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**THIS ACTION IS FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**ANNEX III**

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the Annual Action Plan 2024 of the Multi-Country Migration Programme for the Southern Neighbourhood

**Action Document for ‘Supporting Migrant Protection, Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration for vulnerable and stranded migrants in North Africa**

**ANNUAL ACTION PLAN**

This document constitutes the first part of the annual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, and action plan/measure in the sense of Article 23(2) of NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

**1. SYNOPSIS**

**1.1 Action Summary Table**

<b>2. Title</b> <b>OPSYS</b> <b>Basic Act</b>	Supporting Migrant Protection, Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration for vulnerable and stranded migrants in North Africa OPSYS business reference: <a href="#">ACT-62496</a> ABAC Commitment level 1 number: <a href="#">JAD.1571436</a> Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe).
<b>2. Economic and Investment Plan (EIP)</b>	Yes VIII. Migration and Mobility
<b>EIP Flagship</b>	Yes, Flagship 8 “Migration”
<b>3. Team Europe Initiative</b>	Yes The Action should contribute to the two Team Europe Initiatives (TEIs) covering the regional migration actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The TEI for a Comprehensive Migration Approach in the Maghreb, Sahel and West African countries in the Atlantic/Western Mediterranean Route (AWMED) to which Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and The Netherlands contribute, as well as Switzerland, and</li><li>• The TEI for a Comprehensive Migration Approach in the Central Mediterranean Route (Central Med) to which Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Malta and The Netherlands contribute.</li></ul> The TEIs offer a framework which allows the Union and Member States to improve coordination and increase efficiency of programmes and projects in the area of migration. Contributions can take different forms, including co-financing and individual projects contributing to the same objectives. The commitment of the EU’s contribution to this Action will be complemented by other contributions from Team Europe members. It is subject to the formal confirmation of each respective partners’ meaningful contribution as early as possible. In the event that

	the Team Europe Initiative (TEI) and/or these contributions do not materialise, the EU action may continue outside a TEI framework.
<b>4. Beneficiar(y)/(ies) of the action</b>	The action shall be carried out in North Africa: Algeria, Libya and Morocco.
<b>5. Programming document</b>	Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP <sup>1</sup> ) 2021-2027 for a Multi-Country Migration Programme for the Southern Neighbourhood
<b>6. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives/expected results</b>	<p>The Action is linked to the priority areas of the Multi-Annual Indicative Programme for a Multi-Country Migration Programme for the Southern Neighbourhood (2021-2027):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Priority area 3:</b> Fostering return, readmission and sustainable reintegration</li> </ul>
<b>PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION</b>	
<b>7. Priority Area(s), sectors</b>	Migration and Forced Displacement – Migration, DAC Code 151
<b>8. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</b>	<p><b><u>Main SDG:</u> SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries</b>  <u>Target 10.7:</u> Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies)</p> <p><b><u>Other SDGs:</u></b>  <b>SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.</b>  <u>Target 5.2:</u> Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking in human beings and sexual and other types of exploitation.</p> <p><b>SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.</b>  <u>Target 8.7:</u> Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and trafficking in human beings and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.</p> <p><b>SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.</b>  <u>Target 16.2:</u> End abuse, exploitation, trafficking in human beings and all forms of violence against and torture of children.</p>
<b>9. DAC code(s)</b>	15190 (Facilitation of orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility) – 100%
<b>10. Main Delivery Channel</b>	<p>International Organisations – 21000</p> <p>Other multilateral institutions – 47000</p> <p>Public sector institutions – 10000</p>

<sup>1</sup> C(2022) 8015 MULTI-ANNUAL INDICATIVE PROGRAMME FOR A MULTI-COUNTRY MIGRATION PROGRAMME FOR THE SOUTHERN NEIGHBOURHOOD (2021-2027), 28 November 2022 - European Commission (europa.eu)

<b>11. Targets</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
<b>12. Markers (from DAC form)</b>	<b>General policy objective</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
	Participation development/good governance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>RIO Convention markers</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
	Biological diversity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>13. Internal markers and Tags</b>	<b>Policy objectives</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>
EIP		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EIP Flagship		YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
Tags		YES	NO	
Transport		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Energy		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
environment, climate resilience		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Digital		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
economic development (incl. private sector, trade and macroeconomic support)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
human development (incl. human capital and youth)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
health resilience		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

	migration and mobility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	agriculture, food security and rural development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	rule of law, governance and public administration reform	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Digitalisation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Tags	YES	NO
	digital connectivity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	digital governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	digital entrepreneurship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	digital skills/literacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	digital services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Connectivity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Tags	YES	NO
	digital connectivity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	education and research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Migration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	COVID-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### BUDGET INFORMATION

#### 14. Amounts concerned

Budget line(s) (article, item):

Total estimated cost: EUR 57 000 000

Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 56 000 000 The contribution is for an amount of EUR 56 000 000 from the general budget of the European Union for 2024.

This action is co-financed in joint co-financing by at least one other donor for an amount of EUR 1 million.

The commitment of the EU's contribution to this action will be complemented by other contributions from Team Europe members. It is subject to the formal confirmation of each respective partners' meaningful contribution as early as possible. In the event that the Team Europe Initiatives (TEI) and/or these contributions do not materialise, the EU action may continue outside a TEI framework.

### MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

#### 15. Implementation modalities (management mode and

Project Modality

Indirect management with the entity(ies) to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.3.1

## 1.2 Summary of the Action

The proposed Action aims to complement the current EU funded interventions to support Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) of vulnerable migrants stranded in North Africa initiated in the framework of the action “Supporting sustainable Protection, Return and Reintegration in North Africa” adopted in 2021 and the action to support southern neighbourhood countries for the management of migration flows adopted in 2023. It responds to the increasing demand on Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) in North African countries and the projection provided by IOM for the next three years which estimates the gap to support assisted voluntary returns of nearly 70,000 persons between 2024 and 2026. Therefore, the Action will enable the current EU funded programme on AVRR to step up substantially its activities in Algeria, Libya and Morocco by providing direct assistance and support to the AVR for an estimated 26 000 stranded migrants.

The Action intends to address the expected results of the two Specific Objectives stated in the Priority Area 3 of the regional MIP: “Fostering return, readmission and sustainable reintegration” in line with the EU strategy on voluntary return and reintegration<sup>2</sup>, including by strengthening third countries’ national systems and capacities for return, readmission and reintegration, in full respect of fundamental values and human rights. The action is 100% DAC-able (DAC code 15190) and directly contributes to the achievement of SDGs **10, and most notably target 10.7** (Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies). It also contributes to the achievement of SDG 5, 8 and 16. Finally, the action contributes to the two Team Europe Initiatives (TEIs) covering the regional migration actions, notably the TEI for a Comprehensive Migration Approach in the Maghreb, Sahel and West African countries in the Atlantic/Western Mediterranean Route (AWMED) and the TEI for a Comprehensive Migration Approach in the Central Mediterranean Route (Central Med).

