



Learning Lessons from the EUTF

- Phase 2 -

*Paving the way for future programming on migration,
mobility and forced displacement*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Executive summary

Introduction¹

At the end of 2021, the last contracts of the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa (EUTF for Africa, hereafter EUTF or Trust Fund) will be signed, bringing an end to an instrument that has so far funded over 500 projects in more than 25 countries in Africa, with a total of over €4.8B committed since 2016.

The next multi-year funding instrument, known as the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), is currently expected to dedicate 10% to migration-related activities. The transition phase between the two instruments offers a unique opportunity to take advantage of the significant experience gained through the EUTF as well as through other migration activities supported by the international community, often in complementarity with the EUTF. **This report therefore aims to provide an analysis of the migration, mobility and displacement programming in EUTF target countries and highlight best practices (both by the EUTF and other interventions) and opportunities to inform future programming.**

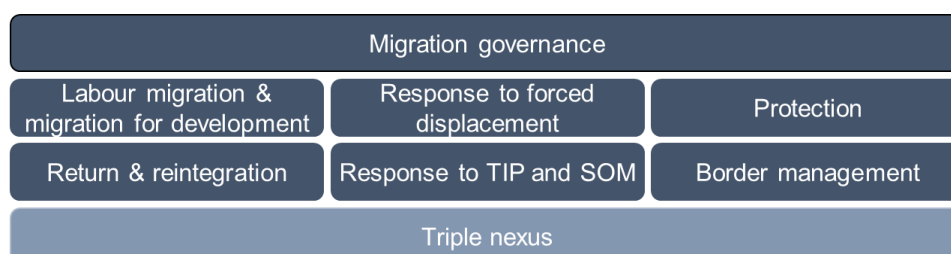
Background, objectives and methodology

The *Learning lessons from the EUTF* exercise was initiated at the end of June 2019 as a light, forward looking exercise, intended as an internal and informal reflection on what could be learned from the implementation of the EUTF on the topics of migration and forced displacement. The initial findings of this exercise were delivered in January 2020 in a first draft report.

The second phase of the *Learning lessons from the EUTF* exercise, which lasted from June 2020 to February 2021 pursued the following objectives: pave the way for a post-2020 strategy on migration, mobility and forced displacement; update the EUTF portfolio assessment and contextual data developed in phase I; further analyse the eight thematic areas identified and deliver an updated *Learning lessons from the EUTF* report at the beginning of 2021 to support future programming.

The research was based on the analysis of: materials from implementing partners working on EUTF projects; in-depth secondary research on migration, mobility and forced displacement in general and on each of the eight identified thematic areas represented in the diagram below; and key informant interviews with over 350 stakeholders from a variety of organisations including EU agencies, most EU Delegations (EUDs) covered by the EUTF, implementing partners, member states, the United Nations (UN) and other international organisations as well as members of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), think tanks, academia and civil society. The report was also based on case studies that were conducted in parallel on relevant topics and projects.

Figure 1: Eight thematic areas in the scope of the study



¹ Sources for all information mentioned in the Executive Summary can be found in footnotes in the relevant sections of the main report.

Migration and displacement trends

Irregular arrivals from Africa to Europe have sharply decreased since the migration ‘crisis’ of 2015, which was itself mostly attributable to increased mixed migration from the Middle East, not Africa. **Conversely, and perhaps most importantly, the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the three EUTF windows, combined with the number of refugees from these countries living in Africa, increased by a third** between 2015 and 2019 – from 13.3 million to 17.7 million, including many children. In fact, the number of displaced persons in the SLC region increased by 1.5 million between 2018 and 2019 alone.

The COVID-19 crisis will continue to have a significant influence on migration in the short to medium term. The main migration-related consequences of the pandemic will likely consist in a significant impact on remittances as well as a deterioration of already poor and crowded living conditions for migrants and refugees and worsening access to education and socioeconomic conditions.

In the coming decades, migration, mobility and forced displacement-related challenges are likely to increase, driven mainly by factors such as demographic growth, economic development and climate change. The combination of these factors will, above all, exacerbate pressures on African cities: the number of urban residents in Africa is expected to increase from 550 million in 2018 to 825 million in 2030 and 1.5 billion in 2050, with migration currently contributing to around a third of the increase in the urban population.

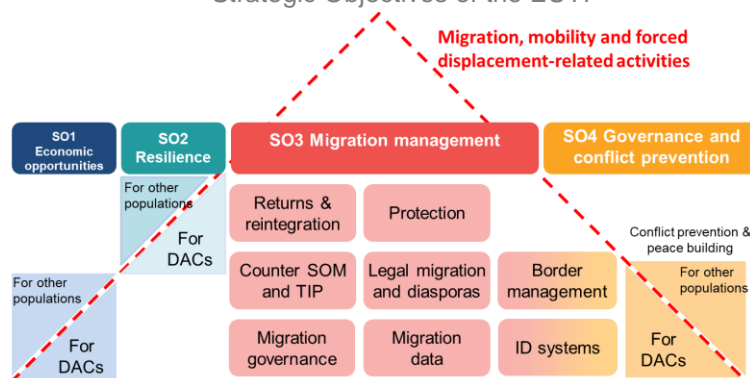
All of this **suggests a need for a sustained and even increased EU response to migration, forced displacement and mobility-related challenges in Africa**, including in cities which will likely be on the frontline of the response to migration pressures, and between Africa and its neighbours, including Europe.

EUTF portfolio analysis

1. Overall EUTF funding dedicated to migration

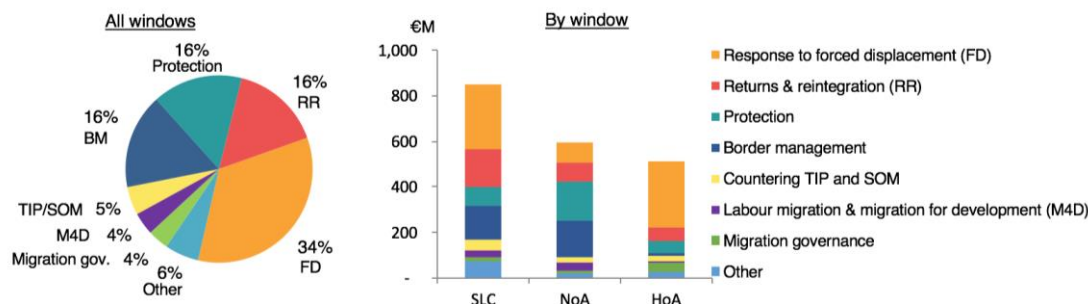
An analysis of the EUTF portfolio conducted for this report shows that, **overall, 51% of EUTF funding is estimated to be directly ‘migration-related’¹** (€1.95B out of a total mapped budget of €3.80B for contracted projects).

Figure 2: Perimeter of migration, mobility and forced displacement-related activities across the four Strategic Objectives of the EUTF



The percentage of EUTF funding per region that is directly related to migration is highest in the North of Africa (NoA) with 84%, followed by the Sahel and Lake Chad region (SLC) with 48% and the Horn of Africa (HoA) with 39%. **34% of the EUTF’s migration-related budget is spent on support to displacement-affected communities (DACs)** – including resilience, livelihoods and conflict prevention –, around 40% of which is directed to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and their associated host communities.

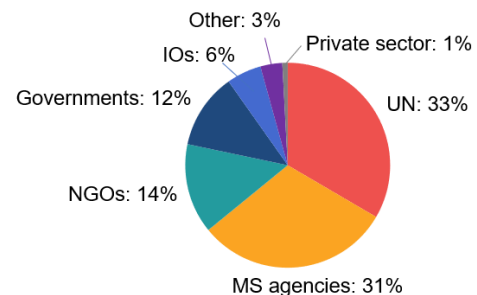
Figure 3: Migration-related EUTF funding as of September/November 2020 by thematic area



¹ Throughout this report, ‘migration-related’ refers to migration, mobility and forced displacement, which is not always spelled out for ease of reading.

Contrary to perceptions held by some (and to analyses of the overall portfolio where EU member state agencies do tend to have a larger share), only 31% of the EUTF's migration, mobility and forced displacement-related budget is implemented by member state agencies. UN agencies actually implement the largest share, with 33% of EUTF migration, mobility and forced displacement-related activities. IOM received almost €400M in EUTF migration, mobility and forced displacement-related funding (€394M), largely through the EU-IOM Joint Initiative, while UNHCR received €181M.

Figure 4: Migration-related EUTF funding as of September/November 2020 by implementing partner



NGOs directly implement a non-negligible proportion of EUTF migration, mobility and forced displacement-related activities, at 14%, with large regional differences (24% in the HoA against only 2% in NoA). It should be noted, however, that this figure does not include the share of projects that are sub-contracted to NGOs by member state agencies and UN agencies. The EUTF mid-term evaluation indicates that NGOs actually represent 25% of total (not only migration-related) contracting when sub-contracts are considered.

Although the 'peak' of disbursement of EUTF funding occurred around the summer of 2020, a significant amount of programming remains and will continue to be rolled out until the end of 2024. In addition, contracts 'in the pipeline' are expected to increase disbursements of funds to come.

2. Monitoring EUTF results and impact

The EUTF Monitoring and Learning System (MLS) was contracted to design a regional 'meta-monitoring' system of EUTF outputs which are analysed in quarterly reports.¹ At this stage, the most visible achievements of the EUTF are these very tangible outputs. This is already meaningful as millions of people of concern have access to improved basic services and benefit from nutritional support, over 100,000 migrants have been supported to return home and are receiving employment reintegration support, many frameworks and systems have been created to manage migration better, civil servants have been mobilised and trained, migrants smugglers are being prosecuted, etc.

