



Co-funded by the Asylum, Migration  
and Integration Fund of the European Union



 Ref. Ares(2021)5954797 - 30/09/2021



Italy, lead of the RDPP NA Consortium

## **Regional Development and Protection Programme for North Africa (RDPP NA)**

### **A Success Case Method (SCM) Evaluation Study**

*This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*

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## ABSTRACT (English)

The Regional Development and Protection Programme for North Africa (RDPP NA), under its Protection Pillar, aims at strengthening third countries' institutional capacity to provide adequate reception, access to international protection and durable solutions for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. This study investigated the extent to which implemented interventions in Phase I to III (July 2016<sup>1</sup> to December 2019) contributed to achieve the expected impact.

The study adopts a Success Case Method (SCM) design to identify the impact of the action and factors that contributed to as well as those that hindered the success of the intervention. It focused on two areas of intervention: (i) capacity building and (ii) direct support to mixed-migration flows management. In a first phase, all implemented projects are ranked based on delivered outputs against set target indicators. Then, among those interventions that achieved all expected results, four cases are randomly selected for in-depth analysis.

The key finding is that completed projects, by achieving specific objectives, brought several improvements in targeted countries. The capacity building component contributed to improve coordination and assistance to disembarked individuals in Libya. To some extent, it also improved acceptance of international organizations and humanitarian agencies that, for instance, have been granted greater access to disembarkation points. In Egypt, the action has contributed to increase awareness of refugees' issues and recognition of UNHCR-issued cards. In turn, the enhanced recognition of refugees' documents has led to greater freedom of movement and decreasing instances of arbitrary arrests.

The RDPP NA component that focused on providing direct support to mixed-migration flows management (including RSD, RST and AVRR) has contributed to increasing access to assistance, protection and, to some extent, to durable solutions in Tunisia. In Libya, through the support to resettlement operations, RDPP NA funds have contributed to provide life-changing opportunities for resettled refugees that have been enabled to move to a safe third country.

Nonetheless, despite these documented improvements, several hindering factors have limited the contribution to the overall action's objective. The action's impact was to be measured against the extent to which it contributed to strengthening targeted countries' capacity to provide adequate reception, protection and durable solutions for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. This contribution has been found to be modest.

The hindering factors are mostly related to the operational environment and context in targeted countries, such as the lack of a domestic asylum legislation. Although these variables are not under the control of the programme and implementing partners, they should be taken into consideration and mitigated to enhance the (future) potential impact of the action.

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<sup>1</sup> As per grant agreements, the starting date of the action was 15 July 2016 while implemented Working Packages formally started on 1 August 2016. This difference has no implications for the study.

## ABSTRACT (Italian)

Il Programma Regionale di Sviluppo e Protezione per il Nord Africa (Regional Development and Protection Programme for North Africa - RDPP NA) mira, nell'ambito del Pilastro Protezione, a rafforzare la capacità istituzionale dei paesi terzi a fornire adeguata accoglienza, accesso alla protezione internazionale e soluzioni durevoli per migranti, richiedenti asilo e rifugiati. Questo studio ha valutato la misura in cui gli interventi implementati nella fase da I a III (da Luglio 2016 a Dicembre 2019) del Protection Pillar hanno contribuito a raggiungere l'impatto atteso.

Lo studio adotta una metodologia di Success Case Method (SCM) per identificare l'impatto dell'azione e per identificare quali fattori hanno contribuito al e ostacolato il successo dell'intervento. La valutazione si è concentrata su due aree di intervento: (i) capacity building e (ii) sostegno diretto alla gestione dei flussi migratori misti. In una prima fase, tutti i progetti implementati sono classificati in base ai risultati ottenuti a livello di output. In seguito, tra gli interventi che hanno raggiunto tutti i risultati attesi, quattro casi studio sono selezionati casualmente per un'analisi approfondita.

Il risultato principale è che i progetti implementati, raggiungendo i loro obiettivi specifici, hanno portato molti miglioramenti nei paesi target. La componente relativa alla capacity building ha contribuito a migliorare il coordinamento e l'assistenza alle persone sbarcate in Libia. In una certa misura, ha anche migliorato l'accettazione delle organizzazioni internazionali e delle organizzazioni umanitarie a cui, ad esempio, è stato concesso un maggiore accesso ai punti di sbarco (Disembarkation Points). In Egitto, l'azione ha contribuito ad aumentare la consapevolezza sulle questioni relative ai rifugiati e il riconoscimento dei documenti emessi dall'UNHCR. A sua volta, il maggiore riconoscimento dei documenti rilasciati ai rifugiati ha portato a una maggiore libertà di movimento e a una diminuzione dei casi riportati di arresti arbitrari.

La componente del programma RDPP NA che si concentra sul fornire supporto diretto alla gestione dei flussi migratori misti (compresi Refugee Status Determination, Reinsediamento di Rifugiati e Ritorno volontario assistito) ha contribuito ad aumentare l'accesso all'assistenza, alla protezione e, in una certa misura, a soluzioni durature in Tunisia. In Libia, attraverso il sostegno alle operazioni di reinsediamento, i fondi hanno contribuito a fornire opportunità che hanno cambiato la vita ai rifugiati che sono stati supportati a trasferirsi in un paese terzo sicuro.

Tuttavia, nonostante questi miglioramenti, diversi fattori hanno limitato la misura in cui l'azione ha raggiunto il suo obiettivo generale. L'impatto dell'azione doveva essere misurato rispetto alla misura in cui ha contribuito a rafforzare la capacità dei paesi terzi beneficiari di fornire un'adeguata accoglienza, protezione e soluzioni durevoli per migranti, richiedenti asilo e rifugiati. Questo contributo è stato modesto.

I fattori che hanno ostacolato il raggiungimento di un maggiore impatto sono principalmente legati al contesto nei paesi presi di implementazione, come la mancanza di una legislazione nazionale in materia di asilo. Sebbene questi fattori non siano sotto il controllo del programma e degli implementing partners, dovrebbero essere presi in considerazione e mitigati al fine di massimizzare il potenziale impatto (futuro) dell'azione.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Regional Development and Protection Programme for North Africa is composed of one Protection and one Development pillars. The action aims at strengthening third countries' institutional capacity to provide adequate reception, access to international protection and durable solutions for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. More specifically, the general objective is to support third countries in North Africa to consolidate their migration and asylum systems and build their capacity to provide adequate reception, protection and durable solutions for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. This is done through reinforcing the protection of migrants and refugees by improving their living conditions and by offering them achievable and meaningful alternatives to irregular migration across the Central Mediterranean route. The Programme also supports migrant-friendly inclusive services, social cohesion, and employment opportunities at community level, enhancing advocacy, research, and knowledge-sharing.

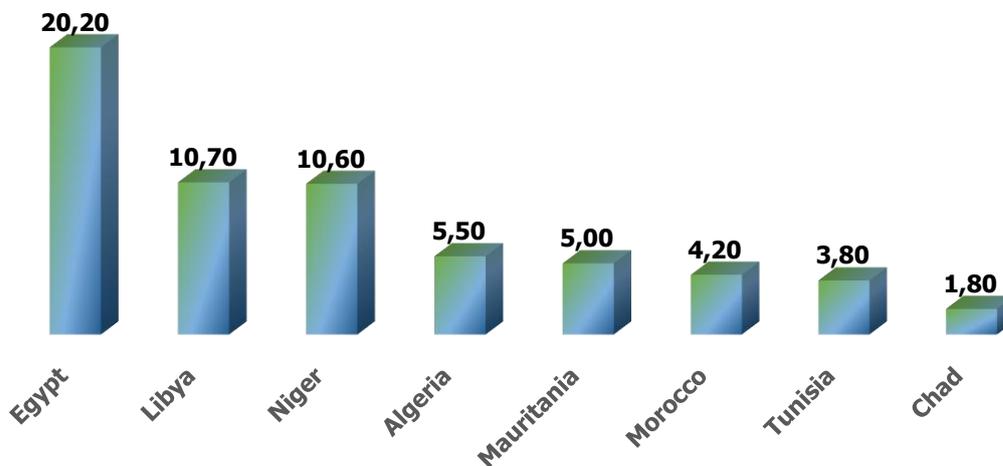
The Protection Pillar of the Programme since 2016 has been funding 57 projects in Algeria, Chad, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, and Tunisia for an overall budget of € 63,7 million euros (€ 57 million funded by the European Commission's AMIF and € 6.7 million by the Governments of Italy, Czech Republic, Norway, and Austria). This component is managed by a Consortium of EU Member States led by Italy with the participation of Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Malta, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Czech Republic, Spain, and Sweden. The Consortium and the European Commission meet twice a year in Steering Committees to monitor projects' implementation, review achievements and challenges and select new activities for funding.

Stated priorities under the Protection Pillar are:

- establishing, developing, and improving effective **Registration, Refugee Status Determination and Durable Solutions** processes for asylum-seekers and refugees, with a legal/policy and institutional framework to help host countries better manage migration and refugee situations.
- supporting the **integration** of migrants and refugees in the host countries of the North Africa region.
- provide **Direct Assistance** for migrants and refugees, including distribution of food and non-food items, medical, legal, and psychosocial assistance, Assisted Voluntary Returns and Reintegration (AVRR) to the countries of origin, rehabilitation of reception facilities.
- **Capacity building** initiatives in support of national Governments, NGOs, and civil society organizations with a specific focus on human rights standards, international protection and services for vulnerable migrants and refugees.
- **Awareness raising** activities on the risks related to irregular migration and access to international protection.

The 57 projects funded so far by the action have targeted Algeria, Chad, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, and Tunisia. The main recipient country has been Egypt with 32% of disbursements, followed by Libya and Niger with 17% each.

Figure 1. Country allocation of funding (millions) from five RDPP NA Phases - Protection Pillar



This study aims at evaluating direct and indirect effects generated by the initiatives carried out in the framework of the first three phases of the RDPP NA (AMIF AWP<sup>2</sup> 2015, 2016, 2017) to verify whether and how these interventions have changed the living conditions and behaviour of beneficiaries. The timeframe covered by this evaluation is from July 2016 to December 2019.

The primary focus of the evaluation is on programmatic outcomes, rather than project-level outputs. Paraphrasing the AMIF AWP 2015, 2016 and 2017 grant agreements, the general objective of the action was *to support migration management processes and asylum systems in targeted countries and to build local capacity to provide adequate reception, protection and durable solutions for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.*

Therefore, the primary focus of the study is on documenting whether (i) the RDPP NA has built the capacity of third countries to provide reception, protection and durable solutions to migrants, asylum seekers and refugees and/or (ii) contributed to improve migration management processes (such as RSD, RST, AVR) in targeted countries. The study adopts a qualitative design that allows (a) to document stories of impact in targeted countries and (b) to develop an understanding of the factors that have enhanced or impeded impact.

In addition, given that the study is a mid – term evaluation, a secondary focus lies on process learning that could inform future phases of the RDPP NA programme. Hence, the study also seeks to identify strengths and weaknesses of implemented intervention within the action. Taking stock of almost five years of implementation, the secondary objective of the study is of internal learning and is intended to inform operational decision-making.

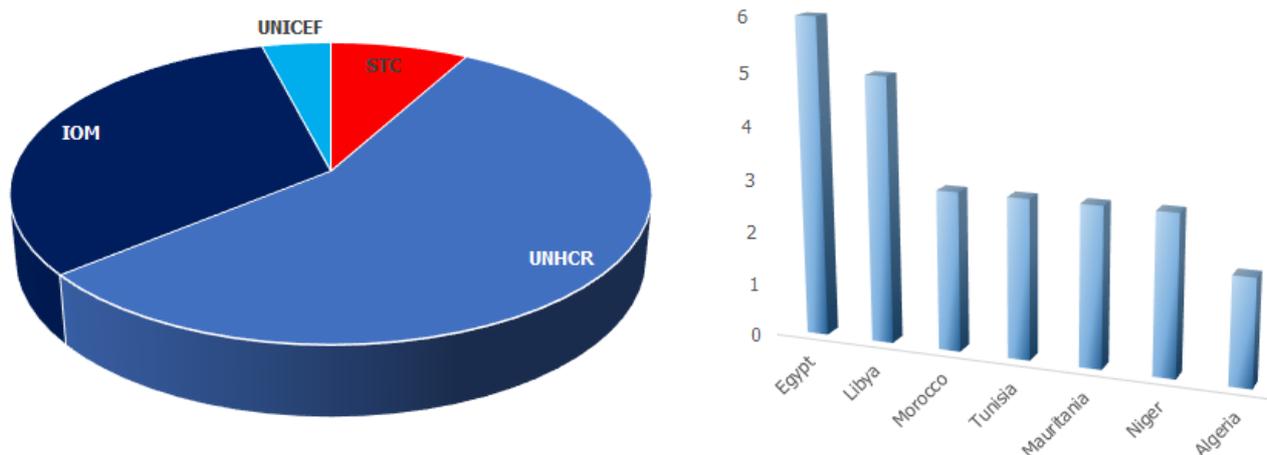
<sup>2</sup> Throughout this report the terms “AWP” and “Phase” are used interchangeably to indicate the three phases of funding of the RDPP NA. The “AWP 2015” corresponds to “Phase 2015” or “Phase I”, which started in July 2016 and lasted until June 2019. The “AWP 2016” corresponds to “Phase 2016” or “Phase II”, which covered February 2017 to February 2020. The “AWP 2017” corresponds to “Phase 2017” or “Phase III” that lasted from January 2019 to June 2021.

The remaining part of this report is composed as follows: section 2 provides an overview of the action; section 3 describes the methodology adopted; section 4 discusses the main findings; section 5 concludes.

## 2. PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

During the first three phases of the action<sup>3</sup>, 25 interventions have been funded in 7 targeted countries for a total of nearly €28 million. As illustrated in Figure 2, most projects have been implemented by UNHCR (56%) and IOM (32%). Save the Children was granted two projects and UNICEF only one. In terms of targeted countries, Egypt has been the main recipient with 6 interventions, followed by Libya with 5.

Figure 2. Projects funded under Phases I to III by implementing partner (left) and by target country (right).