This Action will contribute to a key priority area of the external dimension of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum<sup>3</sup>. It is aligned with the partnership approach of the Joint Communication on a Renewed Partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood<sup>4</sup>, adopted on 9 February 2021, as well as on the EU Action Plan for the Central Mediterranean and on the EU Action Plan for the Atlantic/Western Mediterranean where migration and mobility, including return operations, are indicated as a priority area.

This Action is also aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which refers to “the right of migrants to return to their country of citizenship” and the obligations of states “to ensure that their returning nationals are duly received” and their commitment to ensure, “safe, orderly and regular migration involving full respect for human rights and the humane treatment of migrants regardless of migration status, of refugees and of displaced persons”.

Beyond improved assisted voluntary return, this Action will also contribute to the protection of migrants in the North of Africa, while their sustainable reintegration in countries of origin will be enabled through the support of EU-funded programmes for reintegration of migrants managed by DG INTPA to the extent possible. The Commission, through DG NEAR, envisages to fund individual reintegration in countries of origin where no other reintegration programme is available.

The following areas will be articulated under this action considering the mixed migration patterns and national context specificities:

<sup>2</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/pdf/27042021-eu-strategy-voluntary-return-reintegration-com-2021-120\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/pdf/27042021-eu-strategy-voluntary-return-reintegration-com-2021-120_en.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> COM (2020) 609 final, Communication on a New Pact on Migration and Asylum [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:85ff8b4f-ff13-11ea-b44f-01aa75ed71a1.0002.02/DOC\\_3&format=PDF](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:85ff8b4f-ff13-11ea-b44f-01aa75ed71a1.0002.02/DOC_3&format=PDF), 23 September 2020

<sup>4</sup> Join (2021) 2 final Renewed Partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood: [joint communication renewed partnership southern neighbourhood.pdf \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/external-action/joint-communication-renewed-partnership-southern-neighbourhood_en.pdf)

- Provision of protection and direct assistance to an estimated number of 15,000 vulnerable migrants stranded in North Africa. This support would include support to post rescue and interception at sea, medical and psychosocial assistance, pre departure hospitality and provision of other essential support for vulnerable and stranded migrants, in particular for women, girls and unaccompanied minors.
- Support Assisted Voluntary Return from the North African countries (i.e. returning migrants mainly from Libya, Algeria and Morocco) to countries of origin for an estimated 26,000 migrants in complementarity with the current MPRR-NA programme and in coordination with the MPRR programme for Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as other relevant programmes on reintegration funded by the Commission ( DG NEAR, DGHOM) Frontex and Member States. This component will also cover – whenever applicable - support to host countries in the North of Africa in developing national mechanism for a better governance of the returns of migrants from the North of Africa to countries of origin.
- Provision of immediate post arrival assistance to cover essential logistical needs and individual reintegration support, with the aim to support psychosocial, social and economic reintegration to an estimated 2600 returning migrants in country of origin (North Africa and other partner countries) where no reintegration assistance is provided by the EU, national entities or other donors<sup>5</sup> and as a temporary measure until a mechanism or programme for sustainable reintegration is set up.

### 1.3 Beneficiaries of the action

The Action shall be carried out in Algeria, Libya and Morocco, all of which are included in the list of ODA recipients.

## 2. RATIONALE

### 2.1 Context

#### Overall context:

In recent years, the North Africa region has faced complex challenges influencing migration patterns which includes political and economic instability, conflicts, growing socio-economical inequalities, increased urbanisation, demographic transition, and climate change alongside environmental degradation. At the same time, a combination of persistent insecurity and public health emergencies, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the war of aggression against Ukraine have further negatively impacted socioeconomic opportunities in the whole region, exacerbating pre-existing vulnerabilities of migrants, forcibly displaced persons and host communities.

As a result, irregular migratory flows across Africa have continued to appear in the Mediterranean routes, with countries in North Africa still being considered simultaneously points of origin, transit and increasingly destination. This is also due to the persistently limited regular migration channels available, and the need to rely on increasingly prominent smuggling and trafficking networks along the routes. The numbers of migrants returning from North Africa to their countries of origin under assisted voluntary return and reintegration programmes have grown as migrants and refugees face extreme risks along migration routes and have limited possibilities of socio-economic integration in the North African countries. For comparison, 6 650 migrants were supported to voluntary return to their countries of origin in 2021 while there were 13 530 to be assisted in 2022 and 13 021 in 2023<sup>6</sup>.

At the same time, more efforts are needed to protect and assist migrants and refugees facing extreme risks along migratory routes, upon arrival in transit and destination countries (especially in Libya), including through reinforcement of protection, voluntary return and reintegration actions in countries of origin. Special attention is in particular needed for Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASCs). As evidenced largely

<sup>5</sup> This strand of activity will be implemented in close coordination and complementarity with INTPA programmes to avoid overlapping.

<sup>6</sup> Figures provided by IOM for EU funded programmes on AVRR.



for children and youth on the move via the Mediterranean Sea routes to Europe, the journey is marked by high levels of abuse, trafficking, and exploitation<sup>7</sup>.

### *Building on previous and current interventions on AVRR in North Africa*

The Action will build on the extensive experience of the EU-IOM Joint Initiative (2017-2022) funded by the EUTF Africa and the current programme Migrant Protection Return and Reintegration North Africa implemented by IOM since 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2023. It will also maximise the complementarity with other interventions covering AVRR from and to those countries involved, including those funded by EU Member States.

In 2023, the MPRR NA supported 13 021 migrants with assisted voluntary return from North Africa. 5138 have benefitted from protection services. It also provided 547 migrants with post arrival assistance and reintegration support in countries where no reintegration programmes for returnees are funded by the EU.

IOM expects that over the next years the number of migrants requesting assisted voluntary return in North Africa will increase significantly. To this end, this Action aims to complement the current work done by IOM under the MPRR NA and strengthen the ownership and capacity of partner countries to better manage migrant's return to their country of origin.

### **Specific context in Algeria:**

**Algeria** is an important transit and destination country with an estimated population of around 100,000 migrants originating mostly from Niger, Mali, and other West and Central African countries. Continued instability in the Sahel region and more recently expulsions from Tunisia to Algeria, as well as the revocation of a 2015 anti-migration law by Niger's military Government have particularly intensified migration flows to and through Algeria. The long and perilous journey across the desert, coupled with the difficulties in access to regular work opportunities, leave many of the migrants stranded in Algeria, often in vulnerable conditions and unable to continue their journey onwards, or return to their country of origin in a safe and dignified manner.

Since 2017, 4,820 migrants were assisted to return to their country of origin from central and south Algeria (Algiers, Tamanrasset and Djanet) under EUTF and NDICI funded programmes. The main countries of origin for migrants have been: Guinea, Mali, Niger and Côte d'Ivoire and the majority being males. According to IOM, the number of requests for protection services and Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) from Algeria is increasing.