Beyond output monitoring, outcomes are also being measured by projects, and the MLS initially attempted to aggregate these. But because these numbers depend on the methodological choices made by implementing partners, and because the intensity of the changes cannot be summed up, EUTF management and the MLS decided not to go forward with a quantitative aggregation of outcome indicators, and to analyse individual project outcomes as they emerge.

The broader impact of the EUTF is even more difficult to capture, but will have to be considered and analysed over the next few years. Perhaps more importantly, our research suggests more 'intangible' but highly significant effects generated by the EUTF, including the new dynamics of collaboration being created across governments and the improved capacity and influence of institutions (e.g. IGAD); the information networks and linkages being established across police and intelligence agencies (e.g. ROCK); the political access being gained with governments and new dynamics of collaboration around subjects that were until recently deemed too sensitive or EU-centred.

These effects will have to continue to be measured in the future as projects funded by the EUTF come to maturity. This longitudinal analysis should be integrated into the design of future programmes.

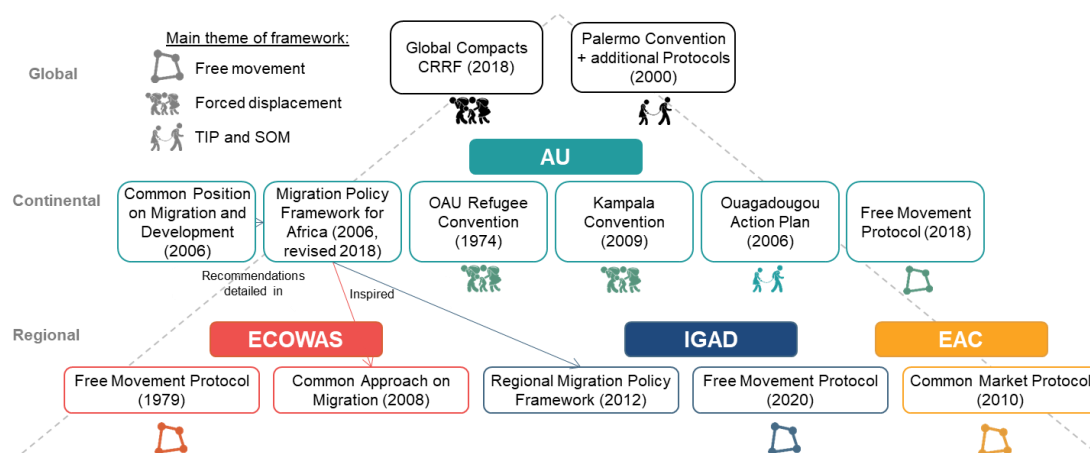
¹ Available on the EUTF Website.

Migration governance

For this thematic review and portfolio analysis, support to migration governance includes: i) support for the development of migration governance norms, policies, frameworks, strategies, etc. (hereafter 'frameworks'), and the integration of migration-related issues into existing sectoral frameworks; ii) capacity building for government staff on policymaking (vs. operational) purposes; and iii) support for coordination between countries, and within countries (between policymakers).¹ **Frameworks specific to migration are not the only way forward** when it comes to migration governance. However, key good practices include 'whole-of-government' approaches and the inclusion of local governments and civil society. **Studies have been conducted on migration governance frameworks in Africa but research on their implementation is almost non-existent.**

1. Situation across Africa

Figure 5: Selected migration governance frameworks in Africa (cross-country level)



2. Key non-EUTF interventions

At least €110M were identified as spent on migration governance programming by non-EUTF donors in the EUTF regions, dealing with a diverse range of themes but tending to focus on the regional level.² Beyond the EU, prominent donors include Germany and to a lesser extent Sweden and Switzerland. **Innovative approaches** identified include: demand-driven facilities that ensure stronger ownership of donor programming (which is especially key in the field of governance – for example as part of the German agency GIZ's 'Support to the African Union on migration and displacement' or the EU's FMM³ projects) and the 'Swiss approach', which focuses on specific countries (e.g. Tunisia) and attempts to build migration governance systems over a number of years and at various levels (both national and local).

3. EUTF portfolio

About €75M in EUTF funding is dedicated to migration governance, over half of which is spent in the Horn of Africa. Key implementers include GIZ (€24M) and IOM (€12M). **In general, the EUTF has so far not adopted a comprehensive approach of support to migration governance**, instead tending to support specific governance structures with the objective of facilitating the implementation of its projects.

¹ The term 'policymakers' can include non-traditional actors such as NGOs, CSOs, even the private sector, as long as they are part of a group making policy decisions for example.

² However smaller programming focused at the national and local level was certainly missed by this thematic review.

³ FMM is the 'Support to Free Movement of Persons and Migration in West Africa' project.

Main themes covered include, with around €15M each: overall migration policies at the national or local levels; policies related to **forced displacement**, mostly to improve the inclusion of refugee- and IDP-related considerations into local governance systems in HoA; **smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons**, again focused on the HoA, with the Better Migration Management (BMM) programme in particular; and **legal and labour migration** to a slightly lesser extent (about €12M), mostly through support to IGAD's Protocols on Free Movement and the THAMM¹ programme in NoA. In addition, €5M were allocated to addressing governance related to **returns and reintegration**, and a few projects across the three windows aim to address governance on **protection**.

4. Perspectives and areas of opportunities

The next funding cycle should be an opportunity to adopt a more ambitious and systematic approach to supporting migration governance across Africa.

Good practices are highlighted in the Migration governance section of this report, such as the EU FMM initiative in West Africa and its demand driven facility. Following a similar cross-country and multi-annual logic, a new ambitious EU-funded programme could be put in place at the cross-country level to support the development, coordination and harmonisation of migration governance systems across Africa.

Such a programme would be designed and managed to: i) keep track of the development of migration governance systems over the next decade; ii) respond rapidly to partner governments' needs with a customised approach; iii) map, track and share good practices in migration management support initiatives across countries; and iv) complement these support initiatives and foster coherence between approaches while minimising overlap (given that other donors will continue to run their own migration governance support programmes).

This combination of analytical and technical support should be ensured in the medium term to accelerate efforts currently taking place in many countries.

To pave the way for such a programme, the EU should engage in a comprehensive exercise aimed at assessing both the situation – including gaps – in migration governance legislation and in its implementation, as well as the current structures in place (coordination agencies, secretariats, focal points in ministries and at local level) and the absorption capacities of partner countries, as of 2021. This assessment would also set a strong baseline for future programming.

¹ THAMM stands for 'Towards a Holistic Approach to Labour Migration Governance and Labour Mobility in North Africa.'

Labour migration & migration for development

This thematic review covers activities supporting labour migration (as well as student mobility) **and the positive impact of diasporas** in countries of origin (often referred to as 'migration for development'). It therefore covers mobility schemes (for workers and students) and other activities that directly contribute to the safe mobility of new migrants, as well as programming that aims to increase the contributions of existing migrant populations to their countries of origin. **Identity (ID) systems** are also considered in this thematic review as the lack of foundational identity systems is a major challenge to free movement.

1. Situation across Africa

The AU Protocol on Free Movement of Persons (FMP), adopted in 2018, requires 15 ratifications to enter into force but has so far only been ratified by four states. Though most RECs have either adopted or proposed protocols for the free movement of persons between states, in practice, implementation has only started in ECOWAS and the EAC. Inspired by the ECOWAS and EAC protocols, IGAD's Protocol on FMP was endorsed in February 2020 with EUTF support. It is important to keep in mind that **Protocols on FMP are a necessary condition for the continent to fully benefit from migration, but, alone, they are insufficient.** Investments in infrastructure connecting countries with each other, as well as strong ID systems will also be needed.

Three main types of labour migration were identified: 1) **within Africa** - In 2017, there were around 13 to 14.4 million migrant workers across Africa, of whom almost 30% were working in southern Africa. In addition, although numbers are difficult to find, cross-border transhumance and nomadic pastoralism may well turn out to constitute the bulk of 'labour migration' occurring within the continent; 2) **to the Middle East** - Estimates of African migrant workers in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and Lebanon vary between 2 and 4.5 million. Low-skilled migrant workers are vulnerable to exploitation, and faced with mass expulsions and trafficking; 3) **to the EU** to a lesser extent - In the EU, 61,000 first-time residence permits were issued to African citizens in 2019 for work reasons, though this represented only 12% of all permits issued. A significant proportion of irregular flows to Europe can however also be qualified as labour migration.

Student mobility is still low. 'Only' 130,000 African students (tertiary level) were studying in other African countries in 2017, while over 400,000 were studying in non-African countries, including 245,000 in Europe. Lack of universal recognition of university degrees constrains the mobility of students across Africa.

Migration for development – Remittances represent a significant proportion of GDP, and in some countries, they represent more than ten times the amount of development aid. While **it is unclear to what extent remittances contribute to economic growth**, they can support communities' resilience and help to reduce their economic vulnerability. **Diasporas are a growing topic:** though only a minority of African states have national labour and/or diaspora policies, over two thirds of those that do have adopted them in the past four years.

2. Key non-EUTF interventions

This thematic review identified projects worth around €110M currently funded by non-EUTF actors in the fields of labour migration and migration for development, including about €70M from other EU sources such as the European Development Fund (EDF) and the EU Pan-African Programme. Other **key donors include the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) and GIZ/Germany.** Thematically, funding is largely targeted at small-scale mobility schemes, efforts to protect migrant workers (which are mostly implemented by the ILO), and increasing contributions of migrant workers to their countries of origin.

