

Action fiche of the EU Trust Fund

1. IDENTIFICATION

Title/Number	T05-EUTF-REG-REG-01 - Research and Evidence Facility for the Sahel and Lake Chad Region and the North of Africa		
Total cost	Estimated total cost: EUR 8 000 000 Total amount from Trust Fund: EUR 8 000 000		
Aid method/Implementation methods	<i>Direct Management</i>		
DAC code	150	Sector	
Sector of intervention of the Trust Fund	Cross-sectorial		
Sector of intervention of the Valletta Action Plan	Cross-sectorial		

2. GROUNDS AND BACKGROUND

2.1. Summary of the action and its objectives

The **overall objective** of the action is to enhance the knowledge and understanding of the root causes of instability, insecurity, irregular migration and forced displacement in West and North Africa and of migration routes, drivers and underlying factors, as well as to analyse and disseminate the most effective policies and approaches to address and reduce them and improve migration management.

The **specific objective** is to conduct, synthesize, disseminate and make use of new and existing research on the drivers and dynamics of the root causes of instability, insecurity, irregular migration and forced displacement in West and North Africa and migration routes, and the most successful policy responses aimed at addressing them and improving migration management in order to equip the EUTF with sufficient evidence to refine its identification and implementation processes.

The action will be split in three major components:

- i) Conduct multidimensional empirical, quantitative and qualitative research;
- ii) Analysis of best practices and of 'what works' aimed at reducing instability, insecurity, irregular migration and forced displacement in the covered region;
- iii) Consolidate and disseminate research results.

The causal chain envisaged is that improving the availability of quality knowledge, and disseminating it strategically and effectively will lead to evidence-base, well-informed decision making around conflict and migration management.

For the implementation of this Facility, the use of research networks rooted in the region, thereby building on existing know-how and sharing knowledge amongst stakeholders will be encouraged.

More specifically, the main pathway to change is based on the following hypothesis: "If the EUTF is able to improve the supply of quality supporting evidence through research and to successfully promote its use by decision makers, then policies and practice will become more effective in reducing conflict and forced migration and improving its management".

2.2. Background

2.2.1. Sectoral background: policies and challenges

In the region, the root causes of instability, forced displacement and irregular migration are diverse, complex and often inter-related, requiring a holistic and integrated approach. There are growing challenges linked to demographic pressure, environmental stress, extreme poverty, internal tensions, the negative impact of terrorism and widespread corruption on the affected populations, institutional weaknesses, weak social and economic infrastructures, and insufficient resilience to food crises. These have in some cases led to human rights violation, open conflict, displacement, criminality, radicalisation and violent extremism, as well as irregular migration, trafficking in human beings and the smuggling of migrants – all further exacerbating existing challenges. There are a number of country-specific challenges to be addressed which can be broadly characterised as follows:

- Countries and/or regions that “traditionally” are areas of origin for legal and/or irregular migration;
- Countries and/or regions that are zones of transit for irregular migration;
- Countries and/or situations marked by structural vulnerability, insufficient access to basic services, demographic pressure, and low resilience to external shocks;
- Countries and/or situations marked by instability, recent or ongoing conflict, including terrorist activities (leading to refugee flows and internal displacement); and
- Issues related to regional cooperation, wider issues of governance and security, and existing capacities for the management of migration flows.

The North Africa region remains either a transit or final destination for mixed migration flows from sub-Saharan Africa, and from other conflict affected countries. The instability still affecting some parts of the region, in particular Libya, continues to generate irregular movements to Europe, as well as an increase in the number of persons seeking international protection. The ongoing unrest and human rights violations in some countries have created greater protection needs, in particular with regard to the most vulnerable groups on the move, with increased numbers of displaced persons being arbitrarily arrested and detained. Terrorist activity in the Sahel and Sinai regions, as well as fighting between rival militia in Libya, also reduces de facto access to international protection.

In this respect, the key challenge in North Africa continues to be the arrival of mixed migration flows at the time when some of the countries face a risk of instability and witness a period of political transition. This is exacerbated by the absence of national and regional strategies for managing mixed migration movements, and the lack of national asylum systems consistent with international standards.

2.3. Lessons learnt

The Sahel and Lake Chad and the North of Africa windows already benefit from a plethora of existing information and sources related to the priority areas of interventions of the EUTF.

However, there is need to reinforce research initiatives to acquire the best knowledge available on local dynamics and how they act as drivers of irregular migration, forced displacement or violent conflict, including violent extremism. Stability, security, irregular migration and displacement are indeed politically complex phenomena that require granular analysis of local and regional contexts and related root causes.

Accessing information and analysis can be difficult in certain areas covered by the EUTF. Local contexts can change swiftly in a constantly evolving environment. Therefore, the EUTF must benefit from accurate and regularly updated information to strengthen its decision-making process and the precision of its actions.