The Government of Algeria has been in discussions with the EU on the possibility to increase AVRR to up to 10 000 p.a. with the help of IOM since June 2023. This request for 10 000 AVRR/year is supported by the main countries of origin such as Guinea, Mali, Niger, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Senegal, through their respective Embassies in Algeria.

Since 2020, IOM saw a considerable increase in requests for AVRR to up to 10,000 requests per year, a tenfold increase compared to previous years, including unaccompanied and separated children UASCs, victims of trafficking VoTs and potential victims of trafficking PVoTs (about 10% of overall requests). In addition, with intensifications of expulsions from Tunisia to Algeria and from Algeria to Niger and back, the number of requests for protection services, including AVRR from Algeria is further increasing. There are currently around 6 000 migrants registered or awaiting registration.

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<sup>7</sup> IOM and UNICEF, 2017: [Harrowing Journeys: Children and youth on the move across the Mediterranean Sea, at risk of trafficking and exploitation | IOM Publications Platform](#)

## **Specific context in Libya:**

Libya is a transit and destination country for migrants coming from a wide variety of countries in Africa, and remains the country with the highest degree of complexity, where criminal networks involved in trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants are taking advantage of the vulnerable situations migrants face, targeting particularly vulnerable groups, including women and girls<sup>8</sup>.

In October 2023, the number of migrants in the 100 Libyan municipalities is estimated at a total of 706 369 migrants originating from over 45 nationalities<sup>9</sup>. As of end January 2023, around 3000 migrants were identified as being held in detention centres while others may be stranded and in urban settings increasing their vulnerabilities towards traffickers or smugglers, including with detention at checkpoints, verbal and physical abuse, including gender-based violence.

The criminalisation of migration in Libya substantially increases their vulnerabilities including arbitrary arrests and detention, the risk of becoming subject to trafficking in human beings, as well as limiting their access to protection and assistance. Undocumented migrants relying on informal labour arrangements are at high risk of labour exploitation, without any possibility for minimum labour standards enforcement, or access to recourse.

Since 2015, IOM has assisted more than 78 000 migrants to return to over 54 countries of origin across Africa and Asia in the framework of the Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) Programme funded by the EUTF for Africa to support stranded, vulnerable, or detained migrants expressing desire to return from Libya to their country of origin. Among these were unaccompanied minors, migrants with disabilities, migrants over 60 years of age, victims of trafficking in human beings, gender-based violence survivors; pregnant/ lactating women, and migrants with medical conditions. The VHR programme supported migrants to acquire consular support, return home safely while providing reintegration support upon arrival through a tailored, comprehensive reintegration plan. The VHR process in Libya is governed by the Voluntary Humanitarian Return with Integrated Protection in Libya Standard Operating Procedure implemented by IOM. It followed a rights-based and 'do no harm' approach to ensure that dignified and sustainable solutions are made available for those who seek to return from Libya.

There have been important developments in the country following the recent engagements with the EU and the decision on national authorities to significantly simplify the exit visa procedures in order to speed up the voluntary humanitarian returns. This creates a new playground in the country and an expectation to increase the numbers of VHRs to at least 15.000 per year. Additional support for the related administrative measures should be also made available so that we could make sure we could fully capitalise on this political will. In addition to that, the human rights situation in the disembarkation points and detention centers is of particular concern. This creates the need to put in place a solid referral/screening mechanism, including the necessary facilities, that should operate in both types of location and should be able to perform the identification of migrants with vulnerabilities, people in needs of international protection, etc.

## **Specific context in Morocco:**

Morocco faces a complex and varied situation in terms of migration. It continues to be a country of departure, transit and destination. Its migration profile is characterized by mixed flows, including migrants and refugees. Migrants fleeing poverty, lack of opportunities and increasing violence in their countries of origin continue to arrive in large numbers to Morocco on their perilous attempts to migrate irregularly to Europe, notably along the Western Mediterranean and Atlantic Routes. Morocco remains a key partner in the area of migration and a positive model of cooperation in the region. Our cooperation is comprehensive

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<sup>8</sup> The majority of migrants are men, and also target of traffickers and smugglers (IOM Data Tracking Matrix round 36: men 80%, women 10% children).

<sup>9</sup> [Migrant Report Key Findings 50 \(October - December 2023\) | Displacement Tracking Matrix \(iom.int\)](#)



and includes all areas of the new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, which aim to promote tailor-made and mutually beneficial partnerships.

For many migrants, Morocco is the last step before an attempt to reach Europe. As a result, they are concentrated in northern Morocco: in Tangier, Oujda, Nador. The phenomenon of irregular migration in Morocco has been exacerbated by the strict control of borders, exposing migrants to situations of insecurity and vulnerability. Finding no employment in their home country, migrants in an irregular situation are increasingly desperate to secure employment in Morocco and are willing to take risks which could lead them to become potentially victims of trafficking (VoTs).

Despite the Moroccan Government's strategy to ensure access of migrant populations to basic services and assist those who are in a vulnerable situation (particularly migrants fleeing poverty, lack of opportunities and increasing violence in their countries of origin), various studies and consultation processes led by UN agencies, civil society and governmental actors, have shown that several barriers such as language, lack of or non-tailored information, administrative status, misinformation on their rights and obligations, or just the migratory situation and discriminatory perceptions may limit access to shelter, education, health, protection and assistance services and their effective use. Due to their irregular administrative situation, the job search remains very difficult, which increases their vulnerability. Due also to the limited possibility of onward legal journeys to Europe, finding work, and the difficult living conditions, thousands of migrants end up being stranded in Morocco and the voluntary return through AVRR programme offers them a humane and dignified solution.

IOM registers an average of 3,000 migrants on a yearly basis deciding to return to their country of origin for a wide range of reasons. The number of applications for return from Morocco remained high in the last years. In close cooperation with the Government of Morocco, over 7,000 stranded migrants benefitted from AVRR between 2021 and today.

### **Complementarity with EU and other Donors/Partners**

Coordination and complementarity will be established, where suitable, in the framework of the Team Europe Initiatives on the Atlantic/Western Mediterranean and the Central Mediterranean migratory routes, as well as with the future Regional Migration Support Programme for Sub-Saharan Africa and any other relevant interventions at country/bilateral level.