Based on programmatic priorities stated above, four main areas of interventions have been identified:

- Direct assistance (including protection)
- Awareness campaigns
- Capacity Building
- Direct support to (mixed migration) flows management

### 2.1. Direct assistance

Direct assistance activities aimed at supporting the immediate needs of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in hosting countries. They entailed the provision of safe housing, food, and Non-Food Items (NFIs), legal support, granting access to medical assistance, psychological support, and education services. As a whole, between July 2016 and December 2019 the RDPP NA assisted more than 65,000 individuals<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> The study only covers the first 12 months (until December 2019) of the AWP 2017/Phase III that was due to be completed in June 2021.

<sup>4</sup> These data are aggregated based on figures retrieved in final (for Phase I and II) and mid-term (for Phase III) reports as well as from the Indicator Monitoring Tool for all three Phases (see Annex 3). It should be noted that available Indicator Monitoring Tools at the time of writing were still in the draft version (except for Phase III). Therefore, reported figures should be taken as indicative only. Reported figures may also be subject to several layers of duplication.

- In Algeria, more than 1,069 migrants and refugees have been supported through direct assistance activities, including:
  - 879 migrants that benefitted from individual counselling.
  - 60 sub-Saharan children that benefitted from education services.
  - 130 urban refugees that benefitted from shelter, healthcare, and legal services.
  
- In Egypt, more than 9,000 persons of concern have been supported through direct assistance activities, including:
  - 600 migrants that received Non-Food Item kits.
  - 777 minors at risk of violence that benefitted from case management.
  - 296 migrants that benefitted from psychosocial support services.
  - 1,150 children that benefitted from education kits.
  - 307 children that attended Accelerated Learning Programs or language classes.
  - 534 unaccompanied children that received comprehensive (best Interest) assessment and response.
  - 2,124 asylum seekers and refugees that received specialized legal support.
  - 4,192 detainees and asylum seekers that received food and medical items.
  
- In Libya, more than 36,000 persons of concern have been benefitted through direct assistance, including:
  - 1,247 migrants and refugees that benefitted from anti-scabies campaigns and fumigation operations in Detention Centres.
  - 2,893 migrants that benefitted from provision of medical assistance.
  - 150 migrants that were provided with psychosocial services.
  - 3,107 migrants that received NFI and hygiene kits.
  - 10,000 migrants and refugees that received life-saving kits.
  - 22,000 migrants and refugees that received medical consultations.
  - 4,331 families that were supported with winterization kits.
  
- In Mauritania, more than 1,900 migrant and Mauritanian students benefitted from direct assistance activities, including:
  - 750 students that benefitted from basic medical assistance.
  - 312 children that participated into recreational activities.
  - 912 students that have been supported with emergency NFI kits.
  
- In Morocco, more than 8,500 persons of concerns have been supported with direct assistance, including:
  - 8,323 medical consultations provided (including 3,205 specialized ones).
  - 269 refugees that benefitted from the social services of *Entraide Nationale*.
  
- In Niger, more than 2,100 persons of concern benefitted from direct assistance activities, including:
  - 1,800 asylum seekers and refugees that received basic services such as food, housing, medical assistance, and psychosocial support.

- 323 unaccompanied children that benefitted from psychosocial support and family reunification services.
- In Tunisia, more than 8,000 individuals benefitted from direct assistance activities, including:
  - 1,344 migrants that received medical assistance.
  - 2,528 migrants that received Non-Food Item kits.
  - 507 migrants that participated into recreational activities.
  - 4,265 migrants that received individual counselling, including legal services and psychosocial support.

## 2.2. Awareness campaigns

Awareness campaigns were carried out with a primary focus on increasing knowledge about assistance and services available to migrants and refugees, including how to access international protection and the risks related to irregular migration. The main modalities were the dissemination of informative material, such as brochures and leaflets, the setting-up of free toll helpline and the organization of events at community level. As a whole, the RDPP NA in its first three phases (until December 2019) reached more than 21,000 migrants and refugees with awareness campaigns.

- In Algeria, 8,100 posters and brochures on Assisted Voluntary Returns (AVRR) have been distributed.
- In Mauritania, 1,000 copies of the migrant's guide for persons on the move focused on available services in the country have been distributed.
- In Morocco, 5,049 individuals received complete information to access protection services in border areas.
- In Niger, 18,500 posters and flyers have been displayed in the 22 guesthouses where ETM evacuees from Libya lived during their transit in Niger to sensitize on several subjects, including: rights and duties of the asylum seekers and refugees in the host country; SGBV cases; fraud and corruption; resettlement key messages.
- In Tunisia, 1,065 brochures on migrants' rights and 6,025 leaflets on Assisted Voluntary Returns (AVRR) have been disseminated.

## 2.3. Capacity Building

RDPP NA implementing partners undertook a wide range of training and capacity building activities. These efforts primarily targeted representatives of national authorities, such as governments, parliaments and law enforcement agencies, and civil society. The capacity building component aimed at strengthening the capacity of key actors in targeted countries to provide adequate reception, assistance, access to protection and durable solutions to migrants, refugees,

and asylum seekers. The main modalities adopted have been short and long courses as well as study visits to European and other North African countries. More than 1,600 stakeholders have been trained in targeted countries from July 2016 to December 2019.

- In Algeria, the awareness of 90 stakeholders on international protection issues has been raised, including:
  - 50 members of the Algerian government have been trained on international protection.
  - 40 journalists and members of the civil society have been trained on protection issues and specific needs of asylum seekers and refugees.
  
- In Egypt, more than 1,100 stakeholders have been trained, including:
  - 40 community health workers and leaders.
  - 73 NGOs and IOs members that benefitted from training on minors' safeguarding, PSS, and case management.
  - 1,181 government officials that have been trained on international protection and Refugee Law principles.
  
- In Libya, 118 government officials have been trained on human rights, hygiene promotion and information technology.
  
- In Mauritania, 324 government officials, judges and police officers have been trained on international protection. 690 government officials, media associations and civil society (including religious leaders) received trainings on child protection.
  
- In Morocco, 687 national actors have been trained on international protection and asylum.
  
- In Niger, 1,300 national stakeholders have been trained on international protection law and principles. 23 social workers have been trained on data collection tools related to children on the move.
  
- In Tunisia, 13 government officials and members of the parliament participated into study visits to France and Sweden.

#### **2.4. Direct support to (mixed migration) flows management**

Under this component the RDPP NA aimed at supporting key functions of the government in targeted countries. These activities ranged from supporting registration of asylum seekers to carrying out Refugee Status Determination as well as undertaking all necessary steps to offer suitable durable solutions such as resettlement and assisted return to the country of origin. In several recipient countries RDPP NA partners substantially replaced the government in carrying out these functions, also because of the lack of a related national strategy and/or legal framework. RDPP-funded interventions between July 2016 and December 2019 contributed to reach more than 30,000 beneficiaries.

- In Algeria, 673 migrants have been assisted with returning to their home country.
- In Egypt, 296 migrants have been assisted with returning to their home country. More than 29,000 asylum seekers were provided with a Refugee Status Determination decision.
- In Libya, 1,206 refugees have been resettled to a safe country.
- In Mauritania, 178 asylum seekers were provided with a Refugee Status Determination decision. 51 migrants have been assisted with returning to their home country.
- In Morocco, 6,010 potential asylum seekers have been identified and referred for registration and RSD procedures.
- In Niger, 764 cases had their file processed for Refugee Status Determination.
- In Tunisia, 248 migrants were supported to return to their country of origin. 396 asylum seekers were provided with a Refugee Status Determination decision.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The current study adopts a Success Case Method (SCM) design<sup>5</sup>. This approach was first developed to assess the impact of organisational capacity-building interventions, and then expanded and applied to non-profit program evaluation<sup>6</sup>. In its original form, SCM involves identifying the most and least successful cases in a program and examining them in detail. By examining these extreme cases, SCM aims at identifying and reporting the apparent factors that made the difference between achieving impact and lack of it. The underlying notion is that we can learn best from those cases who either have been exceptionally successful and draw lessons that can be generalized to the entire (current and/or future) targeted population. Typical questions answered through a SCM study are:

- What results, if any, is the program helping to produce?
- When the program works, how well does it work?
- When the program works, what factors contributed to its success?
- What factors impeded achieving sustained impact?
- How could the initiative be improved?

The expected outputs of conducting a SCM study include documented stories of impact that can be disseminated to stakeholders, and a better knowledge of factors that enhance or impede impact.

The following key steps have been undertaken to implement the SCM study:

#### *1. Adjusting the Success Case Method to the RDPP NA*

The usual SCM design takes the individual as a unit of analysis. This needs to be adjusted to the RDPP NA, given its multi-country multi-project nature. Hence, for the purpose of this study, the unit of analysis is "project components". A project component is defined as *one or more sets of activities aiming to achieve a Specific Objective (SO)*, as outlined in grant documents. All implemented interventions aimed at addressing several SOs that can be grouped into one or more project components. Table 1 below summarizes the result of grouping Specific Objectives into project components for interventions implemented in Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Niger and Tunisia during Phase I, II and III of RDPP NA based on Grant Agreements as well as Final and Mid-term reports.

Because of their relevance, relative to the general objective of the action, the study focuses on success cases of project components defined as

- i) capacity building, and
- ii) support to mixed-migration flows management (e.g., Registration, RSD, RST, AVRR).

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<sup>5</sup> Brinkerhoff, R. O. (2003). *The success case method: find out quickly what's working and what's not*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler

<sup>6</sup> Coryn, C. L., Schröter, D. C., & Hanssen, C. E. (2009). Adding a time-series design element to the success case method to improve methodological rigor: An application for non-profit program evaluation. *American journal of evaluation*, 30(1), 80-92.

These are also the most common set of activities in reviewed projects. Out of 19 considered interventions<sup>7</sup>, 14 had at a least one set of activities aiming at supporting migration flows management and 14 had at least one set of activities aiming at building the capacity of national officials and/or CSOs in targeted countries.

*Table 1 Project components of reviewed interventions*

RDPP NA Phase/ AWP	Country	Partner	Project Components				
			1.1 Training/ capacity building	1.2 Support to flows management processes (RSD, RST, AVRR)	2.1 Awareness campaigns	2.2 Legal Assistance	2.3 Other assistance and protection
2015	Egypt	UNHCR	X	X	X	X	X
2015	Libya	IOM	X	X			X
2015	Libya	UNHCR	X			X	X
2015	Niger	UNHCR	X	X		X	X
2015	Tunisia	IOM	X	X	X	X	X
2016	Algeria	IOM		X			
2016	Algeria	UNHCR	X			X	X
2016	Egypt	IOM		X		X	X
2016	Egypt	UNHCR		X			
2016	Egypt	STC	X				X
2016	Libya	UNHCR	X	X		X	X
2017	Egypt	STC					X
2017	Egypt	UNHCR	X	X		X	
2017	Libya	IOM	X	X			
2017	Libya	UNHCR		X		X	
2017	Niger	UNHCR	X				X
2017	Niger	UNICEF	X	X			
2017	Tunisia	IOM	X	X		X	X
2017	Tunisia	UNHCR	X	X			
TOTAL		19	14	14	2	10	12

## *II. Creating an "impact model" that defines what success should look like*

In the present study, "success" is defined as *a project component having achieved, or overachieved, with regards to all planned outputs and deliverables that are expected to contribute to short and long-term outcomes in terms of (i) strengthening targeting countries capacities to provide effective reception, protection, and durable solutions, or (ii) supporting targeted countries*

<sup>7</sup> In preliminary meetings it was agreed that the study would not focus on Morocco and Mauritania.

*management of mixed migration flows (RSD, RST, AVRR).* In other words, a successful project component is defined as having achieved or overachieved against all output indicators.

This definition of “success” is not linked to impact, and it is not intended as an evaluation of each intervention. It was proposed and endorsed as an as objective as possible criterium to categorize implemented interventions. This categorization is needed to select those “successful” components that had likely contributed to a greater extent to achieve the action’s expected impact. To this end, final (for Phase 2015 and 2016) and mid-term reports (for Phase 2017<sup>8</sup>) as well as the monitoring tool currently being finalized at the Management Support Unit have been used to assign project components to three categories:

- HIGH SUCCESS (H): if all (100%) planned outputs have been delivered.
- MEDIUM SUCCESS (M): if a majority (>=50%) of output indicators have been achieved.
- LOW SUCCESS (L): if none or only few (<50%) of the expected targets at output level have been achieved.

For instance, if a project component was expected to deliver trainings to 100 government officials and succeeded at reaching 150 trainees it would be assigned to the HIGH SUCCESS category. If a project component was expected to process 100 RSD cases with an average waiting period of 30 days and succeeded at processing 200 RSD cases but with an average waiting period of 40days, the component would be assigned to the MEDIUM SUCCESS category because one out of two targets had not been achieved.

### *III. Identify best cases.*

After assigning each intervention to a category (see Annex 1 for details), two cases for each programme component have been randomly selected to proceed to the next phase. These “high success” interventions (see Table 2 below) are then studied in detail. In addition, one “low success” case was also selected for both (i) capacity building and (ii) direct support to flows management. While these “low success” cases (Algeria UNHCR - 2016 and Tunisia IOM - 2017) are not analysed in detail, they are used as a source of information to triangulate data on factors that contributed (and hindered) success.

*Table 2. Selected programme components*

Component	Country	Implementing Partner	Phase / AWP	Category
1.1 Capacity Building	Libya	IOM	2015	HIGH SUCCESS
	Egypt	UNHCR	2017	HIGH SUCCESS
	Algeria	UNHCR	2016	LOW SUCCESS
1.2 Direct support to flows management	Libya	UNHCR	2017	HIGH SUCCESS
	Tunisia	UNHCR	2017	HIGH SUCCESS
	Tunisia	IOM	2017	LOW SUCCESS

<sup>8</sup> At the time of the evaluation final reports for AWP 2017 were not available.

As outlined in section 2, UNHCR and IOM implemented almost 90% of funded interventions. Therefore, these implementing partners had higher probability to be selected in a random process compared to Save The Children and UNICEF.

#### *IV. Interviewing and documenting success cases*

The second part of an SCM study involves interviews to identify success cases and document the actual nature of success. At this stage, we need to determine whether the project component represents a true and verifiable success. Upon verification, interviews proceed to probe, understand, and document the impact. These interviews focus on gathering verifiable and documentable evidence so that impact can be proven.

Primary data has been collected through 42 semi-structured interviews with key informants that can be grouped into four main categories:

- Programme staff of implementing partner involved in or informed on the intervention.
- Representatives of national authorities who participated, cooperated, or has knowledge of the intervention.
- Migrants/refugees affected and/or involved in the action.
- Country experts not belonging to the implementing partner.