3. EUTF portfolio

EUTF funding for labour migration and migration for development is limited compared to other thematic areas, accounting for about €75M (with an additional €10M if one includes support to IGAD's Free Movement Protocol, which is counted in the thematic review on *Migration governance*), or about 2% of total EUTF funding, of which almost half is allocated to the NoA window. Senegal and Morocco received particularly significant funding. **The largest amounts are dedicated to promoting diaspora investments (about €35M), to mobility schemes** for students and university staff (Erasmus+, €16M) and for workers (THAMM, €15M). In addition, €57M were used to support **identity systems**, mostly in Mali and Senegal).

4. Perspectives and areas of opportunity

Making free movement protocols a reality and preparing infrastructures to support mobility in Africa should be a priority.

This should be connected to the broader efforts on supporting migration governance frameworks and capacities across Africa and will also require the development of a realistic roadmap and investment plans to put robust ID systems in place across the continent.

Protocols on transhumance and their implementation should also be supported, especially given the challenges related to herder-farmer conflicts in the SLC area. Key lessons learned can be drawn from FMM research on the implementation of the ECOWAS transhumance protocol.

Donors should continue to focus on supporting the development of intra-Africa transport, connectivity infrastructure and hubs of economic development, as the real benefits of free movement can be multiplied if migrants can access favourable economic environments.

Intra-country mobility should also be looked at with great attention, especially in the context of climate change, with rural workers increasingly likely to move to cities (as opposed to other countries) due to decreasing agricultural returns.

Migrant workers' specific needs should be streamlined into employment policies and planning, particularly regarding access to social services and protection. The EU could also help African states, most likely through Regional Economic Communities (RECs), **to develop regional positions and measures to negotiate with other states who receive labour migrants.**

In the short term, concrete gaps and complementarities should be identified between labour markets in Africa. As labour market information systems are likely to remain limited in the short term, efforts should focus on the most promising sectors where numbers are likely to be significant.

Pilot initiatives for mobility schemes toward Europe should be scaled up, building on the experience of existing schemes.

To further develop student mobility and based on its relevant experience, the EU could strengthen its support to the AU and RECs to **facilitate recognition (and portability) of qualifications (including for TVET)** across Africa. It could also step up its support to intra-Africa student mobility (access to full degrees, building the capacities of institutions). Lessons could be drawn from the EU-funded 'Intra-Africa Academic Mobility Scheme' and pilot projects between TVET institutions.

Finally, the EU could support increased and more profitable diaspora involvement in Africa's mid/long-term development, in part by adopting 'systemic approaches' to reducing the cost of remittances as well as through efforts to encourage diaspora entrepreneurship. **In parallel, the EU could assist countries to develop positive relations of trust with their diasporas**, which should ultimately allow for more development-oriented diaspora investments.

Response to forced displacement

Forced displacement is not a legal term but rather a commonly accepted way of describing the movement of populations protected by international conventions and frameworks. It is defined as 'the

movement of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters.'

1. Situation across Africa

The HoA region is characterised by large numbers of forcibly displaced people (accounting for 61% of all displaced people in EUTF countries), most of whom are hosted in camps. **In SLC**, which accounts for 33% of all displaced people in EUTF countries, **increased violence in the last few years has provoked additional displacement** around the Liptako-Gourma region and the Lake Chad Basin. **In NoA**, the escalation of hostilities in Libya and the Syrian crisis have led to an increase in the number of IDPs, refugees and asylum seekers.

In SLC and HoA, governments have progressively adopted laws to protect forcibly displaced people and to implement international and regional conventions at the national level, with Uganda considered a model country for refugee policy in HoA, and Niger standing out in SLC for having passed a law protecting IDPs (in 2018) by making the government responsible for assisting them. **Conversely, most NoA countries have not yet adopted domestic measures to ensure the implementation of frameworks on refugees and IDPs.** However, Morocco stands out with the introduction in 2014 of the National Immigration and Asylum Policy.

2. Key non-EUTF interventions

Humanitarian funding for forcibly displaced people is highly dependent on a small share of donors and actors. In all three regions, UNHCR is the main recipient of donor funding, and the US government is the main donor. In terms of UNHCR funding, most situations that are considered protracted are lacking more than 50% of required funding, possibly indicating donor fatigue. **Targeted development assistance for forced displacement has grown rapidly since 2016**, thanks in large part to the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, which launched the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) approach and to increased involvement from multilateral development banks. UNHCR has positioned itself as a catalyst for engagement of development funding, and multi-donor initiatives (like the FCDO-UNHCR-World Bank programme 'Building the Evidence on Forced Displacement') and private sector actors (such as the IKEA Foundation) are also emerging as key players in this field.

3. EUTF portfolio

The EUTF has funded a large and diverse range of projects to support DACs, with €638M used to implement various strategies across the three windows, from support to international frameworks for DACs in HoA (such as the CRRF projects in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda) to resilience-building LRRD (Linking relief, rehabilitation and development) approaches in SLC. **Most stakeholders claim that the EUTF has created space, learning and funding for a significant number of innovative 'pilot' projects to support DACs**, and such risk-tolerant funding seems to have encouraged other development partners to pursue similar approaches. Examples of this include the RDPP Kenya project, which acted as a catalyst to attract additional donors and programmes to Kalobeyei (such as the IFC's Kakuma Kalobeyei Challenge Fund).

4. Perspectives and areas of opportunity

4.1. General principles

Donor coordination is critical in forced displacement programming. The creation of joint funds should be considered to ensure a common strategy and approach to forced displacement in each country or area of intervention. Furthermore, to support **evidence-based approaches**, multi-donor mapping, vulnerability assessments and political economy analyses should be commissioned, and **real-time**

monitoring of activities should be used to adjust interventions to rapidly evolving contexts and integrate lessons and best practices. Political dialogue and cooperation with local government and sectoral systems should be prioritised, and the EU's political clout offers an opportunity to **bridge the gap between development and political actors**. Finally, further engagement with the private sector should be considered where possible, notably through **public-private partnerships**.

4.2. Programme design

Agility and flexibility (such as through crisis modifier funds) should be prioritised in programme design so that interventions can better respond to the volatility of displacement situations and concomitant humanitarian and development needs. **Continuity** should also be promoted through longer multi-year programming cycles. Where possible, a **nexus approach** should be adopted, for example by conducting joint assessments with ECHO where possible. DACs should themselves be integrated into programme design through **participatory approaches**, and **area-based approaches** should be employed where appropriate. Livelihoods interventions should be based on strong **value chain analyses** and take into consideration beneficiaries' aspirations. **Targeting** methodologies should be primarily vulnerability- and needs-based, though additional vulnerabilities arising from status alone must also be considered. **Support to urban areas** hosting many forcibly displaced people should be extended where possible. **Finally, ensuring that all implementing partners include and effectively implement an appropriate exit strategy** is key to ensuring the sustainability of their approach.

4.3. Evidence-based and data-driven approach

Collaboration with learning partners should continue to foster the identification of best practices and lessons learned for future interventions (e.g. ReDSS for RE-INTEG, URD for KEY in Mali). **Investments should be made in research and learning on support to DACs in insecure and hard-to-reach areas**, as methods of implementation and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) often need to be adapted to them. **Data collected on forced displacement, beneficiary profiles and needs should be harmonised and centralised** to better inform policy and programming. The impact of projects should be monitored as they unfold to be able to scale up promising activities and ensure alignment with durable solutions frameworks. Finally, the **inclusion of additional groups in the definition of forced displacement should be considered** to take into consideration some groups that are left in a 'grey area', such as forced returns, and to adapt to the evolution of the migration context.

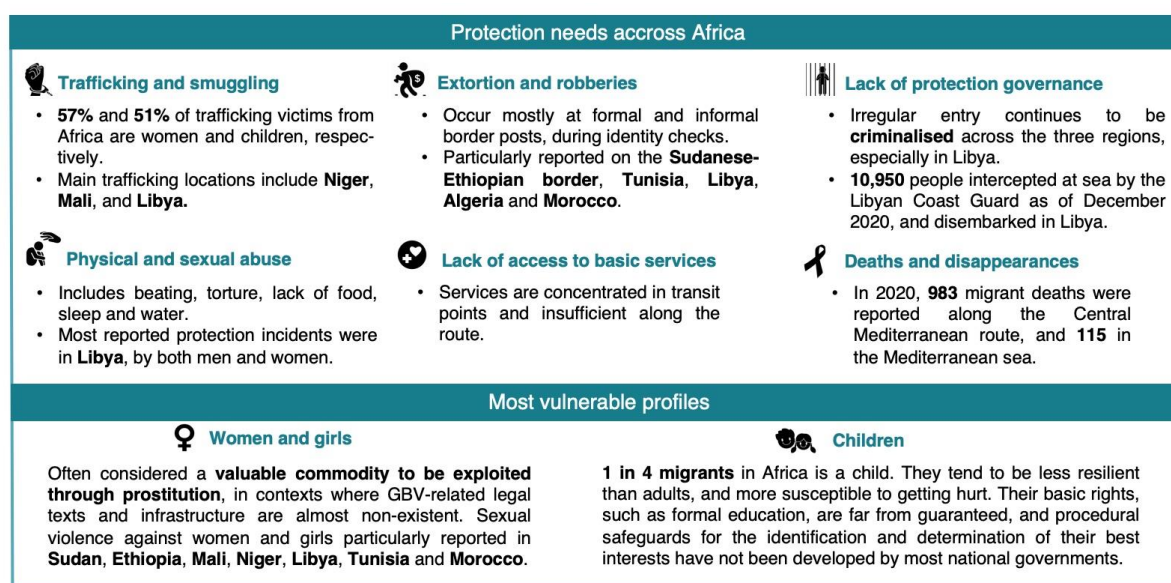
Protection

There is no universally agreed definition of protection, but, for the purpose of this study, we use that of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), according to which protection refers to ‘*all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law (human rights law, humanitarian law and refugee law)*’. This definition also applies to **people on the move**, who will be the focus of this section.¹

1. Situation across Africa

Conflict-related violence, combined with poor protection governance and the COVID-19 pandemic, are contributing to higher protection needs across the region, especially in NoA and SLC.

