventions in the area of migration management, they might have had a greater impact than assessed by the meta-analysis.** Indeed, the vast majority of mixed results stem mainly from the complexities of assessing direct impact within the project life cycle and from the fact that the success of interventions depends heavily on the commitment of governments, which are often short-lived in such fragile political contexts, and on their limited capacity to maintain results over time. Furthermore, the broader and long-term results of such interventions is even more difficult to grasp as, even if progress has been made in adopting policies, the real effects on the target populations are not yet visible.

It therefore appears that, **results should not be sought exclusively in the actual adoption of a policy, but rather in the progress made throughout the negotiation process that leads to the adoption of such policies**. Although development partners can influence results, translating them into tangible impacts involves national processes and policies that are often beyond the control of the organisations in charge of implementation. **While many policy interventions have not been ratified or implemented, they have succeeded in pushing the national agenda and changing the governments' understanding of and commitment to migration issues**.

In addition, **other more moderate and indirect but still significant effects generated by the actions should be taken into consideration**, including the increased collaboration between governments, improved institutions' capacity, as well as new or optimised cross-border information systems.

Development of tools, standardised procedures and information management systems

One of the types of interventions that has shown the most promising results in terms of effectiveness, is the development of tools, standardised procedures, information management, referral mechanisms and monitoring frameworks to support effective governance. This has been used in 9 projects, with 4 of them rated as having positive impact and the remaining 5 resulting effective at the output level.

In all the projects analysed, **the creation of guidelines, standard procedures and manuals was particularly well received by beneficiary institutions**, with sustainability and effectiveness increasing when combined with training. In the case of a project in Sudan, it was reported that the improved documentation processes developed by the project had significantly improved the knowledge management capacity of key stakeholders involved. Similarly, a project on sustainable reintegration in Ethiopia highlighted its success in facilitating the standardisation of operational procedures of the competent government office. The intervention supported the development of a series of guidelines and manuals and trained the personnel on these, with the result that these manuals now guide all the operations of that office and every reintegration activity is adequately documented. Moreover, a survey of 60 stakeholders involved in a regional project on return and reintegration reports that 88% found the products developed by the project as useful and relevant, and 64% indicated that such products helped inform their migration related programming and policy work.

At the regional level, **the formulation and adoption of shared protocols between states was reported as a significant success**, especially when accompanied by parallel work to develop and align national policies. For example, in the case of a project supporting the free movement of people and transhumance protocols, it was indicated that the adoption by IGAD Member States of

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BOX 7 Creating spaces for dialogue to facilitate the adoption of policies: good practice from a regional project

One of the regional programmes has successfully supported several policy processes, including the finalisation of migration policies in Kenya and South Sudan, the process of drafting the labour migration policy in Sudan, the revision of national regulations on the recruitment of foreign workers in Uganda. Consultation phases that will enable the drafting of a migration policy in Ethiopia were also supported. Considering the slow and lengthy processes, and the difficulty of aligning all stakeholders and bringing forward a unified approach to migration, **the programme invested in a series of workshops and consultation meetings to bring together stakeholders from various authorities**. Such initiatives were well received by participants for their role of promoting understanding and the definition of common priorities, providing expertise on specialised topics relevant to the drafting process and offering continuous support during the development processes.

the protocol should be recognised as a successful result of the project.

Research and evidence production for policy

Where present, **research and mapping activities have shown to have a positive impact on government activities and the formulation of new initiatives**, proving to be a good sustainability practice.

Indeed, the **increased availability of data on migration** has been cited as a first sign of impact, as it provides projects implementers and local authorities with evidence to inform policy-making at the national and regional level. In the case of a project in Ethiopia, for instance, it was reported that **the research and M&E work carried out by the project was fundamental in identifying integrated and sustainable solutions** based on concrete data for refugees and host communities. Likewise, the final evaluation of a regional project on return and reintegration highlighted that the monthly, biannual and annual migration data outputs, the thematic papers, and the capacity building initiatives on information management contributed to an enhanced evidence base on migration trends and policy developments in the region.

Stakeholder and services mapping have also proven crucial at both the strategic and operational level, for institutional partners and project implementers, respectively. For example, in the case of a project in Somalia, planned activities envisaged an initial mapping of the central and local institutions with a role in the management of mixed migration flows, as well as of the laws and policies on mixed migration in force at federal and state level. The mid-term evaluation report reveals that not only was this mapping used by the various agencies involved in the formulation and implementation of their respective projects, but that the study also served as a basis for various advocacy actions undertaken to influence political decisions.

4.2.2.3. Inclusive governance[33]

On this specific category, it is important to emphasise that in the EUTF for Africa's strategic orientation document,[34] inclusive governance is identified as a key tool to ensure local ownership, facilitate dialogue and ultimately promote cooperation. In this regard, the document states that *'to ensure local ownership, projects should respond to the needs of both partner governments and communities and enable them to participate in the various stages of the project (from planning to implementation),* while maintaining speed of execution'. Actions presented in this category follow the intervention logic just described.

Nine projects were identified in the inclusive governance category, including three implemented at a regional level and six implemented in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda.

Inclusion of migrants, refugees and/or asylum seekers in government programmes and their participation in decision-making processes

Overall, this type of intervention has shown good potential, as evidenced in five projects across Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia and Uganda.

The activities included supporting local authorities to integrating migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in government programmes, to promoting the adoption of measures for the socio-economic integration of the displaced population and improving their access to public services such as healthcare and education. Other activities fostered the engagement of communities affected by displacement through dialogue and consultation, with the aim of ensuring their meaningful participation in local decision-making processes.

TABLE 7. Overview of rating: Inclusive governance category

	Positive impact	Mixed evidence	Effective at output level	No impact
Inclusion of migrants, refugees and/or asylum seekers in government programmes and their participation in decision-making processes	4	1	n/a	n/a
Awareness-raising and community dialogues on migration issues	n/a	2	2	n/a

33 In the context of this study, we have interpreted 'inclusive governance' in the broadest sense of the term. We refer to the inclusion in decision-making processes of people and groups that have traditionally been excluded or marginalised (e.g. migrants), and to the fact that institutions, policies and public services are accessible to all members of society. For more information on the concept of inclusive governance, and its relationship with sustainable development, see: OECD (2020): What does "inclusive governance" mean? Clarifying theory and practice; in: OECD Development Policy Papers, No. 27. Paris: OECD Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1787/960f5a97-en.

34 The European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Stability and Addressing Root Causes of Irregular Migration and Displaced Persons in Africa, Strategic Orientation Document; available at: https://trust-fund-for-africa.europa.eu/document/download/433626ee-b4d8-4040-a59d-7f49024d2924_en?filename=Strategic%20orientation%20document%20of%20the%20EUTF%20for%20Africa.

Results of the projects analysed suggest that interventions focusing on inclusive governance and community involvement have a positive impact on local governance but above all on **social cohesion and access to services for both refugees and host communities**. In the four cases that were considered effective, projects strengthened the coordination structures between displaced populations and local authorities, improved the capacity of governments and host communities to support refugee populations, and contributed to more inclusive and context-specific programmes and policies in forced displacement situations. In the case of a project in Djibouti, positive effects went beyond governance and cohesion, as the creation of new school facilities for refugees allowed also local pupils to continue their education locally instead of moving to another city.

Some of the **actions successfully supported the processes of conception, negotiation and adoption of policies and programmes aimed at including and regulating the rights of displaced populations at a national level.**

In some cases, these were wide-ranging and comprehensive policies. This is the case of Somalia, where one of the projects proved particularly effective as it successfully supported the drafting and adoption of the National Policy on Returning Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons. Furthermore, during the project period, key policy documents for the integration and sustainable well-being of displaced populations were also finalised, such as the Interim Protocol on the Allocation of Land for Housing to Eligible Returning Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons and the Somali Federal Government's National Eviction Guidelines. In the case of Djibouti too, according to the information provided, the development of a National Refugee Policy was a key result of the project. The policy was developed through a participatory process involving refugees, government officials and international organisations, and addresses the needs of refugees in a comprehensive and inclusive manner. The final evaluation report of the project also mentions that this **policy has contributed to improving the coordination and management of programmes relating to refugees.**

In other cases, the results were more limited, relating to a specific area of intervention such as access to work, education or health services. For example, in the case of Ethiopia, it has been reported that thanks to the support of the project, the Ethiopian government has started issuing residence permits to refugees, allowing them access to economic opportunities and to fully participate in inclusive initiatives. As a result, over 14,800 refugees have received work and residence permits since 2018 and, consequently, these refugees have integrated into local communities, contributing to the economy by creating 129,000 jobs, both through joint projects and as self-employed workers. Also in Djibouti, the project's efforts have achieved important results at the national level, including the fast tracking of the naturalisation process for refugee students, which has enabled them to access higher education and even receive scholarships. Thanks to this support, around 50 students in Djibouti have been able to enrol into university. In this sense, **the project has contributed to a paradigm shift in the life prospects of refugee students and their families.**

BOX 8 Direct assistance to migrants and displaced population: evidence from the field

Six of the fifteen projects analysed also included a component of direct assistance to migrants and displaced populations, both in terms of basic goods and services and logistical support (for example in the case of returnees), monetary and economic support. Although this was not included among the types of interventions analysed, some considerations emerged from the discussion with practitioners in the field. Above all, **the importance of integrating direct assistance to migrants and displacement affected populations with actions aimed at developing government capacities and policies on migration**. This holistic approach is essential as it allows for continuity and sustainability of actions in the long term, breaking the cycle of dependence on aid funds. Furthermore, **emphasis was placed on the importance of shared responsibility over assistance provision, which should not fall on a single actor or donor**. Instead, local host institutions should be supported in offering their public services alongside humanitarian efforts, allowing for a more sustainable integration of displaced people within host communities. **Collaboration between various stakeholders is essential to ensure that vulnerable populations are supported** without creating parallel service systems, by expanding and adapting services to meet the needs of all individuals, especially in humanitarian contexts where people often have urgent basic needs. In this regard, a good practice emerged from South Sudan, where a project successfully provided health services at selected health facilities to the refugee community through two partnership agreements with national services. The support provided covered the cost of drugs, surgical procedures, laboratory tests and other diagnostic investigations for primary, secondary and tertiary healthcare.

Other projects involved displaced populations in the planning of programmes and interventions and connecting them with institutional actors through participation in area-based development planning processes, to give one example. This approach has demonstrated the **potential for a significant impact on the long-term success and sustainability of actions**.

Projects in Djibouti, Ethiopia and Somalia have given special attention to active community engagement through dialogue and consultation with the aim of ensuring meaningful participation in planning processes and supporting local integration strategies. For instance, a project on sustainable reintegration in Ethiopia has successfully developed mechanisms to consult and support returnees to develop their own reintegration plans and monitor their progress once they are engaged in a business.

Notably, it appears that **involving both refugees and host communities in identifying obstacles, setting joint objectives and providing feedback fosters a sense of ownership and shared responsibility** towards the specific challenges and opportunities of the communities, which ultimately helps strengthen social cohesion.

Awareness-raising and community dialogues on migration issues

As for the activities of awareness-raising and community dialogues on migration issues, the results were rather positive. Two projects showed results at the output level, while two others showed slightly more positive results and were therefore rated as showing some progress, as they managed to successfully **combine the work of advocacy with dissemination and awareness-raising practices**. For example, in Sudan, despite various initiatives, a project failed to obtain work permits for refugees in the Khartoum area. The issuance of the permit was blocked by the Security Agency (NISS). However, advocacy work carried out by project implementers has allowed the issuing of a resolution by the government which, if and when effectively implemented, could open the doors to the labour market or the option of self-employment for refugees in the Khartoum area.

Another example of progress is a project in Ethiopia. An impact assessment documented the positive results of the project's awareness campaigns, emphasising how they helped improve the lives of displaced people in the areas covered by informing local communities and advocating for more inclusive and sustainable policies. However, the success was limited to the improvement of perceptions and information at the community level, while it was not possible to assess the effectiveness in terms of improving the government's ability to manage and implement solutions.

An example of effectiveness at the output level comes from a project in Djibouti, where awareness-raising activities were organised to promote understanding and tolerance of refugees among local communities, including community dialogues, awareness-raising campaigns and the sharing of informative material. The final report states that the activities were well received by local communities and that they helped to raise awareness of refugee issues. However, no evidence was collected on the impact of these activities on governance. Another example is a project in Somalia, where project partners also supported the dissemination of the information contained in the policy documents through billboards, posters and other publications, and by supporting radio and television awareness programmes.