The Action will be complementary to other on-going interventions, including:

- The Programme Migrant, Protection, Return and Reintegration in North Africa co funded by NDICI-Global Europe, the Government of Denmark, Italy and Norway. This programme is implemented by IOM in the 5 North African countries aiming to support AVR for 30170 migrants from January 2023 to December 2026.
- The Migrant Protection, Return and Reintegration for Sub-Saharan Africa (MPRR-SSA) for the provision of post arrival and reintegration assistance in country of origin targeted by this programme to the extent possible. Considering the increasing number of assisted voluntary returns from North Africa and the limited fund available under this programme, the Commission will maintain a close coordination on both the mechanism to be designed to ensure referrals to reintegration programmes developed at the national level and on the accompanying funding.
- The regional 'Protection Services to Vulnerable and Stranded Migrants in and Transiting through North Africa' project (PROTECT), which is funded by the Netherlands and implemented by IOM in Algeria, Egypt and Tunisia;
- The programme COMPASS funded by the Netherlands and implemented by IOM in Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco, and other Members States' bilateral programmes on AVR.

- The regional development and protection programme in North Africa (AMIF funded) focussing on the protection of migrants and refugees in the region (registration and RSD of refugees; protection of vulnerable migrants and refugees and in particular children and victims of trafficking).
- Awareness raising campaigns on the risks of irregular migration and legal migration opportunities (AMIF funded) in North Africa.
- Frontex' Joint Reintegration Services supporting return and reintegration from Europe.

To avoid overlapping, the Action will ensure regular coordination meetings with key development stakeholders to share information and identify synergies with actions implemented in similar areas. This will include projects on migrant's protection funded by the EU, Member States and other donors. The Action will engage as much as possible with all relevant stakeholders at the local, national, regional and international level. EU Delegations will support and guide selected implementing partner(s) in the coordination process. The implementing partner(s) will also ensure that priorities identified by partner countries in their development plans and/or migration strategies at the national and/or local level are taken into account at all levels of intervention. A “do-no-harm” approach to ensure that migrants and communities are not negatively affected by the actions will be applied.

## **EU Added value**

The EU and Member States are involved in several continental and regional dialogues on migration governance, including in the areas of return and reintegration, where exchanges of best practices and lessons learned have demonstrated the EU's added value. These dialogues include:

- The AU-EU Continent-to-Continent Migration and Mobility Dialogue (C2CMMD), which provides a platform for consultation, coordination, and information exchange across the two continents, and encourages collaboration and cooperation for results-oriented joint actions on migration and mobility;
- The Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development (Rabat Process), a regional migration dialogue established in 2006 and bringing together countries of origin, transit and destination of the migration routes linking Central, West and Northern Africa with Europe;
- The Khartoum Process, a platform for political cooperation among the countries along the migration route between the Horn of Africa and Europe, established in 2014;
- The 2015 Valletta Summit and the Joint Valletta Action Plan (JVAP), which lays down a series of priorities aiming at supporting Valletta Partners with the enhancement of migration governance between Europe and Africa – including in the area of return, readmission and reintegration;
- Current consultations on a Team Europe Approach to ensure harmonisation of aid and complementarity between the EU and interested Member States, through a “whole of route” approach.

## **2.2 Problem Analysis**

### Short problem analysis

Under the EU-IOM Joint Initiative funded by the EUTF, more than 100,000 migrants have benefited from voluntary return assistance and post-arrival and reintegration assistance in Africa. However, the protection needs as well as the pace and scale of the returns and the corresponding needs for reintegration have been far more important than anticipated, with increased calls for continuous reinforcement of protection, voluntary return and reintegration actions. The EU and African countries have reinforced a joint approach to effective migration governance, improving cooperation on the fight against irregular migration, smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings while developing more sustainable approaches to harness the potential of

migration as fundamental driver for inclusive and sustainable development in countries of origin and transit in Africa.

This Action will help to address the dire situation of stranded migrants who find themselves trapped in dangerous situations either on their way to Europe or on their way back. Migrants face significant risks along migration routes, including violence, exploitation, and abuse at the hands of smugglers, traffickers, and others. Hence, they require protection and assistance in the areas of transit and upon return. Although most do not qualify for refugee status or other forms of international protection, they may still find themselves in vulnerable situations. Voluntary return is one of the options for stranded migrants facing dire conditions along the migration routes, including in transit, who wish to return to their countries of origin but do not have the necessary information and means to do so. Coupled with sustainable reintegration, this Action can offer to the migrants a durable solution in their countries of origin and encourage voluntary return across the continent.

The main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) covered by the action are:

- Stranded and vulnerable migrants in transit in North Africa are the final beneficiaries of this Action.

Other main stakeholders include:

- The government authorities at national and local level (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Justice, Wilayas, Municipalities...).
- Consular services of returnees' countries of origin
- Member States, the African Union, the UN agencies (IOM) and INGOs in charge of protecting migrant rights.
- Other actors responsible for funding / managing / implementing strategies, policies, and programmes in the area of migrant protection, return and reintegration and vocational training.
- At national level, the selected implementing partner(s) will support to strengthen work or develop new coordination mechanisms with national and international actors, including civil society organisations involved in protection, return and reintegration activities. NGOs, EU and Member States agencies and other UN agencies with protection capacity, will be involved in responding to the needs of stranded migrants in transit as well as in supporting the reintegration of migrants once returned in their country of origin. Referrals to national stakeholders offering return-related services should be prioritised to ensure sustainability and accountability of national actors. At EU level, EU Delegations will support the implementing partner(s) to better coordinate with EU Member States funding AVRR in North Africa and their service providers on the ground.
- Member States agencies, the African Union (AU), Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Non-State Actors (NSAs), and NGOs.

## 2.3 Lessons Learned

Lessons learned from the EU-IOM Joint Initiative (2017-2022) and the current action MPRR NA show that there is potential to maximise the effectiveness of the EU's action by supporting partner countries to meet their obligations and by providing capacity building for the management of returns, reintegration assistance, and referrals to development programmes, including monitoring upon return, information and awareness raising campaigns.

Based on this experience, several challenges and good practices have been encountered and are summarized below:

- **Ensuring programme flexibility** as a key factor to be able to adapt to changes in migratory flows (increased workload, change of routes), to fragile political and security environments, as well as to epidemics (COVID19).

- **Strengthening cooperation and improve connections between countries of origin and countries of transit and destination** by promoting transnational dialogues and direct exchanges between institutional stakeholders to address common issues and explore jointly durable solutions.
- **Tackling capacity shortages of countries' of origin consular services**
- **Improving the link between the pre-departure and post-arrival stages, and between EU funded and existing voluntary return programmes supported by EUMS, DG HOME and Frontex**, in particular through the Team Europe Initiatives.
- **Integrating protection assistance needs into national systems of host countries and countries of origin** – the structures and partnerships established through the EU-IOM Joint (2017-2022) and the current intervention MPRR NA (2023-2026) should be maintained and strengthened. Governmental and non-governmental partners have gained, through capacity building activities, knowledge and skills on how to identify migrants' vulnerabilities and address their needs so as to be able to implement activities themselves.
- **Increasing referrals to other “development programmes”** – the individual reintegration process for returnees, involving active participation of communities and institutions of origin has proved lengthy and at times discouraging for migrants and receiving institutions. Since the communities of return typically overlap with the communities where migration root-causes actions are implemented, the referral of returnees to existing and emerging development programmes and national services on resilience, economic development, education and vocational training, agriculture and value chains should accelerate and increase the delivery of reintegration assistance, in addition to promoting aid-effectiveness.
- **Involving national authorities from host countries more regularly** – standard operating procedures to allow for harmonised dignified voluntary return and reintegration have been developed and adapted to country contexts and development strategies, however they have not yet been adopted by the national authorities for a swift implementation. More regular (both formal and informal) dialogue and involvement of national authorities is needed to ensure ownership and effective return system.
- **Improving EU involvement in political dialogue with transit countries and countries of origin** and strengthening EU visibility towards partner countries.