Figure 6: Main protection needs for people on the move in the three EUTF windows



2. EU and non-EU interventions and actors

The US is currently the largest contributor of **humanitarian funding** to protection activities in the EUTF regions between 2016 and 2020. It is especially active in the HoA, where it has provided nearly USD 194M in protection funding, of which 47% has been allocated to the UN. Similarly, **the EU** – currently the third largest donor of humanitarian funding to protection activities in the EUTF regions² after the UN – has allocated half of its humanitarian protection funds in the past four years to HoA. **Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPF)** in Nigeria, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia allocated USD 188M to protection activities between 2016 and 2020. **Switzerland** is the fifth largest donor with USD 142M allocated to protection between 2016 and 2020.

The NoA window leads with the highest amount (€170M) and proportion (24%) of EUTF funding allocated to protection activities, as the protection of vulnerable migrants is one of the four priority areas for the region according to the EUTF’s Strategic Board. **The portfolio analysis indicates smaller proportions of EUTF funds allocated to protection in SLC (4%) and HOA (3%).** However, this is partly because in SLC, many protection activities are included in the ‘return and reintegration’ and ‘forced displacement’ categories of the portfolio analysis. Similarly, in the HoA context, protection

¹ IOM and UNHCR use the IASC definition.

² As of November 2020, the EU is the first contributor in Libya with USD 30M. OCHA website, Libya. Retrieved [here](#).

needs are less urgent and more likely to be addressed through longer-term support to displacement-affected communities.

3. Protection response and main challenges

Protection responses can range from **flexible interventions to quickly stop, limit or alleviate the impact of violence on people on the move; the provision of services along migration routes; awareness raising (AR) campaigns** (which mostly focus on the risks of irregular migration, rather than providing information on alternatives to irregular migration); **and durable solutions approaches** (e.g. voluntary returns, local integration and resettlement).

Interlocutors reported several **challenges** associated with implementing protection interventions. For example, **the targeting of beneficiaries within mixed migration flows in emergency contexts** represents a significant challenge, in part because refugees, IDPs and migrants all have different needs and protection frameworks. **Cooperating with local and national actors**, while essential, can also be challenging if their understanding of protection incidents and their capacity to address the protection needs of people on the move is limited. Finally, although **resettlement** is an effective and durable protection solution, **it targets a very limited number of refugees, and is an expensive and complex mechanism as seen with the Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM)**. Funded by the UNHCR and the EU, it was launched in late 2017, to evacuate the most vulnerable refugees from Libya to Niger and Rwanda, where support to resettlement and complementary pathways are meant to be provided. Though 3,833 persons have been evacuated as of December 2020, political and security constraints in Libya, bottlenecks in the resettlement process and a lack of alternative regular pathways to Europe can limit the positive impact of the programme in the long run.

4. Perspectives and areas of opportunity

Flexible interventions that provide protection services in emergency contexts should support an inclusive approach to protection while also maintaining adapted protection services for different migration profiles. **Knowledge of local dynamics** should be strengthened to ensure interventions adapted to the context, while strengthened **cooperation with national and local actors** will help to ensure continuity. **Mobile interventions and search and rescue operations along fast changing migration routes should continue**, and should be supported by effective referral systems to more/better equipped protection actors. The **network of Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) should also be strengthened** by building the capacity of their staff and promoting mobile clinics and protection monitoring patrols. Information sharing, data collection and analysis on protection needs, **especially regarding women and children on the move**, should be strengthened.

AR campaigns should not only focus on the protection risks along the route, but should also provide information about alternatives to irregular migration, local opportunities, and how to best prepare for the risks for those who still wish to continue to migrate.

Capacity building and cooperation efforts to reinforce the protection environment should focus on **national protection laws and frameworks** for people on the move, **capacity building in the psychosocial sector (PSS)**, **cooperation between state actors**, and **sensitisation of national and local authorities on protection issues**, especially regarding children and women. **Long term funding** for this should be ensured, as well as closer coordination between humanitarian and development actors in the protection sector.

Several areas of opportunity were also identified for **durable protection solutions**.

With regards to the ETM, the local footprint and knowledge of the Libyan context should continue being strengthened to ensure access to detention centres and effective cooperation with the most relevant local and international actors on the ground in a very fluid environment. **If ETM activities are scaled up to other countries, transparency and realism on the transit centres'**

absorption capacities and resettlement opportunities should be assured when making the initial agreement with government partners. **Communication efforts with beneficiaries** should continue to avoid pull factors in detention centres or tensions and disappointment, including during transit, and make sure beneficiaries' expectations are realistic. **Advocacy efforts** should be continued in favour of more resettlement spots and swifter and remote resettlement (RST) selection processes.

Durable protection solutions should also continue to be provided directly **from Libya**, through stronger cooperation between the EU and Libyan authorities to include people on the move in the country's reconstruction phase in the future. Good practices of countries like Sweden and Canada which select RST beneficiaries located in Libya or Italy which operates humanitarian evacuations directly from Libya can also be replicated.

Durable protection solutions should also continue to be provided along the **migration routes**. Stronger Refugee Status Determination (RSD) capacities could be put in place in countries along the route for potential asylum seekers to apply before they reach Libya; local livelihood opportunities could be more systematically offered to migrants and asylum seekers in all countries along the route (as currently being piloted in Mauritania by the UNHCR with EUTF funding), as an alternative to heading north. Finally, **complementary pathways** should also be encouraged in parallel such as humanitarian corridors as done between Niger and Italy, or community sponsorships as seen in Canada.

Return & reintegration

This section provides an analysis of the landscape of return to and reintegration (RR) in Africa, building on a thorough review of the EUTF-funded return and reintegration activities (from Africa to Africa), as well as on insights from non-EUTF interventions (including returns from Europe to Africa) to gain a comprehensive overview of the actors and approaches at stake, and of best practices in this field. Resettlement is covered in the thematic review on *Protection*.

1. Situation across Africa

Returns from the EU: From 2014 to 2019, a total of 11,940 migrants benefitted from assisted return (mainly voluntary) from the EU (28 countries) to Africa, with 58% returning to Algeria, Nigeria, Morocco and Tunisia. During the same timeframe, 221,560 were forcibly returned following an order to leave.

Returns from Africa: From May 2017 to November 2020, IOM assisted 88,949 people with their voluntary return from Africa and 101,027 migrants with reintegration assistance, with a sharp increase in the number of third-country nationals being returned from Algeria to neighbouring countries such as Mali and Niger in 2019.

Returns from the Middle East: Over four years (2013-2014 and 2017-2020), the approximate number of returns from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) (total 437,509) is almost twice the total number of forced returns from the EU recorded in five years (221,560).

With the onset of **COVID-19 and the suspension of AVR services, returns were mostly spontaneous** from March 2020 through the following six months, meaning without external assistance, protection or health control.

Migrants face numerous socioeconomic challenges in the context of reintegration. Migrants moving within Africa often undertake dangerous journeys and are at risk of a range of human rights violations and abuses. Minimally integrated and low-skilled migrants returning to Africa from Europe face loss of social status, shame and self-stigmatisation in their communities of return, and may have to reimburse family members for financial support provided on the initial migration journey.

2. EUTF portfolio

Within the EUTF portfolio, over €306M are dedicated to RR across the three windows through a total of 33 projects. The SLC window receives most of this funding (55%) due to the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration (EU-IOM JI) and to the main return route from northern Africa to the SLC, followed by NoA (27%) and HoA (18%). With over 100 000 migrants supported in their return and / or reintegration process, the Joint Initiative is **the only large-scale programme dealing with south-south RR flows and is unique in its magnitude.**

The **amount and form of assistance** provided to individual returnees varies depending on vulnerabilities and needs. In its initial phase, the EU-IOM JI experienced a much larger than expected caseload, which generated delays in the provision of economic reintegration assistance, creating a degree of dissatisfaction among returnees and some attrition. The outbreak of COVID-19 has further complicated the provision of in-kind assistance which has often been replaced by cash or mobile money.

The need for **psychosocial support** (PSS) is widespread among returnees, particularly minors. The EU-IOM JI offers PSS but returnees' needs are only partially met, with persisting challenges in identifying needs and ensuring accessibility, quality and continuity of care. To address the EU-IOM JI's PSS weakness, IOM is mobilising medical NGOs where possible but few referral mechanisms are yet in place.

IOM has started to offer a broader range of **economic reintegration options. Job creation:** the EU-IOM JI assists many returnees to set up their own businesses but the constrained reintegration budget

per beneficiary limits the necessary pre-assessments and follow-up. **Job placements** or the orientation of returnees towards concrete jobs has not been very developed through the EU-IOM JI yet as they require a robust knowledge of the job market, a network of private sector actors and local employers, and specific expertise that IOM is yet to build. **Referrals** are still few but increasing under the JI. Referring to other EUTF projects has been done to a limited extent due to a variety of obstacles.

Community-based projects: In practice, the evolution toward more community support did not happen to the extent originally intended by IOM, and the **approach faces considerable operational challenges and delays**. The level of engagement in, experience with and opinions about collective and community assistance vary significantly. There seems to be a contrast between implementing partners and governments' enthusiasm on the one hand and the limited returnees' interest on the other.