4.2.2.4. Regional cooperation and stakeholder engagement

Eight projects have been identified in this category, six of which are regional and two of which are being implemented in Djibouti and Ethiopia. **The interventions classified in this category concern all coordination activities**, whether between countries and therefore at a regional level, or within countries, between different government authorities, or across the various actors involved in the EUTF projects or programmes.

BOX 9 Including displaced populations in local decision-making processes: good practices from Djibouti

The use of a **participatory approach to involve refugees in the design and implementation of programmes that affect them** has proven to be an effective approach, especially in ensuring that the services and policies developed are truly in line with the needs and expectations of displaced populations. In this regard, a good practice emerged from a project in Djibouti. To encourage the real and active participation of refugees in local decision-making processes, the project supported the creation of **refugee committees**, which served as a space for exchange and discussion but also provided technical assistance and training, guaranteeing the provision of culturally sensitive and refugee-specific services. Moreover, it was reported that **putting refugees in touch with institutional players helped to strengthen social cohesion and peaceful coexistence between refugee and host villages**.

TABLE 8. Overview of rating: Regional cooperation category

	Positive impact	Mixed evidence	Effective at output level	No impact
Cross-border information and data sharing systems	4	n/a	1	n/a
Stakeholder engagement and coordination	5	1	3	n/a

Cross-border information and data sharing systems

The type of intervention aimed at improving the coordination and sharing of cross-border information and data was found in five of the projects analysed, all regional ones. **Activities of cross-border information exchange, such as the setting up of computer systems for data recording and sharing, have proven effective in most cases (4 out of 5).** More specifically, all four of these projects focused on migration management in the areas of preventing the trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants.

One of the most effective practices within this type of intervention is the **establishment of a joint training on standard operating procedures to improve cooperation and coordination between police, prosecutors and the judiciary**. For example, to better follow up on cases of human rights violations against migrants and refugees, one of the projects supported the establishment of new - or modification of existing digital complaint mechanisms based on the needs of migrants. These were established in Uganda, Kenya and Djibouti, and later also used at a cross-border level. In another case, a project **trained human rights institutions across borders, organised regional exchanges for their personnel**, and established multi-agency task forces in all countries. These actions contributed to improving national and cross-border cooperation in the fight against human trafficking and migrant smuggling.

Again, **it is difficult to determine the real impact of individual interventions,** i.e. whether or not they have contributed to disrupting and reducing human trafficking and smuggling. However, some anecdotal evidence emerged from the available documents pointing to improved communication, coordination and management of human trafficking and smuggling cases. For example, a project evaluation reports that 84% of the interviewed prosecutors, investigators and judges confirmed an improvement in internal cooperation and coordination in handling cases of human trafficking. Moreover, some information can be interpreted as a sign of the effectiveness of the actions. For instance, one of the projects mentions a significant number of memoranda of understanding signed by the countries involved and a good response to the organised regional activities, which would suggest a propensity for cooperation.

Finally, when asked about the strengths of the EUTF's cross-border actions in the field of migration management, experts and practitioners agreed that one of the major successes of the EUTF's interventions at the regional level is **having initiated a new and innovative type of cooperation between African countries on migration issues.** More specifically, this cooperation has been characterised by a collaborative and inclusive approach, bringing together multiple stakeholders and countries, even beyond the region, to address common challenges and share best practices. For example, the creation of new effective communication channels and information-sharing mechanisms has been a key factor in this success, enabling countries to respond more effectively

BOX 10 Anti-crime operations coordination: good practice from a regional project

One of the projects promoted the creation of a joint facility for information sharing, with the aim of countering criminal networks involved in the smuggling of migrants and human trafficking in the Horn of Africa. The activities implemented over the course of 52 months have shown significant and very encouraging progress. The programme has in fact created an effective model of cooperation and coordination of law enforcement agencies in the sharing of operational information. A central hub has been set up where project staff and liaison officers (LOs) from nine countries could be trained and work together on intelligence reports on human trafficking in the region and beyond. More specifically, **the practice of appointing LOs, i.e. authorised and seconded representatives from different countries, proved to be an added value of the project and an effective way to complement traditional information-sharing arrangements and to encourage international collaboration and synergies.** Although it is still too early to determine the actual impact of the project on countering smuggling and trafficking networks in the Horn of Africa, feedback from the relevant agencies and programme managers, as well as other institutional partners, shows broad consensus on the success the programme has had. More specifically, the key success highlighted is that the project has promoted and initiated a new and innovative type of cooperation between African countries in a sensitive sector, which did not exist in a similar way before.

to migration-related issues and fostering a sense of trust and mutual understanding.

Stakeholder engagement and coordination

More than half of the projects analysed (7 out of 15) implemented activities aimed at strengthening stakeholder engagement and coordination. Of these, five were classified as having a positive impact on improved governance, and three as effective at the output level and one reported mixed evidence. Six of the projects analysed were carried out at the regional level.

Overall, **multi-stakeholder engagement has proven effective, especially when actively supported by activities such as regular meetings and dialogue platforms at federal, regional and local level.**

In order to facilitate multi-stakeholder involvement and joint decision-making, some projects have effectively established efficient mechanisms for sharing information, whereby stakeholders from government entities, UN agencies, NGOs, and development partners have been given the chance to actively participating and contributing to enhanced coordination, collaboration and joint decision-making. Among these, a project in Ethiopia created a platform for efficient information sharing and continued trainings to key stakeholders in Project Management, while holding regular meetings and dialogue platforms, at the federal, regional, and local levels.

Another project, implemented in Djibouti, has successfully facilitated bilateral intergovernmental consultations with other countries in the region and beyond, including Ethiopia and Mauritius, and the sharing of best practices, which led to the creation of a technical coordination committee focused on the protection of vulnerable Ethiopian children in Djibouti.

Notably, two practices have proven to be particularly effective, also according to the experts and practitioners consulted:

- In most cases, **cooperation with other EUTF projects was indicated as a good practice, especially for regional actions**. In particular, the positive impact of interventions that supported a **consortium approach**, covering different areas and types of more targeted interventions, emerged. In this regard, the potential for sustainability and impact was emphasised if the comparative advantages and added values of the members are carefully analysed and managed. One example of success is the regional project that saw the collaboration of various organisations on complementary activities for free movement and labour mobility in the region. The effectiveness of the project is due to the joint activities of various actors, each with their own expertise and strengths. On the one hand, the political influence of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) combined with its technical expertise has led to significant results. On the other hand, local institutional actors, such as trade unions and employers' organisations, played a fundamental role in the policy-making and decision-making processes for sustainable impact. Finally, the International Labour Organization (ILO) provided support in the development of independent regional confederations.

- In cases marked as positive impact, the programmes based their intervention on a **whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach**. As a result, **mutual trust and strengthened relationships were promoted, leading to better communication and a willingness to engage in dialogue and cooperate**. In the case of a project dealing with return and reintegration assistance, for example, the **programme not only supported the involvement of all ministries and authorities in migration management, but also ensured the involvement of local authorities and civil society organisations**. The latter proved crucial for implementation, and in particular for providing protection services to migrants and thus addressing return management in accordance with international standards.

BOX 11 Joint events for better stakeholder involvement: good practices from regional projects

Some of the projects have **succeeded in mobilising and bringing together stakeholders on different migration issues through the organisation of joint events and the creation of spaces for dialogue**. For instance, one of the programmes helped improve regional cooperation on the protection of migrants, facilitating nine regional thematic conferences on issues such as witness protection, child protection and the rights of migrants. During the regional conferences, state and non-state actors discussed and agreed on practical recommendations for joint follow-up. The same project also managed to strengthen bilateral cooperation through facilitating eight cross-border exchanges on specific thematic issues relevant to neighbouring partner countries, including seasonal labour migration, anti-trafficking and -smuggling as well as border management. Another project on the disruption of criminal networks of trafficking and smuggling in the Horn of Africa organised training courses and joint events with regional organisations. Through its convening capacity, the project improved regional exchanges and cooperation, as well as the role of regional organisations with this mandate.

4.3. Social cohesion and conflict prevention

4.3.1. EUTF approach to social cohesion and peace building

Improving governance and conflict prevention while reducing forced displacement and irregular migration is one of the four strategic objectives of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. Overall, 18% of the EUTF operational budget for the HoA has been allocated to this strategic objective. The aim is to reduce the negative impact of violent conflicts, forced displacement and irregular migration, to foster a more inclusive political and economic environment in the region, and create new opportunities for vulnerable communities, particularly youth, victims of violence and women.

The intervention logic is that improving access to livelihood opportunities, providing more inclusive services and governance in the realm of justice and security, will lead to reduced violence, increased social cohesion and improved stability. These conditions will in turn create a more conducive environment for improved stability and lower rates of displacement and irregular migration. In this regard, the EUTF's strategic orientation document

specifies that *'if the Trust Fund can sustainably improve the provision of basic services, food security, and protection for local communities and those displaced by violent conflict, political oppression and environmental pressures, then tensions between host and displaced communities will be reduced and resource management, resilience, protection and human development will be improved for vulnerable communities'.*[35]

4.3.2. Our analysis

The analysis sample consisted of eighteen projects, four with a regional focus and fourteen implemented across six countries, namely Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and Uganda. The approaches were grouped into three categories with eight types of intervention (see Figure 6).

Activities included are training on specific topics, capacity building measures, support legislative development, and policy formulation. Additionally, community-wide support was provided through service delivery, livelihood support, and awareness-raising campaigns. Furthermore, justice services were also a key component, encompassing the implementation of alternative justice mechanisms, capacity building activities, accountability measures, and the provision of support to victims of violence.[36]

FIGURE 5. EUTF SO4 portfolio in HoA as of June 2024[36]
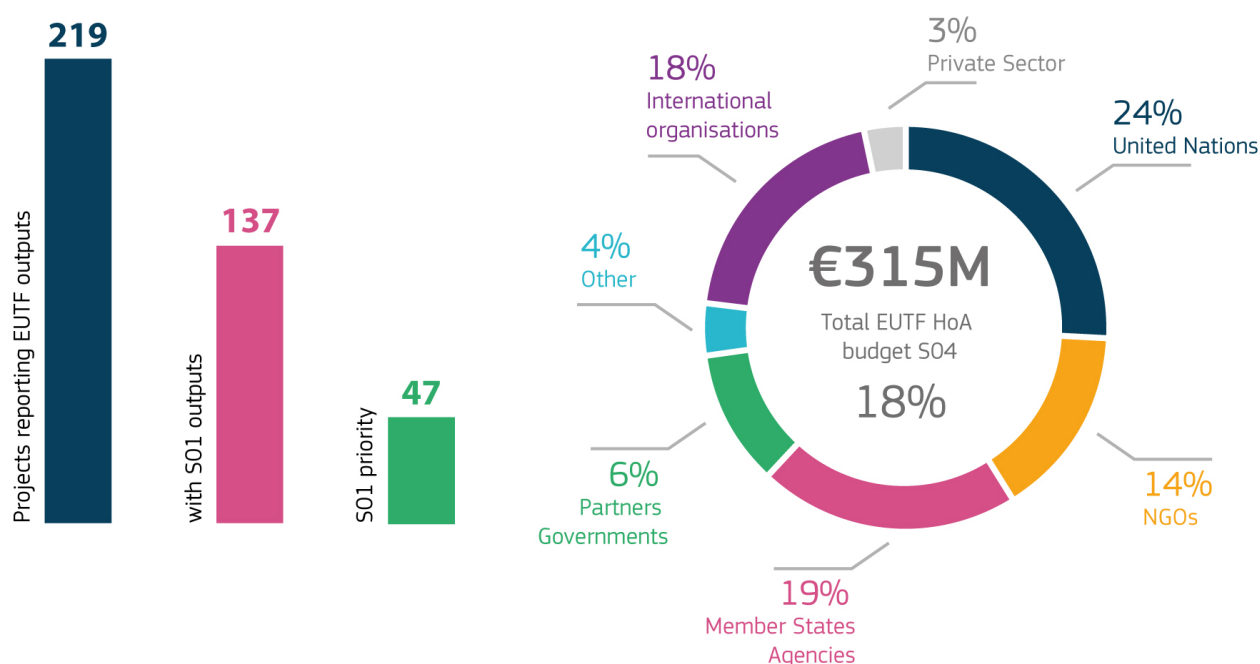
35 EUTF Strategic Orientation Document, available at https://trust-fund-for-africa.europa.eu/document/download/433626ee-b4d8-4040-a59d-7f49024d2924_en?filename=Strategic%20orientation%20document%20of%20the%20EUTF%20for%20Africa
36 EUTF Horn of Africa Infographic Strategic Objective 2, June 2024, available at: https://trust-fund-for-africa.europa.eu/library_en

4. Findings

FIGURE 6. Overview of category and intervention classification

INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING	COMMUNITY-WIDE SUPPORT	JUSTICE INTERVENTIONS
Training on conflict resolution, peacebuilding, human rights, justice, gender rights, and SGBV	Access to and/or management of natural resources and basic service delivery	Justice services and related capacity building and accountability measures
Civil society participation and advocacy work	Improve livelihoods	Support to victims of violence
Support to legislative framework and policy development	Awareness-raising and capacity-building	

4.3.2.1. Institutional strengthening

Institutional strengthening interventions refer to activities that assist national and/or local governments in enhancing their competencies. Implemented interventions included training programmes on conflict resolution, peacebuilding, human rights, justice, gender rights and sexual gender-based violence (SGBV), engaging civil society in institutional processes or advocacy, legislative framework and policy development.