### 3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

#### 3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

**The Overall Objective (Impact)** Increased assisted voluntary returns from North Africa and sustainable reintegration of irregular migrants in North Africa and in their respective countries of origin (MIP Priority 3)

**The Specific Objective(s) (Outcomes)** of this action are:

1. Vulnerable and stranded migrants in North Africa return safely, voluntarily and in dignity to countries of origin
2. Migrants returning to and from North Africa are sustainably reintegrated in their countries of origin;

The **Outputs** to be delivered by this action contributing to corresponding Specific Objectives (Outcomes) are:

contributing to Outcome 1 (or Specific Objective 1):

1.1 Increased identification, and quality and timely assistance services to vulnerable and stranded migrants in North African countries

1.2. Strengthened safe and dignified assisted voluntary return processes from North Africa to countries of origin

1.3. Enhanced stakeholders' capacities to develop national mechanism in host countries and better manage Assisted Voluntary Returns and Reintegration

Contributing to outcome 2 (or Specific Objective 2)

2.1 Increased provision of services to support returning migrants' immediate arrival and sustainable reintegration in country of origin (only if reintegration services are not covered by other EU interventions)

#### 3.2 Indicative Activities

Activities related to Output 1.1:

- Set up migrant screening mechanism at border and disembarkation points, as well as in detention centers to identify most vulnerable and at risk where possible otherwise establishment of mechanisms for migrant profiling to allow for appropriate counselling and referral of the persons concerned to the appropriate response mechanism (e.g. Registration, Refugee Status Determination, assisted voluntary return, particularised process for victims of trafficking).
- Provide adequate, safe and dignified reception conditions (basic material and psychosocial needs).
- Provide counselling, referral of person of concerns and family-reunification for unaccompanied minors, this includes support to family reunification procedures (children and youth at risk to join parents abroad), screening and interviews with child/youth, with caregiver and/or parents/relative abroad, and home visits;
- Support state/non-state actors' capacities to provide comprehensive timely gender-sensitive protection assistance and specialised services.

Activities related to Output 1.2:

- Provision of pre-departure counselling on voluntary return process and existing conditions/situation and opportunities in the countries of origin to ensure a fully informed decision;
- Provide assisted voluntary return (air ticket, travel allowance, transit assistance, land transportation, pre-departure hospitality) for an estimated 26,000 migrants to return to their countries of origin (indicatively: 11,000 from Algeria, 11,000 from Libya, 4000 from Morocco);
- Support consular services and consular missions of countries of origin on return delivery process;
- Support regional and cross-border cooperation and dialogue on return, readmission and reintegration in close coordination with the Countries of origin, the African Union, the European Union and the EU Member States active in the third countries involved.
- Provide information and awareness raising activities, including through direct outreach and social media, so that irregular migrants and migrants at risk of irregular migration can make better-informed migration decisions. Understanding the psychological challenges that migrants face, building trust, and managing expectation are critical to delivering assistance effectively. These will be carried out in synergy with other existing campaigns, especially those funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF).

#### Activities related to output 1.3:

- Provide tailored trainings/seminars to strengthen national capacities in host countries to better manage Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration
- Provide support, including technical equipment, for the relevant national structures and the implementation of measures aiming at simplifying/speeding up the voluntary (humanitarian) measures.
- Adopt Standard Operating Procedures for AVRR ensuring safe and dignified voluntary return processes that supports the voluntary nature of returns
- Ensure regular coordination with relevant stakeholders to facilitate returns and referrals –
- Support regional and international cooperation on AVRR programming, management, and monitoring
- Strengthen data collection and analysis to better inform AVRR strategies and programming processes

#### Activities related to Output 2.1:

- Deliver post-arrival assistance and reintegration assistance to an estimated 2600 individuals returned to third countries where no reintegration assistance is covered by programmes funded by the EU or other donors to the extent possible. The target may evolve depending on the volume of funds dedicated to reintegration provided by other EU- funded programmes for migrant reintegration, including those implemented by the Commission through DG INTPA. The support from the Commission through DG NEAR has to be considered as a temporary measure until a mechanism or programme to support sustainable reintegration is set up in the relevant country. The assistance will seek to address economic, social and psychosocial dimensions. This integrated approach will be tailored to the migrants' needs, skill set and background. Activities can include support to creation of sustainable employment and income generation, small-scale infrastructures that can reduce the local population's vulnerability, health centres, training and employment centres, youth centres.

The commitment of the EU's contribution to the Team Europe Initiative to which this action refers will be complemented by other contributions from Team Europe members. It is subject to the formal confirmation of



each respective member's meaningful contribution as early as possible. In the event that the Team Europe Initiatives (TEI) and/or these contributions do not materialise, the EU action may continue outside a TEI framework.

### **3.3 Mainstreaming**

#### **Environmental Protection, Climate Change and Biodiversity**

The EIA (Environment Impact Assessment) screening classified the action as Category C (no need for further assessment).

**Outcomes of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening** (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project).

The EIA (Environment Impact Assessment) screening classified the action as Category C (no need for further assessment).

**Outcome of the Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) screening** (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project).

The CRA screening concluded that this action is no or low risk (no need for further assessment).

#### **Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls**

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G0. Nevertheless, gender concerns will be mainstreamed in all activities under this action to the extent possible, taking into account the challenging and sensitive context in which the action will take place. The Action will ensure that assistance provided is tailored to the needs of women and girls, and thus also contributing to the EU Gender Action Plan<sup>10</sup> (GAP) III<sup>11</sup>. Given the nature of the action, the protection of human rights and due process will be an integral part of the activities carried out. Both age and gender considerations will be mainstreamed in all activities of the project, with gender and age sensitive information campaigns, implementation of the referral mechanisms, equal participation in training programmes and sex disaggregated data. Unaccompanied minors and victims of trafficking in human beings will be provided with specialised, gender specific and child sensitive assistance and protection.

#### **Human Rights**

The Action will ensure full respect of the human rights of migrants and their communities, based on non-discrimination principles, self-determination and participation of the migrants as well as confidentiality and right to privacy. Protection and assistance mechanisms, including assistance and protection for victims of trafficking in human beings, will take into account the specific situation and vulnerability of the migrants, such as ensuring the best interest of the child, as well as the gender and age of the victims, and the consequences of the specific type of exploitation suffered. SO 2 in section 2 will include capacity building of state actors and civil society for the protection, promotion and fulfilment of human rights of the targeted population.