National ownership and sustainability of the RR process requires policy development and institutional strengthening as well as the involvement and capacity building of national actors. EUTF funding has been essential to open a dialogue with national authorities on migration issues such as RR. The EU-IOM JI has so far made considerable progress enhancing these governance dimensions to increase empowerment, ownership and leadership. IOM has invested commendable efforts in formal and informal capacity building of governments and field partners. However, significant challenges persist and questions related to the end of the project and funding remain, such as how to institutionalise technical committees and coordination bodies. Further, the **involvement of national institutions remains limited and, in some countries, they demand to play a more central role**.

While the EU-IOM JI plans to continue strengthening capacity building with different partners, other EUTF-funded programmes are pushing for national appropriation of the RR process through capacity building of national authorities that are entirely in charge of managing RR. Projects supporting national ownership of the RR process include the 'Sustainable reintegration support to Ethiopian returnees from Europe' and '*ProGreS Migration Tunisie*', a reintegration project in Tunisia whose objective is to support a Tunisian-led common reintegration mechanism ('Tounesna') for a selected number of Tunisian returnees from four European countries. So far, this is the only identified platform exclusively dedicated to reintegration in EUTF countries. Essential to the development of such platforms is the **willingness and interest of the government to own the process**. Efforts are also ongoing to strengthen cooperation on RR between authorities across EUTF windows, including through the cross-window programme '*Action de Coopération Sud-Sud en matière de migration*'.

Emergency returns and Voluntary Humanitarian Returns (VHR) from Africa to Africa – VHRs offer tailored approaches to migrants impacted by conflict or natural disaster-related displacement. IOM is one of the few actors with tangible results on VHR as they also occur under the EU-IOM JI. VHR and reintegration from Libya is also one of the specific objectives of the EUTF-funded 'Managing mixed migration flows in Libya' project.

3. Return and reintegration from Europe (non-EUTF)

This section describes the **key return flows** from the EU to Africa in the last ten years and the **evolution of key RR-related policies, actors and funding** since the 1970s. It further draws attention to partnerships between and approaches by EU member states. **AVR** has gained substantial appeal as it is perceived as a **cost-effective and more humane alternative to deportations**. IOM has become the main agency for AVRR, benefitting from strong financial backing from EU funds and member states. In parallel, **Frontex** was created in 2004, but its mandate only expanded to cover return management in 2016 and reintegration in 2019.

4. Perspectives and areas of opportunity

The magnitude of return flows should be assessed and anticipated to calibrate future return programmes. Although the available data is incomplete, several major flows of return to Africa from

Africa, Europe and the Middle East were identified over the last five years. Future trends should be assessed based on a combination of datasets that include data collected by IOM (e.g. Displacement Tracking Matrix or DTM) and by the DRC through the Mixed Migration Centre, as well as data available from Frontex and EU member states' interior ministries on irregular migrants in the EU. Using this data to monitor trends should allow the EU and other relevant actors to properly calibrate the systems to be maintained or put in place to support future returns.

Returns from Africa to Africa are likely to remain a key focus area for the EU, and the number of returnees to be supported in the future is expected to remain significant as most are low-skilled or otherwise vulnerable. Thus, a robust system of assistance should be maintained, and **lessons from the EU-IOM JI and other relevant projects should be integrated**.

The capacity of local reintegration platforms should continue to be reinforced, taking advantage of best practices developed by other agencies under the European Return and Reintegration Network (ERRIN) and EUTF funding. While the EU-IOM JI mostly focused on the national adaptation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for RR, the next step of building local capacity and a platform for reintegration was not delivered through the EU-IOM JI. **The next cycle of EU funding could support the long-term establishment of national platforms for RR** that are integrated into local frameworks.

Returns from Europe should take advantage of the experience gained through ERRIN and the EU-IOM JI to be progressively harmonised and use the national platforms as they emerge, while remaining cognizant of the member states' preference to remain owners of their RR process. The EU would benefit from a more coherent return strategy, based on a thorough analysis of RR actors, their purposes and areas of focus. This would provide a basis to move away from project-based organisation towards **robust, long-term relationships between partners with strong coordination procedures**.

The **complexity of creating job opportunities in most African countries**, for returning migrants as well as the local population, should not be overlooked in future programming, and will require well-structured or more organic (community-based) approaches to job creation that adopt a long-term view of labour market needs, as well as a higher level of funding per capita – than currently being proposed through the EU-IOM Joint Initiative, with an average €1,500 per returnee –, to ensure the sustainability of the reintegration process.

Finally, **RR programmes should continue to be assessed, best practices should be built on and areas for further research should be identified**. For example, lessons learned from ILO's support to major waves of returns from the Gulf States to Africa should be examined to identify best practices and challenges and support future returns from the same region.

Response to trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants

This report defines **Trafficking in persons (TIP)** as *‘the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.’*¹ **Smuggling of migrants (SOM)** is defined in one of the Palermo protocols as *‘procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident.’*

TIP and SOM are fundamentally distinct crimes under international law and require different policy responses (while some smuggling may end in trafficking, most of the time, it does not). For different reasons, **both TIP and SOM can have connections to other types of criminal activities**, though the association is more systematic in the case of cross-border TIP networks. However, despite being different crimes both practically and under international law, **the concepts of migrant smuggling and trafficking are often conflated**. Placing TIP and SOM on equal footing puts **excessive emphasis on the criminal exploitation aspect**, which is stronger in trafficking, while neglecting the agency of migrants seeking smuggling services. This tends to lead to a response focused on a law enforcement approach, with disproportionate attention paid to border controls and to the investigation and prosecution of perpetrators, as well as the criminalisation of victims and a **lack of attention to their protection needs**.

1. Situation across Africa

In Africa, the extent and persistence of TIP and SOM are rooted in state fragility (including total state collapse in Libya), mass conflict-driven forced displacement, limited legal migration options and poverty. In SLC, smuggling and trafficking itineraries mainly go through countries like Mali or Niger to reach the Maghreb and Europe.² In HoA, routes follow the three main migration paths (northern, eastern and southern). Many migrant smuggling and human trafficking criminal networks operate in countries in NoA due to their strategic location between sub-Saharan Africa and Europe, their status as origin, transit and destination countries for migration, and the civil war in Libya. **While many frameworks on anti-trafficking can be observed at the continental, regional, and national level, few exist on smuggling.**

2. Key non-EUTF interventions

This study identified more than €69M of non-EUTF funding dedicated to ongoing projects in the areas of anti-trafficking and anti-smuggling, including more than €46M by other EU instruments. **Few donors and relatively small amounts appear to be dedicated to these actions. The EU is currently funding three projects on these issues in West Africa:** A-TIPSOM and OCWAR-T³ and the FMM project with ECOWAS. Some EU member states are also taking independent action against SOM and TIP. Apart from the EU, two of the main donors are the UK and the US, which, for example, contribute a combined €42.7M to the Global Fund to End Modern Slavery. **The types of interventions identified demonstrate that donors are increasingly opting for integrated approaches to TIP and SOM.**

¹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, ‘Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons especially women and children’, Article 3a, 2000. Retrieved [here](#).

² GAR-SI Description of Action.

³ A-TIPSOM is the “Action Against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants” project and OCWAR-T is the “Organized Crime: West African Response to Trafficking” project.

3. EUTF portfolio

EUTF funding for anti-trafficking and anti-smuggling activities represents 5% of the EUTF's migration-related budget. According to our portfolio analysis, a total of €95M of the EUTF's contracted budget is allocated to activities tackling TIP and SOM, of which 51% or €49M is allocated to SLC, 27% (€25M) to NoA, and 22% (€21M) to HoA. **28 projects deal with anti-trafficking across the three windows, including 20 in SLC, five in HoA and three in NoA.** Projects in NoA are mainly dedicated to law enforcement and security activities. In SLC, anti-trafficking efforts aim to protect victims and better regulate human trafficking in transit countries, such as Niger and Mali. In HoA, the EUTF supports strengthening of national capacities as well as cooperation between countries on sharing information and dismantling criminal organisations operating in the region (e.g. ROCK).

4. Perspectives and areas of opportunities

4.1. Strategic focus

The difference between TIP and SOM should be clarified at both the strategic and programming level through awareness raising, information and training activities, as the understanding of and response to TIP and SOM are undermined by a common tendency to conflate the two concepts.

African countries and organisations generally have structures in place to deal with TIP, but these often require expansion, enforcement or updating. It would therefore be beneficial to **support the implementation of existing frameworks and plans, though donors should always ensure that they are appropriately tailored to national needs and dynamics**: a bad law can be worse than none.

Information sharing, data collection and research on trafficking and smuggling should continue to be funded, and should be used in real time to adjust programming in a fast-changing environment.

The **sheltering, protection and reintegration of victims of trafficking (VOT)** remain a significant gap in anti-trafficking actions. Increased funding to extend and renovate transit centres is therefore key. Donors should also invest more in psychosocial support for VOTs, which is a prerequisite for further longer term reintegration activities (such as help with finding a job).

More effort should be invested in domestic TIP and in **coordinating with anti-money laundering activities**. The EUTF's AML/THB¹ programme in HoA is a significant achievement for the EU, but it would be advisable to **strengthen cooperation in this field with actors such as UNODC**, as observed in BMM, to maximise synergies.

4.2. Modalities of intervention

Many projects seeking to address TIP only receive short-term, limited funding to act on specific issues. **Encouraging more holistic approaches** through larger grants would likely be beneficial. Building partnerships with **influential local voices / civil society organisations (CSOs)** to convey prevention messages on anti-trafficking is recommended. There is also a reported need for **increased gender sensitivity in projects that seek to combat TIP and SOM**. **Local ownership** should also be enhanced across all levels by, for example, **developing co-decided projects** such as with FMM in West Africa. There is also reportedly room for improvement for donors to **strengthen coordination, advocacy and political dialogue** in order to ensure the most appropriate analysis and approaches.

