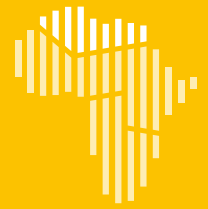


SUCCESS STORY

Empowering Pathways: young migrant students helping others as a foundation for their future



EU Trust Fund for Africa - North of Africa

T05.412 - Mediterranean City-to-City Migration (MC2CM – Phase II)

**EUTF PARTNER:**

International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD).

**BUDGET:**
EUR 5.6M

COUNTRY: North Africa and Middle East regions with special focus on Lybia, Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan and Lebanon.



From **7/2018** to **06/2022**

Objective of the project

Foster rights-based migration governance-systems in the region.

Key successes

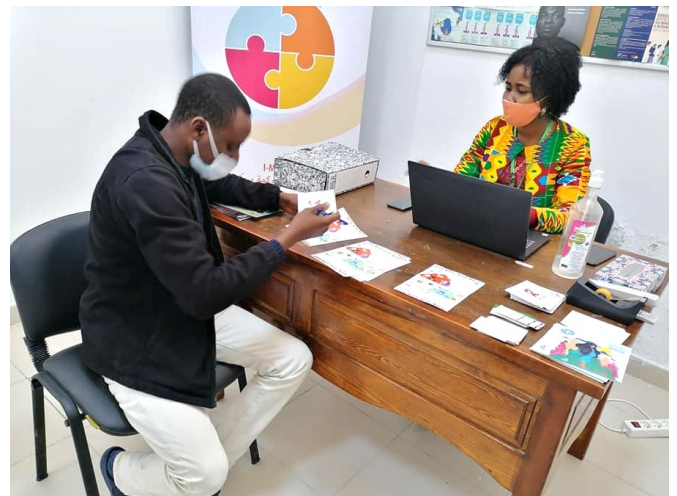
- > 13,650 people reached by sensitisation campaigns on resilience-building practices and basic rights.
- > 144 institutions and non-state actors supported through 21 Targeted City Actions in 33 cities across 5 countries.
- > In Tunisia: 12 legal cases handled; 192 migrants received social assistance; 146 migrants served by physical and digital desks.

The story of transforming lives

Awa and Amadou are just two among hundreds of young migrants in Tunisia who dream of a better future, pursuing education and securing good jobs. When they were offered the opportunity to work at the Migrant Information and Orientation Desk alongside their university studies, they eagerly accepted. This role not only provided them with a chance to support fellow migrants but also to gain practical experience in a field closely related to their own challenges.

Their primary responsibilities included offering information and advice on legal matters and documentation relevant to their status as migrants. They also provided guidance on how to access essential healthcare services, which was often a lifeline for those in need. However, their role extended beyond these technical aspects. *“It should be noted that some migrants came to talk because the agents were peers—they were also migrants, and they felt comfortable talking to someone who shared their experiences”*, explains the head of the partner NGO.

Through their work, Awa and Amadou learned how to connect with individuals in vulnerable situations, often facing a lack of trust due to their difficult circumstances. They found deep satisfaction in witnessing the positive impact of their efforts, whether it was helping someone



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navigate complex legal issues or simply being there to listen. In some cases, just providing moral support was crucial.

“The students we are in contact with have decided to return to their country. Their experience working with us was important for finding employment, as they gained international experience certified by us, even though they were in challenging conditions”. This experience not only enriched Awa and Amadou's own lives but also empowered them to make a tangible difference in the lives of their peers, creating a ripple effect of support and encouragement within the migrant community.



How did the EUTF help?

Fostering a rights-based approach to migration.

The project accompanied the advocacy and awareness raising efforts of local authorities at national, regional and global levels, to ensure that the urban dimension of migration governance is fully considered, and that municipalities identified as key interlocutors. Cities and their local actors were provided with spaces for dialogue, knowledge resources, and action-oriented tools. Representatives from civil society and migrants' associations were exposed to peer-learning events and webinars.

Migrant Information and Orientation Desks. Migrant support centres were set up in three municipalities of Tunis Governorate (Raoued, La Marsa and Ariana) and managed by multicultural agents from migrants' associations. They offered assistance to migrants, legal counselling—primarily for those in irregular situations—and access to public services, with health services being the most frequently requested, such as health assistance during pregnancy.

Online support tools. The mobile application has played a crucial role in disseminating information to users. Additionally, the digital service desk launched through the Facebook page successfully guided many migrants to the appropriate services.

Keys to Success

Migrant to migrant. The operators providing information and counselling services to migrants were also migrants themselves. This ensured a high quality of service, as they understood the needs of migrants seeking support. Additionally, migrants tended to trust their peers more, especially in sensitive cases involving legal issues.

Municipal support. While the municipalities were not directly responsible for assisting migrants, they were deeply committed to resolving their issues. They actively collaborated with NGOs and played a key role in establishing the information centres. Other project activities facilitating international networking and learning were important drivers for the local municipalities, creating interest and motivating their representatives to engage in the support provided to migrants.

Synergies with other NGOs. Numerous other initiatives were taken at the municipal level to support migrants. For instance, there was significant collaboration with Médecins du Monde on the health aspects of migrant support. The project shared space with this partner, which provided direct healthcare assistance to migrants, enhancing the overall support network through combined efforts.

Building on Success

Cities' support to civil society. Support provided to civil society is crucial because associations have an in-depth understanding of the local context and are closely attuned to the needs and problems of local populations. They also play a significant role in raising awareness and promoting shared values of coexistence. Southern Mediterranean countries still need financial support to enable their civil societies to play a significant role in implementing migration governance and addressing the rights of beneficiaries.

Agents as reference points. After 2022, the political context in Tunisia changed, and local authorities shifted their stance, reducing their level of engagement. The three municipal centres closed, and the service is no longer available. However, contact remains ongoing with most of the agents, who continue to serve as reference points for migrants within the different communities.

Potential resources for future activation. Although the services are no longer operational, aspects of the capacity built during the project are still in place and could be utilized to revive cooperation and support services. A guide for agents remains valid and can still be used effectively. The service and rights map is also up-to-date and could be refreshed as needed. Additionally, a mobile application is available, which can be expanded and utilised if reactivated.



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Disclaimer

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