*Table 3. Summary of Key Informant Interviews*

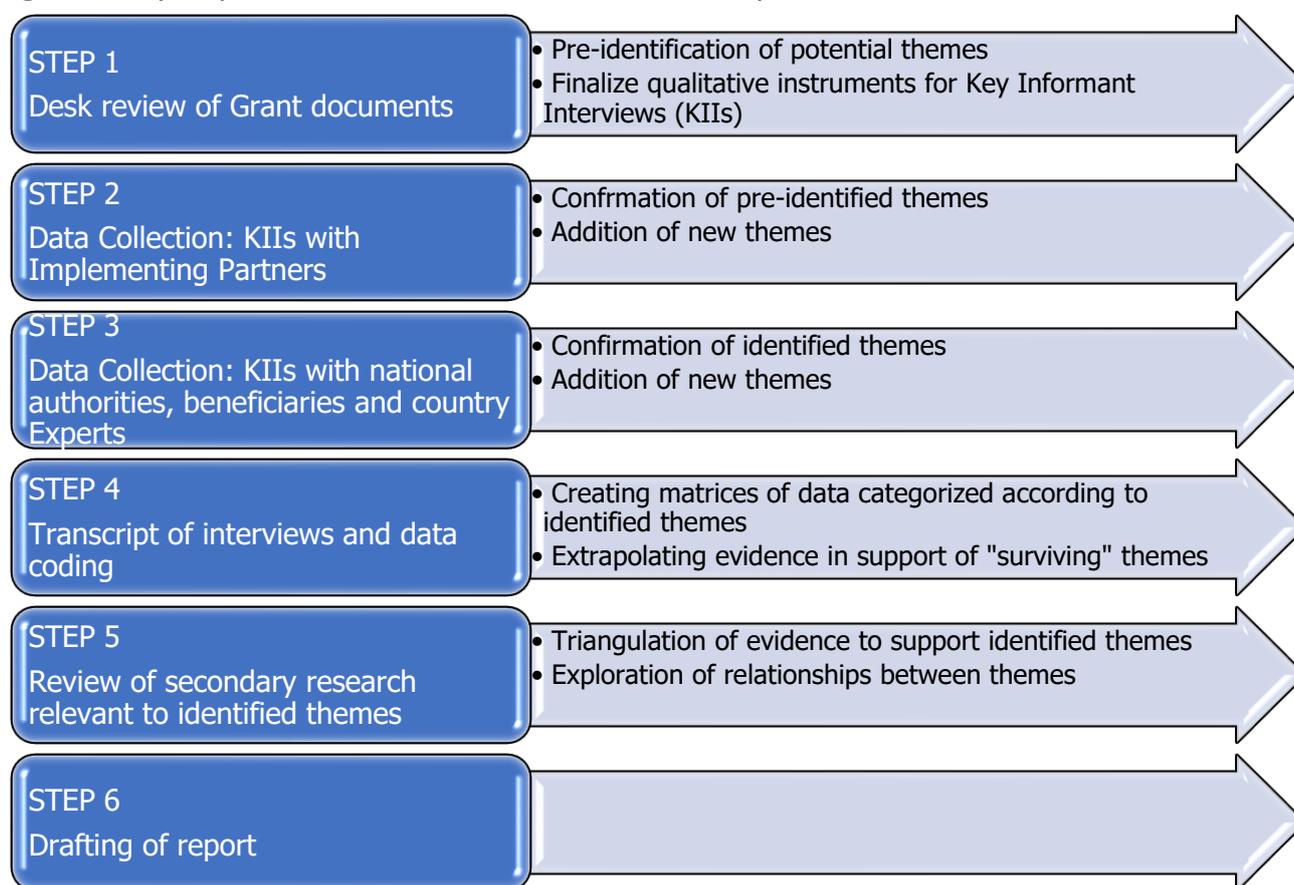
Target Country	Type of KII	Number of KIIs
<i>Libya</i>	Implementing Partner (IOM & UNHCR)	5
	National Authorities	4
	Migrant/Refugee	2
	Country Experts	4
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Egypt</i>	Implementing Partner (UNHCR)	3
	National Authorities	1
	Migrant/Refugee	2
	Country Experts	4
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Tunisia</i>	Implementing Partner (UNHCR & IOM)	5
	National Authorities	2
	Migrant/Refugee	2
	Country Experts	3
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Algeria</i>	Implementing Partner (UNHCR)	2
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Niger</i>	Implementing Partner (UNICEF)	1
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Italy</i>	Management Support Unit (MSU)	2
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>2</i>
TOTAL		42

Table 3 provides a summary of all interviews undertaken. These are grouped per targeted country and category of Key Informant. The number of interviews per country is directly linked to the number of programme components considered that have been implemented. For instance, Libya had two "successful cases" considered and therefore has the highest number of interviewees. The number of interviews was also affected by access to Key Informants. For instance, in Egypt it was not possible to access any trainees of the capacity building component. A more detailed list of interviewed organizations, date of interviews and related programme component is given in Annex 2.

#### V. *Data analysis and communicating findings.*

Collected data has been analysed adopting a thematic analysis<sup>9</sup> framework to document impact as well as factors that contributed to or hindered success. Figure 3 shows the steps undertaken to collect and analyse data.

Figure 3. Key steps undertaken in data collection and analysis.



<sup>9</sup> See: Atkinson, S., & HAP, M. A. E. (1996). Domain analysis for qualitative public health data. *Health Policy and Planning, 11*(4), 438-442; see also: Green, J., & Thorogood, N. (2018). *Qualitative methods for health research*. Sage.

The first step has been reviewing grant documents to identify potentially relevant themes to be addressed in semi-structured interviews with key informants. In the context of the current study, a theme was defined as:

- a result of the intervention, or
- a factor enabling delivery of outputs, or
- a factor posing challenges to the delivery of outputs, or
- a potential aspect of longer-term impact of the intervention, or
- a factor impeding the achievement of impact, or
- a factor enabling the translation of outputs in impact.

A second step has been the collection of data from representatives of relevant implementing partners. This stage allowed confirming pre-identified themes and including additional ones that had not been identified at desk review stage. Third, interviews with national authorities, migrants and refugees, and country experts served to finalize the list of identified themes. Fourth, the transcription of conducted interviews allowed a more in-depth analysis. Matrices of data have been coded and assigned to identified themes so that evidence could be gathered in support or against all “surviving” themes. Fifth, as a last stage of analysis, secondary research has been further reviewed to support or challenge identified themes. Secondary sources included scientific research (peer-reviewed journals and books), reports from international organizations and INGOs on targeted countries, newspaper articles and publicly accessible datasets. A tentative list of sources is provided in Annex 3, while specific references are given in footnotes throughout the report.

### **3.1.Challenges and Assumptions**

The choice of the research design was dictated by both the primary and secondary objectives of the mid-term impact assessment as well as the framing of the action to be assessed since its inception. On the one hand, the absence of baseline and/or end-line data for the whole action across countries and projects excluded the options of quantitative evaluations. Preliminary meetings with, and feedback from, implementing partners highlighted the non-availability of secondary data to conduct the present study. Collecting quantitative primary end-line data was not feasible because of (a) budget and time constraints, (b) beneficiaries’ attrition and dispersion, (c) movement restrictions linked to COVID-19. On the other hand, no clearly defined theory of change has been outlined in grant documents, which limits the applicability of theory-based frameworks.

Given the proposed design, access to key informants was paramount to collect primary data to document impact and factors that contributed to it. While the proposed design requires a limited number of interviews, it has been assumed that the majority of Key Informants in targeted countries could be reached remotely. Nonetheless, because the Phase I of the RDPP NA started nearly five years ago, in 2016, it was not always possible to access key informants with full knowledge of selected interventions.

A further challenge is posed by the co-funded nature of several interventions. Because RDPP NA funds are contributing to activities that may also receive support under other lines of funding, it is not always possible to disentangle the impact of this specific programme from confounding factors.

In these cases, it is assumed that the RDPP NA's contribution to impact is as relevant as its share of co-funding.

To conclude, the study does not aim at producing a costs analysis. Relevant actors should read presented findings in light of the relative cost of targeted programme components compared to the total budget of the action.

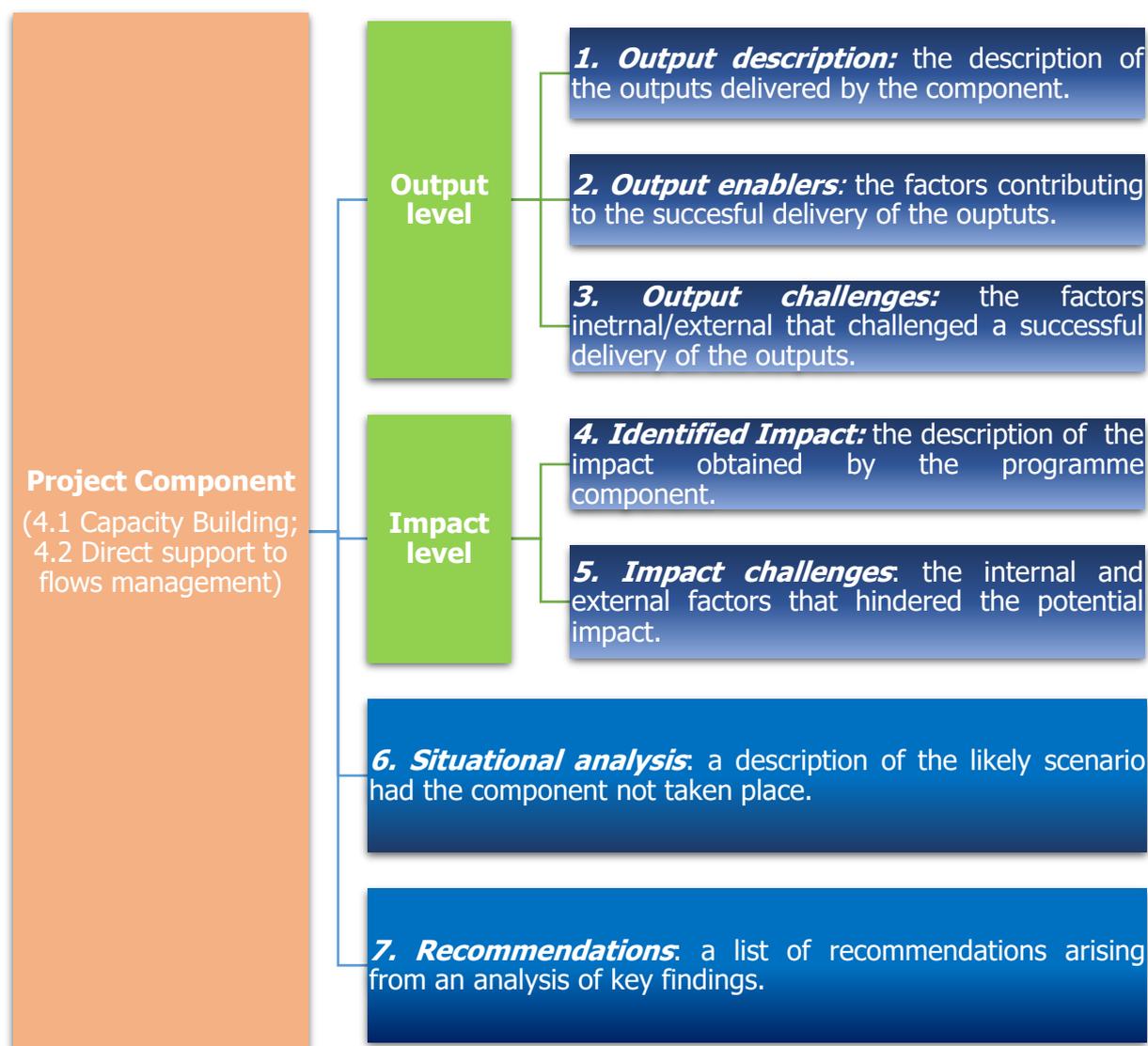
### 3.2. Recommendations

While reviewing grant documents and elaborating a methodology for the study, a series of recommendations has been formulated with regards to programme design, management, and evaluation. These are outlined below.

- 3.a Plan and design the evaluation at the onset of the action, allowing budget and time.
- 3.b As much as possible, design and implement baseline surveys (for instance survey about migrants' awareness of asylum processes and legal migration alternatives in country of implementation) during the inception phases so that the impact of the programme can be evaluated against a benchmark.
- 3.c Request a clear logical framework from implementing partners. First, grant documents should outline a *theory of change* that specifies what changes are expected because of implemented activities. Second, implementing partners should outline how achieving specific objectives contributes to the broader intended impact. They should explicitly state what logical link is supposed to lead from outputs to outcome to impact. At present, available grant documents do not always outline how completing activities and delivering outputs would contribute to the general action's objective.
- 3.d SMART indicators should be provided at both output and outcome (specific objective) level. Implementing partners should always make a clear distinction between outcome (indirect effect of activities) and output (the completion of an activity). For instance, available grant documents report "1,000 NFIs distributed", which is clearly a measure of output, as an outcome indicator.
- 3.e Activities planned across different projects should be grouped into macro categories so that impact can be more easily analysed at programme level. This study proposes a categorization (see Table 1) that could be improved and adopted.
- 3.f Monitoring tools should be harmonized so that comparable data can be collected across countries and implementing partners for similar activities, such as trainings and distributions. At the time of the evaluation, obtaining aggregate figures on deliverables at programme level was not possible.
- 3.g Reporting tools and templates should be harmonized so that quarterly reports cover the same period for all interventions within the action. At the time of the evaluation, reports referring to the same quarters covered different periods for different projects. Having standardized quarters for the whole action, which start and end on the same date, could be more efficient for management purposes.

## 4. MAIN FINDINGS

This section of the report presents the main findings of the study. Sub-section 4.1 focuses on capacity building activities, while sub-section 4.2 describes direct support to (mixed migration) flows management (such as RSD, RST and AVRR). Each sub-section starts by outlining the achievements at output level and the factors that contributed to success<sup>10</sup> or challenged it. It then continues with describing the identified impact and the factors that hindered it. The presentation of the findings is structured identically for both components, and it can be schematized as follows:



As it can be seen in BOX 1, the main impact of capacity building activities has been on improving coordination and assistance at disembarkation, improved acceptance and access of international organizations and humanitarian agencies, enhanced recognition of refugees' documents and related freedom of movement. However, several hindering factors have limited the action's impact

<sup>10</sup> In the context of this study "success" is defined as having achieved all output indicators.

against the general objective to enhance the capacity of targeted countries to provide adequate reception, protection, and durable solutions.