Nonetheless, accessing information and analysis is not sufficient. The EUTF team needs to be able to make informed choices to pinpoint interventions and identify the best implementing partners for a given situation. Well informed, conflict sensitive and rights-based interventions underpinned by nuanced conflict analysis are more likely to result in positive results while safeguarding the principle of 'do no harm'.

Other EU research projects have highlighted the importance i) to partner up with local research institutions to ensure relevance, appropriateness, sustainability and knowledge transfer and ii) to disseminate research results so that evidence is reaching relevant stakeholders and is being used to improve the effectiveness of interventions.

Finally, provided that the EUTF is exposed to a high level of scrutiny, that its actions are identified, formulated and implemented quicker than usual and given the large number of stakeholders involved, the EUTF will seek transparency. The EUTF is willing to benefit from both new research in its priority areas of intervention and from analyses and evaluations of its actions under implementation to refine its operational approach.

2.4. Complementary actions

The Horn of Africa window of the EUTF already benefits from a Research Facility, the estimated cost of which amounts to 4.1 m€. However, there is no Research Facility outstanding for the Sahel and Lake Chad and the North of Africa windows as of today. The present action therefore aims at reaching complementarity with the Horn of Africa Research Facility. In addition, joint researches may be considered to reach synergies between both Research Facilities.

This action will fit in the larger CAD framework (Collect, Analyse and Disseminate) in favour of evidence-based identification, monitoring and evaluation. It will align with the need for "strong research and analysis" identified in the EUTF's strategic orientation document.

The action will be complementary with the technical cooperation facility of the trust fund: while the TCF focuses on short term analysis for the immediate needs of the trust fund's programmes (eg short term technical assistance, for example for monitoring during implementation), the Research facility will focus on longer term objectives/analysis (eg more in-depth analysis required during identification and evaluation phases).

It will built on research already carried out and seek complementary with new initiatives. Relevant EU Member States research on instability and the root causes of irregular migration was produced by, amongst others, the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and the French Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD), the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the British Overseas Development Institute (ODI), the German Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). Other development partners

such as the OECD, the UNDP, ILO, the WB the IMF, the IDS, URD and ICMPD have also conducted relevant research in the field, including studies carried out under the framework of ongoing programmes on migration and international protection. Research and studies produced by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) are of particular relevance to this action. The OHCHR has two relevant regional offices (West Africa, based in Senegal and North Africa, based in Tunis) whose thematic priorities include trafficking in persons and conflict and insecurity. In addition, OHCHR has country offices in Mauritania and Tunisia, has deployed a human rights adviser to the UN country team in Chad and human rights components to UN missions in Mali and Libya. Lastly, the work of the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights' Special Rapporteur on Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons should be taken into account. For the North of Africa, complementarity will be sought with the studies and research undertaken under the programme Euromed Migration IV and the Regional Development and Protection Programme for the North of Africa.

The EUTF will make sure to avoid the duplication of work and to disseminate the collected information as widely as possible and in a user-friendly form so that different stakeholders can both benefit from and contribute to the information.

Eventually, EUTF projects that already include Research & Evidence components built in will be tackled with care to avoid any overlap.

2.5. Donor coordination

The use of open data platforms to publish research and studies will enhance transparency and enable donors to re-use available information.

Research led on the field will take account of discussions with other donors and other stakeholders in order to align with national mechanisms.

3. DETAILED DESCRIPTION

3.1. Objectives

The **overall objective** of the action is to enhance the knowledge and understanding of the root causes of instability, insecurity, irregular migration and forced displacement in West and North Africa and of migration routes, drivers and underlying factors, as well as to analyse and disseminate the most effective policies and approaches to address and reduce them and to improve migration management.

The **specific objective** is to conduct, synthesize, disseminate and make use of new and existing research on the drivers and dynamics of the root causes of instability, insecurity, irregular migration and forced displacement in West and North Africa and migration routes, and the most successful policy responses aimed at addressing them as well as improving migration management in order to equip the EUTF with sufficient evidence to refine its identification and implementation processes.

3.2. Expected results and main activities

Result 1: Multidimensional empirical, quantitative and qualitative research on the drivers and dynamics of the root causes of instability, insecurity, irregular migration

and forced displacement in West & North Africa and along migration routes is conducted, collated and synthesized.

Activities will cover the production of new research and evidence on the drivers and dynamics of the root causes of instability, insecurity, irregular migration and forced displacement in West & North Africa and along migration routes. The 4 areas of interventions of the EUTF will be covered.

Activities will involve, amongst others, qualitative and quantitative research, baseline studies, field research and surveys, statistical studies, etc..

Result 2: Analyses of best practices and 'what works' and identification of gaps, including policies and development programmes, aiming at reducing instability, insecurity, irregular migration and forced displacement and improving migration management in West & North Africa and along migration routes are undertaken.