This category was among the most used within the analysed projects, implemented in all 18 projects across six countries and in projects with a cross-border focus.

Trainings on conflict resolution, peace building, human rights, gender justice and sexual gender-based violence (SGBV)

Training is one of the most common approaches under this category, with 12 out of 18 projects using it to address social cohesion and conflict prevention.

In the majority of the projects (7 out of 12), the impact of training on social cohesion was not evaluated or difficult to measure, resulting in the rating effective at output level. Although not marked as having a long-term impact, these

projects reported some successes, including, for example, having contributed to improving the understanding of the competent national authorities with regard to the issues of human rights and gender-based violence and discrimination. In three cases, trainings on peacebuilding and conflict resolution showed positive impact. The analysis indicates that **training on specific topics, such as conflict resolution, peacebuilding, human rights, gender justice and sexual gender-based violence (SGBV) can be an effective strategy for promoting social cohesion and conflict resolution.** More specifically, evidence suggests that specialised conflict resolution trainings were more effective than general human rights and gender justice trainings.

For instance, a project in Kenya that trained young people and security actors in conflict management skills successfully contributed to reducing the level of violence in the area and improving the relationship between community members and security actors. This was possible by providing a platform for young people and security actors to interact with each other and build trust. Specifically, the project trained 593 youths in conflict management skills, who were then enrolled as Youth Ambassadors and members of Youth Peace Committees. These committees served as a crucial interface with formal security structures, facilitating information sharing and providing feedback to the project team. Furthermore, to

TABLE 9. Overview of rating: Institutional strengthening category

	Positive impact	Mixed evidence	Effective at output level	No impact
Training on conflict resolution, peacebuilding, human rights, justice, gender rights, and SGBV	3	2	7	n/a
Civil society participation and advocacy work	2	4	2	n/a
Support to legislative framework and policy development	n/a	n/a	1	4

Recommendation: Strengthen training and capacity building through comprehensive support.

Capacity building initiatives should be combined with the provision of the necessary tools and resources to ensure that new knowledge and skills translate into tangible results and impacts. This includes not only providing continuous access to equipment and technology, but also equipping individuals and organisations with adequate communication and reporting tools, enabling them to apply new capacities in a practical and horizontal way, and sustain it over time. Furthermore, comprehensive support should also encompass training on mediation and conflict resolution techniques, as well as the availability of skilled mediators in institutions at the local level, who can facilitate dialogue and negotiation when new conflict situations arise.

fortify the emerging trust between the community and the government, regular dialogue sessions were held with both the youth and the general community. These sessions provided a safe space for addressing grievances, communicating government policies and programmes, and fostering open communication. As a result, over 80% of respondents reported a reduction in conflict cases compared to the pre-intervention period. In another example from Kenya, both duty bearers and community leaders were trained on how to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts in the communities they serve. Such training has enabled them to manage and resolve conflicts effectively, as they gained conflict sensitivity skills to prudently plan, allocate and distribute resources at their disposal. This, in turn, has helped improve relations between the community and the administration and reduce disputes in the regions. Additional evidence on the potential of training interventions comes from a project in Somalia. In this case, **training activities on gender justice led to the effective functioning of three SGBV centres in the region,** which were then able to provide support services to SGBV victims. These results suggest the importance of improving knowledge around human rights, gender justice and SGBV, to enhance awareness and challenge cultural norms. In this sense, training can indirectly contribute to conflict mitigation and help in preventing future conflicts and increasing social cohesion within communities.

Finally, two projects were found to have mixed results. One of these is a regional one whose training activities have proved to be quite effective. **The intervention has in fact successfully contributed to strengthen local committees for border governance and peace, enabling these structures to effectively address local conflicts**. Several examples of local conflict resolution and reduced discrimination, which have improved social cohesion, were cited in the reference documents. For example, an interview with the staff of a peace-building facility revealed that *'the training received from the programme has enabled us to ensure the safety of non-indigenous people who have come to this area to work and live'*. Despite this success, however, it was reported that **no improvements had been made in the management of**

cross-border conflicts between the two states. This was reported to be due to several challenges, including a lack of training and cross-border exchange on early warning information, limited communication facilities, lack of access to telecommunications services and a lack of transportation. Furthermore, the limited involvement of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), also due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, has contributed to the partial achievement of the cross-border dimension.

Civil society participation and advocacy work

A total of nine projects were identified as using this type of intervention. Two were effective at the output level, in the sense that **the planned activities were successfully completed, but without reporting direct effects on social cohesion or improved governance** in terms of conflict prevention and resolution. These include, for example, a project in Sudan that conducted targeted support to civil society on human rights and supported their participation in public processes without any reported impact results.

Two projects were assessed as having a positive impact. In the case of a project in Kenya, the **integration of women and young people in local governance processes and community structures, such as farmer or mother garden groups, contributed significantly to gender equality and the empowerment of young people,** ultimately strengthening their sense of belonging to society and thus contributing to peaceful coexistence. Similarly, in the case of the project in South Sudan, it was reported that the **creation and support of community self-help groups, such as farmer and youth groups, combined with training on group dynamics and collective management of resources, significantly increased social cohesion and collective production capacity,** demonstrating a good strategy for enhancing community resilience.

The results of five projects were mixed in terms of effectiveness and impact. In these cases, analysis shows that **community engagement initiatives have the potential to strengthen the link between communities, civil society organisations and national and local security actors.** Furthermore, it emerged that greater collaboration between civil society and local authorities, for example in the form of committees and platforms, favours mutual understanding and the creation of safe environments to prevent and mitigate conflicts. However, **no evidence was found that this actually increases social cohesion in the long term.** For example, a project in Kenya reported that the youth peace committees established were able to engage with stakeholders and participate in decision-making processes and that this contributed **to improve the participation of the youth in public** processes. This in turn helped to improve the responsiveness of the government to the needs of the youth but the long-term impact and how these committees continue to work was not monitored.

Mixed results also include activities focused on advocacy work. An example of this is a project in South Sudan that aimed to increase access to justice for victims and survivors of gender-based violence (GBV). In this case, the project supported women-led advocacy on gender equality and gender-based violence legislation. These interventions made progress thanks to the continuous involvement of project partners in advocacy and policy discussions on the Gender-Based Violence Bill and the Family Bill, and the design of a capacity-building programme for women leaders. Although the project has made some progress, the impact of advocacy work on the overall reduction of GBV cases is not directly measurable. The documentation also shows that the effectiveness of the results was influenced by external factors, such as the unstable security situation in the region, financial issues and deficiencies in the judicial system itself. This demonstrate that, despite the impact of support efforts on specific issues such as violence (including SGBV and GBV), the levels may not be directly quantifiable, but they certainly have the potential to bring about positive change and highlight the importance of sustained and collaborative approaches.

Support to legislative framework and policy development

A total of six projects were identified as relevant for this type of intervention. One was found to have insufficient evidence for an assessment of its effectiveness. In one case, a project in Uganda, the intervention proved to be effective only at the output level. This is because the project did indeed carry out actions to support the development of District Contingency Plans and Resource Management Plans that include conflict resolution and peacebuilding components, but there is no evidence of their actual implementation and subsequent impact on local communities.

In four cases, however, the **support provided to legislative frameworks and policy development showed no impact or long-term** change. On the one hand, such limited results may be due to the protracted **nature of legislative processes and policy development, which often outlast the project cycles of development programmes**. This makes it **difficult to measure the success** of these activities, as the impact of legislation and policies only becomes apparent over time. The same reasoning also emerged in the context of interventions aimed at supporting the development of policies and programmes on migration governance or access to employment. On the other hand, **operating in fragile and unstable contexts, such as the Horn of Africa region, characterised by frequent changes of government and military coups, poses great challenges to legislative support interventions.** The case of Sudan is a clear example of how contextual dynamics are a major contributor to the limited effectiveness of such interventions. That is the case, for instance, of a project that contributed to the development of a national strategy for the protection of civilians, which provided a framework for a coordinated approach to the implementation of the United Nations protection mandate in Sudan and supported the drafting of a new law on violence against women. By providing a coordinated approach and a framework for advocacy and resource mobilisation, the project enabled development and humanitarian actors, as well as national and local partners, to work together, improving the capacity of national authorities to combat discrimination and protect women from violence. However, the implementation of these initiatives was impeded by the military coup.

Nevertheless, interviewed project implementers emphasised the importance of continuing to implement such interventions, as delaying the initiation of processes due to concerns about their completion within a single project cycle or vulnerability to political upheavals would ultimately prevent their implementation altogether.

4.3.2.2. Community-wide support

In the category of interventions that support communities, 15 projects across five countries as well as regional projects have been identified. Interventions that focus on community-wide support seek to empower communities by enhancing their capacities, improving their access to and management of natural resources, and strengthening their basic service delivery. These initiatives encompass a wide range of activities, including livelihood activities, awareness-raising campaigns and capacity-building, basic service delivery and sustainable natural resource management to support community-wide development.

The majority of examined interventions in the category of community-wide support reported substantial positive effects in terms of community resilience through increased

TABLE 10. Overview of rating: Community-wide support category

	Positive impact	Mixed evidence	Effective at output level	No impact
Access to and/or management of natural resources and basic service delivery	3	1	4	n/a
Improve livelihoods	5	2	3	n/a
Awareness-raising and capacity-building	1	2	10	n/a

assets or knowledge, but in only half of the cases, they reported their impact on social cohesion.

Access to and/or management of natural resources and basic service delivery

In total, nine of the projects analysed applied this type of intervention, which aims at the sustainable and coordinated management of natural resources and access to them, as well as the provision of basic services, to promote peaceful coexistence and social cohesion.

Half of the projects (4 out of 8) were rated as 'effective at the output level'. In these cases, the interventions were found to be successful in achieving their primary objective, i.e. improving resource management or access to services, but without resulting in specific impacts on social cohesion, or without such impacts being properly monitored. In the case of a regional cross-border project between Kenya and Ethiopia, for instance, it was found that **the restoration of water services, which included the distribution of hand pumps, generators, mechanical water tools and plastic tanks, was successful in enabling local communities to access water.** However, there is no evidence that this has actually reduced conflicts over resources in the region in the medium or long term.

Three projects demonstrated having positive results in terms of impact. One is a project implemented in Uganda, which aimed to respond to the development needs of South Sudanese refugees and host communities in northern Uganda and ultimately improve their inter-community relations. One of the main objectives of the action was to promote relationships and synergies between host communities and refugees through the joint management of resources and access to services. In particular, **the project used a unique approach of targeting both populations equally, instead of the usual 70/30 ratio, which proved to be particular effective.** Indeed, the final evaluation shows that the percentage of individuals with a strongly positive perception of peaceful coexistence increased from 76.7% at the halfway point to 96.3% at the end. Qualitative interviews with beneficiaries also revealed a positive perception of peaceful coexistence. They applauded the project for focusing on co-existence between the refugees and host communities in terms of sharing public resources and services like water sources, health services and markets and explained that before the implementation of the project, there were many cases

of land wrangles and fights registered between refugees and host communities by police. One of the interviewees, for instance, said that: *'Since this project started, we have learnt to ask the host community for what we need and they no longer fight us.* ***The causes of conflict between refugees and host communities are mainly due to resources, and once we learnt to manage these, conflicts were significantly reduced.'***

Another successful project was implemented in Ethiopia. The final evaluation showed that the integrated basic services provided as part of this action had demonstrated an excellent level of cohesion between the refugees and the host communities, both at an administrative and community level. **The construction of water and educational facilities for the benefit of both the refugees and the host communities has changed the attitude of the host communities, balancing the availability of basic services for both groups.** Furthermore, the electrical infrastructure, supported by the project, has created new hope for the refugees to engage in new economic activities and improve their lifestyle.