*BOX 1. Summary of findings for capacity building component.*

<u>SUCCESS CASES</u>	
Libya, Phase I. Achieved on implementing 3/3 trainings and 3/3 meetings of the Technical Working Group.	
Egypt, Phase III. Over-achieved by training 386/200 officials on UNHCR's mandate and refugees' issues.	
<u>DOCUMENTED IMPACT</u>	<u>HINDERING FACTORS</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Improved coordination and assistance at disembarkation in Libya</li> <li>➤ Improved acceptance and access in Libya</li> <li>➤ Enhanced recognition of refugees' documentation and freedom of movement in Egypt</li> <li>➤ No significant impact on durable solutions neither in Libya nor Egypt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Detention still common practice in Libya</li> <li>➤ LCG remains unreliable partner for SAR and disembarkation</li> <li>➤ Libya remains a "non-safe port"</li> <li>➤ Significant barriers to refugees' integration remain in Egypt</li> <li>➤ Limited to no control over participants' selection</li> </ul>

BOX 2 summarizes the key findings for the direct support to flows management component. As a result of the action, refugees and migrants have enjoyed increased access to assistance and protection, increased access to durable solutions, and resettlement countries have been supported with migration management given that resettled refugees are selected based on predetermined eligibility criteria.

*BOX 2. Summary of findings for direct support component.*

<u>SUCCESS CASES</u>	
Tunisia, Phase III. Refugee Status Determination was processed for 404 /100 cases.	
Libya, Phase III. Resettlement Registration Forms were submitted for 337/233 cases.	
<u>DOCUMENTED IMPACT</u>	<u>HINDERING FACTORS</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Increased access to assistance and protection</li> <li>➤ Increased access to durable solutions</li> <li>➤ Contributed to migration management processes in resettlement countries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Fragmented funding/response</li> <li>➤ Low resettlement quotas</li> <li>➤ Lack of domestic asylum legislation</li> <li>➤ Macro-economic conditions in targeted countries</li> </ul>

The main factors that limited the extent to which the action achieved its main objective include fragmented or insufficient funding that did not allow a holistic response in targeted countries, low resettlement quotas that reduced the impact of the component, the persistent lack of asylum

domestic legislation as well as other contextual factors that pose significant barriers to local integration. These findings are discussed in more details in following sections.

#### 4.1. Capacity Building component

The evaluation of the capacity building component relies on two randomly selected success cases and one “low success” case (see Annex 1). As described in section 3, “success” is defined as having achieved or overachieved against all relevant output indicators.

The main findings at the impact level for the capacity building component are schematized below:

##### **SUCCESS CASES**

- \* Libya, Phase I. Achieved on implementing 3/3 trainings and 3/3 meetings of the Technical Working Group.
- \* Egypt, Phase III. Over-achieved by training 386/200 officials on UNHCR’s mandate and refugees’ issues

##### **MAIN IMPACT:**

- \* Improved coordination and assistance at disembarkation in Libya
- \* Improved acceptance of IOs and humanitarian agencies in Libya
- \* Enhanced recognition of refugees’ documentation and freedom of movement in Egypt

##### **Internal challenges to Impact**

- Fragile coordination to ensure continuous support to migrants and refugee
- Limited control over trainees' selection
- Limited duration of trainings in Libya
- Geographical centralization of trainings

##### **External challenges to Impact**

- Administrative burden to renew residencies
- Protection space in Egypt is limited
- Barriers to refugees’ integration in Egypt
- Lack of domestic asylum legislation
- Detention common practice in Libya
- Limited capacity to perform SAR in Libya
- Libya remains a “non-safe” port

Internal challenges are those factors that hinder impact and that are, to a great extent, under direct control of the programme and implementing partners. External challenges are those factor that hinder impact and that, to a great extent, are related to the context in targeted countries and, therefore, not under the direct control of the programme and implementing partners.

Following sections expand on these aspects, starting by describing the “success” at output level.

##### 4.1.1. Output description

In Libya, during Phase I, IOM has implemented the *SEA DEMM - SEA and DEsert Migration Management for Libyan authorities to rescue migrants* project. The project focused on strengthening the immediate response of the Libyan authorities in relation to saving lives of the migrants who arrive and are disembarked back in Libya, while promoting longer term capacity-building and awareness-raising initiatives, in line with international standards and principles. Within

this intervention three trainings have been implemented: one 3-day Human Rights training that was conducted for 33 officials from Libyan Coast Guard (LCG), Coast Security (CS), Department for Combatting Illegal Migration (DCIM) and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA); a training on Information Technology targeted 15 officers from LCG, CS and DCIM; Hygiene Promotion sessions were implemented in four Detention Centres.

Moreover, three meetings of the Technical Working Group have been organized to coordinate operations and discuss the drafting of SOPs, thus achieving on all capacity building related indicators. Additional capacity building, not initially planned, was conducted to improve coordination of disembarkation procedures.

In Egypt, during Phase III, UNHCR has implemented the *Reinforce Protection Mechanisms for Asylum-Seekers and Refugees Through RSD, Child Protection and Government Capacity Building* project. RDPP NA Phase III contributed to UNHCR's overall activities on capacity building of government officials. In 2019 a total of 386 government officials from Egypt (namely from the Ministries of Defence and Interior) as well as from the Ministries of Interior of other countries in the region were trained on UNHCR's mandate, International Protection and Refugee Law. With a target of 200 trainees per year, the initiative overachieved on the capacity building component in terms of output delivery.

#### 4.1.2. Output enablers

This section describes the key factors that enabled the considered component of the RDPP NA programme to successfully deliver all expected outputs.

##### a. Internal trainers from within targeted institutions

The use of internal trainers from within targeted departments and institutions was found to have enhanced participation. Requesting members of targeted departments to act as facilitators contributed to shift responsibility to the trainees. For instance, in Libya, because of forms of social control, DCIM managers needed to demonstrate to have implemented discussed standards in their area or centre of competence prior to delivering the training to their peers. In this way, trainees are "morally obliged" to put into practice the shared knowledge to professionally present themselves as credible discussant of mentioned standards.

In Egypt, the capacity building of internal trainers through the implementation of ToT was attempted in the past. However, staff rotation within government entities may be an obstacle as internal trainers move to other departments and are no longer available to deliver courses to their peers. Nonetheless, this rotation could also play a positive role as knowledge does not get lost and could be transported to different departments.

##### b. Training as a professional reward

Many trainees perceived their participation into the training as a reward. Many of them have not had any previous contact with international organizations, so selection for the training made them feel considered as professionals by their own department and exposed them to an international

environment. This is even more relevant when trainings are organized outside of the targeted country as stated by one trainee:

*"I think if all the trainings were in Libya results were not the same, even attendance would not be the same... when people hear the training is in Tunis everyone wants to take part...even from the smallest part to senior management, even they know from previous experience that we give them extensive training from morning to evening, 6 o'clock, 7 o'clock... however everyone wanted to go...they know very well it is not very easy...everyone wanted to go, it's travel."  
(DCIM Key Informant, Tripoli – March 2021).*

c. Language and contextualized training can be positive factors.

The study finds contextualizing the trainings made them more appealing to the participants enabling them to engage with practical case studies relevant to their daily jobs. While a positive contributing factor in Egypt, DCIM representatives in Libya lamented that some relevant trainings are available only in English and are not contextualized. The former aspect reduces the potential outreach of the training. The latter decreases the relevance of the content.

Language has a twofold effect. Because most international trainers do not speak Arabic, implementing partners resorted to local staff to facilitate the training. On the one hand, this has had positive effects enhancing participation and making the sessions more dynamic. On the other hand, resorting to local staff may also be a limiting factor as they cannot be as outspoken as visiting international experts would be.

d. Dedicated team/focal person is a facilitating factor.

The case of Egypt highlights that having a dedicated team to capacity building or at least one focal point in charge of the training portfolio, helped ensuring the successful implementation of the component in terms of output delivery. Mostly, this is linked to the fact that coordinating and lobbying with ministries is a time-consuming activity given the often-diverging political priorities. The difficulty in coordinating with authorities has been found as a key reason for underperforming on set targets in Algeria in Phase II<sup>11</sup>. On the one hand, having a dedicated focal point allowed also building a personal connection with government counterparts. On the other hand, it also increased internal accountability as there was a clear responsible for the implementation.

e. Institutionalization of implementing partner.

Another factor that contributed to successful implementation is the institutionalization of the implementing partner. As the case of UNHCR in Egypt shows, having been doing similar activities for many years make all parties accustomed to deal with each other. While not necessarily positive, it played an enabling role with reference to regular capacity building activities.

<sup>11</sup> The initiative achieved 38/60 and 15/9 national actors; 30/150 police officers; 1/5 events.

#### 4.1.3. Challenges to successful output delivery

The study did not identify additional factors that posed challenges to the successful delivery of capacity building activities. Challenges at output level have mostly arisen from the absence of the enabling factors outlined above.

#### 4.1.4. Identified Impact

The identified impact of the capacity building component includes:



##### a. Improved coordination and assistance

The study finds that capacity building and awareness raising activities as well as the support to the Technical Working Group have contributed to improve coordination in providing reception and assistance to migrants and refugees in Libya. Over the months, these activities have often resulted in a more coordinated response to those who are disembarked. The improvement of coordination mechanisms brought to the establishment of a committee at the national level that includes all relevant authorities, namely Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Planning, Libyan Coast Guard (LCG), Coast Security (CS). A unified coordination room has helped with identifying boats, sending police forces and buses for transfers, setting up disembarkation procedures as well as coordinating with the Libyan Red Crescent (LRCS) for dead body management within Disembarkation Points (DPs)<sup>12</sup>.

*"Cooperation is becoming better, everyone knows at least how to manage dead bodies and what are the responsibilities: if we should take a photo, if we should collect the parts of the body. Before we had many difficulties with authorities to*

<sup>12</sup> It should be noted that a leaked letter from the Director General of DG Home at the European Commission, Paraskevi Michou, to the Frontex Director, Fabrice Leggeri, dated on 18 March 2019, stated that SAR events have been supported also by Italy acting as a "communication relay". See: <http://www.statewatch.org/news/2019/jun/>

*manage the dead bodies, but now everyone is aware about our activities, so they make it easy for us."*

*(Libyan Red Crescent Key Informant, Tripoli – April 2021)*

An example of the impact of this improved communication and coordination, is that humanitarian agencies are often alerted of ongoing operations so that relevant teams can be present on the ground to provide assistance as needed. This improvement in coordination and openness of national authorities to cooperate with international organizations is also confirmed by stakeholders that are not implementing partners of the RDPP NA such as the Libyan Red Crescent Society as stated below.

*" In general, we receive the call from the authorities, when they want support. For example, when there is a disembarkation, they ask for support for these migrants, they give us information just to provide food and NFIs and psychological support."*

*(Libyan Red Crescent Key Informant, Tripoli – April 2021)*

b. Improved Acceptance of international organizations and humanitarian agencies

Engaging representatives of national authorities in a capacity building process has also contributed to improve the relationship with international organizations. IOM, UNHCR and other international organizations have been increasingly recognized as potential partners rather than threats to the state authority and sovereignty. Prior to the start of trainings and awareness sessions in 2016, the general attitude of authorities (LCG and DCIM in particular) was more hostile towards humanitarian agencies. Many field staff highlight how challenging it was to operate in Libya before the RDPP NA Phase I implementation, when international organizations were perceived as a threat.

Following the training sessions, representatives of the national authorities have also started to facilitate international organizations' efforts at fulfilling their mandate. Although remaining very challenging, the operating context has progressively improved also because of raised awareness by RDPP NA funded interventions. The work with the Technical Working Group has improved communication among departments and agencies leading to some benefits in terms of access to both disembarkation points and detention centres.

Notably, access to disembarkation points has improved. The trainings provided by IOM allowed them to gain more access through the buy-in of trained entities (such as DCIM and LCG), which functioned as an advocacy force within the government as a whole. For instance, this allowed granting access to Abou Sita disembarkation point despite it being close to a large military base and, therefore, a sensitive spot:

*"Abou Sita is a good example, it is a large military base... not anyone was allowed to go there... but after the training we taught everyone what we do, who is a migrant, why are we supporting, why are we helping these people, they*

*understood the situation...it was clear they discussed, they transferred our point of view to other military forces...who also started to provide access.”*  
(IOM Libya Key Informant 2, Tripoli – March 2021)

c. Establishment of a centralized registration system for disembarked migrants

The capacity building process also contributed to set the foundation for the establishment of a more organized and centralized registration system of disembarked individuals. Once finalized, the centralized system allowed other country missions to reach out to locate missing people. Also, families of migrants are reportedly approaching IOM in Libya to request tracking of their siblings and missing relatives. While this may not appear as a remarkable achievement in other missions, such a step is believed to be a great result given the baseline level in Libya.

*“If when I arrived in Libya, they would have told me that IOM would have been able to do this, I would not believe them... like doing this kind of tracking back of missing migrants and figure out what are their conditions and situations.”*  
(IOM Libya Key Informant 1, Tunis – March 2021)

At the beginning of their operations, the Libyan Coast Guard (LCG) was only tracking counts of overall numbers. As a result of the received support, consisting of both training and equipment, the LCG is now able to have more disaggregated information (actual names, sex, age, health conditions). The “registration team” that started working with paper and pen composed of 5 people at one disembarkation point only, counts now around 30 staff members, and elaborated a KOBO tool. The information collected can be sent to IOM and allows tracking of missing migrant. Nonetheless, as of 2018, secondary research found that Libyan authorities still largely refused to share details of detained migrants and asylum seekers with international organizations<sup>13</sup>.