#### **Disability**

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<sup>10</sup> The Gender Action Plan III is a Joint communication by the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy which was welcomed through EU Presidency Conclusions of 16 December 2020. Drafting was led by European Commission in close consultation with EU Member States, EEAS, civil society organisations, partner governments, and international organisations (UN entities, International Finance Institutions among others). The different parties contributed to the drafting of the document through meetings and through responses to a survey conducted during the process.

<sup>11</sup> JOIN 2020 17 final - EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) III – An Ambitious Agenda for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in EU External Action

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D0. This implies that while there is no specific objective relating to disabled people, under the Action, referrals to medical and other assistance for disabled people will be carried out where possible.

### **Democracy**

The Action will be based on non-discrimination principles, self-determination and participation of the migrants and refugees as well as confidentiality and right to privacy.

### **Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience**

Peaceful coexistence with local populations is also a cross cutting issue which will be considered across all elements of the implementation, through needs assessments and context analysis. For the success of the Action, it is essential that efforts are made to maintain dialogue with local population and ensure sensitisation of the community.

### **Disaster Risk Reduction**

Migrants are considered as a group that is more vulnerable in case of a disaster given their inherent vulnerabilities and limited access to information. This action will aim at integrating strategies to reduce migrants' vulnerability and exposure to risks.

## **3.4 Risks and Assumptions**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Risks</b>	<b>Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)</b>	<b>Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)</b>	<b>Mitigating measures</b>
1 (external environment)	Instability, security, changing government priorities, including the risk of politicisation of migration.	<b>H</b>	<b>M</b>	The EU Delegations – together with the selected implementing partners - will engage with relevant authorities at the highest level possible to advocate for the programme's rights-based approach and other principles. If effective follow-up and monitoring mechanisms cannot be established in a given country, operations will be put on hold. Political dialogue or technical engagement with HQ involvement could also be engaged, as appropriate
1	Lack of political will and commitment from the beneficiary countries to work on capacity building to facilitate assisted voluntary return	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b>	In close cooperation with EU Delegations, the Action will promote regular inter-stakeholder dialogue and information exchange, based on evidence, regarding the benefits for countries to engage on voluntary return. Political dialogue or technical engagement with HQ involvement could also be engaged, as appropriate. The overall engagement will also seek to obtain full local support for IOM activities.
1	Government officials deny direct access to migrants in detention centres or other	<b>M</b>	<b>H</b>	Through this Action, maintaining effective and positive relationships with Libyan officials will remain critical to ensure continued capacity building

	migrant detention facilities in Libya			activities and to maintain access to detention facilities in a predictable way.
1	Low interest of migrants to engage in AVRR programmes	<b>M</b>	<b>H</b>	Continued awareness raising and information exchange, based on evidence, will be part of the Action, including in particular at local government and community level.
1	Change of migratory flows during the implementation of the project can significantly increase or reduce the number of migrants opting for AVRR to selected target countries of origin.	<b>M</b>	<b>H</b>	The Action will include constant monitoring of migratory flows and AVRR demand to allow for early detection of changes in the migration patterns. To ensure the Action responds to return flows and reintegration needs, adaptations to the countries of origin targeted for reintegration support will put in place to the extent possible in close coordination with the Commission (DG INPTA). Moreover, the selected implementing partner(s) will closely monitor the context and provide programme adaptations to ensure safe voluntary return.
1	Lack of cooperation on readmission in Countries of origin	<b>M</b>	<b>H</b>	Commission's services together with the EU Delegations in the target countries and the selected implementing partners will engage with relevant authorities at the appropriate level to support the engagement of the third countries on readmission.
1	Structural changes at national and local government level, including regular turnover of government's staff	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b>	From the outset, the selected implementing partner(s) will ensure close cooperation with stakeholders highlighting the importance of dedicated resources (financial and personal), and if necessary convene meetings at high level to address the issue – in close coordination with EU stakeholders.
1	The existing funds will not support the level of ambition of the partner countries for numbers of AVRs/VHRs	<b>M</b>	<b>H</b>	Raise awareness and advocate for co-funding from MS. In parallel, strengthen options for referrals into national development programmes for reintegration in countries of origin.
1	Sudden pandemic (MPOX, resurgence of the COVID -19 pandemic) of communicable diseases that hinder staff mobility and activity implementation.	<b>M</b>	<b>H</b>	The selected implementing partner(s) will follow international regulations and advisory from the World Health Organization, and will focus on reprogramming to achieve the intended results of the Action in consultation with the donor.
2 (planning, processes and systems)	Funding for reintegration support falls short of needs and requires a change in approach and a reduced level of assistance for	<b>M</b>	<b>H</b>	The Commission will continue to monitor the take up of voluntary return and reintegration support and ensure close coordination between voluntary return and reintegration activities and funding with the aim to ensure that all returning migrants can benefit from

	returning migrants in their countries of origin.			adequate and appropriate support. Discussions with MS through TEI to search complementarities and advocate for additional contribution. Further developing or strengthening of referral mechanisms must be ensured.
2	Absence of coordination and referrals between returns and reintegration partners in countries of origin	<b>H</b>	<b>M</b>	Develop referrals between the Commission implementing partners to ensure complementarities between the return and reintegration processes
2	Lack of capacities of the implementing partner to significantly increase AVRR	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b>	Adopt a gradual approach and conduct regular meetings with the national authorities in host countries to identify main bottlenecks and find solutions to enable AVRR scaling up
5 (communication and information)	Strong public criticism against the Action.	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b>	In close consultation with the EU, the selected implementing partner(s) will issue prompt response to media coverage or other forms of criticisms with counter arguments based on facts to rectify false information and counter negative perceptions. At the same time, the implementing partner(s) will develop and disseminate knowledge management products showcasing the successes of the Programme.

## External Assumptions

- Authorities provide continuous support to protection, return and reintegration activities.
- Adequate funds are available to provide individual reintegration to returnees in countries of origin
- Migration flows are steady and migrants in transit countries are in need of protection, assistance, especially return, and reintegration assistance.
- Partner countries support the establishment of referral pathways to provide return assistance and the implementation of programmes targeting returnees is coordinated with countries of origin to ensure an adequate reintegration assistance.
- Authorities support dissemination of awareness campaigns in key areas of origin /transit/return.
- Turnover remains low and trained staff remain in place in key institutions and the implementing partner(s).

## 3.5 Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is that by providing protection and support to stranded and vulnerable migrants in North Africa, and by supporting assisted voluntary return and sustainable reintegration for returnees in the region, the Action will contribute to a better management of migration within Africa in full respect of the rights of migrants and in line with international standards.