Activities under result 2 will seek to provide the EUTF with analyses and evaluations of existing policies and programmes in the covered regions and to identify potential gaps. The reasons why they worked or failed will be investigated in order to provide the EUTF with clear guidance and lessons learnt. More specifically, activities will involve various approaches such as impact assessments, participatory research approaches, outcome harvesting, micro and macro evaluations etc.

In addition, other activities will cover independent reviews and evaluations of EUTF actions under implementation.

Result 3: Research results are systematically consolidated and effectively disseminated to EU decision makers and partners in order to ensure transparency and a knowledge sharing amongst different stakeholders.

Activities will relate to the communication and dissemination of research conducted and data collected via open data platforms in order to ensure transparency and a knowledge sharing amongst different stakeholders. Expected research results will cover, amongst others, policy and operational conclusions.

3.3. Risks and assumptions

Risks	Risk level (H/M/L)	Mitigating measures
Complexity of factors and diversity of national specificities complicates aggregated analysis, impact measurement and/or comparison among countries.	Medium	The recognised expertise of the implementing partners and academic/research institutions involved will contribute to reducing this risk by ensuring that analysis is robust and statistically significant and takes into account certain regional/ national circumstances.

		The contribution to the project of external experts from recognised academic institutions as well as of appropriate policy dialogue experts will be a significant factor of risk reduction as well.
Lack of availability of data to support research	Medium	The project stakeholders will identify adequate partners, including government authorities' and national statistic offices through support of EU Delegations, EU Member States embassies and civil society actors to improve access to existing data.
Insufficient commitment and efficiency of relevant academic partner in developing countries.	Low	Joint work with EU research/academic institutions involved in the project activities will result in peer to peer capacity building.
Limited relevance of the research at country level and insufficient commitment shown by governments in selected partner countries to get involved more deeply into dialogue and share information on their public sectorial policies.	Low	The relevant authorities of target countries will be actively involved throughout the action to ensure ownership and commitment.
<p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research is operationally focused and there is sufficient demand for and use of research findings; - Partner institutions are open to using an evidence-based approach to improve decision making; 		

3.4. Crosscutting issues

The following cross-cutting issues will be tackled and supported through this action: good governance and democracy, the promotion of human rights and gender equality.

Research and research participants will be treated with cultural and gender sensitivity and confidentiality. All stakeholders, including research participants, are to be involved in the validation of research results. Research practices will be rights-based and conflict sensitive and ensure that no participant suffers harm as a result of their participation in research. Participation will be voluntary and based on informed consent and allow the possibility to opt out at any point.

These cross-cutting issues will be further explored during the assessment of the specific themes for research at global and country levels.

3.5. Stakeholders

Stakeholders will include research and academic bodies, humanitarian and development actors, decision makers at regional, national and local levels, other donors and implementing partners as well as civil society organisations and human rights institutions. Ultimately, the final beneficiaries of the action are the people of the region, who will benefit from more informed and targeted operational actions.

Partnerships with key academic and research institutions with solid expertise in the 4 areas of intervention of the EUTF in the covered region will be implemented. A due balance will be ensured combining institutions from the EU and from partner countries, favouring north-south/south-south/triangular cooperation schemes.

Outside of academic and research institutions, many organisations participate, directly or indirectly to research that is useful to understand and address the issues that the EUTF aims to tackle. Their cooperation will also be sought in the framework of this action.

4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

4.1. Financing agreement, where applicable

No financing agreement will be concluded for the implementation of this action.

4.2. Indicative period of operational implementation

The implementation period will be 60 months.

4.3. Implementation components and modules

The action will be implemented in centralised management through the award of service contracts or grants.

Given the crisis situation acknowledged by the decision on the establishment of a European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa C(2015)7293 (article 3) and with reference to Chapter 21 of the companion, the EUTF benefits from flexible contractual procedures.

Service contracts will be awarded following those provisions and in accordance with the specific needs through direct award(s), restricted procedure(s) or competitive negotiated procedure(s). The Commission may launch a call for expression of interest to identify a list of potential research providers. The Commission will seek to mobilise the best available expertise and encourage partnerships between organisations, including from partner countries.

4.4. Indicative budget

Component	Amount in EUR'000
Research and Evidence Facility (Results 1 to 3)	8 000 000
Total	8 000 000

4.5. Evaluation and audit

If necessary, ad hoc audits or expenditure verification assignments could be contracted by the European Commission for one or several contracts or agreements.

Audits and expenditure verification assignments will be carried out in conformity with the risk analysis in the frame of the yearly Audit Plan exercise conducted by the European Commission. Evaluation and audit assignments will be implemented through service contracts, making use of one of the Commission's dedicated framework contracts or alternatively through the competitive negotiated procedure or the single tender procedure.

4.6. Communication and visibility

The outputs of this action will be published on an open data platform so that the information collected, provided that it is not confidential, can be re-used by other stakeholders.