The establishment of a registration system was also defended by LCG representatives as important for their own accountability. Given the number of accusations against the LCG for not saving people and enforced disappearances, the registration system can allow them to check the names and find out when, how and where a specific person has been disembarked and transferred. It also allows for a more centralized way of sharing information and knowledge. The information collected at Disembarkation Points are immediately accessible to detention centres, so that by the time migrants reach them, available data is already updated. Nonetheless, interviews with DCIM representatives clarified that database and digitalization are only available for a limited number of detention centres supported by IOM.

d. Slow shifting of narrative towards a more human-rights centred approach in migration management

Trainings and awareness raising sessions contributed to start a slow process that would allow adding a focus on “humanitarian assistance” to the main narrative around “countering illegal

<sup>13</sup> Zarocostas, J. (2018). Libya: War and migration strain a broken health system. *The Lancet*, 391(10123), 824–825. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(18\)30505-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(18)30505-1)

migration". Consequently, international organizations became allowed to and supported with providing assistance to those disembarked. As described below by IOM key Informant, before these trainings, it was common practice that migrants were disembarked with no interaction with any agencies until DCIM representatives would come and transfer them. Now, several Key Informants confirm that they are able to be more interactive with migrants, so that they can, to some extent, mitigate the sense of insecurity, distribute NFIs and small food packages.

*"In past, it was clearly seen. The Libyan Coast Guard for example, they intercept, or they rescue migrants... they used to look as if they are illegal migrants, only illegal people that have entered the country in illegal way and they should be punished by law and they should be in prison...but this has completely changed...they now know that these people came from bad situations...and they were not criminals or something like that."*

*(IOM Libya Key Informant 2, Tripoli – March 2021)*

Another example of behavioural changes as a result of implemented trainings and awareness raising sessions is an increased level of communication with migrants upon disembarkation. It is now a more common practice to identify one migrant that can translate for everyone else who does not speak Arabic to ensure a better information sharing with the migrants. This was not a concern before RDPP-funded activities were implemented. Further, according to Key Informants from national authorities, , there were no points of reception for migrants before RDPP-funded interventions. With the start of the RDPP NA Phase I, so-called "counting points" have been installed. These now serve as reception centres where minimum infrastructure such as toilets, umbrellas/parasols, chairs, medical clinics are available and where small snacks are distributed upon arrival as described by the Libyan Government Informant below.

*"All Reception Points and Disembarkation Points that are under the LCG are equipped by international organizations, like IOM and UNHCR, so the Libya government gave whatever they could and everything else was given by IOM and UNHCR. Disembarkation Points under the LCG, they all have minimum amenities required... they receive food, they receive a place to go to toilet, they receive cover for winter, they receive health treatment, they have umbrellas when it is very hot... so at these places they have all amenities to provide all minimum services."*

*(Libyan Coast Guard Key Informant, Tripoli – March 2021).*

Human rights trainings contributed to increase the awareness of some representatives of national authorities regarding the need to assist disembarked individuals even in lack of appropriate equipment. In some instances, dead body bags have been reportedly distributed to migrants to compensate for the absence of blankets and dry clothes instead of providing no assistance at all. To some extent, this shows an increased propensity of national authorities to provide minimum assistance. Senior representatives of DCIM also confirmed that participating into human rights training affected the way they approach their work with migrants and refugees:

*"My job became more humanitarian than disciplinary. I graduated from police academy, so I'm trained to implement the law on the ground (Law n. 19). I*

*should arrest, return, and investigate...but when someone is in need, I do not only refer to the law. For instance, I am supposed to finish my shift at 14.30, now it's 18.30 and I'm still in my uniform and I just arrived at the detention centre in Tripoli to make sure 500 migrants that just got disembarked get the assistance they need. I also use my personal phone to call international organizations, and to talk to you."*

*(DCIM Key Informant, Tripoli – March 2021).*

e. Increased understanding of refugee concepts and recognition of documents

Turning to the case of Egypt, the study finds that training sessions did contribute to increase the awareness about who is a refugee and their rights. While acknowledging the challenges in monitoring such an outcome, there is broad consensus among key informants that the major trend is one of general reduction in instances of arbitrary arrest and detention. The focus on law enforcement agencies has contributed, for instance, to reduce the detention of UNHCR registered individuals. While there are still reports of asylum seekers and refugees being arrested when not in possession of residency permits and valid legal documentation, it is reportedly much less common than in the past as affirmed by UNHCR Egypt Key Informant below. Such incidents usually get resolved in a matter of hours as persons of concerns are released upon verification that UNHCR cards are valid.

*"Now and then it still happens that applicants are arrested but if the card is genuine, they are usually released...there is a general tolerance in the government that is not written in any paper, any law...you still need a residence permits, however because of administrative process and fees many refugees they don't have access to residence permits, but we don't see massive arrest campaigns for applicants holding UNHCR documentation."*

*(UNHCR Egypt Key Informant 1, Cairo – March 2021)*

Evidence of the positive impact on refugees' freedom of movement is also confirmed by refugees themselves. Refugee key informants confirmed that, in their experience, being stopped by the police is not common:

*"I don't get stopped by police... it is not normal. If they do, they do some group patrolling, over the residency rather than the blue cards.. not all the police are trained to recognize the blue card, but in all cases I usually don't get stopped by the police. It is mainly against Syrians because they pay the police to let them go...and they mainly don't do the residency thing."*

*(Refugee Key Informant 2, Cairo – March 2021)*

Some arrests still happen mostly because refugees are legally considered as foreign citizens and, therefore, they need to apply for and obtain residency permits. Such misconception is mainly due to the lack of a domestic asylum legislation. Based on the Memorandum of Understanding between Egypt and UNHCR signed in 1954, asylum-seekers (and *prima facie* refugees) receive the so-called *yellow card* from UNHCR, and refugees who have successfully completed their Refugee Status

Determination receive the *blue card* as means of identification. The memorandum is still in place and representatives of the Government confirms its commitment to it, while acknowledging the discrepancies with national legislation:

*"Egypt recognizes the cards issued by UNHCR according to MoU signed in 1954, so if refugees hold the card, then it is fully respected and they are not arrested, even if they are arrested because the card is expired, they are immediately released... there is a difference in validity, UNHCR card is valid for 2 years, while the residency is for 6 months, because 6 months is the longest residency we give."*

*(Ministry of Foreign Affairs Key Informant, Cairo – April 2021)*

The extent to which the positive impact on documents recognition has affected the general population of refugees in Egypt is hard to identify. At the individual level, the study finds evidence of positive effects on refugees' freedom of movements as well as a reduction arrests and detention in Egypt. To the contrary, secondary research<sup>14</sup> report that at the macro level UNHCR cards are still often not accepted by government officials who are often unaware how to proceed in cases involving asylum-seekers or refugees. These awareness raising activities in Egypt have brought improvements for some, but there is no evidence of impact on a large scale. Nonetheless, when taking a longer-term perspective, beyond the life cycle of a project or RDPP NA phase, experts acknowledge that there has been a significant shift:

*"I would say before 2011 these yellow/blue cards were rarely recognized, and this is something when I started screaming for help from legal advocates and the Ministry of Justice to conduct training. [...] But I would say that when I started this job in 2004/2005, nobody really knew about these cards and people were being detained and deported, but now there is more recognition."*

*(AUC Key Informant 1, Cairo – April 2021)*

*"It took years for these officers on the ground to recognize UNHCR card... even that pretty simple...so something more complex, more complicated will take even more years..."*

*(AUC Key Informant 2, Cairo – April 2021)*

While a significant macro impact cannot be documented within the duration of an RDPP NA phase, there is evidence that these sessions have contributed to remarkable changes when considering a much longer timeframe. Legal experts and researchers agree that there is a higher awareness from officials about the refugee and asylum seeker cards, which facilitates the daily lives of persons of concern. This micro-macro paradox can be better understood taking into consideration

<sup>14</sup> The Center for Migration and Refugee Studies (2020). *Refugee Entitlements in Egypt*. The American University in Cairo. See also: Sharafeldin, N. (2020). *Refugees in Egypt: practices and prospective law*. The American University in Cairo; Montaser, M.S. (2020). Investigating self-settled Syrian refugees' agency and informality in southern cities greater Cairo: a case study. *Review of Economics and Political Science*; Norman, K.P.(2021). Urbanization, informal governance, and refugee integration in Egypt. *Globalizations*.

the contextual factors that, while outside of the direct control of the programme, delay and hinder the achievement of sustained impact.

#### *4.1.5. Factors that hinder impact*

Despite the positive outcomes described above, several factors hinder the impact of implemented intervention on migrants and refugees. In Libya, the study finds that these improvements in coordination and efficiency of response, had only limited impact on the condition of disembarked individuals. While there have been some positive effects on the attitude and the cooperation with local and national authorities, the study does not find evidence of significant changes to the reception and solutions offered to migrants and refugees. In Egypt, the main positive outcome of enhanced freedom of movement is hindered by the persistence of several barriers to refugees' integration. These hindering factors are mostly contextual and are not under the direct control of implementing partners. Nonetheless, they severely limit the impact of implemented interventions.

##### a. External challenge: "Red tape burden" in renewing UNHCR cards

The procedural framework coordinating the timeframes between the issuance of residency and the refugee cards is still not synchronized. Although the law stipulates that for refugees registered with the United Nations Refugee Office<sup>15</sup> the residence permit should be issued for a renewable period of three years<sup>16</sup>, in practice asylum-seekers and refugees are required to renew their residence permits every six months. This frequent renewal creates an immense administrative effort, both from the side of the applicants and the government officials responsible for the renewal of residence permits. This process is outlined by a refugee key informant living in Cairo:

*"I had my blue card from the last appointment with UNCHR and I have like the card from the Egyptian residency, we renew every six months. The process is too hard, we have to go to wait in line in the foreign affairs ministry and get the number of the file, then we go to the administration for affairs of foreigners and residencies and wait for three weeks... then we have to go, and we have to give them our cards and we have to wait for our numbers, and it takes like three weeks. Then you wait another two weeks for the process to complete. The whole process takes around two months, three weeks, and two weeks after to take fingerprints and photos... The first three weeks are not counted in the residency, but the residency is counted since you take the fingerprints."*

*(Refugee Key Informant 2, Cairo – March 2021)*

The main result of this "red tape burden" is that many decide not to renew their residency due to the high effort and costs, which increases the number of those formally staying in an irregular fashion and therefore become more exposed to arrest. In recent Focus Group Discussions, participants from all nationalities told stories of friends and family members being detained by the police, even if they possessed valid documents showing they are either refugees or asylum-

<sup>15</sup> "United Nations Refugee Office" is the term used in Egyptian law, refers to UNHCR in Egypt.

<sup>16</sup> Ministry of Interior Decree No. 8180 of 1996, (Reorganizing Foreigners' Residence Inside the Arab Republic of Egypt), *Al-Jarida Al-Rasmiyya*, 10 November 1996 (Egypt), Article 2(8).

seekers<sup>17</sup>. For many, the main complaint was that the authorities are unaware that the UNHCR refugee card is a valid source of identification in the country. Furthermore, there were complaints about unfair treatment during detention, including not being informed about the reason of arrest or being prevented from contacting their families or legal representatives. This administrative burden is compounded by the risk of being arrested while attempting to comply with it:

*"I only interact with Egyptian government when I have to do my residency, but I don't think it is safe to do it. I saw people being arrested while they wait at the place... I don't think they did something wrong; I think it is about documents."*  
(Refugee Key Informant 1, Cairo – March 2021).

b. External challenge: protection space remains limited.

The study finds that the capacity building component of the RDPP NA had a limited contribution to the general programmatic objective of building the capacity of third countries to provide reception, protection and durable solutions to migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in Egypt. Despite acknowledged improvements, training activities are not found to have achieved sustained impact as many refugees and asylum seekers are still far from enjoying a sense of security in Egypt as Key Informants reported below:

*"It would be better for them to teach us about the law, and when you do something they say it is against the law, which law? they did not teach us how to go about it...but at the end of the day, you are arrested, you are harassed, beaten brutally, some are killed...can you imagine some are going for a walk...I knew two of them they went for a walk but they never came back...on the next day they called the family and ask to collect their bodies... we don't know where the person is, we found passport, we found the phone...this is something scary."*  
(Refugee Key Informant 1, Cairo – April 2021)

*"For asylum seekers... the process must be more effective and maybe more protection... like I feel like in some areas is not safe for refugees to stay, UNHCR should be aware of that...some neighbourhoods... I mean, they can be physically harmed by Egyptian people here... and because of discrimination based on the colour of the skin and even if the police are present, they do not intervene in certain areas."*  
(Refugee key informant 2, Cairo – April 2021)

All interviewed key informants acknowledged that the protection space in Egypt remains very limited<sup>18</sup>, which hampers the positive impact obtained through capacity building activities.

c. External challenge: barriers to successful integration

<sup>17</sup> The Center for Migration and Refugee Studies (2020). *Refugee Entitlements in Egypt*. The American University in Cairo

<sup>18</sup> See also: The Center for Migration and Refugee Studies (2020). *Refugee Entitlements in Egypt*. The American University in Cairo; Büyüm, A. M. (2021). *Perceptions of Iraqi Refugee Integration in Egypt and Jordan: A Secondary Analysis*. Duke University.

The Egypt component showcases that the positive impact of training activities on the refugee population is hindered by persisting barriers to integration. These barriers are mostly related to limited access to formal employment opportunities, health assistance and public education. Access to **livelihood** is a key obstacle to successful integration. Under Egyptian law, the right to work to non-citizens is granted upon obtaining a work permit, receiving authorization of entry and residency for work purposes. This means that in practice most asylum-seekers, refugees and failed asylum-seekers are unable to fulfil these requirements and are forced to resort to work in the informal sector or to rely on financial support from NGOs or family members abroad to survive. Such a situation had several repercussions also on the mental health of one of the refugee key informants:

*"My situation as refugee it is pathetic story to be honest with you, I'm living a miserable life...because I have to depend on others [...]. I'm feeling depressed why can't God just take my life, better to be a dead person than to be a living dead."*

*(Refugee Key Informant 1, Cairo - 2021)*

As per **education**, Egyptian law limits the access to public schools to nationals, while most non-nationals are expected to attend private schools. Some form of exception is granted to Sudanese, Jordanian, Libyan, Saudi Arabian, Palestinians and on temporary basis to Syrian and Yemeni students. In particular Eritrean, Ethiopian, Iraqi, Somali, and South Sudanese, are unable to access public primary education and have to rely on private schools or community learning centers. However, the cost of private education is prohibitive to most and community schools are not accredited nor recognized by the government.