To achieve this desired impact, the Action will firstly enable safe, humane, voluntary return of vulnerable and stranded migrants in North Africa (Specific Objective 1). This will be done by ensuring migrants stranded receive protection and assistance services, through the delivery of comprehensive, quality and timely assistance and specialised protection services (Result 1.1). The Action will support their assisted voluntary return, including by providing pre-departure hospitality, medical and psychological assistance and support for the travel documentation. Mobile outreach campaigns will also continue to be an important tool for reaching vulnerable migrants in remote areas particularly (Result 1.2). The Action will also contribute to strengthen the ownership by the national authorities by supporting partner countries and relevant stakeholders in North Africa

to acquire the necessary skills and ownership over the return. As a result, relevant stakeholders will be equipped with the knowledge, skills and equipment to support a dignified return. (Result 1.3).

Secondly, the Action will facilitate post arrival and reintegration assistance in countries where no reintegration is provided by the EU or any other donors (Specific Objective 2). The reintegration of returnees from transit countries in North Africa will be implemented through an integrated approach addressing economic, social and psychosocial dimensions. Where applicable, and to avoid funds overlapping, returning migrants will be referred to existing socio-economic development actions funded by the EU and its Member States. (Result 2.1).

### **3.6 Indicative Logical Framework Matrix**

This indicative logframe constitutes the basis for the monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the intervention. On the basis of this logframe matrix, a more detailed logframe (or several) may be developed at contracting stage. In case baselines and targets are not available for the action, they should be informed for each indicator at signature of the contract(s) linked to this AD, or in the first progress report at the latest. New columns may be added to set intermediary targets (milestones) for the Output and Outcome indicators whenever it is relevant. At inception, the first progress report should include the complete logframe (e.g. including baselines/targets). Progress reports should provide an updated logframe with current values for each indicator. The final report should enclose the logframe with baseline and final values for each indicator. The indicative logical framework matrix may evolve during the lifetime of the action depending on the different implementation modalities of this action. The activities, the expected Outputs and related indicators, targets and baselines included in the logframe matrix may be updated during the implementation of the action, no amendment being required to the Financing Decision.

Results	Results chain: Main expected results [maximum 10]	Indicators [it least one indicator per expected result]	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
<b>Impact 1</b>	Increased assisted voluntary returns from North Africa and sustainable reintegration of irregular migrants in North Africa and in their respective countries of origin (MIP Priority 3)	% of returned migrants reporting social and economic self-sufficiency, stability, and wellbeing in their community of return, disaggregated by sex and nationality			Return / Reintegration sustainability survey	<i>Not applicable</i>
<b>Outcome 1</b>	Vulnerable and stranded migrants in North Africa return safely, voluntarily and in dignity to countries of origin	<p>% of returning migrants who report they are satisfied with travel arrangement made for them</p> <p>% of returned migrants who report that they have been provided with sufficient and useful assistance to return to their country of origin, disaggregated by sex and nationality;</p> <p>% of government and civil society partners reporting increased knowledge, capacity and/or resources on migration governance</p>			Return survey / AVR monitoring survey	Security and political contexts are stable and AVR can be programmed safely. Migrants continue to require and engage in AVR.
<b>Outcome 2</b>	Migrants returning to and from North Africa are sustainably reintegrated in their countries of origin	% of returning migrants who report they are satisfied with the reintegration assistance received			Reintegration satisfaction survey	Migrants continue to require and engage in reintegration assistance. Governments and local actors are engaged in efforts better manage



						migrants AVR
<b>Output 1 related to Outcome 1</b>	1.1 Increased quality and timely assistance services to vulnerable and stranded migrants in North African countries	1.1.1 Numbers of beneficiaries of referral/screening mechanisms set at the disembarkation points and in the detention centers  1.1.2 % of migrants in transit in North Africa countries who report they are satisfied with protection and direct assistance (disaggregated by sex and nationality);  1.1.3 # of migrants benefitting from essential services in transit countries			1.1.1 AVR Survey  1.1.2 Database of beneficiaries	Governments and local actors are engaged in efforts to provide assistance to migrants
<b>Output 2 related to Outcome 1</b>	1.2 Strengthened safe and dignified assisted voluntary return processes from North Africa to countries of origin	1.2.1 # of migrants assisted to return voluntarily from North Africa countries to their countries of origin (disaggregated by sex and country of destination).  1.2.2 # of people reached through media information campaigns disaggregated by sex and status (migrant/ host community member).			1.2.1 Database of beneficiaries  1.2.2 Programme Records	Once given sufficient and reliable information, migrants opt to return voluntarily.  Security and political contexts are stable. National and local Authorities support dissemination

						of awareness campaign.
<b>Output 3 related to Outcome 1</b>	1.3 Enhanced stakeholders' capacities to develop national mechanism and better manage Assisted Voluntary Returns and Reintegration	<p>1.3.1 # of partner organisations trained by the EU-funded intervention with increased knowledge and/or skills on return management disaggregated by sex and type of actor (public, private, civil society, etc);</p> <p>1.3.2 Number of referral mechanisms for return endorsed by governments (1/country and 5 in total)</p> <p>1.3.3 Number of coordination meetings of relevant stakeholders to facilitate returns and referrals –</p>			<p>1.3.1 Programme records</p> <p>1.3.2 Pre- and post-training tests to assess the knowledge of participants before and after the intervention whenever possible.</p>	Targeted institutions remain committed to receive capacity building.
<b>Output 1 related to Outcome 2</b>	2.1 Increased provision of services to support returning migrants' immediate arrival and sustainable reintegration in country of origin (only if reintegration services are not covered by other EU interventions)	2.1.1 # of returning migrants supported through economic, social and psycho-social measures;			2.1.1 Programme records	Returnees remain engaged until the end of the reintegration process. The monitoring of the reintegration on the ground remains feasible

## **4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS**

### **4.1 Financing Agreement**

To implement this action, it is not envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with the partner countries.

### **4.2 Indicative Implementation Period**

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3.1 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is **72 months** from the date of adoption by the Commission of this financing Decision. Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

### **4.3 Implementation Modalities**

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures<sup>12</sup>.

#### **4.3.1 Indirect Management with a pillar-assessed entity**

This action may be implemented in indirect management with one or more entities, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

- completed pillar assessed entity;
- proven established experience and operational capacity in the management and implementation of voluntary return and reintegration projects including capacity building and international cooperation in the North Africa;
- technical competence in the sector and leverage for policy dialogue, including technical expertise in border management and law enforcement cooperation;
- administrative capability and the experience to implement this type of intervention due to its mandate and expertise;
- extensive network of national and international partners, which can be drawn on;
- demonstrated capacity to coordinate with various stakeholders.
- a robust, reliable and tested internal control mechanism to prevent, detect and deter non-compliance with EU restrictive measures.