¹ The full name of the programme is the 'Disrupting Criminal Trafficking and Smuggling Networks Through Increased Anti-Money Laundering and Financial Investigation Capacity in The Greater Horn of Africa.'

Border management

There are several definitions of and approaches to border management, but most are related to border controls – that is, monitoring, regulating and/or facilitating the flows of people, goods, services, money, animals, etc. Border management is therefore relevant to security concerns such as counterterrorism and trafficking, and extends into areas such as integration, customs, trade and transport. Against this backdrop, the concept of **Integrated Border Management (IBM)** was coined by various actors, including the EU and the IOM, **stressing the need for inter-agency and inter-country cooperation and adopting a holistic view of addressing border challenges.**

1. Situation across Africa

Despite progress made since the 1960s, formal border delimitation in Africa remains unachieved: in 2011, only about a third of African borders were properly demarcated. **Most African borders are fluid and integrated to some extent**, in part due to the presence of the same communities and tribes across borders.

Frameworks and policies on border management involve different actors at the international, continental, regional and national levels that often have differing interests and priorities regarding security, migration and regional integration. The **AU has committed to a progressive border agenda that emphasises border cooperation and joint governance.** However, **regional cooperation and the implementation of key frameworks remain challenging**, with differing priorities and limited human and financial resources, data sharing, and member state ratifications of key documents.

2. Key non-EUTF interventions

This review identified several ongoing border management projects funded by non-EUTF actors in the EUTF regions, including at least €108M in funding from other EU sources. **Apart from the EU, key identified donors include EU member states, notably France and Germany, which along with the UK and USAID** promote border management efficiency by facilitating regional integration and trade, and strengthening border security and anti-trafficking, as well as Japan, which provides support to equipment, infrastructure, technology and information systems in Uganda, for example.

3. EUTF portfolio

Border management represents the second-largest thematic area in terms of EUTF funding (after support to DACs, and on an equal basis with Protection and RR) **and accounts for 16% of the EUTF's migration, mobility and forced displacement-related budget, or 8% of the total EUTF budget.** According to our portfolio analysis, **a total of €320M has been contracted to border management interventions** through 32 EUTF projects (23 in SLC).

Border management funding is mostly attributed to NoA, with €160M, or 50% of the total spending, followed by SLC with €145M (45%). In HoA, border management (€15M, 5%) is only a secondary topic that places far behind economic and resilience efforts for displacement-affected communities.

4. Perspectives and areas of opportunity

Border management tends to be treated by many stakeholders solely from the security point of view. However, the significance of cross-border trade and informal flows of people and goods means that it is important to tap into the benefits of supporting borders for economic development, and to **de-securitize the border management agenda. It would be hugely beneficial to take a positive view of borders and borderlands** and to create a limited number of organised, sustainable crossing points that support free movement, legal trade and security, without hindering traditional informal movements.

Excessively strict border management can increase borderland communities' vulnerabilities and foster mistrust of border management actors. When the pros of a potential intervention do not clearly outweigh the cons, the do no harm principle should prevail, to avoid disrupting informal cross-border ecosystems and livelihoods of border communities. More effort should also be invested in **mitigating corruption** at border posts through **awareness-raising, specialised training on prosecuting corruption, and monitoring tools** for border authorities.

Combining 'hard' (equipment, construction of border posts, security) **and 'soft'** (protection of migrants, human rights at the border) **aspects of border management is key for project sustainability and impact**. More funding should also be allocated to supporting **cross-border trade and long-term solutions for pastoralist, nomadic and semi-nomadic lifestyles**.

RECs could be supported through **efforts to harmonise travel documents and procedures to facilitate legal migration**, as well as through interventions to tackle various types of trafficking.

Choosing the appropriate receiving institutions and beneficiaries according to the objective and ensuring ownership of these objectives by the institutions or beneficiaries is key. To ensure continuity, programmes should: **integrate trainings of officials into the national authorities' curricula, obtain budgetary guarantees for structures and institutions created or reinforced, making authorities accountable for every result**, and favour support to authorities over direct action.

The reorientation of funds from one border point to the other could be facilitated when needed (e.g. from management of land borders to building capacities in airports or ports, or vice versa). To facilitate this, projects could **use mechanisms such as demand-driven facilities**.

The establishment of **one-stop border posts** (OSBPs) facilitates the movement of goods and persons across borders by creating a single stop for border control between two countries. However, OSBPs should be established only when the potential for border cooperation meets minimum standards.

A multilateral approach, instead of a bilateral one, could be encouraged in future EU funding, in order to address border management needs regionally.

The **mandates of EU instruments that contribute to border management** (e.g. IcSP, EUTF, some DG Home instruments) should be clearly **demarcated** to avoid potential overlaps in programming.

Triple nexus

1. Introduction

The objective of the triple nexus is to maximise the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of coordination between humanitarian, development and peace actions. In practical terms, for the purposes of this study and in accordance with the OECD DAC 'Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus', this means implementing joint analysis, shared strategic planning and programming, and collective outcomes among humanitarian, development and peace actors, all of which should be supported by predictable, flexible, multi-year financing and a comprehensive, adaptable and coherent donor strategy.

2. Triple nexus approaches in SLC, HoA and NoA

In SLC, the combination of the first Libyan civil war in 2011, the political crisis in Mali in 2012 and the ongoing Boko Haram insurgency led to a significant destabilisation of the Sahel and Lake Chad region in the early 2010s. As terrorist activities spilled over from Mali to neighbouring Niger and Burkina Faso, unprecedented waves of forced displacement and humanitarian needs emerged in 2019. Protracted conflicts, coupled with recurrent droughts and food crises that were particularly severe in 2011-12, increasing the need for stronger cooperation between humanitarian, development and peace actors, leading to a push for nexus approaches among the three sectors. For example, **in Mali, the international community has tried to support an integrated approach with initiatives such as the multi-sector and multi-donor Sahel Alliance.**

In HoA, the 2010-2012 East Africa drought was a humanitarian disaster that contributed to the deaths of over 250,000 people in Somalia alone. **Failure to mitigate the crisis was partially attributed to the international community's focus on short-term humanitarian responses** instead of building long-term resilience, triggering a serious reconsideration of the way the international community operates in the region. A concerted, effective push for a resilience agenda followed in the early to mid-2010s, which has naturally evolved into a triple nexus agenda in recent years. Examples include the rollout of the CRRF in Uganda, supported by the EU nexus action plan for the country.

Overall, the international agenda in the NoA region tends to be more focused on migration management and development than humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding. As such, **Libya is the only country in the region with serious multi-sectoral needs and where concrete attempts to implement the triple nexus are in place.** Efforts by the UN and other stakeholders to develop and operationalise a triple nexus strategy in the southern region of Libya have been ongoing since 2018.

3. Nexus interventions in the EUTF portfolio

Examples of triple nexus interventions in the EUTF portfolio include the RESILAC programme in SLC, which is a flexible resilience programme that includes support to local actors and social cohesion activities, and the REINTEG programme in Somalia, which delivers basic services, improves livelihoods and supports conflict resolution related to housing, land and property. There are also numerous examples of double nexus interventions throughout the portfolio, such as the RESET II programme in Ethiopia (humanitarian-development nexus), which takes an LRRD approach and includes a crisis modifier component, and the PEV programme in Burkina Faso (peace-development), which combines community dialogue, mediation and support to income-generating activities to support the stabilisation of border regions.

4. Perspectives and areas of opportunity

There is no universally applicable triple nexus approach, and the inclusion of the peace component must be carefully adapted to each context. Peace should therefore be systematically

integrated from the beginning of any nexus discussion or joint planning process in conflict-affected contexts. The *'Programme d'urgence pour la stabilisation des espaces frontaliers du G5 Sahel'*, which is implemented in all G5 Sahel countries and was designed as a pilot project for the implementation of the triple nexus, is a positive example of this approach.

Humanitarian and development actors should be thoroughly familiarised with the different approaches to peace (from 'hard' security interventions to softer peacebuilding actions such as social cohesion), and similarly, there should be a strong understanding among peace actors of the impact of their activities on the humanitarian and development sectors. Donors could support this by encouraging and facilitating discussions and brainstorming, particularly if they contract humanitarian, development and peacebuilding projects in the same area.

Several EUTF programmes strengthened cooperation among the humanitarian, development and peace sectors through a consortium approach, which brings together actors from across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus through the development of a joint response to the call for proposal, joint design and planning of the project, and a common logical framework. It is worth noting that this approach, though effective, requires the allocation of additional budget and time for coordination that must be realistically planned for.

Despite reports of recent advances since the launch of the EU nexus strategy, there remains **room for improvement with regard to collaboration between ECHO and INTPA**, as the level of cooperation in each country depends largely on motivated individuals and the strength of personal relationships. One practical suggestion is simply to consider office space and location, as multiple stakeholders noted that it is easier to promote collaboration between staff who work together physically.

One of the main barriers to EU coordination, particularly in countries where all EU development funding is channelled through the EUTF, is the misalignment of planning and funding cycles. ECHO responses are planned on an annual basis, whereas EUTF decisions are made throughout the year with little predictability as to the amount of funding that will be allocated to any given country, inhibiting higher-level coordination and joint planning. **Funding cycles should be aligned where possible to facilitate joint planning and coordination across the humanitarian and development sectors.** When this is not possible, flexibility should be built into funding processes to allow for coordination.