Regarding **medical care**, all refugees, asylum-seekers, regular migrants, and irregular migrants are entitled to medical treatment in emergency or life-threatening situations and cannot be denied access to clinics or hospitals<sup>19</sup>. Through cooperation between the Egyptian Ministry of Health and UNHCR, refugees and asylum-seekers should have access to public primary, secondary and emergency health care. In practice, however, it is not always clear for asylum-seekers and refugees where to find help, as reported by one key informant:

*"To be honest most of refugees that have disabilities are really suffering... I can really feel that they are going through hell as well... to be honest I really need a place where I can get room for my head, where I can go for medical treatment, currently I have no place, I have no access to medical services...I have no money for transportation... it is really hard for me."*

*(Refugee Key Informant 1, Cairo - 2021)*

Refugees and migrants often suffer from low quality services in public hospitals, encounter discrimination and racism, and are mostly turned away in emergency cases. Nonetheless, it should be noted that similar struggles and obstacles are faced by Egyptian nationals.

<sup>19</sup> Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Articles 17 and 18.

d. External challenge: slow progress on establishing a domestic legal framework.

Although this was not the intended impact of implemented activities, it was recognized across most interviewees that the absence of a comprehensive national legislation poses a major challenge to achieving sustained impact against the general objective of the action. One common position among interviewed lawyers and researchers is that national authorities have a welcoming position towards migrants as long as they are perceived as temporary guests and there is no narrative around integration. To a large extent, this may explain the lack of tangible progresses when it comes to the approval of a national asylum legislation.

Therefore, the study investigated whether raising awareness on refugee issues across law enforcement agencies would unintentionally contribute to create a fertile ground for the approval of an asylum legislation. Both experts and UNHCR key informants expressed concern regarding the limited progresses achieved in this regard:

*"We are not even advocating for major changes; we are just capacitating what are the international protection principles. We are not going there requesting for a change... we do not assess this be the right forum to do so...if we want to propose change, this needs to go from top ranking UNHCR staff to top ranking Egyptian officials. "*

*(UNHCR Egypt Key Informant 1, Cairo – March 2021)*

*"The only thing... sometimes it surprises me how little has evolved... when I first came, UNCHR was in charge of all this thing and I was told Egypt is in the process of drafting asylum law and they are still doing it 15 years later, at least legally not a huge amount has changed."*

*(Legal Expert, Cairo – April 2021)*

Because capacity building sessions targeted middle and lower ranking officers, there is a general belief that they are in no position to influence the government agenda. While targeting middle and low rank officers has had an impact on their daily activities, it did not yield a significant effect on creating a momentum to speed up the passing of an asylum legislation, whose lack of remains a hindering factor.

As a result of the lack of a national framework, refugees are currently supported via a parallel system led by UNHCR. To a large extent, this vacuum in domestic legislation prevents refugees from being effectively included into the national system and accessing services provided by the state apparatus.

e. External challenge: racism beyond law enforcement

Another key challenge that interviewed refugees mentioned in their experiences in Egypt was widespread racism. They stated that they have been mistreated in several instances because of their appearance. Allegedly, this was particularly the case for Southern Sudanese and Eastern Africans. More broadly, the study finds that the programme may benefit from extending awareness

raising activities to the broader society. Because police officers are not the only agent interacting with refugees daily, the impact of the programme could be greater by expanding the target of capacity building and awareness raising activities. This was clearly stated by a key informant with several years of experience supporting migrant and refugees in their legal grievances in Egypt:

*"but there are also just people at hospitals that don't know they should treat refugees like Egyptians, and they don't recognize UNHCR cards... so many people have issues with housing and then landlords' issues... it is a very complex situation."*

*(Legal Expert, Cairo – April 2021)*

f. Internal: the continuum of support to migrants and refugees is fragile

Although the assistance provided to migrants and refugees is reigned by international law and legally organized by mandate, the study finds that a rigid categorization of support provided to "refugees" and "migrants" could have a negative unintended backfall without effective coordination. Scientific literature clearly indicates that migration is far more complicated than any binary categorization can encompass<sup>20</sup>. In practical terms, the majority of rejected asylum seekers prefer remaining as irregular migrants than returning to their countries of origin. For instance, for citizens of Eritrea, Sudan, and Ethiopia, it is largely impossible to return if unable to obtain asylum status in Egypt. In Eritrea, failed asylum seekers face a high risk of detention and are often subjected to torture upon their return<sup>21</sup>. Similarly, in Ethiopia, they are at risk of arbitrary and indefinite detention, torture, and extrajudicial execution<sup>22</sup>.

The risk is a gap in assistance as individuals transition out of the asylum system and they are no longer covered by UNHCR's mandate. As stated by UNHCR key informant below, rejected asylum seekers and closed-file individuals are not systematically referred and/or followed-up by other implementing partners, which may expose them to high risks if they are in vulnerable situations:

*Once they are rejected at appeal the file is closed and they considered not of UNCHR concern...this exposes them to risk of detention, arrest and return to the country of origin, this is a reality... we do understand, we also have close cooperation with IOM before even closing the file for AVRR...we do not have an*

<sup>20</sup> See, for instance: Crawley, H., & Skleparis, D. (2018). Refugees, migrants, neither, both: categorical fetishism and the politics of bounding in Europe's 'migration crisis'. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44(1), 48-64.

<sup>21</sup> U.S. Department of State (2020). *2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Eritrea*. Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor; see also: Alpes, J., Blondel, C., Preiss, N., & Monras, M. S. (2017). Post-deportation risks for failed asylum seekers. *Forced Migration Review*, 54, 76-78; and Podeszfa, L., & Manicom, C. (2012). Avoiding Refoulement: The Need to Monitor Deported Failed Asylum Seekers. *Oxford Monitor of Forced Migration*, 2(2), 10-15.

<sup>22</sup> De Regt, M., & Tafesse, M. (2016). Deported before experiencing the good sides of migration: Ethiopians returning from Saudi Arabia. *African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal*, 9(2), 228-242.

*established framework, probably it should be the case to have one...rejected are not of concern so we do not take further steps.*

*(UNHCR Egypt Key Informant 3, Cairo – 2021)*

This means that unless systematic coordination is undertaken to provide continuous protection to rejected asylum seekers and closed-file individuals, many migrants could be exposed to high protection risks as they fall out of UNHCR's specific mandate<sup>23</sup>. Capacity building activities under the RDPP NA must be coordinated as much as possible to mitigate these risks. In the absence of an established framework there may be unintended consequences on a large part of the population of concern.

g. External challenge: detention still common modality of migration management in Libya

As described in the previous section, RDPP-funded trainings contributed to increase coordination of disembarkation procedures. While the increase of efficiency is a positive aspect, it should also be considered that all interviewees, including IOM key informant reported below, confirmed that upon disembarkation migrants are automatically transferred to detention centres, regardless of their profile.

*Yes, they are still being moved or transferred to detention centers and maybe this is upon rules, or policies I'm not sure... but we see them allowing us to go there and provide assistance...we see them happily providing access, we see them helping even in the distribution...we see them call asking in the middle of the night for medical support...so we knew there was something positive out of the training we gave them...but yes, that's still ongoing, migrants are still transferred to detention.*

*(IOM Libya Key Informant 2, Tripoli – March 2021)*

Interviews conducted with national authorities' representatives made it evident that a key focus in terms of operational development is on the improvement of the efficiency and quality of data collection. As much as the enhancement of coordination has been supported by the evidence collected for this study, any improvement of conditions of migrants upon transfer to detention centres could not be documented. The sole example provided of impact on daily migrants' management related to first-aid trainings so that police officers are now enabled to provide critical life-saving assistance.

Disembarked individuals may be transferred to official sites operated by the Directorate for Combating Illegal Migration (DCIM) or they may be placed in unofficial detention sites controlled by traffickers, smugglers, and militias. This was the common practice at least until 2020<sup>24</sup> according to all key informants, including national authorities' representatives. It clearly constitutes

<sup>23</sup> See also: Abdel Aziz, N. A. (2018). *Out of sight out of rights: Rejected asylum seekers and closed-files individuals in Egypt*. The American University in Cairo.

<sup>24</sup> Food shortages, unsafe roads, unpaid wages to DCIM officials, and fear of spreading COVID-19 in detention centres were among the reasons that allegedly led to a reduction of the number of migrants being transported to detention from 2020.

a hindering factor to the potential impact of RDPP NA interventions, as one key informant bluntly puts it:

*As long as this immediate detention from disembarkation system exists, as long as it is utilized as a business model, as long as people are forced to pay ransom as the only way out... the system that exists right now, it is hard to imagine those disembarkation as being more human rights abiding just because the conditions are really up for abuse.*

*(Amnesty International Key Informant, Tunis – April 2021)*

h. External challenge: limited capacity of Libyan authorities to conduct Search and Rescue (SAR) operations

Despite the improvements described above, several key informants adamantly highlight how any changes occurred between 2016 and 2019 had limited impact on the overall behaviour of Libyan authorities when it comes to respect of human rights and international protection standards. Lawyers working with asylum seekers and migrants disembarked in Italy, continue to posit that Libya does not have the necessary capacity to perform Search and Rescue (SAR) Operations according to international law and standards. For instance, they refer to phone registrations available to them as part of preliminary investigations by Italian Courts. Key informants reported of several occasions when emergency calls to the Libyan Coast Guard have been left unanswered or they have been attended by officers that only speak Arabic, although the SAR convention clearly requires any MRCC to communicate in English<sup>25</sup>. These episodes are also confirmed by reports from The Alarm Phone<sup>26</sup>. Further, lawyers and representatives of International NGOs also report of Libyan Coast Guard using violence against migrants in distress during sea rescue operations. The persistence of these incidents is also confirmed in a video recently published by the NGO Sea-Watch<sup>27</sup>. They conclude that as of 2021, the Libyan Coast Guard cannot be considered as a reliable actor to conduct SAR and disembarkation operations according to international law and standards.

The views of International NGOs and Italian lawyers are shared in a Joint Communication by Five United Nations Special Procedures to the Italian Government issued in May 2019. The communication concluded that the politics of SAR disengagement pursued by the Italian government, including deterring migrants from arriving and facilitating “pullbacks” by Libyan authorities, is leading to grave human rights violations of non-derogable and absolute rights, such as the right to life and non-refoulement, which are in violation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the UN Convention against Torture, and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment (CAT)<sup>28</sup>.

<sup>25</sup> 1979 International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (the so-called SAR Convention).

<sup>26</sup> See, for instance: Alarm Phone (2021). *Europe watches as a shipwreck takes place off the coast of Libya*. <https://alarmphone.org/en/2021/03/30/europe-watches-as-a-shipwreck-takes-place-off-the-coast-of-libya/>

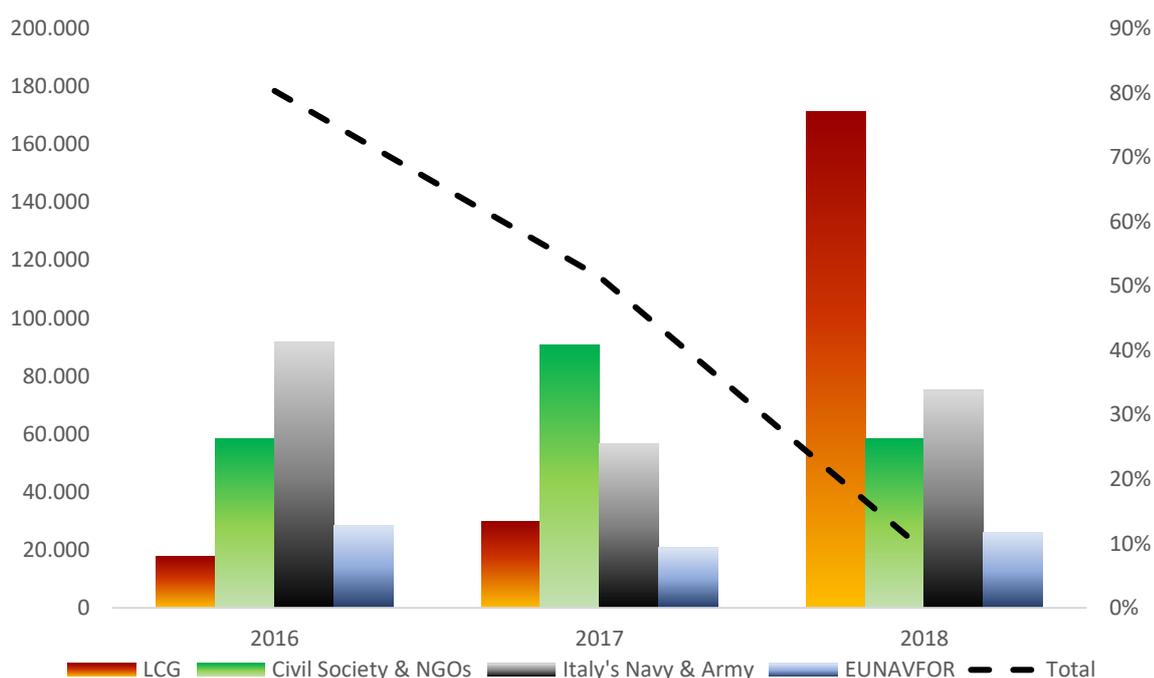
<sup>27</sup> Sea-Watch (2021). So-called Libyan Coast Guard attacks people in distress, 30.04.21. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X9X95FuA09U>

<sup>28</sup> United Nations Human Rights Special Procedures, Joint Communication, by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; the Independent Expert on human rights and international solidarity; the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants; the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance; the Special Rapporteur on torture and

Similarly, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, in a letter published on the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2019, stated her concern about relinquishing responsibility for search and rescue operations (SAR) to authorities “which appear unwilling or unable to protect rescued migrants from torture or inhuman or degrading treatment”<sup>29</sup>. In a following letter published on the 13<sup>th</sup> of February 2020, the same Commissioner more explicitly requested to suspend co-operating with the Libyan Coast Guard (LCG) observing that migrants and asylum seekers who are intercepted and returned to Libya are “subjected to serious human rights violations”<sup>30</sup>.

The above should be read in light of the fact that as the RDPP NA Phase I (AWP 2015) started, there has been a progressive shift of SAR responsibilities to the Libyan Coast Guard. Drawing on statistics provided by the Italian Coast Guard, Frontex and UNHCR, Figure 1 shows the total number of migrants rescued in the Central Mediterranean as well as the percentage of caseload for category of actors. On the one hand, between 2016 and 2018, the total number of migrants rescued and accounted for decreased from almost 180,000 to less than 20,000. On the other hand, the Libyan Coast Guard became the main actor accounting for 77% of rescued migrants.