#### **4.3.2 Changes from indirect to direct management (and vice versa) mode due to exceptional circumstances (one alternative second option)**

If the implementation modality under indirect management as defined in section 4.3.1 cannot be implemented due to circumstances beyond the control of the Commission, the modality of implementation by grants under direct management would be used according to the following section:

- (a) The action grant will cover the whole implementation of the action or one of the two components.

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<sup>12</sup> [www.sanctionsmap.eu](http://www.sanctionsmap.eu) - Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

(b) Type of applicants targeted:

- legal person, and
- non-profit making and
- specific type of organisation such as: civil society organisations, non-governmental organisation, public sector operator, local authority, international (inter-governmental) organisation as defined by Article 156 of the EU Financial Regulation.

#### 4.5 Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)	Third Party contribution
<b>Objective 1</b> - Vulnerable and stranded migrants in North Africa return safely, voluntarily and in dignity to countries of origin		
Indirect management – cf. section 4.3.1	50 000 000	1 000 000
<b>Objective 2</b> - Migrants returning to and from North Africa benefit from immediate post-arrival assistance and are sustainably reintegrated in their countries of origin		
Indirect management – cf. section 4.3.1	6 000 000	
Evaluation – cf. section 5.2 Audit – cf. section 5.3	will be covered by another Decision	
Communication and visibility – cf. section 6	N.A.	
<b>Total</b>	<b>56 000 000</b>	<b>1 000 000</b>

#### 4.7 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

Steering Committees (SC) providing guidance and strategic orientation will be established for each project contract to be signed under this action and if necessary, in each target country. The Contracting Authority may establish – on the bases of their preference and the variety of national and international interlocutors – whether one or more SC are necessary based on the different components of the action. These will be co-chaired by representatives of the Contracting Authority and implementing partner(s). Depending on the subjects to be discussed, meetings shall be open to the participation of national Institutions and other relevant stakeholders, including those in direct contact with the final beneficiaries (civil society organisation, state actors). In principle, all EU Member States shall be invited to participate to these meetings. If required the existing organisational structure of the current programme MPRR NA will be revised and adapted to this new programme.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action.

## **5. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT**

### **5.1 Monitoring and Reporting**

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its Outputs and contribution to the achievement of its Outcomes, and if possible at the time of reporting, contribution to the achievement of its Impacts, as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

Arrangements for monitoring and reporting, including roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring:

Implementing partners' monitoring system is expected to measure, and report, on progress in relation to the planned outputs, outcomes and impact of the action by means of RACER (Relevant, Accepted, Credible, Easy, Robust) and SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-related) indicators related to a baseline situation. Balanced indicator system should also include both quantitative and qualitative indicators as well as gendered indicators. Considering the multi-country nature of this action, indicator values will be measured, and reported, both on a country and regional level.

Establishing baselines and targets for each indicator selected will be the responsibility of implementing partners' and this information will be provided at contracting level (at the latest at the end of the inception phase). If a baseline survey is deemed necessary, correlated endline studies to collect results data will need to be envisaged. Such surveys can be financed under the regular budget of the intervention and should be budgeted accordingly at contracting level (with specific budget lines identified for this purpose).

The Monitoring system put in place will collect and analyse data to inform on progress towards achievement of planned results to feed decision-making processes and to report on the use of resources. Considering the multi-country nature of this action, the separation of tasks and coordination on monitoring and reporting duties between the implementing partners involved in the action will have to be detailed and agreed upon by all parties involved at contracting stage. Result-based reporting will be used to foster the active and meaningful participation of all stakeholders involved in the action. Result-based progress reports will be presented and discussed during the action's steering committee or any other relevant coordination mechanisms established in the framework of this action.

### **5.2 Evaluation**

Having regard to the importance of the action, a mid-term or final evaluation will be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants contracted by the Commission. This exercise will be combined with the evaluation foreseen for NDICI-GEO-NEAR/2021/043-489 if applicable.

In case a mid-term evaluation is envisaged: It will be carried out for problem solving, learning purposes, in particular with respect to the intention to launch a new phase of the action.

In case a final evaluation is envisaged: It will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the fact that the field of migration

governance is sensitive, thus it requires close analysis of its effectiveness as well as the level participation of direct beneficiaries (right holders), as well as the accountability of the partner countries involved.

The Commission shall form a Reference Group (RG) composed by representatives from the main stakeholders at both EU and national (representatives from the government, from civil society organisations (private sector, NGOs, etc.), etc.) levels. If deemed necessary, other donors will be invited to join. [The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 30 days in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation exercise and missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partner country and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

The financing of the evaluation shall be covered by another measure constituting a financing Decision.

### **5.3 Audit and Verifications**

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

## **6. STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY**

All entities implementing EU-funded external actions have the contractual obligation to inform the relevant audiences of the Union's support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. To that end they must comply with the instructions given in the 2022 guidance document [\*Communicating and raising EU visibility: Guidance for external actions\*](#) (or any successor document).

This obligation will apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, the partner country, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU Member States. In each case, a reference to the relevant contractual obligations must be included in the respective financing agreement, procurement and grant contracts, and contribution agreements.

For the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action, the Commission may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, as part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union. Visibility and communication measures should also promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds. Effectiveness of communication activities on awareness about the action and its objectives as well as on EU funding of the action should be measured.

Implementing partners shall keep the Commission and the EU Delegation/Office fully informed of the planning and implementation of specific visibility and communication activities before the implementation. Implementing partners will ensure adequate visibility of EU financing and will report on visibility and communication actions as well as the results of the overall action to the relevant monitoring committees.



## Appendix 1: IDENTIFICATION OF THE PRIMARY INTERVENTION LEVEL FOR REPORTING IN OPSYS

A Primary intervention<sup>13</sup> (project/programme) is a coherent set of results structured in a logical framework aiming at delivering development change or progress. Identifying the level of the primary intervention will allow for:

- ✓ Differentiating these Actions or Contracts from those that do not produce direct reportable development results, defined as support entities (i.e. audits, evaluations);
- ✓ Articulating Actions and/or Contracts according to an expected common chain of results and therefore allowing them to ensure a more efficient and aggregated monitoring and reporting of performance;
- ✓ Having a complete and exhaustive mapping of all results-bearing Actions and Contracts.

The present Action identifies as

<b>Contract level</b> (i.e. Grants, Contribution Agreements, any case in which foreseen individual legal commitments identified in the budget will have different log frames, even if part of the same Action Document)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 1	Contribution Agreements

<sup>13</sup> For the purpose of consistency between terms in OPSYS, DG INTPA, DG NEAR and FPI have harmonised 5 key terms, including 'Action' and 'Intervention' where an 'Action' is the content (or part of the content) of a Commission financing Decision and 'Intervention' is a coherent set of activities and results which constitutes an effective level for the operational follow-up by the EC of its operations on the ground. See more on the [concept of intervention](#). *[to access the link an EU Login is needed]*