From these two examples, it emerges that not only did **the provision of basic services work better when reaching both populations equally,** but also that, in general, projects which have an objective of easing tensions between refugees and host communities should provide equal support to the refugees and the host communities.

Available evidence seems to suggest that the harmonious joint use of resources such as health centres, water sources, markets, schools, roads and transport also leads to the development of greater mutual understanding and respect between local communities and displaced persons. **The sharing of resources would therefore not only promote efficiency and better access to services for both groups, but also favour a peaceful co-existence.** This happened, for instance, in the case of a project in Uganda that worked on a harmonious sharing of community services and resources to foster peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities. At the end of the project, 93.2% of the beneficiaries reported feeling safe, indicating a positive impact on their sense of security.

One project showed mixed results in terms of effectiveness and impact. This is the case of a project in Uganda that promoted the sustainable management of natural resources with the aim of mitigating tensions between

4. Findings

> **Recommendation: Adopt the concept of "peace dividends" for social cohesion and conflict prevention.**
>
> The provision of basic services, such as improved WASH, education and health access, combined with the improvement of physical infrastructure, can serve as a powerful "peace dividend" that promotes economic and social solidarity. This approach can be particularly effective in ethnically divided areas, or hosting refugee contexts, where social and economic inequalities often exacerbate tensions and fuel conflict.[37]

refugees and the host community. The project successfully implemented various activities, such as the development of resource management plans, the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices, and the revegetation of 380 hectares of degraded land. However, the final evaluation recorded a significant drop (from 60% to 28.9%) in the percentage of refugees and members of host communities who believed they had equal access to natural resources. The reasons for this shortfall were not definitively determined, however a possible explanation relates to increase awareness and willingness of project participants to report conflict incidences.

Although this type of intervention has not always proved to have substantial impact, testimonies from implementing partners have emphasised effective results highlighting **how access to essential basic services and physical infrastructure, such as water, is a critical factor in preventing conflicts over limited shared resources.**

Improve livelihoods

Livelihood approaches to promote social cohesion and prevent conflict were a common strategy in 10 out of 18 projects . Half of these (5 out of 10) had a positive impact, demonstrating that **interventions that improve economic and livelihood opportunities contribute positively to reducing tensions and thus to supporting peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities.**

In particular, **the establishment of groups such as farmers' groups, Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLAs) and self-help groups has been identified as an effective strategy for increasing cohesion and promoting a sense of community.** For example, in a project in Uganda, regular meetings and joint activities among members of a mixed group, which included host and refugee communities, created a strong bond among the participants. After the group was formed, members began to engage in economic activities together, and to participate in social gatherings and recreational activities such as sports, which further strengthened their relationships and mutual trust.

Another example of effective practices concerns the provision of direct financial support. In the case of a project in Uganda, for instance, the final evaluation shows that the support provided by **the project in terms of in-kind and cash grants increased the overall household's income of the beneficiaries, enabling them to meet their basic needs and improve their economic situation.** Such financial empowerment has, among other things, given beneficiaries the means and time to participate in the conflict resolution activities promoted by the project, and has also made them more active in the decision-making process within their families and communities, which potentially contributes to their overall sense of agency and well-being. The fact that 95% of beneficiaries across the three districts reported feeling empowered by participating in the project is also a strong indicator of its success.

The other half of the projects, on the other hand, reported less promising results. Three projects were evaluated as effective in terms of results, while the remaining two showed mixed results. **Some interventions have indeed proved to be promising in improving livelihoods and increasing community resilience, but not in alleviating tensions and conflicts.** Or, at least, such effects were not monitored. It should be emphasised that more than half of the projects (6 out of 10) relevant to this type of intervention did not have social cohesion as their primary objective, which means that the results in terms of social cohesion may not have been included in the logical framework, making it difficult to monitor and evaluate the impact.

Awareness-raising and capacity-building

Awareness-raising campaigns and capacity building activities, such as community trainings on gender, SGBV, human rights, conflict prevention and peacebuilding processes, were the most prevalent type of intervention

4. Findings

Recommendation: Address economic drivers of community tensions.

To build peace and social cohesion, a combination of soft (e.g. dialogue, mediation) and hard tools (e.g. economic opportunities, physical infrastructure, livelihood interventions) is necessary. While soft peace-building efforts are important, they are often insufficient on their own to address the complex challenges of building peace and social cohesion. Economic drivers, such as lack of opportunities and resources, often underpin community tensions. Therefore, interventions that promote economic opportunities, support livelihoods, and provide physical infrastructure can help create a more stable and peaceful environment, and foster long-term resilience and social cohesion.

among the projects analysed, with 13 out of 18 cases identified.

Only one project has shown positive results in terms of positive impact on social cohesion and conflict prevention, as well as reducing ethnic and gender-based violence. Such project, implemented in Uganda, successfully contributed to increasing the knowledge of rights of both refugees and host communities, promoting peace and harmony between the communities. This was mainly attributed to the awareness-raising activities, dialogues and training conducted in both the settlements and the host communities. The majority (92.7%) of beneficiaries agreed that the project contributed to improving peace and creating a safer environment.

Two projects showed some progress in terms of impact. Of these, one project implemented in Kenya reached 1000+ participants with intercommunity and intergenerational dialogue activities. The final evaluation revealed that, thanks to this practice, the project succeeded in creating safe spaces for community members to discuss concerns and trauma, both individual and societal, and discuss solutions through working together, and ultimately promoting social cohesion.

The majority of projects (10 out of 13) were found to be effective only at output level. Overall, awareness-

raising and capacity-building activities have improved access to information on topics like human rights, justice, gender justice and SGBV. However, **while in some cases capacity-building activities enabled community members to develop new skills and knowledge, projects recorded no evidence of further impact on social cohesion.** For instance, in a project in Somalia, **community outreach and awareness-raising campaigns have been successful in raising awareness and facilitating peace dialogue and confidence building in the region.** In another project in Uganda, there was a notable increase in community knowledge on conflict mitigation and resolution, from 45% to 66.9%. Similarly, the organisation of joint entertainment activities, including music, dance, theatre, dialogues and radio talk shows, have proven effective in increasing the community's knowledge on sensitive topics, such as gender-based violence, land rights or conflict mitigation. However, their potential to foster bonds between communities, leading to better relationships and cooperation, has only emerged at an anecdotal level.

These results suggest that awareness-raising initiatives can effectively enhance community knowledge and capacity. Whilst their impact on overall social cohesion and specific issues, such as the reduction of gender-based violence (GBV) cases, may be challenging to measure directly, the **overall benefits of these approaches in**

BOX 12 Capacity building and awareness raising for social cohesion: Good practice from Uganda

When it comes to the potential of **awareness-raising campaigns and capacity building in promoting peace and social cohesion,** some good practices emerge from a project in Uganda. Overall, the project has led to a more peaceful and secure environment, a reduction in tensions and conflicts over resources between refugees and host communities, and better use of basic services. The success of the project is **attributed to the project design, which aimed to strengthen existing structures and empower established structures through capacity building.** In particular, the project activities targeted community structures, including refugee welfare committees, local courts, paralegals, parastatals, child protection committees and peace promoters/activists in general, through capacity building. In addition to building capacity, this approach also led to a greater sense of **ownership of the structures involved, which in turn contributed to longer-term sustainability.**

promoting peace and social cohesion are evident. By allocating resources to awareness-raising, capacity building and education, interventions can foster a culture of peace, mutual understanding and tolerance, thereby mitigating the risk of conflicts arising in the first place.

4.3.2.3. Justice interventions

A total of eight projects, spanning five countries, were analysed under the third category of **justice interventions.** Justice service activities included the implementation of alternative justice mechanisms, accountability measures and the provision of support to victims of violence.

Activities that centred **capacity building and accountability measures related to justice services showed promising results in addressing social cohesion and conflict prevention.** This was especially evident when using Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms (negotiation, mediation and arbitration) such as alternative legal services (e.g. mobile courts, counselling clinics, ADR-centres).

Justice services and related capacity building and accountability measures

Three of the eight projects identified have demonstrated a positive impact on social cohesion and conflict prevention using justice interventions. Of these, two were implemented in Uganda and one in Somalia.

Overall, the results indicate that **informal justice interventions, such as alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms and mobile courts, are more effective than formal justice interventions.** These initiatives offer several advantages, including strengthening community referral systems, creating a safe environment for peaceful conflict resolution, and mitigating grievances that would have led to conflict or violence in previous situations.

More specifically, the analysis identified several approaches that have proven effective in promoting access to justice. **Targeted interventions, such as mobile courts, ADR mechanisms, reporting mechanisms and legal aid, have succeeded in improving access to justice for victims of violence and SGBV.** In Somalia, one project

in particular showed positive results, with the support of 16 ADR centres providing services to 14,268 beneficiaries and the use of mobile courts increasing access to justice for marginalised communities. The establishment of a specialised gender-based violence prosecution unit and an online gender-based violence information management system at the Puntland Attorney General's Office, as well as support to the SGBV unit at the Banadir Attorney General's Office, have strengthened the legal capacity to address SGBV cases.

Furthermore, **projects that utilised community-based and alternative justice mechanisms, while strengthening the capacity of formal justice actors, achieved positive results**. A project in Uganda the establishment of mobile legal aid and counselling clinics, supported by mobile court sessions and trained community paralegals, strengthened the community referral system and created a safe environment for peaceful conflict resolution. As a result, 82.2% of reported disputes were resolved through ADR, almost double the baseline value of 46%. The project also trained 243 formal justice sector actors on human rights, justice, gender rights and sexual and gender-based violence. According to the final evaluation, this training enabled 100% of the trained justice actors to identify and respond to protection needs, with a 45.6% improvement in their ability to do so.

Multifaceted approaches combining human rights training, access to justice, peacebuilding, advocacy and legal aid services have also been effective in filling existing gaps in legal services and creating better-informed and legally empowered communities. In Uganda, for example, training local courts and traditional leaders on alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and legal processes led to a significant increase in the percentage of individuals with a strong positive perception of peaceful coexistence, from 76.7% to 96.3%.

However, **most of the projects analysed did not address the structural problems of the formal justice system**, thus proving effective only at the output level (3) or showing mixed results (2). An example comes from Somalia. On the one hand, ADR activities have been effective in improving access to judicial services for rural and marginalised communities, as well as for victims of sexual and gender-based violence. On the other hand, the project has encountered limitations in addressing critical underlying issues that hinder access to justice and human

TABLE 11. Overview of rating: Justice interventions category

	Positive impact	Mixed evidence	Effective at output level	No impact
Justice services and related capacity building and accountability measures	3	2	3	n/a
Improve livelihoods	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Recommendation: Combine informal and formal justice interventions.

In order to effectively address the needs of survivors of violence, GBV, and SGBV, and to promote social cohesion and conflict prevention, it is essential to adopt a dual approach that combines informal and formal justice interventions. This includes continuing community engagement and support for alternative justice mechanisms, while also working to strengthen formal justice services and address the underlying issues that hinder access to justice and human rights, such as cultural stigma and significant barriers faced by marginalized groups, especially women.

rights. These limitations include the inability to effectively ensure institutional compliance with human rights standards, to improve gender equity, or to address the high costs and widespread manipulation associated with access to the formal justice system. These shortcomings underscore the need for a more comprehensive approach to improving access to justice and human rights.

Support to victim of violence

A total of four projects have been identified that combine justice services with support for victims of violence, including gender- and sexual and gender-based violence. Activities include the provision of legal aid and counselling services, as well as the creation of referral systems and the training of female paralegals. **These initiatives have produced encouraging results, including improved access to justice and increased support for vulnerable people.** However, there is no evidence of the long-term impact on social cohesion and conflict prevention. As a result, all four cases have been marked as effective at the output level.