Figure 4. Total rescued migrants (left) and percentage per category of rescuing ship (right)



Sources: data reported in Carrera and Cortinovis (2019).

other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment; and the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, 15 May 2019, ALITA 4/2019.

<sup>29</sup> Commissioner for Human Rights, Council of Europe, Letter to Prime Minister of Italy, Strasbourg, 31 January 2019. <https://rm.coe.int/letter-to-giuseppe-conte-prime-minister-of-italy-by-dunja-mijatovic-co/1680921853>.

<sup>30</sup> Commissioner for Human Rights, Council of Europe, Letter to Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy, Strasbourg, 13 February 2020. <https://rm.coe.int/letter-to-mr-luigi-di-maio-minister-of-foreign-affairs-and-international-cooperation-of-italy/16809c8262>.

i. External challenge: Libya cannot be considered as a safe country.

Despite some improvements, including those resulting from RDPP-funded interventions described above, as of 2019 several United Nations actors continued emphasising that Libya could not be considered as a “safe port” and that “those rescued and intercepted at sea should not be returned there”<sup>31</sup>. Previously, a Joint Communication issued by UN Special Procedures (UN Rapporteurs and two Working Groups) to the European institutions on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2018 stated that “outsourcing the responsibility of disembarkation to third countries, in particular those with weak protection systems, only increases the risk of *refoulement* and other human rights violations”. Similarly, as of 2019 the UNHCR did not record remarkable improvements in detention conditions compared to previous years that included limited access to food and outbreaks of disease at some facilities, along with several deaths<sup>32</sup>.

At the time of the evaluation, the same position was shared by key informants that legally support asylum applicants upon disembarkation in Italy:

*"Libya is obviously still not a safe port because foreign citizens have no access to asylum and they are therefore exposed to refoulement, direct and indirect refoulement. Indirect refoulement to their country of origin as Libya is not signatory to the Geneva Convention and they cannot request protection to prevent their forced return; and direct refoulement because in Libya they are subject to detention in centres where acts of violence and torture happen very frequently. Hence, we sustain these are acts of direct refoulement because individuals are exposed to real and documented threats to their own safety without access to asylum."*

*(ASGI Key Informant, Rome – April 2021)*

To support the idea that conditions in Libyan detention centres have not changed significantly over the years, and that violence and tortures are common also in DCIM managed centres, key informants refer to a ruling by the Messina Court in Italy. The sentence, published in 2020, found that in the official Zawyah centre torture was systematically endured as a management practice<sup>33</sup>. The distinction between official and unofficial centres is often reported as a key variable that explains the persistence of inhumane practices given that many places of detention are practically outside of authorities control. However, these demarcation lines are blurred as Ministry of Interior buildings account for about 20% of unofficial detention centers<sup>34</sup>. Further, an investigation of

<sup>31</sup> See: Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) (2018), *Desperate and Dangerous: Report on the Human Rights Situation of Migrants and Refugees in Libya*, 20 December 2018. <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/LY/LibyaMigrationReport.pdf>; see also: International Organisation for Migration (IOM) (2019). *IOM Statement: Protecting Migrants in Libya Must be Our Primary Focus*, 4 February 2019.

<sup>32</sup> UNHCR (2019). *Desperate Journeys. Refugees and migrants arriving in Europe and at Europe's borders*, January-December 2018. <https://www.unhcr.org/desperatejourneys/>

<sup>33</sup> See: Toscano, S. (2020). *Messina, condannati per tortura a 20 anni tre carcerieri del lager libico. «Sentenza storica»*. *Corriere della Sera*, 29 May 2020; see also: Scavo, N. (2020). «Torturatori di Stato». *Il giudice: Libia, abusi nelle prigioni ufficiali*. *Avvenire*, 28 October 2020.

<sup>34</sup> Al-Dayel, N., Anfinson, A., & Anfinson, G. (2021). *Captivity, Migration, and Power in Libya*. *Journal of Human Trafficking*, 1-19.

detention places between 2011 and 2019 revealed that the treatment of detainees and captives across several sites constituted similar conditions of abuse and enslavement<sup>35</sup>.

j. Internal: limited control over the selection process of trainees

Although the perception of trainings as a professional reward contributed to enhance participation, the above aspect should be read considering that the selection of participants has largely been delegated to authorities, as stated by IOM key informant:

*"This was the role of local authorities, senior management...but I remember that we used to advise them for inclusion, but it was not our role to tell them who should be there."*

*(IOM Libya Key Informant 2, Tripoli – March 2021)*

While the number of trainings and participants in considered interventions was high and overachieved set indicators, such a measure may be misleading if used to assess impact. Despite being common practice across projects and implementing partners, delegating the selection of participants to authorities may not necessarily follow relevance criteria. For instance, as highlighted by DCIM representatives in Libya, several officials at the Ministry of Interior have recently been trained on anti-trafficking despite not having to deal with migration in their daily work.

Moreover, limited control on trainees' selection may lead to renowned traffickers being trained and elevated as counterparts by the intervention. Members of the Technical Working Group in Libya and trainees have been identified as members of human trafficking organizations<sup>36</sup>. IOM key informants reported that these episodes<sup>37</sup> led UNSMIL to request the suspension of all capacity building activities involving targeted institutions and the implementing partner had to negotiate their continuation.

The study finds participants' selection was one impeding factor also in the case of Egypt as UNHCR had limited space to influence the process. As reported below, trainers and programme staff acknowledge not always being aware of whom trainees are and what entity they belong to.

*Unfortunately, when we work with ministries, they request the training and select dates and they will select their staff. We try to set criteria, but we cannot really influence the decision making of the people being selected, it is completely up to the government entity... if UNHCR pushes to much the risk is to lose any buy-in from local authorities.*

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Tinti P. (2017). Nearly there, but never further away. *Foreign Policy*.

<sup>37</sup> The most notable one is Abd al-Rahman al-Milad, known as "Bija". In May 2017 he took part to a study visit to Italy as a representative of Tripoli's delegation. In 2018 the UN Security Council included him into the list sanctioned individuals because "The UN Panel of Experts claims that Milad, and other coastguard members, are directly involved in the sinking of migrant boats using firearms". He has been arrested in Tripoli 2019 with the accusations of human trafficking but released in 2021. See: United Nations Security Council (2018). [ABD AL RAHMAN AL-MILAD](#); see also: Albanese, F. (2021). La Libia scarcera Bija, uno tra i trafficanti di uomini più pericolosi e feroci. *La Stampa*, 11/04/2021.

*(UNHCR Egypt Key Informant 1, Cairo – March 2021)*

Because the formal process requires all communication and requests to be processed via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Egypt, direct coordination with relevant ministries is very limited. This was confirmed by the Focal Point for relations with international organizations:

*The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the focal point for cooperation between all national entities and international organizations...so we try to coordinate between these ministries and organization to fill the gaps and to fulfill the capacity building needs of national institutions... we do this with UNHCR and IOM, and lately we signed a road map with EASO for asylum law as well.*

*(Ministry of Foreign Affairs Key Informant, Cairo – April 2021)*

More in general, relationship with Egyptian authorities in this regard is complex. This study could not access previous trainees from government entities. Hence, it was not possible to get their perspective on content, modality, and effectiveness of trainings. Moreover, interviewed government representatives were not aware of RDPP-funded trainings with law enforcement officers.

*If I may clarify, they do not conduct specific training for the ministry of defense and ministry of interior. They conducted one training and it involved different stakeholders, I think the ministry of justice, and the parliament...it was a general and broad training, of course it is important because it is an eye opener on all the support that we will need to establish this national asylum system [...] the target group so far is those in charge of refugee policies in the ministry...these are not the police officers in the street...however police officers study in their formation international law, so they know that refugees enjoy international protection.*

*(Ministry of Foreign Affairs key informant, Cairo – April 2021)*

k. Internal: limited duration hampers sustainability of capacity building processes

The study finds a key limitation to achieve sustained impact is the duration of the capacity building process. Key informants reported that in Libya the duration of IOM trainings has been limited to the life cycle of the project, rather than being part of an overarching strategy. As a result, the impact may have been hampered by the limited number of officials targeted. Such a challenge raises questions about the sustainability of the initiative when not included in a broader plan. DCIM representatives adamantly confirm that capacity building sessions should be organized in a continuous manner:

*"Capacity building cannot be done in 12 months, it is not feasible."*

*(DCIM Key Informant, Tripoli – March 2021)*

The case of Egypt demonstrates that behavioural changes on simple practical issues, such as law enforcement officers recognizing UNHCR-issued cards, has taken several years. Hence, to achieve systemic changes, such as obtaining the respect of human rights and dignity by key actors in Libya

as well as mitigating the micro-macro paradox described above, cannot be planned over 12 or 24 months. Unless these activities are part of a sustained and continued effort, any potential impact will be dissipated.

l. External challenge: government staff turnover

The hindering effect of the limited duration of capacity building activities is compounded by the frequent turnover of staff within relevant ministries and government agencies. The rotation of staff negatively affects the number of trained officers and officials that can make use of received trainings. In addition, the frequent change of interlocutors poses a challenge for implementing partners as the institutional capacity would not be built over time. While not having a measurable effect at output level, the limited duration of trainings coupled with high turnover in relevant institutions has had hindering effect on achieved impact. This aspect was clearly highlighted by key informants from governmental counterparts in Libya that took part into the trainings:

*"It is hard to tell whether these trainings had an effect because between 2015 and 2020 there have been a lot of changes in the management of DCIM and each change comes with a different vision in terms of scope of work of DCIM. There have been five heads since 2015, some come from out of the organization, they could come from civil or other military institutions, and because of the centralization of decision making they could not take into consideration what branches would say."*

*(DCIM Key Informant, Tripoli – March 2021)*

m. Internal: geographical centralization of trainings

While not limited in time, UNHCR training activities in Egypt were found to be limited in geographical coverage. Many key informants stressed that, to their knowledge, most activities have focused on the Cairo area, while smaller cities have been, to some extent, left behind. This means that officials in small and middle cities may have never been trained. One reason behind the limited impact at the country macro level is the centralization of trainings.

*4.1.6. Scenario without the intervention*

Overall, because of the several hindering factors, the study finds evidence of limited impact of capacity building and training activities in Libya. Nonetheless, the most likely scenario without this RDPP-funded intervention is that cooperation with authorities would have been hampered and implementing partners would have not been able to deliver the same level of assistance. Without these awareness raising and capacity building activities, implementing partners would have suffered from serious access issues. However limited relative to the need, the improvements in the assistance provided to migrants and refugees in Libya would have not been possible.

In Egypt, the most likely scenario in absence of the RDPP-funded capacity building activities would be no improvement of the conditions for refugees in the street. Without these efforts to make law

enforcement officers aware, detention of registered asylum seekers and refugees would have remained much more common. More broadly, awareness about refugees' issues and related documentation would have been more limited making daily life more troublesome. Furthermore, the relationship with UNHCR would have deteriorated compromising all other essential services provided by the agency.

#### 4.1.7. Recommendations

- 4.1.a Implementing partners should set outcome targets for all funded interventions. In available grant documents only output level indicators are given for capacity building objectives (such as *number of trainees*). While knowledge and behavioural changes are difficult to measure, implementing partners should go beyond measuring mere delivery. For instance, if training activities are expected to reduce arbitrary detention, one outcome indicator could be the *reported instances where partners had to intervene to release detained persons of concern*.
- 4.1.b Trainings should always be included into a broader capacity building strategy that goes beyond the life cycle of one single project or RDPP NA Phase. This is particularly the case for issues, such as human rights and protection standards, that cannot be expected to be affected within 24 months. When funding this type of intervention, RDPP NA should request that a clear broader capacity building strategy is outlined in project proposals. Both short-term (up to 24 months) and long-term outcome indicators should be clearly set based on such an existing capacity building strategy.
- 4.1.c RDPP NA actors, and more specifically IOM and UNHCR, should pay attention not to reinforce the binary categorization "migrant" vs. "refugee" in their capacity building activities. While helpful operationally, it does not effectively represent the complex reality of migratory experiences and it may contribute to reducing access to services and rights. Systematic coordination should be put in place to avoid a potential vacuum of protection as individuals fall out of the specific concern of UNHCR. RDPP NA as a programme should plan holistic interventions that mitigate potential negative unintended effects of individuals as they transition out of the asylum system.
- 4.1.d The operating context in targeted countries, such as Libya, includes interlinks between smuggling organizations and targeted government agencies. Implementing partners should clearly outline the process to select trainees and how it affects expected training outcomes. Further, a clear mitigation strategy should be put in place to minimize the negative effects of limited control over participants' selection.
- 4.1.e Awareness raising activities and capacity building to relevant entities in targeted countries should continue. Even in absence of demonstrated impact in the short term, trainings may contribute to set the foundations for improving the capacity to receive and assist migrants and refugees over a longer timeframe. However, any further support and involvement of targeted agencies (such as the Libyan Coast Guard) should be made conditional to a demonstrable and documentable improvement of compliance with human rights and international protection standards.
- 4.1.f While building the capacity and raising the awareness of targeted governments, Search and Rescue (SAR) and disembarkation operations should not be entirely delegated to actors (such as the Libyan Coast Guard) that are not yet equipped to guarantee the respect of basic human rights and protection standards.

4.1.g Implementing partners should expand the geographical coverage and targeted audiences of capacity building activities. In doing so, implementing partners should consider (i) areas with higher concentration of population of concern and (ii) which sectors of the government apparatus and civil society in hosting countries are main sources of daily challenges for migrants and refugees.

## 4.2. Direct support to (mixed migration) flows management

The evaluation of the direct support to flows management component of the action also relies on two randomly selected success cases and one “low success” case (see Annex 1). As described in section 2, “success” is defined as having achieved or overachieved against all relevant output indicators.

The main findings at the impact level for the direct support to flows management are summarized in the scheme below:

### **SUCCESS CASES**

- \* Tunisia, Phase III. Refugee Status Determination was processed for 404/100 cases.
- \* Libya, Phase III. Resettlement Registration Forms submitted for 337/223 cases.

