



EVALUATION BRIEF

Protection Thematic Evaluation of EUTF Interventions in Libya

1. Overview

The Migration Unit of the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG-NEAR) has launched a call to conduct a ‘Thematic Evaluation of the European Union Trust Fund (EUTF) Protection Interventions in Libya’. The scope of the evaluation encompasses eight major protection related programmes contracts (17 contracts) in Libya, financed by the EUTF between 2017 and 2022, lifesaving activities at Disembarkation Points (DPs) and Detentions Centres (DCs), protection assistance and resilience activities in urban settings, as well as capacity building and information management.

2. Evaluation Objectives

Independent assessment of the performance of the interventions to be evaluated, paying particular attention to their different levels of results, measured against their expected objectives; and the reasons underpinning such results. The specific objectives include the aggregated results achieved by the interventions, an assessment of how they have contributed to the EUTF, the reasons behind the performance of the interventions, and the key lessons learned and recommendations on how to strengthen relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and impact of the future EU interventions in the Protection sector in Libya.

3. Methodology

Eight Evaluation Questions (EQs) guided this evaluation, organized under four clusters; ownership, management

of implementation, impact and sustainability and cross-cutting themes, and based on the OECD evaluation criteria and EU added-value. Mixed-method, theory-based and participatory approaches were adopted, with emphasis on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (GEWE), disability inclusion, the principle of Leave No One Behind and the Rights-Based Approach. The field data collection took place between March and August 2023, where Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and four surveys were carried out, bringing the total number of the evaluation participants to 341 people. The difficulties encountered during this evaluation were many and included cancellation of travel plans due to security reasons (e.g. outburst of sudden clashes in the city), travel restrictions by Libya and country of origin, low survey response rates leading to increased focus on qualitative data, inaccessible areas required reliance on secondary sources and difficulties to meet with Libyan authorities.

4. Interventions Evaluated

Project Name	EUTF Implementing Partner
<i>“Strengthening protection and resilience of displaced populations in Libya”</i>	Consortium led by DRC with IRC, CESVI and IMC
<i>“Expanding Protection Environment and Services for Mixed Migration Flows and Vulnerable Libyans along Migration Routes in Libya and Supporting Local Socio-Economic Stabilization”</i>	UNFPA

<i>“PEERS – Protection Enabling Environment and Resilience Services”</i>	CESVI-IMC
<i>“Resilience building programme for vulnerable children in Libya, including host communities, migrant and refugee children” (phase I) and Scale-up “Managing mixed migration flows in Libya” (phase II)</i>	UNICEF
<i>“Protecting vulnerable migrants and stabilizing communities in Libya” (phase I and II); “Integrated approach to protection and emergency assistance to vulnerable and stranded migrants in Libya” (phase III); “Managing mixed migration flows - protection, health assistance, resilience and community engagement” (phase IV)</i>	IOM
<i>“Facility for Migrant Protection and Reintegration in North Africa and Voluntary Humanitarian Return” Top up “Voluntary Humanitarian Return and Reintegration Assistance”</i>	EU-IOM Joint Initiative for migrant protection and reintegration
<i>“Reinforcing International Protection and Delivery of Assistance to refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and host communities in Libya” (phase I); “Integrated approach to protection and emergency assistance to vulnerable and stranded migrants in Libya” (phase II); “Managing mixed migration flows - Enhancing protection and assistance for those in need in Libya” (phase III); “Managing mixed migration flows - Protection, health assistance, resilience and community engagement” (phase IV)</i>	UNHCR
<i>“Enhancing protection, live saving assistance and solutions, including resettlement for persons of concern with international protection needs in Libya and West Africa” (Only Libya component evaluated); “Durable solutions for Refugee Unaccompanied and Separated Children and Family Reunification” (only Libyan component evaluated)</i>	UNHCR

Estimation of funds evaluated: around 220,000,000€.

5. Main Findings and Conclusions

Ownership

Migrants, asylum seekers and refugees face extreme protection risks in Libya and are subject to arbitrary detention with inhumane conditions. Response by EUTF partners in government-managed DCs remained irregular due to restrictions by the authorities, and because of human rights violations, activities implemented in DCIM-run DCs were reduced to only limited life saving activities to align with do no harm principle. At DPs, the response was by providing life-saving medical assistance and core relief items (CRIs), advocating for the release of detainees and improving capacities and infrastructure of DPs.

In urban settings, the cash assistance provided by EUTF partners was a pressing priority, yet, it had fell short to respond to the multiple and emerging basic needs of all vulnerable target groups. Gender Based Violence (GBV) continued to be a prevalent protection risk in Libya and was very carefully considered in the design of the projects. Concerning healthcare assistance, evidence varied on its overall significance and relevance to the specific medical needs of the target groups. Shelter support was a key consideration by the projects, however, attempting to establish specific shelter options had failed due to constraints by Libyan authorities. Hence, projects shifted focus to the provision of direct individual shelter support and community care. In the absence of an asylum legal framework and the deteriorating situation in DCIM-run DCs, the Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM), Family Reunification and Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) programmes were seen by beneficiaries and development partners as the most suitable durable protection solutions.