The **provision of legal support and assistance in navigating legal systems is vital to ensure that survivors of violence, GBV and SGBV have access to justice.** This is particularly important for women, who are often culturally stigmatised and face significant barriers in accessing justice.

Moreover, in the case of post-conflict interventions, the integration of psychosocial support into broader peacebuilding initiatives is essential, given the profound impact that SGBV can have on the mental health of victims. Although interventions targeting gender-based violence and gender-based sexual violence do not directly lead to the construction of peace, they can play a **fundamental role in raising community awareness and challenging cultural norms** that tolerate such violence, thus indirectly contributing to the mitigation of conflicts and the promotion of greater social cohesion.

A family reunited in Uganda
©GIZ/Dennis Onen

5. Conclusions

As the EU looks to the future and the implementation of migration and forced displacement programmes under the present Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) and the future MFF, the lessons learned from the experiences of the EUTF in the Horn of Africa will be crucial in informing the design and implementation of effective interventions. To achieve this, it is essential to acknowledge both successes and challenges, with a focus on identifying areas for improvement. A clear commitment to expanding the available evidence base and integrating it into programme design, implementation, and monitoring is also necessary.

5.1. Lessons learnt on more and less promising approaches

From the analysis of their effectiveness, the identified approaches have proven more and less promising in addressing the selected key drivers of migration and forced displacement. From these, a series of lessons learned and good practices can be drawn per thematic driver, with the aim of informing the design of future interventions that are effective and sustainable.

5.1.1. Employment

In terms of effectiveness, the analysis of the various approaches to creating sustainable employment and livelihood opportunities adopted by the EUTF in displacement-affected area in the Horn of Africa have provided valuable insights. Several key findings have emerged, highlighting the most promising approaches to increasing, improving or diversifying employment and income-generating opportunities, as well as approaches that proved to be less effective.

On the one hand, several approaches have proven to be successful. **Community-based initiatives, such as Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) and producer associations, have demonstrated their effectiveness in creating self-management systems, community resources, and increasing financial inclusion, particularly for women.** Additionally, holistic approaches that address the complex barriers to employment, including technical, economic, social, and legal obstacles, have emerged as a key factor in increasing employment and income-generating opportunities. These approaches often involve **providing technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in combination with financial support to help new businesses get off the ground.** Interventions aimed

at creating direct access to employment, such as job creation initiatives, have also generated opportunities, although mostly short-term ones. Among the youth, targeted support to enhance skills and connect them to the labour market has shown positive results, increasing their confidence in their employability and providing them with a sense of direction and social contribution.

On the other hand, some approaches have been less successful. Short-term employment initiatives, such as cash for work programs, have met short-term basic needs but have not had a lasting impact on income. **Training initiatives that were not accompanied by job creation or support for entrepreneurship have led to increased frustration and aspirations for migration among beneficiaries.** Furthermore, efforts to support institutional processes, such as national policy development and cross-border cooperation, have been hindered by the limited commitment and capacity of government institutions, resulting in a lack of tangible results. Addressing the underdeveloped private sector and limited labour demand in the region remains a significant hurdle, highlighting the need for continued investments.

A number of obstacles were indeed identified that hindered implementation and impact of actions, including external events such as political instability, inflation and environmental shocks, lack of local ownership, the strong marginalisation of certain areas, as well as the limitations imposed by short project cycles. In terms of monitoring, a significant challenge that has emerged is the lack of data and evidence on long-term results, particularly on employment and income outcomes.

Despite these challenges, several key lessons have emerged for future programming:

- **Investing in public infrastructure and ensuring its sustainability is crucial, particularly in fragile contexts and marginalized areas.** In this sense, partnerships with local institutions, including youth vocational training centers, have proven effective in ensuring the long-term sustainability of projects' infrastructure investments.

- **The active involvement of local stakeholders at all levels and throughout the project cycle is essential to tailor interventions to the specific needs and challenges of local communities.** In the EUTF experience, this collaborative approach fostered trust, ownership and inclusiveness, enabling local stakeholders to take leadership roles and contribute to the success of the intervention.

- **The private sector's involvement is fundamental to increase access to job opportunities.** This can be achieved through the provision of training, subsidies and access to funding for both new and existing businesses, to improve their investment and employment capacities and performance.

- **Effective interventions require a market-driven and employer-centric approach, alignment with local dynamics, and a solid monitoring and evaluation system.** In-depth labour market assessments and analysis of the local economy and market is critical and should be effectively integrated in the design of interventions.

- **Working in parallel on trade, market and value chain development is essential to provide comprehensive support to market and value chain development in priority sectors,** such as agriculture in the case of the countries of the Horn of Africa.

5.1.2. Migration and forced displacement management

The analysis of the effectiveness of the various interventions highlighted several key results related to support for migration and forced displacement management, both in terms of effective and less effective approaches.

Approaches that proved effective include capacity development, which was the most commonly used approach in EUTF interventions. **The creation of tools, standardised procedures and information management systems has shown great potential, contributing to significant improvements in the modus operandi of institutions at both national and regional level.** Shared protocols at regional level have proven particularly effective when accompanied by efforts to develop and align national policies. Regional approaches have emerged as key to addressing the specific challenges of migration and forced displacement management, such as promoting cross-border mobility, supporting voluntary returns, and preventing human trafficking and migrant smuggling. **Cross-border cooperation has been found to be a highly successful approach especially in combating human trafficking and migrant smuggling,** particularly through the establishment of cross-border information systems.

Inclusive governance interventions have also contributed to positive changes in local governance, social cohesion, and access to services for both refugees and host communities. In the context of projects focused on protection, return and (re)integration, the analysis revealed that a **holistic approach to direct assistance and capacity building is a crucial factor in achieving sustainable (re) integration of displaced persons within host communities.** This approach involves complementing

immediate humanitarian assistance to migrants and displacement-affected populations with capacity building for local governments in host countries, promoting shared responsibility and increasing longer-term sustainability of actions.

On the other hand, some approaches were less effective. Notably, **in the area of capacity building, the impact of trainings and direct institutional support was limited when used in isolation,** but these interventions did have a positive effect when combined with other initiatives, such as the development of manuals and procedures, by enhancing their effectiveness. The development of migration policies and programs in partner countries, although not always ratified or implemented, contributed to advancing the national agenda and shifting governments' understanding of and commitment to migration issues.

The analysis also identified several challenges that hindered the implementation and impact of actions, including external events such as inflation and environmental shocks, ongoing conflicts, and the significant vulnerability of migration management projects to fluctuating political dynamics and institutional commitment. Furthermore, the lack of comprehensive assessment of the different dimensions of migration governance and the reliance on generic indicators in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks limited the ability to capture migration-related outcomes.

Building on these experiences, several key lessons have emerged that can inform and improve future programming:

- **A whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to migration and forced displacement management**, is essential, with government institutions, civil society, and international organizations working together to develop joint solutions to local challenges related to migration and displacement.

- **Institutional training needs to be accompanied by the availability of equipment and resources** to ensure sustainability and impact, and should be designed to address the specific capacity gaps and needs of institutions.

- **The active involvement of displaced populations in programme design and implementation is a critical factor in ensuring that services and policies are tailored to their needs and expectations.** Such participatory approach has demonstrated great potential for increasing the effectiveness and relevance of programmes, ultimately contributing to better outcomes for targeted communities.

- **Multi-stakeholder engagement and coordination have also demonstrated significant value in addressing complex migration and forced displacement management challenges,** with

regular meetings and dialogue platforms facilitating collaboration and information-sharing among key stakeholders, both at national and regional level. The creation of spaces and tools for cross-border dialogue and cooperation at a regional level should be promoted, particularly through systems that allow new and more efficient channels of communication between countries.

5.1.3. Social cohesion and conflict prevention

The analysis of EUTF interventions in the HoA revealed several key findings on the most and less effective approaches to promoting resilience and social cohesion in conflict-affected areas.

Approaches that proved effective include delivering justice services through community-based and informal mechanisms, and creating economic opportunities that benefit both displaced and host communities equally. Prioritising specific training on conflict, peace education, and conflict resolution, targeting both duty bearers and rights holders, has been shown to be more effective than general human rights and justice training. Combining dialogue and mediation with economic support, such as livelihood programs, has proven to be a good practice in addressing the root causes of tensions and fostering social cohesion. Investing in informal justice mechanisms, such as alternative dispute resolution and mobile courts, with the involvement of traditional and religious leaders, has also shown to be effective in mitigating conflict and providing access to justice for marginalised communities. **Creating safe spaces for discussion,** such as inter-community and inter-generational dialogues, has proven successful in addressing the concerns and traumas of communities and finding joint solutions, particularly in post-conflict interventions.

On the other hand, some approaches were less effective. There is **limited evidence of impact on social cohesion for training of institutional actors and the provision of support to victims of violence, although these interventions raise awareness on key issues and challenge cultural norms, indirectly contributing to conflict mitigation and prevention.** Additionally, it emerged that **many projects have fallen short in addressing the underlying causes of conflicts.** Due to limited analysis timeframes and resources, projects have focused on conflict resolution rather than prevention, providing stakeholders with tools to manage conflicts rather than preventing conflict from arising in the first place.

The analysis also identified several challenges that hindered the effectiveness of the interventions. Arising conflicts, political changes, climate shocks, and new inflows of displaced people made the operating environment extremely challenging. Social cohesion was rarely

considered a primary objective, resulting in a lack of adequate context analysis, baseline data, and limited evaluation or reporting of interventions' impact on social cohesion. The lack of standard indicators to measure social cohesion also made it challenging to assess the impact of interventions.

Key lessons learned for future programming include:

- **Effective interventions require a deep understanding of root causes of conflict and displacement,** especially context-specific elements, as well as solid and adequate instruments to monitor their evolution and the interventions' impact on them.

- **Working with youth is essential in preventing conflict and violent extremism,** and targeted interventions that build skills, facilitate access to the labour market, and provide mentoring and conflict resolution training can help reduce feelings of frustration that can lead to radicalization and recruitment into armed and terrorist groups.

- **Ensuring equal access to basic services,** such as water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), education, and healthcare, for both displaced populations and host communities, is crucial in preventing conflicts due to limited resources and promoting social cohesion.

- **Introducing protection services for victims of violence,** including legal assistance, counselling, and referral systems, can provide crucial support and help mitigate conflict and promote social cohesion.

5.2. Cross-cutting conclusions

The detailed analysis and findings presented in Chapter 4 of this Technical Report leads to four general conclusions and two observations on project design and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems.

The general conclusions are:

Overall positive but limited impact of interventions

While many EUTF projects had a positive impact, many had a more limited impact than expected, as the effects were more modest than planned or as the effects were not fully measured. For example, projects aimed at creating direct access to employment often only managed to create short-term opportunities. Interventions supporting migration policies were largely unsuccessful in adopting new policies or regulations in the given timeframe, but did achieve greater commitment and awareness from governments. The limited impact can be attributed to contextual

challenges, such as ongoing conflicts, political changes, COVID-19, climatic shocks or new inflows of displaced people, as well as weaknesses in project design, implementation and monitoring systems. Institutional dynamics have also affected the effectiveness of interventions. To mitigate these factors, it is essential to conduct thorough situational assessments and risk analyses, and incorporate contingency plans into programme design. Moreover, **measuring intermediate or partial results can help capture the nuances and levels of impact.** Notably, this holds true for policy development interventions across various thematic areas, where progress is often incremental and multifaceted. Rather than focusing solely on the adoption of specific policies or regulations, it is essential to consider the intermediate steps, negotiations and advancements made towards this goal, such as increased government interest and awareness, or demonstrated political commitment through participation in regional and international forums.