Flexibility, adaptability and risk tolerance are key to effective nexus-supportive financing. This is one area where the EUTF stands out, by being flexible enough to finance projects that span the nexus, including in areas that have traditionally had a strong humanitarian or development focus, and by incorporating adaptive components into programming such as crisis response modifiers.

Finally, **more patience and flexibility may be required from donors to ensure that capacity building interventions are provided with the time and resources required to produce results.** For example, the EUTF-funded programme RESILAC, which operates in the Lake Chad Basin countries, has adopted the CARE approach to the triple nexus, which stresses the need for an intervention grounded in local realities and that integrates local responses. RESILAC conducts needs assessments with the most relevant CSOs and community-based organisations across the humanitarian, development and peace sectors, and also reinforces their local project management skills.

EUTF strengths and weaknesses

This section presents a combination of the main comments from key stakeholders from the fields of migration, mobility and displacement on the EUTF approach. It includes views received from consultations with EUDs from the three EUTF windows, several EU member states and partner states, as well as a broad range of implementing partners of the EUTF, and a summary of the main strengths and weaknesses that appeared through the above thematic reviews. It is largely based on stakeholders' perceptions and is not meant as a formal evaluation of the Trust Fund.

1. Scope and ambitions

The **exceptional visibility and magnitude** of the EUTF (with €4.8B in approved programming, representing about 30% of the total DEVCO (now INTPA) effort in the EUTF area of operations) has had several positive outcomes. For example, the Trust Fund has helped some of its stakeholders (such as IOM) to pursue a more strategically coherent vision than was previously possible by offering larger, longer term, and more predictable funding. The magnitude of the EUTF also promoted a high degree of visibility that, in many cases, helped to publicise projects and attract other funders, as exemplified by EUTF funding to the Kalobeyi and Kakuma camps in Kenya. On the other hand, in specific geographic and thematic areas (such as protection in Libya, for example), the magnitude of the EUTF reportedly led to increased competition between potential implementing partners, preventing much needed coordination and synergies. It also led to 'too many large' contracts that may not have been the best fit for purpose.

In parallel, the magnitude and visibility of the EUTF also gave rise to a number of **misunderstandings and misconceptions**. The broad scope of the Trust Fund, which was not always fully understood, and gave the impression that it intended to address too many issues, resulting in what was sometimes seen as a 'collection of projects' without a clear strategy or end goal. Additionally, given the 'emergency' nature of the instrument, the focus on 'root causes' was not deemed appropriate for the long-term efforts required.

Both EUDs and member states were generally quite positive about the **Trust Fund's success in positioning migration on the agenda of most partner countries** as it had never been before, and in showing that the EU was united and truly committed on migration and mobility. Some interlocutors, however, did mention that the message implied in the EU's increased attention to migration was not necessarily always positive or helpful to development work and had led to some 'difficult conversations'. Some EUDs also felt that they and some of their projects **could have benefitted from more active involvement and political support from the EU**.

Some EUDs and member states noted that **some countries benefitted more than others** from the EUTF. Several interlocutors warned that through these imbalances, especially with regard to migration governance and border management interventions, the EU and the donor community as a whole were creating or **worsening regional / continental imbalances** that could in turn worsen the mobility and migration situation in Africa.

Although at the beginning the EUTF was often criticized for lack of **local ownership (including by beneficiary states)**, **this seems to have improved over time**. **Looking forward, partner states recommended: more implication of national** (and local) authorities, the need for more needs assessments and situation analyses (at national and regional levels) before making decisions on programming, basing actions on national and local plans, and working more with local NGOs and CSOs to ensure sustainability and increased transparency in data sharing.

Finally, most of the interviewed EUDs, some of the member states and partner countries and many of the other interviewed stakeholders regretted that **too much focus had been placed on the 'negative' aspects of migration**, such as irregular migration and return & reintegration. Accordingly, some EUDs (and other interlocutors) lamented the lack of projects that aim to provide better and more opportunities

for legal migration, to address issues related to labour migration, and to make the most of migration for development.

2. The EUTF in practice and implementation

The EUTF is recognised by several interlocutors as **having changed 'how work is done'**, partly in that it brings the partner states to the table at the Operational Committees. (At the same time, other stakeholders criticise a supposed lack of partner state involvement on the ground.) EUDs notably mentioned the **ability to develop regional and cross-border projects** (for example, the ROCK, BMM or the Cross-Border programme in the HoA) and particularly valued the idea of trying to foster further collaboration between, across and among countries in the region and, in this case, with IGAD.

In another reflection of its innovative approach, the EUTF is also recognised for having **encouraged and facilitated work in the humanitarian-development nexus**. This has also, however, increased the risk (raised by several interlocutors) that increasing numbers of traditionally humanitarian partners will try (and have started) to move away from short term, humanitarian work to 'follow the money.' Furthermore, the degree of effectiveness of implementation of the nexus varied across regions, with some DG ECHO interlocutors in particular regretting insufficient coordination and lack of joint programming. The **security-development nexus also remains underdeveloped**, and requires a longer term, more politically oriented approach.

Decision making within the EUTF was an initial area of concern for several stakeholders but seemed to also have improved over time. Several stakeholders – both internal and external to the EU – described the decision-making process as highly Brussels-led, with little chance or time to provide input or collaborate (in the case of other EU financial instruments) before the decision was taken, and with possible negative repercussions on the design of the project or lack of 'on the ground context and information'. Several member states however seemed rather positive about the Operational Committees and hoped to have a similar mechanism in the new instrument that would allow them to be involved in the selection and implementation of programmes.

Many interlocutors, notably from the EUDs, pointed out that changes in the fields of migration, mobility and displacement take time, and that the **EUTF's time frame was too short** to show concrete achievements and even more so for desired systemic change. Related to this, there was a concern with the lack of exit strategies and/or continuity for some EUTF projects and for their sustainability.

Many of the above (and other) criticisms made of the EUTF are related to its genesis: set up in the midst of a crisis, with a sense of emergency, with little time or – at the beginning – human resources and in a very politically sensitive setting. As a result of these early dynamics, EUDs confirm that, at the beginning, they sometimes had to formulate programmes 'in a rush', that they did not have enough time to consult with the partner country or to do the appropriate research beforehand, and that they generally 'paid for it' during implementation when aspects of the programme took longer than planned or had to be corrected. Several EUDs also mentioned that the pressure to disburse had led to 'too many big contracts' to IPs who, in any case, reverted to sub-contractors, thus increasing money spent on overheads and delays.

While it was generally accepted that **programming / decision-making and contracting was faster and more flexible than for standard EU projects, the rest of the process did not seem to be significantly faster**, in part because the Trust Fund works with the "usual" implementing partners (IPs) and in often more difficult settings than other instruments. Some interlocutors also noted that **many contracts were not allocated based on a solid analysis of IPs** that would consider their core competencies, field presence, ability to deliver in complex and remote situations, existing relations with the government and proven track records.

3. Communication

An active communication strategy could have helped address some of the strongest and often erroneous criticism, but the EUTF's communication is often considered inexistent outside the official website, too timorous and lacking resources.

On the other hand, the EUTF was considered innovative – especially compared to the EU's traditional development approach – in placing an accent on **evidence and transparency** more than had previously been done by the EU (or even other donors), such as through the REF (though it was not always considered as successful and operationally relevant as it could have been).

Similarly, the attempt to show results in a transparent fashion through the Monitoring and Learning Systems is appreciated, even though there is clear impatience for 'more than numbers' and 'real results,' which will hopefully be addressed by the work on outcomes once enough projects complete and are thus able to deliver outcome results. It should also be noted that criticism regarding transparency was generally related to the awarding of contracts rather than the results.

Recommendations for future programming

1. Strategy, objectives and mobilisation around the next phase of programming

Redefine the purpose of the EU's migration, displacement and mobility programming in Africa at the crossroads of the different priorities at stake

The overall purpose could be aligned with the objectives expressed through the Global Compact for Migration regarding safer, better informed, more orderly and better managed migration. The more specific objectives should aim at a balanced approach to migration, displacement and mobility that takes into account the needs of the most vulnerable, as well as the priorities of both partner countries and the EU as they relate to migration, mobility and displacement.

Carefully define the boundaries of the migration, mobility and displacement portfolio

Root causes should not be addressed through the *migration 10%* funding line, but rather through the main part of the NDICI portfolio (the other 90%). In parallel, migration should be mainstreamed in development portfolios as a general principle, but should only be accounted in the 10% when they directly benefit migrants, refugees, IDPs, returnees or victims of trafficking.

Move away from the emergency mode and establish a mid-term strategy

In each thematic area, a multi-stage approach should be defined, with realistic hypotheses of completion and impact, while continuity, handover / exit strategies and sustainability options should be envisioned and properly timed. This multi-stage approach might have to be spread across several funding cycles.

Integrate current and future mobility trends, and the risks of shocks in the design of flexible systems and tools

Resources should be dedicated to the tracking of population movements (IDPs, refugees and migrants) and the monitoring of the origin, destination and profile of people on the move to better inform programming, with a high level of reactivity (early warning systems) and a depth allowing for the identification of protection needs and their evolution.

Return beneficiary states to the driver's seat with regards to migration policy wherever possible

Interviewed partner states have shown interest in managing migration and mobility-related policy, at least when it comes to their own nationals. Some advocated for a specific migration funding line or facility to be maintained to ensure continuity in the efforts undertaken under the EUTF. Some asked for more involvement, more and better information sharing and more coordination organised around their existing plans.

