

Final External Evaluation of “Protecting vulnerable migrants and stabilizing communities in Libya – Phase II” (EUTF) Program

Prepared for: IOM Libya

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Background

IOM coordinated the EUTF Programme in Libya, funded by the European Union, to implement activities across protection, health, direct assistance, search and rescue, labor and mobility inclusion, resilience and community engagement, data collection and research sectors. It covers the period between September 2021 and October 2022 and is a continuation of the project “Protecting vulnerable migrants and stabilizing communities – Phase I” which was implemented from May 2017 to August 2021. It consisted of the provision of protection services and assistance to populations in need across the country, with a specific focus on migration management and community resilience. The response also included a social cohesion component to improve inter and intra-community relations between host communities, IDPs and migrants as well as trainings for relevant government officials on migration management and youth employment. SREO Consulting conducted a final evaluation to assess and measure how well the project implemented in Libya has achieved its intended short-, medium- and long-term objectives, as well as the extent to which the interventions and delivery strategies were adequate to address the problems at hand, with the aim to determine what worked and what did not work under what circumstances. The overall project performance, its impact on the intended beneficiaries, and how it integrated cross-cutting issues such as gender and human rights were presented in this evaluation.

Key Findings

Overall, the projects increased migrants’ protection by providing consultation upon registration and referring them to IOM-provided services or external services provided by other humanitarian actors available in Libya. IOM distributed non-food items (NFI) to the beneficiaries based on needs expressed. Beneficiaries from Qatroun and Benghazi shared their concerns about the food distribution being irregular and unable to meet the recurring needs of beneficiaries, but they all agreed that the assistance addressed their most urgent needs, such as food kits, NFI kits and medical assistance. Specialized assistance and protection case management services were provided according to expressed need. The Libyan government officials received trainings on migrant management. The key informants expressed that IOM sustained and expanded the provision of essential health and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services for migrants, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and vulnerable host communities in the targeted locations. IOM also provided vocational and business management trainings and toolkits to members of the youth population. The beneficiaries received certification and toolkits upon completion of the training sessions. Beneficiaries shared that they intended to use the skills they learned through this programme to set up their own businesses later. Most community stabilization beneficiaries and interlocutors noted a lack of interaction between local communities and migrants, thus highlighting the difficulty for the EUTF intervention to tangibly improve social cohesion.

Several aspects of the project will likely have a long-term impact on migrants’ lives. The transfer of knowledge to relevant local authorities is improving their technical capacity to effectively respond to

migrants' immediate needs, address human trafficking and smuggling of migrants and improve migration management. Many beneficiaries reported that the project instilled a sense of hope in them. The majority of the interviewed beneficiaries reported not being involved in dialogues between host and migrant communities, noting there was not much interaction between the two groups. In order for the overall programming to effectively contribute toward improving social cohesion, there needs to be more emphasis on community-based dialogues among migrants and the local community.

The EUTF response was designed and implemented to be a needs-based assistance program, prioritizing the most vulnerable among migrant communities, particularly unaccompanied and separated children, women-headed households, victims of trafficking, people with disabilities and the elderly. All beneficiaries expressed that they could access services equally regardless of their gender. The projects incorporated protection principles such as safety and dignity, no discrimination, and positive accountability. Rights and dignity of beneficiaries seem to have been upheld throughout the implementation.

The design and implementation of ongoing and future programming can benefit from the lessons and recommendations in this report, including but not limited to:

Relevance

- In order to minimize the public health impact of water scarcity and shortages, IOM should consider increasing WASH programming and coordination with other actors (Mercy Corps, WHO, UNICEF, etc.) with the capacity to support WASH for healthcare facilities and beyond.
- Continue social cohesion activities through community engagement and capacity-building including awareness raising sessions, paying special focus to the observed more tense relationship between Black African migrants and host community.
- Continue and increase the number of capacity building workshops provided to Libyan authorities. These workshops were reported to be very useful for the participants. The participants also noted that trainings on topics such as English language and IT would be very beneficial for them.
- Consider adding car painting, plastering, construction and maintenance of electronics within the YESS vocational trainings curriculum as informants stated these are highly employable sectors.

Effectiveness

- In order to make mental health and psychological support more accessible to migrants, continue to work with the Ministry of Health and WHO to integrate MHPSS clinics at the public hospitals while providing translation assistance. I
- Coordinate with health actors such as WHO in order to address the medication shortages. Lack of medicines not only means individuals cannot access the treatment they require, but it also undermines confidence in the healthcare system more widely and discourages migrants from seeking and adhering to medical treatment.
- Increase the human resources within the MHPSS teams by recruiting and training further specialists as necessary, to reduce the pressure on them and make sure each case gets sufficient attention.
- Add a psychiatrist to the MHPSS teams in order to be able to deal with more serious cases, as informants highlighted that specialized mental health assistance for more serious cases was not sufficiently accessible to migrants.

Efficiency

- Increase frequency of communication and accelerate the coordination and referral mechanisms internally and between partners especially for urgent medical and protection assistance. Such cases should be handled and responded to as urgently as possible.

Impact

- Continue creating spaces of interaction and collaboration between migrants and host communities through initiatives such as the World Migrant Day, within a context where they can have meaningful interactions. Recent study revealed that most of the interactions between Libyans and migrants happen in market and work-related contexts and this does not allow for meaningful interactions. Furthermore, Libyans who personally know migrants were revealed to have a better image of migrants. Therefore, it is important to continue creating such spaces and opportunities for interaction for social cohesion activities.

Sustainability

- Consider providing one-time cash grants as well as necessary tools and mentoring for participants who successfully complete their vocational training courses, so that they can start their own business. Beneficiaries who received vocational training frequently mentioned that they lacked the capacity and resources to start their own business after the trainings. Due to liquidity crisis in Libya which makes cash unavailable and hard to access, those selected for assistance could receive their cash-grants through a pre-paid card.

Cross Cutting Issues

- Enhance the feedback and accountability mechanism and increase responsiveness/follow-up of issues raised, to make sure every beneficiary feels heard. Even though IOM initiated an interagency system in place called CFM (Common Feedback Mechanism) which is a toll-free number 24/7 that vulnerable population can use to seek humanitarian assistance, some beneficiaries reported receiving no response after their complaints or calls.