Success of interventions combining hard and soft support, while creating local ownership

The most successful projects were those that combined hard and soft support, demonstrating the importance of a holistic approach to intervention. For instance, in employment generation, providing beneficiaries with skills training alone was not enough. Rather, it was the combination of skills training with material support, such as funding or inputs/means that enabled them to start their own businesses. Similarly, in migration governance, training programs were more effective when accompanied by the provision of assets, such as technology or infrastructure that facilitated the implementation of new policies and procedures. In conflict resolution, the combination of training with infrastructure, such as safe shelters or counselling facilities, was crucial in providing support to victims of violence. The need for this integrated approach is rooted in the fact that many communities and authorities lack the resources to fully participate in or sustain program activities, even after their capacity has been improved. By providing both hard and soft support, projects can help bridge this resource gap and increase the likelihood of long-term success. Furthermore, **local stakeholders can provide valuable insights, resources and networks, facilitating the implementation, follow-up and scalability of interventions and ensuring that interventions are tailored to the local context,** responding to the specific needs and challenges of communities. Involving local stakeholders also helps to build trust and a sense of ownership, which are essential for long-term sustainability and success.

Strengthening institutional and human capacity ensures long-term sustainability

Interventions that succeeded in strengthening institutional and human capacity had a lasting impact, allowing the benefits created for the final beneficiaries to be sustained over time. In particular, community-based initiatives, such as Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) and alternative justice mechanisms showed remarkable prospects of sustainability, as they **empowered local communities with the skills and knowledge they need to drive their own development.** Engagement with the private sector, particularly local and national small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), was also vital for sustainable development, facilitating market expansion and job creation. These approaches can enable the overcoming of challenges related to institutional dynamics, including the lack of government capacity and resources, corruption, and the frequent shifting of policy priorities.

More inclusive targeting of interventions can contribute to social cohesion

Targeting interventions to both refugees and host communities was key to making government interventions more inclusive and increasing social cohesion. This result was observed in the analysis of interventions under both migration governance and conflict resolution. **Projects that implemented this strategy were effective in shifting the attitude of host communities by balancing the availability of support to both groups.** This approach helped address social and cultural norms that perpetuate discrimination and mistrust in communities, particularly in the presence of displaced populations.

In terms of observations on project design and M&E systems, the following two points emerged:

Weaknesses in project design

Some challenges to project implementation have emerged, such as scarce resources, the inaccessibility of some project areas, and limited cross-border coordination. In some cases, these can be attributed to weaknesses in the design of the projects. The absence of adequate initial assessments of the conflict and the situation on the ground made it difficult to establish a clear understanding of the context and the needs of the communities, limiting the effectiveness of the interventions. **Project design should be based on solid assessments of needs and an adequate consideration of the operating environment and its challenges.** However, even with careful consideration, inaccessibility or limited coordination can still occur, and therefore, project design and planning should also incorporate flexibility to adapt to changing environments, such as integrating contingency plans and

budget options, building in flexibility in project duration and funding volumes, and allowing for adaptability in project plans to respond to unforeseen circumstances. In this sense and based on the first conclusion, project objectives should also be more realistic.

Limitations in M&E systems

The analysis of projects and related documentation reveals a **significant lack of data and evidence at outcome level.** Notably, this limitation is a widespread issue in the development sector, with experts and practitioners suggesting that inadequate M&E systems and data gaps are a common challenge faced by many projects, regardless of funding source. In the specific cases of analysed EUTF interventions, project implementers pointed out to several factors that have hindered effective monitoring. These include the limited availability of budgets for M&E at the project level, the lack of available baseline data, poorly defined or unclear indicators, insufficient project timeframes, and the lack of a uniform system for monitoring results at outcome level – beyond the common indicators set by the EUTF at output level. Particularly, the absence of solid quantitative indicators makes qualitative indicators necessary. However, monitoring the latter is often costly and time-consuming and sometimes implies access to sensitive information, which participants may not be willing to provide. In the specific case of social cohesion and conflict prevention interventions, the analysis showed that the majority of interventions did not have

these two as primary objectives (many were, for example, livelihoods or resilience projects), resulting in a lack of baseline data and difficulties in assessing the impact of interventions on this dimension ex-post. This is also due to the fact that many EUTF projects have mainstreamed conflict sensitivity and 'do no harm' considerations, without related specific objectives. To address these challenges, it is essential to develop a more robust M&E systems that can also capture the various nuances and levels of interventions impact. More resources and technical support should be provided to partner agencies to ensure that interventions are monitored and evaluated in an effective and collaborative manner, ensuring that data are adequately shared by the implementing partners. For example, **incorporating budget provisions for ex-post evaluations in project proposals** could ensure sufficient resources for long-term impact analysis and learning. Future monitoring and evaluation frameworks should also be strengthened and enriched to include specific results and indicators to allow for a more explicit assessment of critical aspects such as social cohesion. Finally, the development of collaborative data collection mechanisms combined with the use of measurable and shared outcome indicators would facilitate consistent data collection over time and across projects.

Overall, these findings highlight the need for a more effective and collaborative approach to designing and implementing interventions, with a focus on expanding the evidence base, strengthening institutional and human capacity, and developing more robust M&E systems.

5. Conclusions

Amal Mahad inside her small shop located in the Shader refugee camp in Ethiopia.
© Dereje Agize, Mercy Corps

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List of abbreviations and definitions

Abbreviations	Definition
ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
C4ED	Centre for Evaluation and Development
DCA	DanChurchAid
DFN	Development Fund Norway
DG HOME	Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs
DG INTPA	Directorate-General for International Partnerships
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy
EHoA	Eastern and Horn of Africa
EU	European Union
EUD	European Delegation
EUTF	European Union Trust Fund
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
HoA	Horn of Africa
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
IDLO	International Development Law Organization
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IRC	International Rescue Committee
JRC	Joint Research Centre
LO	Liaison Officer
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
NDICI	Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument
ODI Global	Overseas Development Institute
SGBV	Sexual Gender-Based Violence
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WFP	World Food Programme

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Annexes

Annex 1. Methodology

This study used a multi-phase approach to investigate the effectiveness of the European Union Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) actions in addressing three specific drivers of migration and forced displacement in the Horn of Africa (HoA) region, namely, the lack of access to employment and livelihood opportunities, fragile social cohesion and conflict, and poor migration governance.

The methodology foresaw the following four phases:

Phase 1. Review of HoA context and EUTF actions
Phase 2. Selection of key drivers and project sample
Phase 3. Analysis of interventions by drivers
Phase 4. Validation of findings

The study applied a qualitative approach, drawing on a variety of sources including EUTF action documents, project reports and evaluations, as well as existing literature. Specifically, starting from those sources and for each of the selected migration drivers, it identified the approaches that have proven most promising, those for which evidence is mixed, and those that have shown to be ineffective. This approach was inspired by the work done by the Centre for Global Development (CGD) and Stanford University's Immigration Policy Lab (IPL) in a study for the US Agency for International Development (USAID), outlining the existing research evidence on "what works" to reduce irregular migration from the Northern Triangle.[38]

To ensure robustness and relevance, the results were validated through online workshops with project implementers and an in-person workshop with academic and policy experts.

This methodology allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the varying levels of effectiveness of selected EUTF interventions in the region highlighting both good practices and challenges, and provided a basis for recommendations on how to improve the effectiveness, sustainability and monitoring of future programming.

This annex outlines the methodology and tools developed and used in the study, phase by phase.

Phase 1: Review of HoA context and EUTF actions

The objective of Phase 1 was to gain an overview of the HoA context and EUTF actions. This phase consisted of two steps: 1) a descriptive analysis of migration and forced displacement drivers in the HoA region based on a literature review, and 2) a screening of EUTF Action Documents (ADs) to identify the drivers addressed by EUTF programmes.

The first step involved a thorough analysis of migration trends and drivers' evolution in the HoA region, spanning from 2015, year of EUTF launch, until September 2024. To achieve this, a desk review of existing literature was conducted, examining the main drivers of migration and forced displacement in the region, such as conflict, natural disasters, and poverty, and their evolution over time.

Sources consulted encompassed a range of documentation including:

- EUTF project documentation collected at both regional and national level;

- Previous studies conducted by the Joint Research Centre (JRC) relevant to the thematic and/or geographic focus;

- State-of-the-art of academic literature related to migration and forced displacement trends and dynamics in the region; including research studies and datasets from universities, research institutions, think tanks;

- Grey literature (reports collected by international organisations), including United Nations Migration Network, International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Mixed Migration Centre (MMC) and other relevant agencies working in the region and at national level;

- Key migration and displacement data in the region using sources such as IOM, UNHCR, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), and, when available, national sources.

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38 See: Sarah Rose, Reva Resstack, Helen Dempster, Elisa Cascardi, and Jeremy Weinstein. 2021. "Addressing the 'Root Causes' of Irregular Migration from Central America: An Evidence Agenda for USAID." CGD Policy Paper 243. Washington, DC: Center for Global Development. https://www.cgdev.org/publication/addressing-root-causes-irregular-migration-central-america-evidence-agenda-usaid.

FIGURE 7. Example of network of drivers at the country level

Network of factors impacting migration, mobility and forced displacement in Ethiopia
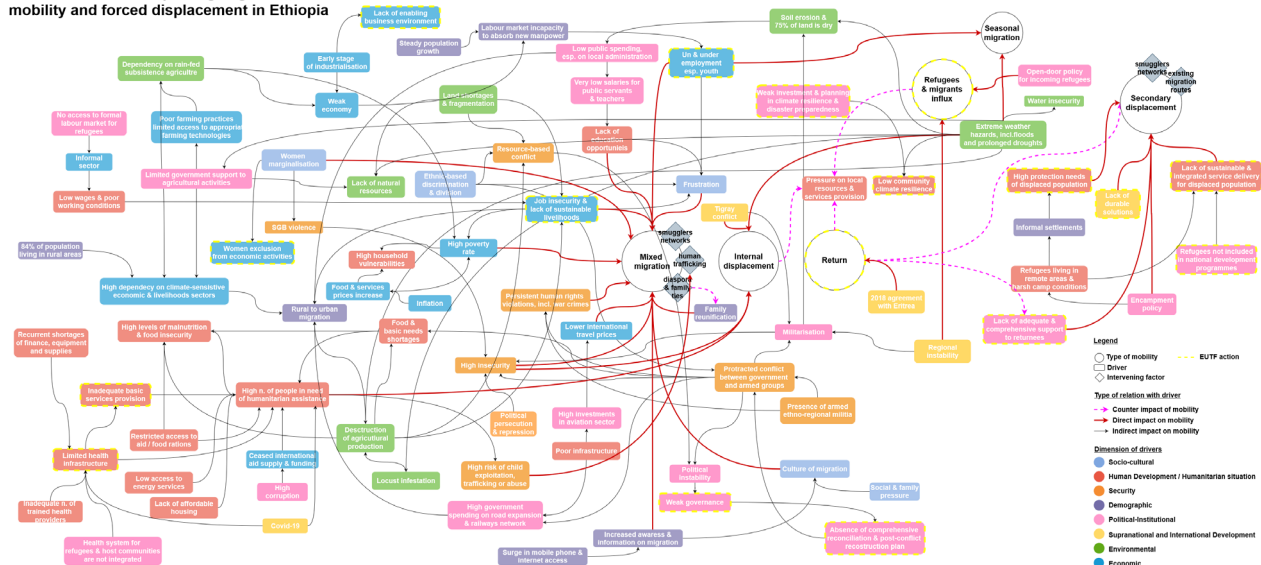
The research team reviewed and synthesized the existing knowledge on migration trends, drivers, and patterns in the region, with a particular focus on understanding the complex interlinkages of factors that contributed to, and were influenced by, migration, forced displacement and other types of mobility.

The literature review was organised using an Excel spreadsheet, which facilitated the assessment of relevance of each source for the analysis, isolation of key findings, and cross-referencing throughout the study. The literature review aimed at identifying the factors driving migration in the HoA, including long-term structural factors such as economic and labour market, environmental, human development, security-related, and socio-cultural factors, as well as medium-term intervening factors such as migrants smuggling and trafficking in human beings, diaspora, and policy and legal frameworks.

Using an online tool (draw.io), the research team visualised the complex network of factors (see Figure 7) affecting migration and forced displacement, and their interconnections, for each country in the HoA region. This allowed for a deeper understanding of the migration dynamics and the relationships between different factors.

The second step involved a review of EUTF Action

Documents (AD) to identify which drivers the programmes focused on. The totality of the 94 approved program action documents[39] were analysed. An Excel matrix was created for each country and the regional level, which included key information such as decision title, EUTF code, operational committee date, decision amount, information from AD problem analysis section, intervention logic and objectives of the programme, geographical focus, foreseen projects, budget per objective or result, relevant indicators, and policy framework reference. A comments cell was used to note any exclusions or comments on the relevance of each AD, ensuring that the analysis was thorough and transparent.