Establish roadmaps for donor cooperation involving the key institutions (AU, RECs) and expert agencies in each sub-thematic area to ensure a coherent programming in each region / country and to better align donor support

Momentum has been built, and at the same time tensions around migration and mobility have decreased enough that there is a window of opportunity to gather the multiple stakeholders of migration, displacement and mobility and build on the lessons learned from the EUTF and other programmes to plan for the future in a coordinated fashion. A series of thematic roadmap consultations could be organised in early 2021 to develop an agreed-upon matrix of priority interventions and objectives in each sub-theme, and establish coordination mechanisms if necessary.

Establish meaningful partnerships with other donors and agencies, leverage the leadership of some stakeholders in specific thematic areas, and develop

complementarities of programming – enhancing the Team Europe approach

Some donors and agencies have positioned themselves on certain thematic areas and geographies. Complementarities should be highlighted and built upon. Team Europe principles should be adopted and strengthened in each country. Partners and implementers should be reviewed on a case by case basis. It may be necessary to diversify the pool of available implementers to avoid overreliance, encourage innovation and ensure the right fit with specific projects and contexts.

Continue to develop a culture that encourages innovation and learning

One of the EUTF's strengths has been to innovate and develop new types of projects (some of the most criticised projects at the beginning might yet turn out to be some of its key successes). Such new, evidence-based approaches should be further encouraged, including with new partners. But, more importantly, a system that allows for lessons to be learned from these approaches should be built.

Build a strong communication strategy – overall, by country and by project

While the EUTF brought migration and mobility issues into the limelight, it was also criticised for its lack of control over its messaging and its lack of responsiveness to criticism. When developing innovative approaches, it will be important to support them with strong communication, which should be implemented by a strategic communication team and accompanied by political support when needed.

Post-EUTF transition: Ensure continuity on the most successful initiatives while defining a new ambition and vision; both should not be contradictory

In parallel with the new programming cycle and instruments, many EUTF projects will continue implementing during the next three to four years and will need to continue to benefit from EU support, with regard to human resources and systems but also to visibility and political support. A bridging system should be set up so that their achievements (and failures) continue to be documented and feed into the parallel NDICI programming and vice versa.

Geography: Extend migration, displacement and mobility strategies to other African countries affected by migration and displacement flows

Particularly in the case of forced displacement, where movements and solutions should be looked at from a wide, regional angle, as well as in cases of cross-border issues such as trafficking and international crime and of international migration routes in general. This is also important in order to avoid creating further imbalances within the continent by focusing on certain areas more than others.

Pay greater attention to migration and displacement caused by climate change and environmental disasters

The dramatic impacts of climate change risk causing mass migration to neighbouring countries and Europe, as well as mass internal displacement. This trend should be carefully monitored in future funding instruments and built into programming and long-term planning to promote communities' resilience and facilitate safe and regular migration as a positive adaptive measure.

2. Programming and implementation modalities

Transition phase: Allocate time and resources to design the next programming cycle in a coordinated manner to give migration and mobility programming its full place

Time and resources should be allocated to assessments, solid strategies, well thought-through theories of change, and consultations with partner countries' governments, all of which should build on evidence and lessons learned from the EUTF. Time and space should be given to the EUDs in 2021 to develop their strategies by following, where relevant, a nexus approach, where the different units and DGs work together, based on the same information, assumptions and objectives.

Take into account the partner countries' limitations and absorption capacity – project ambitions need to be adjusted, and technical support increased in some countries

Project phasing and milestones should take the capacity of partner countries' governments, regional organisations and local partners into account in a realistic manner. While systems should be put in place relatively quickly to generate change, they must be accompanied by adequate capacity building, mentoring and handover phases.

Build sustainability into programming from the beginning

As EUTF contracting comes to an end, it would be advisable to conduct a longitudinal assessment of the ongoing / completed programmes to ascertain where the intended goal is reached in the longer term. This may help highlight the most efficient and effective ways to build capacity.

Implementing partners (member state agencies, UN, NGOs, consortia and coordination mechanisms): efficiency, continuity, access and diversification need to be balanced

A balance needs to be established between global or continental partnerships and the need for efficiency, continuity, innovation and the diversification of partners based on their strengths. At both the global and country levels, lists of potential IPs should be made and regularly maintained, based on an overall and country-level assessment of their presence, strengths and weaknesses and comparative advantages in order to be able to pick from them faster when the need arises. This would be particularly useful in identifying NGOs and CSOs at country level. It would also help build on the capacities and systems already created by some organisations.

NGOs and CSOs can be particularly useful in specific contexts but working with them, given their often limited size, can be labour intensive for EUDs: it is therefore important to carefully consider the need for consortia and which partners to include. Consortia (and their coordination mechanisms) need to be well built, supported and budgeted for to really deliver synergies.

Think out of the EUTF box and diversify the migration portfolio in exploring all thematic areas in light of changing contexts in each country

In the early stages of the new programming phase, the entire spectrum of migration, mobility and forced displacement-related thematic areas should be considered in each country. Priorities should be adjusted to each country's situation and should achieve an adequate balance between the partner government's priorities and the EU's agenda.

Work across EUDs to coordinate regional programming and share lessons and good practices

As already initiated for the pre-programming phase in some EUTF countries (but insufficiently done in the past), cross-EUD consultation will be necessary to align objectives and lines of programming across countries in each thematic area. This coordination should be given time and space in the next few months.

HR and institutional knowledge: build on knowledge gained through the EUTF management teams and position at least one dedicated migration and mobility portfolio coordinator in most EU delegations, as relevant

Continuity needs to be ensured as much as possible in the teams in both HQ and on the ground to support the transition phase and avoid reinventing the wheel in countries of high turnover. In the future, it would be important to continue to recruit specialists on migration and displacement and related topics (e.g. protection) and embed them in EUD teams. More systematic knowledge transmission and management tools or checklists on migration, displacement and mobility should be developed at the country level, as well as at the central (cross-window) level, including to centralise knowledge that is currently divided across windows and encourage synergies between existing programmes.

Regional programmes vs customised national approach: integrate best practices

Developing programmes at a regional level has proven to be the right scale for a number of (though not all) thematic interventions. However, to gain the full benefit from some interventions, it is important to keep the relevant EUDs fully involved and to establish and maintain close management that allows for quick reactions and high-level political support to be applied at the right moments in the project.

3. Monitoring, evaluation and learning and data systems

Continue enhancing an evidence-based and real-time learning approach grounded in several layers of monitoring and data tracking

A dedicated Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning strategy should be developed, and its main objective should be to ensure that the information gathered is in fact used to adapt existing and/or build better new programmes. Real-time monitoring and learning should be ensured. The EU should continue aggregating project outputs and developing visualisation tools to create a strong basis of information that will allow for better coordination and analysis. Attempts to measure effects and impact should continue to be encouraged as EUTF outcomes start coming to the surface in the next few years.

Use solid M&E tools to ensure that, when migration and mobility-related programming is mainstreamed, it is done accurately and in such a way as to have real impact

Mainstreaming what are considered cross-cutting issues often turn into 'tick the box' situations. Even with a marker system, if mainstreaming is to be done in an effective way, programme managers must be given the right tools and training to do so.

Establish new baselines / updated assessments in 2021 in each thematic area

Updated assessments of the effective implementation of frameworks and capacities in place are needed, particularly in areas such as migration governance, free movement / legal migration, countering trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants and protection along the migration routes.

Continue holding implementing partners to the highest standards not only for implementing activities but also for collecting and sharing information

The EU's (and the EUTF's) M&E systems and ability to learn from its actions and improve programming along with time will always be limited by what it is able to gather from its implementing partners. It will be important to continue to hold them to the highest standards with regards to their M&E systems, how they are built, what they collect, what they share and with whom.

Ensure the funding mechanism allows for rapid contracting and flexibility in contracts

This specific aspect of the EUTF was praised by most stakeholders, and was very well adapted to the migration and displacement issues at stake. Some flexibility should be maintained in the NDICI migration programming, including through the use of crisis modifiers when necessary.

Beyond these general recommendations, specific areas of opportunities and priorities for future programming were identified in each thematic area of this report.

Conclusion

The EUTF has been described by many as a game changer in positioning migration and forced displacement much higher on the agenda of partner countries and RECs and creating new dynamics in the sector. Initially designed to bring an emergency response to the 2015 migration crisis and support the Joint Valetta Action Plan, the EUTF gave birth to a much more ambitious and long term-oriented matrix of interventions, and the beginning of a coordinated response to many of the critical issues and challenges that have been identified along the mixed migration routes in East, West and North Africa, including major vulnerabilities and protection needs which had been identified but not addressed until then with this level of magnitude.

The approaching end of the official contracting period of the Trust Fund offers a moment to take a step back and place the EUTF interventions in the broader context of migration and development. Consulted stakeholders largely acknowledged the value created by the Trust Fund, the role the EU has had and should continue to have in migration, displacement and mobility-related programming and expressed interest in contributing to the next phase of programming, if given the opportunity to do so.

This next phase of programming should not be developed in isolation, and more space and time should be given to the design phase than what was allocated during the early days of the Trust Fund. With 10% of the NDICI dedicated to migration, displacement and mobility programming, this transition phase opens a great window of opportunity to continue building on the dynamics initiated and avoid losing the gains achieved and the momentum built so far.

This report hopefully provides a useful layer of knowledge and some ideas and directions to consider in future discussions and formulations of strategies. Further, more specific assessments will be needed to lay the foundations for future programming, in consultation with other donors and partner countries.

While migration, forced displacement and mobility dynamics in Africa remain a very complex subject, the options available to address the topic are now a bit better known and understood, and can be taken to the next level if rigorously informed, organised and tracked over the next 10 to 15 years.