The EUTF in Libya is building on the strategic lines set out in the Joint Communication ‘Managing Flows, Saving Lives’¹ and the Malta Declaration². The efforts of the EUTF-funded projects came in line with the EU’s international policies and human rights strategies and resolutions. Interventions were aligned to national priorities and to the context for health, child protection and cash assistance, whereas for GBV, shelter, legal assistance, education or durable solutions, were neglected by Libyan authorities because of their sensitive and nature. To a limited extent, EUTF-funded projects addressed capacity gaps of local authorities in GBV, child protection, health and education and human rights. High-level policy dialogue between EUD and Libyan counterparts was faced with an increased reluctance and lack of commitment from the government’s side.

The evaluation accounts for the considerable ability of EUTF partners to adapt to changing circumstances in the country, bolstered by the EUTF’s own flexibility, programming had been adjusted, for example to shift focus from DCs to urban

1. Joint Communication to the European Parliament. 2017. Migration on the Central Mediterranean route, Managing flows, saving lives. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:6e6590bb-e2fa-11e6-ad7c-01aa75ed71a1.0001.02/DOC_1&format=PDF

2. European Council. 2017. Malta Declaration. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2017/02/03/malta-declaration/>

settings, as well as to address the liquidity crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. All EUTF partners had been active members or leaders in the donor coordination mechanisms or sector/ thematic working groups in Libya. In spite of this, collaboration between different EUTF partners was often ad-hoc, likely due to the diverse nature of the activities and limited involvement by national stakeholders.

Strategic Management and Implementation Modalities

The total fund allocated to Protection interventions in Libya under the scope of this evaluation was around EUR 200,000,000. However before in the text is mentioned : Estimation of funds evaluated: around 220,000,000€, IOM and UNHCR were the largest recipients of funding. It was reported during interviews by EUTF partners and their IPs that budget allocations were not usually sufficient to cover all services and needs of target populations and human resources were not adequate, especially in the large-scale actions. Remote management in an insatiable context hampered proper implementation to timely adapt and respond to evolving situations in the local areas. Delays in implementation were also caused by limited engagement of authorities on the delivery of protection services to migrants, asylum seekers and refugees given the sensitive and political nature of the migration topic in Libya.

Project monitoring was at the core of the EUTF partners' operations in Libya, adopting a hybrid system of both internal and external monitoring approaches. While most internal monitoring systems were well-established with robust M&E standards, some had limited agility to act upon pressing issues identified in the field. Some of the IPs lacked formal M&E procedures and strategies but strived to diligently follow-up on activities daily so as to address issues.

There was no evidence of engagement by beneficiaries or national stakeholders in monitoring of EUTF projects' activities. Third-Party Monitoring (TPM) by Altai was conducted on monthly, bi-annual, annually and ad-hoc basis. Some interviewed EUTF-partners' staff perceived TPMs as useful providing lessons learned and somewhat reducing reporting burden of staff. However, some others find that aggregate reports that covered all projects and all IPs were of limited use, describing them as rather factual than able to provide in-depth analysis or strategic overviews/ recommendations.

Impact and Sustainability

The EUTF's multi-sectoral protection assistance contributed to improve the momentary access of migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees to different forms of protection. It contributed to saving lives and to, address the beneficiaries' most pressing needs. Nevertheless, the assistance was not sufficient to meet all the needs of all, compared to the susceptibilities of the context in Libya. Only a modest

contribution to strengthening national capacities is evident by the EUTF-funded projects contributing to the development of data management tools, notably the IOM DTMs, the UNHCR protection monitoring and the DCIM-run profiles. The projects enabled the refurbishment of more than one thousand infrastructures³, in health and education facilities, and the provision of capacity building trainings to national stakeholders. However, this evaluation had no access to the government officials and was unable to measure their effectiveness.

Although Family Reunification, VHR and ETM interventions have proven to have a positive impact as durable solutions, their accessibility was largely limited to the most vulnerable cases. This was primarily due to the limited resettlement options notably in European countries, and insufficient cooperation by embassies and complex administrative requirements, capacity constraints in relocation countries, coupled with ongoing crises, and prolonged waiting periods. Hence, success hinged on collaborative efforts, enhanced host family schemes, increased flight availability and comprehensive awareness campaigns. The role of the AU-EU-UN Task Force was vital in engaging African embassies, intensifying their participation in VHR and easing the process. Interviews with ETM beneficiaries showed that UNHCR's support granted them hope for a better future and protection from the hardships they faced in Libya.