The research team examined the focus of EUTF interventions, including how many of them worked[40] on the drivers of migration and forced displacement identified in the literature review, as well as how interventions evolved to reflect the changing regional context. This step allowed the research team to identify the drivers of migration and displacement that the EUTF programmes aimed to address and to understand the context in which these programmes were implemented.

By combining the descriptive analysis of migration and forced displacement drivers with the screening of EUTF

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39   In the context of the EUTF, as in other EU-funded interventions, a Programme is a broad initiative with strategic objectives, indicative activities and a financial allocation. For EU-development cooperation programmes, these elements are compiled in an Action Document. Approved programmes are then executed through multiple Projects, each implemented by a different partner organisation. Projects contribute to a programme's objectives by covering one or more thematic or geographic areas. In the context of this study, the analysis was conducted at two levels: at the Programme level for Phase 1, which involved a review of the EUTF actions based on Action Documents, and at the Project level for Phases 2 and 3, which included the selection of the project sample and the analysis of interventions carried out under specific projects.

40   This description includes both programmes that mention the relevant driver in the context description of the AD, without dedicating specific activities/objectives/indicators to addressing it, and programmes that have specifically included the targeting the given driver among the objectives of the action

TABLE 12. Overview of number of instances the three selected drivers were addressed by programmes and per country

	N. of countries	N. of programmes
Governance and government capacity	8	25
Access to Labour market	7	27
Social cohesion and conflict resolution	6	10

Action Documents, the research team was able to gain a comprehensive understanding of the HoA context and EUTF actions, and to identify the key issues that the EUTF programmes aimed to address. This laid the foundation for the subsequent phases of the study, which built on this understanding to select the key topics to work on and the sample of project for the meta-analysis.

Phase 2. Selection of key drivers and project sample

The research team followed a three-step approach to selecting the key drivers on which to focus the analysis.

First, based on the mapping of the drivers' networks by country (see Figure 7) as well as the analysis of regional dynamics emerged from the literature review, the most influential drivers have been identified, i.e. those that showed having a consistent and widespread impact on mobility over time and across countries. The identified drivers were: i) weak governance and limited government capacity; ii) vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters, including poor natural resource management and struggling smallholder farmers/agriculture sector; iii) lack of access to labour market and limited training opportunities; iv) Inadequate access to basic services; v) unmet protection needs; and vi) conflict and fragile social cohesion, including limited access to justice and violations of human rights.

Secondly, the team screened the EUTF programmes (Action Documents) to establish on which drivers the EUTF worked most, i.e. the number of programmes and countries in which the EUTF addressed each of the key drivers identified in step one.

Finally, once the overlapping between key drivers in the region and key drivers addressed by EUTF programmes had been identified, the research team consulted with the EUTF team to establish the three drivers on which to focus the analysis. Some drivers were excluded because they cover too wide a range of different interventions (e.g. access to

basic services), others to avoid replicating similar existing or ongoing analyses (for example, climate change and climate-induced displacement). The list was then reduced to three key drivers to be part of the analysis, as follows:

- lack of access to employment and livelihood opportunities;

- fragile social cohesion and conflict;

- poor migration governance.

The research team then proceeded with the selection of the project sample for the meta-analysis. For each of the three drivers, key indicators were identified from the EUTF monitoring and learning system (MLS) common output indicators list.[41] Using the EUTF MLS analytics dashboard,[42] all EUTF projects for the HoA window relevant to these indicators were listed. A screening process was then conducted to identify a sample of projects, ensuring variety in terms of the type of activities, locations and type of implementing partner (NGO, Member States agencies, UN, other).

Specifically, the following were identified:

- 123 projects for employment, from which 21 were selected;

- 167 projects for social cohesion, from which 19 were selected;

- 112 projects for migration governance, from which 17 were selected.

Of the 57 projects selected, three were considered for more than one driver, thus creating an overlapping, and a few others have been subsequently excluded for various reasons, such as the fact that they had been cancelled, a lack of documentation or because resulted as not relevant. **The final sample consisted then of 47 projects, implemented in seven countries,[43] namely Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda, and at regional level.**

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41   For the detailed list of EUTF indicators and their description, please consult https://trust-fund-for-africa.europa.eu/document/ download/5bb455d9-556e-4796-9f49-3d8b2608f3f7_en?filename=EUTF%20Methodological%20Notes%20-%20M%26S%20-%20 Jan%202022.pdf

42   EUTF Monitoring and Learning System platform for the Horn of Africa (HoA) and the Sahel and Lake Chad (SLC) windows created and managed by Altai. The platform is for internal use of European Commission and EUTF actors.

43   Although part of the HoA window, Eritrea was not considered as the majority of EUTF actions in the country were suspended for political and security reasons.

TABLE 13. List of EUTF indicators used to select project sample

Access to labour market and livelihood opportunities[44]	Social cohesion and conflict resolution	Migration governance
1.1 Number of direct jobs created or supported through EUTF-funded projects 1.2 Number of MSMEs created or supported 1.4 Number of people benefitting from professional trainings (TVET) and/or skills development 1.5 Number of industrial parks and/or business infrastructures constructed, expanded or improved	2.7 Number of people reached by sensitisation campaigns on resilience-building practices and basic rights 4.2 Number of staff from governmental institutions, internal security forces and relevant non-state actors trained on governance, conflict prevention and human rights 4.3 Number of people participating in conflict prevention and human rights activities 4.1 Number of infrastructures supported to strengthen governance (sub-categories: justice infrastructure, police stations) 4.6 Number of strategies, laws, policies and plans developed and / or directly supported 5.2 Number of planning, monitoring, learning, data-collection and analysis systems set up, implemented and / or strengthened	3.6 Number of institutions and non-state actors strengthened through capacity building or operational support on protection and migration management 3.7 Number of individuals trained on migration management and protection 5.2 Number of planning, monitoring, learning, data-collection and analysis systems set up, implemented and / or strengthened 5.4 Number of regional cooperation initiatives created, launched or supported

Phase 3. Analysis of interventions by drivers

The analysis phase involved a meta-analysis of the selected sample of 47 projects. To facilitate the analysis, a template was created to organize the information collected from each project (see Annex 2. Tools), such as:

- Project description

- Intervention types

- Effectiveness rating

- Sustainability and monitoring considerations

- Migration outcome information

Information from the individual projects was then aggregated in an excel table (see Annex 2. Tools), allowing for a cross-project analysis of the intervention types and their effectiveness.

The analysis applied a two-step process. First, **the various types of interventions implemented by the EUTF projects were identified and classified**. This involved reviewing the available documentation for each project, including description of action, logical frame, progress and final reports, ROM analysis, mid- and end-term evaluations, and in some cases other types of external analysis (e.g. impact evaluation, outcome harvesting

reports). In addition, administrative type of information (e.g. implementation dates and budget) was extracted from EC internal reporting platforms such as the EUTF Monitoring and Learning System analytics platform and the internal EUTF Africa Knowledge platform (wiki).

Second, **the types of interventions were evaluated with respect to their effectiveness in addressing one of the three selected drivers of migration and displacement, in each of the projects where they were implemente**d. Each type of intervention was rated based on the project documentation evidence available using the criteria presented in table n.14.

The ratings were then aggregated to determine the overall effectiveness of each type of intervention, providing a comprehensive understanding of what works best in addressing specific drivers of migration and displacement. The aggregation processes consisted in counting the number of instances in which that specific type of intervention had positive/ mixed/ output or no impact, as shown in Tables 1 to 11.

The analysis also took into account more general considerations regarding the sustainability of the interventions, their monitoring, and their effect on migration outcomes.

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44 EUTF indicator "1.3 Number of people assisted to develop income-generating activities (IGAs)" was excluded from the selection. However, many of the projects selected also had activities related to IGAs.

TABLE 14. Intervention effectiveness rating criteria

Positive impact	**Definition**: The interventions produced long-term effects. Generally measured by impact or counterfactual evaluations. **Example**: The establishment of farmers' groups contributed positively to reducing tensions and thus supporting peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities.
Some progress / Mixed evidence	**Definition**: Activities that showed progress at outcome level but had limited impact or mixed results. **Example 1**: The training sessions on peace dialogue and confidence building were well received by the participants. However, the evaluation team noted that the project's influence in integrating human rights and gender rights in police practices remains minor. **Example 2**: The development of Police Acts has been an important milestone in the implementation of a federal police structure in line with the New Policing Model. However, the evaluation team noted that oversight mechanisms need to be developed or consolidated to ensure the effective implementation of the Police Acts. **Example 3**: The project integrated right-holders in public processes, particularly through the formation of Producer Associations (PAs) and community-led awareness campaigns. However, results were mixed across different districts, with one district showing more positive outcomes.
Effective at output level	**Definition**: Project outputs were delivered as planned, but their medium-term effects (outcomes) have not materialised. Generally measured by final evaluations and endline assessments. **Example**: Participants in TVET activities valued knowledge and skills gained, but there is no information on the extent to which those who received the training were able to access new or better forms of employment.
No impact or no evidence	**Definition**: Unsuccessful intervention or no information available to assess the impact or effectiveness of the activity. **Example 1**: The start-up kits provided to beneficiaries in the field of vocational education and training were neither adequate nor sufficient to support the start-up of a business. **Example 2**: The evaluation shows that the effectiveness of the rangeland rehabilitation interventions seems unsatisfactory in contrast to the expected outcome of the project.

Phase 4. Validation of findings

The validation of findings was a crucial step in the study, aiming to ensure the accuracy of the results, as well as their relevance on the ground. Two types of validation were conducted: a series of online validation workshops with project implementers and one in-person workshop with academic and policy experts on migration and displacement and/ or the Horn of Africa.

The three 2-hours online validation workshops held in November and December 2024, brought together 33 participants from 19 organizations, including NGOs, UN agencies, and Member States' development agencies, to discuss the preliminary key findings of the meta-analysis. The workshops aimed to validate the findings and gather feedback on how to improve the effectiveness, sustainability, and monitoring of future programming. The online workshops were interactive, with participants sharing their experiences, commenting on the initial findings, and engaging in structured brainstorming. The use of an interactive online whiteboard (Miro) allowed them to contribute individually.

FIGURE 8. Example of interactive board created for structured brainstorming during online consultations with project implementers

In addition to the online workshops, an in-person workshop was convened with experts from international organizations, academia, and the European Commission's internal stakeholders. The workshop aimed to consolidate and enrich the results of the study, presenting and validating the preliminary findings and brainstorming recommendations for future programming.

Sixteen external participants from 12 organizations and 12 European Commission participants, from several units across the Directorate-General for International Partnerships, Directorate-General for Migration & Home affairs and the European External Action Service participated in the workshop, held in Brussels.

One session focused on sharing the JRC's findings on the effectiveness of EUTF approaches in addressing the three selected drivers of migration and forced displacement. Divided in smaller working groups, participants had the occasion to discuss and provide feedback on the findings (see Annex 2. Tools). Specifically, the groups explored three types of interventions: training and skill creation for employment generation, support to migration policy development and implementation, and conflict prevention vs. resolution. Participants received a template for each subject, comprising two sections: "improving effectiveness" and "monitoring and evaluation". Each section included guiding questions designed to stimulate discussion and gather insights. After completing the group work, participants reconvened in a plenary session to share and discuss their outcomes on each subject.

Through this dual validation process, the study research team verified the accuracy and relevance of its findings, capitalizing on the expertise of project implementers and experts in the field. This process offered a valuable opportunity for feedback, reflection, and improvement, ultimately yielding more robust conclusions and actionable recommendations.

Annexes

Annex 2. Tools

Tool 1. Template for intervention analysis by project

Project details	
Implementer	
Country	
Start date	
End date	
Status (ended, ongoing, cancelled)	
Budget	
Available evidence	

Analysis	
Intervention logic	
Relevant objectives	
Mention to migration outcome / irregular migration	
Target group(s)	
Geographical scope	
Relevant EUTF Indicators	
Relevant project indicators	
Migration indicators (yes/no)	
Relevant activities	
Types of intervention identified	
Relevant results	
Comments on effectiveness and impact	
Comments on migration outcomes	
Evidence gaps	
Good practices	
Any other relevant reflection	
Summary of key findings	

Tool 2. Excel matrix for rating

Note: The template is to be filled with one project per line.