The sustainability of interventions in Libya presents a mixed picture. In the context of DCs, there is a recognition of the human rights violations, and the involvement is limited to live saving interventions in order not to support the continued suffering of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in arbitrary immigration detention in Libya. In DPs, capacity strengthening and SOPs show a promise to help with a dignified treatment for migrants, if applied. The involvement of Libyan counterparts in assuming responsibility for lifesaving services remains unlikely if humanitarian assistance by EUTF partners were to cease. Within urban settings, while the need for ongoing international support remains clear, certain initiatives demonstrate potential sustainability. For instance, the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) and healthcare provisions through health facilities, and the efforts in relation to GBV and child protection with NGOs that had been capacitated through the EUTF.

Cross-Cutting Themes

In terms of coordination, there is a dichotomy regarding the understanding of coordination between the EU and the UN; as far as the UN is concerned, coordination does not go beyond ensuring the absence of duplication and sharing of information. On the other hand, the EUD's expectations in terms of coordination implies enhanced joint activities and collaboration beyond information sharing. Stronger coordination existed between the EUTF partners and their IPs on ground. FGDs with migrants, asylum seekers and refugees and showed that they believe that no single

3. According to the MLS report 2022 infrastructure rehabilitation was 1,274. It is possible that other projects not reviewed under this evaluation have contributed to this result. However, as the largest percentage of funds were allocated to protection the 8 contracts under evaluation must have contributed to a large degree towards this result.

organization could offer complete protection and emphasized the necessity of coordinated efforts between different agencies. EUTF projects generally lacked specific indicators to measure gender-related issues and there were difficulties to collect and report disaggregated data, although needs of men and women from different nationalities were considered during the design.

The evaluation accounts for the EU's added value in broadening the protection sector in Libya and bringing significant attention to the issue within the EU itself. It helped to instil a route-based approach instead of top-down, where other non-EU states can intervene and host countries can integrate their own perspectives. The EU brought the humanitarian-development nexus in Libya and fostered coordination and coherence within EUTF partners and NGOs, and to a lesser extent, with government stakeholders.

Lessons learned and Best Practices

- 1 The EUTF's multi-sectoral protection assistance contributed to improve the momentary access of migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees to different forms of protection. It contributed to saving lives and to address the beneficiaries' most pressing needs
- 2 Available durable solutions have been successful in increasing protection for vulnerable populations and individuals. Continue and expand, when possible, these services through increased funds to widen the scope of available spaces for these solutions. This should be accompanied by increased advocacy with EUMS and other actors who could speed up the process of ETM and VHR to increase the pace of implementation and the number of beneficiaries
- 3 EU's presence and funding have supported protection priorities in Libya, nevertheless more critical gaps still need to be addressed in protection activities, particularly for durable solutions, legal frameworks and policies and access to livelihoods

6. Recommendations

Strategic recommendations

- 1 Ensure the development of a Programme Theory of Change from the onset including risks and assumptions as well as causal and well-articulated logical frameworks.
- 2 Maintain and when/where possible strengthen Monitoring of Detention Centers to ensure the continuation of the provision of life saving services and advocating for the release of detainees.

- 3 Building on existing migration and refugee conventions signed by Libya, especially those targeting women and children, engage in high-level policy dialogue and advocacy to support Libyan authorities on the development of a migration management framework and protection mechanisms.
- 4 In future funds, ensure robust and participatory context analysis, needs' assessments and risk analysis including identification of mitigation measures. The analysis should include social, economic, and political aspects of the Libyan migration context and other context in the Libya.
- 5 Establish a common understanding on coordination between the UN and EU, including means and approaches, roles and responsibilities and expected outcomes.

Operational recommendations

- 1 Strengthen internal M&E systems, feedback mechanisms and information sharing in ways that make them consistent and provide valuable insights to adjust programme and guide progress and not only for reporting purposes.
- 2 Establish a common and coordinated comprehensive referral mechanism to facilitate access and expand services available to target groups across Actions and IPs.
- 3 EU should continue to support durable solutions, including VHR, ETM and family reunification by IOM and UNHCR, lobbying with EUMS on facilitating processes and requirements and increased funding to ATDs, resettlement and family reunification.
- 4 Strengthen local knowledge through capacity assessments and designing programmes for capacity building for local actors and NGOs. Peer to Peer exchanges between EUTF partners and amongst EUTF partners and IPs could foster the development of a critical mass of agents capable to expanding protection services in a unified manner.
- 5 Expand essential healthcare access for migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees, possibly through identification of private sources of funding, reception centres, referrals, in addition to advocacy for inclusion into public healthcare services.
- 6 Conduct robust capacity assessments for IPs to develop clear capacity building activities that would enable them to systematically carry out protection activities and ensure their awareness of new and emerging protection requirements and successful project management approaches. This would also support the development of mitigation measures for risks that are anchored in potential opportunities in Libya