Project ref.	Relevance for other driver	Country	Status	Category 1			Category 2			Category 3		Other impacts	Baseline assessment	Endline assessment	Impact-level data	Migration-related objectives or mention in intervention logic	Migration outcome indicators	DAC sector code	Comments on sustainability	Other reflections
				Type of intervention	Type of intervention	Type of intervention	Type of intervention	Type of intervention	Type of intervention	Type of intervention	Type of intervention									
EUTF ID / project title	*Specify if project is or should be considered for other drivers*		*(Completed, Ongoing, Cancelled)*			*Rating*						*Include information on unplanned or other impacts of the project*	*yes/no, date*	*yes/no, date*	*Yes/no, If yes specifiy what type, year*	*Yes/no, If yes specify*	*Yes/no. If yes specify*			

Tool 2. In-person validation workshop, group work

Note: The below templates have been provided in the form of posters, with empty space below questions where participant could add sticky-notes with their inputs.

Working session 1 – Policy development and implementation support

📊 Improving effectiveness

- *What main contextual factors should be considered when designing policy support initiatives, and specifically in the Horn of Africa region?*
- *What is the most appropriate level to work on policy support (local, national or regional), and why?*
- *What is the role of capacity building and institutional strengthening in improving the effectiveness of policy support, and how can these efforts be sustained over time?*
- *How to better include beneficiaries and communities into policy development initiatives? (e.g. beneficiary feedback and participatory monitoring approaches to check whether policy support is responsive to the needs and aspirations of local stakeholders)*

📝 Monitoring and evaluation

- *What types of data and indicators are needed to effectively track the effects (outcome level) of policy support on migration governance in the Horn of Africa?*
- *How can monitoring and evaluation systems be designed to capture the potential for policy support to have positive impacts on migration governance, even if these impacts are indirect or long-term?*

💡 Recommendations for future programming

- *Based on the findings and your expertise, what recommendations do you have for future programming in support of policy development and implementation in the realm of migration governance and/or specific migration-related policy area (e.g. return, protection, etc.)?*
- *How can donors, governments, and implementing organisations work together to ensure that this type of interventions are effective, sustainable and aligned with national/regional needs and priorities?*
- *Should the support on policy be always integrated into broader development initiatives and programmes to maximize its impact and effectiveness, and what are the potential benefits and challenges of this approach?*

Working session 2 – Training and skills creation

📊 Improving effectiveness

- *What are the key factors that could improve the effectiveness of training and skills creation interventions in the specific context of the Horn of Africa countries?*
- *How can training programmes be designed to better meet the needs of local employers and the labour market?*
- *What is the optimal balance between training and other forms of support (e.g. grants, job creation) to ensure that beneficiaries can apply their new skills in the local market?*
- *How can training and skills creation interventions avoid creating unrealistic expectations and frustration among beneficiaries, particularly if job opportunities are limited?*
- *What strategies can be employed to ensure that skill creation is aligned with local labour market demands and dynamics, reducing the risk of pushing people to move elsewhere? E.g. focus business-creation and self-employment type of training*

📝 Monitoring and evaluation

- *What type of indicators can be used to better track the effectiveness of training and skills creation interventions and their impact on access to employment?*
- *How can monitoring and evaluation systems be designed to capture the nuanced impacts of training programs?*

💡 Recommendations for future programming

- *Based on the findings and your expertise, what recommendations do you have for incorporating training and skills creation approaches into future programming in the Horn of Africa?*
- *How can donors, governments, and implementing organizations work together to ensure that training programmes are effective, sustainable, and aligned with local needs and priorities?*

Working session 3 – Conflict prevention vs. resolution

Improving effectiveness

- *What approach, between conflict resolution and prevention, do you think is more relevant and effective in the context of HoA, o achieve social cohesion and peace building?*
- *How can initiatives be designed to better factor in and address the specific needs and contexts of different communities, including cultural and land issues?*
- *What role can community-based justice approaches play in peace-building and conflict resolution, and how can they be scaled up and sustained over time? And what role for formal justice systems, and how to strengthen them?*

Monitoring and evaluation

- *Considering the complex and nuanced nature of conflict dynamics, and that conflict-related type of interventions can take a long time to have an impact, what type of indicators can be used to better monitor the effectiveness of conflict-related interventions?*
- *What types of indicators are most relevant for measuring short-term (e.g. immediate reduction in violence), mid-term impacts (e.g. changes in community attitudes), and long-term impacts (e.g. sustained peace)?*

Recommendations for future programming

- *Based on the findings and your expertise, what recommendations do you have for for future programming in support of social cohesion, peacebuilding and conflict resolution in the Horn of Africa?*
- *How can donors, governments, and implementing organizations work together to ensure that such interventions are effective, sustainable, and aligned with local needs and priorities?*

Annex 3. Sample of analysed projects

TABLE 15. Sample of analysed projects

Project	Implementer	Country of implementation	Driver considered for the analysis
Acacia - Arabic Gum Value Chain in Sudan – Support	Agence Française de Développement (AFD)	Sudan	Employment
Better Migration Management Programme (BMM GIZ)	German Agency For International Cooperation (GIZ)	Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, South Sudan, Sudan, Somalia, Tunisia, and Uganda	Migration governance
Better Migration Management Programme Phase II (BMM II GIZ)	German Agency For International Cooperation (GIZ)	Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, South Sudan, Sudan, Somalia, and Uganda	Migration governance
Building Opportunities for Resilience in the Horn of Africa (Cross-Border BORESHA DRC)	Danish Refugee Council (DRC)	Regional	Employment
Building Opportunities for Resilience in the Horn of Africa (Cross-Border BORESHA III DRC)	Danish Refugee Council (DRC)	Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia	Social cohesion
Cross Border Cooperation In Western Ethipioa And Eastern Sudan (Cross-Border GIZ)	German Agency For International Cooperation (GIZ)	Ethiopia, Sudan	Employment, Social cohesion
Cross-border cooperation between Ethiopia and Kenya for conflict prevention and peacebuilding in Marsabit-Moyale cluster (Cross-Border UNDP Peace)	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Kenya, Ethiopia	Social cohesion
Strengthening Emergency Preparedness and Inclusive Natural Resources Management in Refugee Hosting Districts – CARE (CRRF DIRECT CARE)	CARE	Uganda	Social cohesion
Autonomisation et épanouissement des réfugiés via l'éducation, l'accès aux services de protection sociale et les opportunités économiques (CRRF DJ UNHCR)	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	Djibouti	Migration governance
Strenghtened Socio-Economic Development and Better Employment Opportunities for Refugees and Host Communities in the Jijiga area (CRRF ET Job Creation MC)	Mercy Corps	Ethiopia	Employment
Capacity building and technical assistance to CRRF structure and Ethiopian government institutions (CRRF ET UNHCR)	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	Ethiopia	Migration governance
Area-based Livelihoods Initiative Garissa (ABLI-G): enhancing self-reliance for refugees and host communities in Garissa County (CRRF KE ABLI-G)	Danish Refugee Council (DRC)	Kenya	Social cohesion
Enhancing self-reliance for refugees and host communities in Kenya (CRRF KE Self Reliance)	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	Kenya	Migration governance
Disrupting criminal trafficking and smuggling networks CIVIPOL (DISRUPTING CN CIVIPOL)	CIVIPOL	Regional	Migration governance
Employment Promotion In Khartoum State (EPKS GIZ)	German Agency For International Cooperation (GIZ)	Sudan	Employment
EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration in the Horn of Africa (EU-IOM JI)	International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Regional	Migration governance

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Towards Free Movement of Persons and Transhumance in the IGAD Region - Direct Grant to IGAD (Free Movt IGAD)	Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)	Regional	Migration governance
Free Movement of persons and Transhumance in the IGAD Region - Improving Opportunities for Regular Labour Mobility (Free Movt ILO)	International Labour Organization (ILO)	Regional	Migration governance
Accelerated Socio-Economic Empowerment of the Youth (ILED Youth UNFPA)	United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA)	Somalia	Employment
UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund: Support To The Justice, Corrections, Security Local Governance Programmes (JJP UNDP UNMPTF)	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Somalia	Social cohesion
Enhancing security and rule of law – UNOPS (JPP UNOPS)	United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)	Somalia	Social cohesion
JOINT RULE OF LAW PROGRAMME IN SOMALILAND 2020-2022 (JRoL Somaliland UNDP)	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Somalia	Social cohesion
Piloting Private Sector Solutions for Refugees and Host Communities in North-West Kenya (KKCF IFC)	International Finance Corporation (IFC)	Kenya	Employment
Regional Development and Protection Programme in Ethiopia-Bahrale and Aysaita Areas (RDPP ET DCA)	Danish Church Aid (DCA)	Ethiopia	Social cohesion
Strenghtening protection services for refugees and asylum seekers in Sudan (RDPP SD UNHCR)	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	Sudan	Migration governance
Response to Increased Environmental Degradation and Promotion of Alternative Energy Sources in Refugee Hosting Districts (RED Save the Children)	Save the Children	Uganda	Employment
Supporting the development and implementation of policies for the return, reintegration and protection of IDPs and refugees (RE-INTEG IDLO)	International Development Law Organization (IDLO)	Somalia	Migration governance
Integrated multi-sector approach to improve the resilience of vulnerable communities in Wag Himra Zone, Amhara region, Ethiopia (RESET II ACF)	Action Contre la Faim (ACF)	Ethiopia	Employment
Resilience Building and Creation of Economic Opportunities in Ethiopia (RESET II Oxfam)	Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (Oxfam)	Ethiopia	Social cohesion
Youth empowerment for successful transitions to decent work in Amhara and Somali regions of Ethiopia (RESET Plus SC)	Save the Children	Ethiopia	Employment
RESTORE 2 Building Resilience (RESTORE 2 DFN)	Development Fund Norway (DFN)	Somalia	Employment
From surviving to thriving -Strengthening resilience of vulnerable households and communities in Northern Somalia - World Vision Germany (RESTORE 2 WV)	World Vision	Somalia	Employment
Response to increased demand on Government service and creation of economic opportunities in Uganda (RISE ACF)	Action Contre la Faim (ACF)	Uganda	Employment

Response to increased demand on government service and creation of economic opportunities in Uganda (RISE GIZ)	German Agency For International Cooperation (GIZ)	Uganda	Employment, Migration governance
Regional Operational Center in Khartoum in support of the Khartoum Process and AU-HoA Initiative (ROCK)	CIVIPOL	Regional	Migration governance
Solutions pérennes pour les populations hôtes, les réfugiés et les migrants les plus vulnérables sur le territoire djiboutien (Solutions Pérennes IOM)	International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Djibouti	Migration governance
Support Programme to the Refugee Settlements and Host Communities in Northern Uganda (SPRS-NU DRC)	Danish Refugee Council (DRC)	Uganda	Social cohesion
JOBS CREATION AND TRADE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (SS Jobs Creation ITC)	International Trade Centre (ITC)	South Sudan	Employment
The future is equal - Empowerment of women in Upper Nile State (SS Women Empowerment DCA)	Danish Church Aid (DCA)	South Sudan	Employment
Reducing inequality and gender-based violence in South Sudan (SS Women Empowerment LAW)	Legal Action Worldwide	South Sudan	Social cohesion
Food security & Resilience in Transitioning Environments - FORESITE (SSRD WV)	World Vision	South Sudan	Social cohesion
SUPPORT TO THE ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATIONALIZATION OF A UN HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE IN SUDAN (Sudan Democratic Transition HRO UN)	UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA	Sudan	Social cohesion
Strengthening Integrated Systems to Accelerate Access to Gender, Child and Youth Justice - International Rescue Committee (SUPREME JLOS IRC)	International Rescue Committee (IRC)	Uganda	Social cohesion
Supporting a Peaceful and Safe Environment in Northern Uganda - SPESE (SUPREME Justice LWF)	Lutherian World Federation	Uganda	Social cohesion
Sustainable Reintegration support to Ethiopian returnees from Europe and support to vulnerable displaced populations affected by COVID-19 (Sustainable Reintegration RRS)	Refugee and Returnee Services – Ethiopia	Ethiopia	Migration governance
Conflict Prevention, peace, and economic opportunities for the youth (Youth KE KRCS)	Red Cross Kenya	Kenya	Employment, Social cohesion
Conflict prevention, peace and economic opportunities for the youth (Youth KE SAIDC)	Agency for International Development	Kenya	Social cohesion

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