### **MAIN IMPACT:**

- \* Improved access to assistance, protection and durable solutions
- \* Improved conditions for resettled refugees
- \* Improved quality of resettlement processes and reduced burden on refugees

### **Internal challenges to Impact**

- Fragmented funding/response
- Fragile coordination to ensure continuous support to migrants and refugees
- Missed follow-up on resettled refugees
- Waiting time from submission to resettlement departure

### **External challenges to Impact**

- Refugees' intentions and aspirations
- Lack of domestic asylum legislation
- Domestic socio-economic outlook
- Barriers to local integration
- Low resettlement quotas
- Parallel systems for refugees

Internal challenges are those factors that hinder impact and that are, to a great extent, under direct control of the programme. External challenges are factors that hinder impact and that, to a great extent, are related to the context in targeted countries and are not under the direct control of the programme.

These aspects are discussed in detail in the following sections starting with a description of the “success” at delivering expected outputs.

### 4.2.1. Output description

In Tunisia, during Phase III UNHCR implemented the *Building capacities to formalize the national protection space and identifying persons in need of international protection, including within mixed migration flows in Tunisia* project. The intervention aimed at enhancing the existing Refugee Status Determination (RSD) and durable solutions capacities of UNHCR in Tunisia. In 2019,

following staff have been recruited: one RSD Associate in Tunis, one RSD Associate Officer in Tunis and one RSD Associate in Zarzis.

Against a target of 100 RSD cases processed, in 2019 the implementing partner achieved 404 cases processed and 262 decisions finalized. Overachieving one the key target indicator, the intervention succeeded at delivering expected outputs.

In Libya, during Phase III UNHCR implemented the *Promote Durable Solutions for Vulnerable Refugees and Asylum Seekers through Resettlement* project. The main activities aimed at increasing the capacity of its team to provide resettlement services, through recruiting and capacitating additional national and international staff members. In 2019, following staff were recruited according to mid-term reports: one Senior Resettlement Assistant (Tripoli based), one Resettlement Associate (Tripoli based), one Durable Solutions Associate (Tripoli-based), one Durable Solutions Assistant (Tunis-based).

The main output indicator was the number of submitted Resettlement Registration Forms (RRFs). Against a target of 233 RRFs, UNHCR Libya has processed 337 cases leading to overachieving on this component. The 337 cases corresponded to 962 individuals. Among them 529 male and 433 female. The nationalities were Syrians (491), Eritreans (246), Sudanese (221), Somalis (2) Ethiopians (1), and Yemenis (1).

#### 4.2.2. Output enablers

This section describes the key factors that enabled considered components of the RDPP NA programme to successfully deliver all expected outputs.

##### a. Increased staffing capacity

The RDPP NA supported the recruitment of essential staff for Refugee Status Determination in Tunisia and Resettlement Unit in Libya. As of 2018, the RSD unit in Tunis was limited to one person that was not fully dedicated to RSD. RDPP NA provided essential funding to expand a core team of UNHCR mandate.

*"RDPP filled out a major gap because without it we really could not have processed what we have processed. Now we couldn't have had this fully fledged team in place that is very clear about their objectives and work and that process RSD on a regular daily basis and now they're really reaching the very experienced level of work but then if I'm not able to maintain this then all of this is gone."*

*(UNHCR Tunisia Key Informant 2, Tunis – March 2021)*

A key element that determines the staffing needs in Refugee Status Determination is the appeal process. Those applicants with a negative first instance decision have a right to appeal within 30 days. For these cases, the appeal needs to be reviewed by an officer that was not involved in the first instance decision to preserve fairness and justice. Therefore, enhanced staffing capacity

increases the opportunity to complete RSD processes within reasonable timelines reducing waiting periods.

The same factor was found to play a key part for the Resettlement Unit in Libya as increased staffing capacity translated into a higher number of eligible cases for resettlement being selected and submitted.

b. Increased number of arrivals

The higher number of people going through RSD processes in Tunisia has also been a consequence of the operational environment. In 2019, following a trend started in 2018, new arrivals continued to grow from both land and disembarkation. For instance, a significant number of Eritreans, who had been held in detention centers in Libya, was released or fled after some centers had been bombed and managed to get into Tunisia. While by the end of 2018 there were about 1,300 people being registered by UNHCR, at the end of 2019 the number was up to more than 3,300, a 150% increase<sup>38</sup>.

This increase in new arrivals contributed to overachieving the output indicator as a higher number of asylum seekers approached UNHCR. The RDPP-funded intervention allowed the RSD team to be in place so that the increase in arrivals could be dealt with, surpassing the set target of 100 RSD cases being processed during the year.

c. Selection of specific output indicators

The study finds that some key indicators are not clearly defined. For instance, although it is used to measure output achievements in all similar interventions, the definition of a “processed case” in Refugee Status Determination is not clear. Key informants had different views on how to define and count “processed cases”. This means that across countries of operation and over the years the same indicator might record different aspects of the intervention depending on who is measuring it. For some, a processed RSD case is an asylum applicant that has been interviewed at least once:

*"As far as the RSD procedure is concerned, is the number of people who were interviewed at least once..."*

*(UNHCR Tunisia Key Informant 1, Tunis – March 2021)*

For others, it is a closed file, an application where a decision has been made:

*"Completed cases. So, when I say 100 or 200, these are people who have been processed with the final decision issued and the case was closed."*

*(UNHCR Tunisia Key Informant 2, Tunis – March 2021)*

A third key informant argues there is a difference between “processed cases” and “finalized cases”, which implies that the former has not yet reached the conclusion of the process:

*"It could imply different things [...]. Yes, because I think my understanding finalized would mean that the case has been adjudicated until the end and that*

<sup>38</sup> UNHCR (2021). *Refugee data finder*. Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=N3Ufks>

*decision has been issued. I think, so "processed" for me gives the implication that it gives an indication that it could be at one of them... It's in the pipeline, but it could be in one of the stages of the processing... Still, it's not yet in the final stage."*

*(UNHCR Tunisia Key Informant 3, Tunis – March 2021)*

Similarly, the use of Resettlement Registration Forms (RRFs) as the only output indicator for resettlement interventions allows measuring output delivery against an indicator that is under the control of implementing partner. RRFs measure how many cases have been submitted by UNHCR, which differs from the number of people approved for resettlement and also differs from the number of departures. Therefore, success in terms of implementation is also determined by the choice of an indicator that accounts only for a part of the resettlement process. In other words, the same operation may have not been considered successful<sup>39</sup> had a different indicator been chosen.

This is clearly reflected in the position of the representative of one country of resettlement. According to them, a better indicator would be the number of submissions that are accepted for resettlement. On the one hand, this indicator takes into consideration that submissions can be rejected, and a rejected submission can hardly be considered a successful one. On the other hand, considering successful submissions rather than departures still takes into account that there might be several delays beyond the control of both the implementing partner and the resettlement country.

*"I would neither count submissions nor departures but acceptance from RST countries... you can have a big proportion of submission who are rejected and if you count departures, it does affect those resettled, but departures also can be prolonged and delayed for different reasons, as long as the RST country accepts the case, I would say UNHCR have managed to meet the criteria and the needs."*

*(Resettlement Country Key Informant 1, April – 2021)*

d. Remote interviews allowed minimizing disruption.

Another factor that contributed to achieving the output targets despite a fragile security environment in Libya, was the possibility to conduct interviews remotely. Not needing to have international staff on the ground allowed the resettlement operation to continue despite the intensifying of the conflict. Security had an impact on refugees' ability to reach the office to attend interviews. However, because interviews were conducted remotely from Tunis, they were able to continue as long as refugees could reach UNHCR office in Libya, regardless of international staff presence in the country.

For some resettlement countries, conducting interviews remotely and having limited presence in the country of operation has negatively affected the quality of information collected during the interview process and more broadly the quality of all submitted cases. Because of limited access and security issues limiting the possibility to have face to face interviews, they believe some details are lost in the process.

<sup>39</sup> Success in the present study is defined as "having achieved or over-achieved on all output indicators".

*"It does affect the quality of the information we receive, so if we compare with other resettlement operations we have more detailed information in files, more in-depth but also, we can be certain that information is better quality in some other operations...we know that is because of difficult access, so information is lost in both processes, we are much aware of this."*

*(Resettlement country Key Informant 1, April 2021)*

However, this challenge was clearly put on the table beforehand, and it did not yield a significant effect on the capacity to deliver outputs. Moreover, this position is not shared by all resettlement countries. Other embassies are forced to operate remotely and reported the quality of information having been more than satisfactory, despite challenges related to internet connection, bandwidth, and other practical issues, they.

*"I worked in RST for 10 years, this is the most complete and well done, comprehensive RRF we receive... we did ask that there is a lot of background information on the journey, what happened since they have been in Libya, that was extremely helpful to be able to review interview."*

*(Resettlement country Key Informant 2, April 2021)*

The level of satisfaction with the quality of information collected, and the whole process itself, was dependent on previous discussions and agreements. It appears that some countries have had more extensive preliminary negotiation to clarify expectations with UNHCR counterparts, and that contributed to the intervention better fulfilling their objectives.

*"I think there was a certain amount, I would not call it pressure, but explanation... if we are to successfully do this programme... then this is what we would need to do that and they were ready to listen... they really listened to what we needed, we are very flexible...we both have the same objective that refugee can be resettled, it is very much collaborative."*

*(Resettlement country Key Informant 2, April 2021)*

Moreover, for some resettlement countries the Libya operation was an opportunity to "add one more tool in the toolbox" given that videoconferencing is not the standard way of conducting resettlement interviews. With the covid-19 pandemic starting, this has proven a very valuable experience as it allowed continuing operating despite movement limitations and restrictions.

e. Direct selection of cases from registration database.

Another positive factor contributing to a successful output delivery is the possibility for the resettlement operation to directly select cases from the available registration database, ProGRes. In Libya, the sources of referrals for resettlement are limited to other UNCHR units, with no direct referrals from external partners nor self-referrals from refugee themselves. The possibility to analyse already existing data that refugees provided at registration, and that are continuously updated by other units, increased the likelihood to timely reach eligible candidates.

f. Effective communication and clear understanding of resettlement criteria.

The clear definition and communication of criteria by resettlement countries played a key role driving the successful implementation of the intervention in Libya. At times, the efficient processing of cases has also come down to personal relationship built between representatives of resettlement countries and UNHCR resettlement unit given that there are in daily contact.

*"It is better that our criteria are clear and that UNHCR understands our criteria and meet them when referring cases and then of course we do have to build up a good working relationship with UNHCR and good flow of information and cases."*

*(Resettlement country Key Informant 1, April 2021)*

*"Communication with our partners, sometimes off the record communication with our partners on the ground to really be able to understand what is really feasible so we can provide good information back to our HQ who are making decisions on the programme ...once or twice a week at least...same with IOM side...very frank very regular communication, I can read the news but without their perspective it makes it really more complicated to understand the issues on the ground."*

*(Resettlement country Key Informant 2, April 2021)*

#### 4.2.3. Challenges to successful output delivery

This section describes the factors that have challenged the successful delivery of expected outputs.

a. Libya's volatile context.

A key challenge to the successful implementation of the intervention is posed by the volatile environment in Libya. This was also the case for Tunisia, given that a significant portion of persons of concern arrive through Libya. The protracted conflict makes it difficult to predict future caseloads as there are many variables that play a relevant role in determining the condition in the neighbouring country. Consequently, there are challenges in planning required staffing capacity with potentially detrimental effects on waiting periods.

The security situation has been an obvious challenge for the resettlement operation in Libya. It affected the implementation in several ways. First, the predictability of the process and the capacity to foresee its duration has been very limited. Second, depending on the situation on the ground, UNHCR staff and refugee may have not been able to reach the office. Third, several key informants reported of candidates disappearing or having been detained throughout the process. Fourth, with the bombing and the closure of the airport in Tripoli, for many months flights were only possible from Misrata with further logistics constraints. Fifth, the capacity to reach potential

candidates outside of Tripoli has been very limited. In particular in the South and in the East provinces.

*"there were lot of times in 2019 our local point of contact was national staff; she could not come to office regularly at all because of the security situation and that becomes very constraining."*

*(Resettlement Country Key Informant 2, April 2021)*

b. Interpretation and language needs.

With an increased caseload in 2019 in Tunisia, the number of represented nationalities also expanded. The availability of translators for specific local languages and dialects has been found to be an issue. Because some nationalities were not present in the population of interest in Tunisia during previous years, other missions, such as Morocco and Kenya, had to support with translators. Different time-zones made it at times challenging to schedule and conduct interviews.

c. Insufficient funding is an obstacle.

While the RDPP NA allowed recruiting additional staff, and therefore increased the capacity to process RSD cases in Tunisia, the number of new arrivals in 2019 was so high that the RSD capacity was still not meeting all the needs. The overload with insufficient staffing capacity left quite a significant number of people in UNHCR backlog, as described by one key informant:

*"Funding was one of the major obstacles... meaning that the RDPP was able to cover some needs, but not all of them related to RSD and we didn't have any complementary donor or project that could fill in the gap... so, I think by the end of 2019 our operations were about 50/60% funded against the overall funding requirements."*

*(UNHCR Tunisia Key Informant 1, Tunis – March 2021)*

The main consequence of insufficient funding is the impossibility to recruit additional staff, which is directly linked to the capacity of the operation to process cases. The lack of sources of co-funding left the operation understaffed preventing even more asylum seekers from being processed:

*"I mean, unfortunately, the backlog figures speak for themselves in the sense that if you are well staffed, your backlog is going down. And in this case, it didn't go down, it went up... I'm sure given the limited resources and capacity to recruit additional staff."*

*(UNHCR Tunisia Key Informant 2, Tunis – March 2021)*

d. Limited quotas for resettlement.

The number of resettlements represents a tiny percentage of the number of refugees globally. In 2019, refugees were more than 20 million, whereas the overall quota for resettlement was less

than 150 thousand. This means that about 0.8% of recognized refugees have the chance to be resettled every year, while UNHCR estimated that need to be around 4%<sup>40</sup>. To this already challenging environment, the Trump Administration added a drastic reduction of US resettlement quota that brought the global figure to around 50 thousand, making the work of resettlement operations extremely challenging.

*"Funding projects and staff is not enough, the greater number of the quotas the more we can resettle people. Fortunately, USA revised its standard going back to over a thousand, that is very good news for us as organization and also for those who have been waiting so long for resettlement."*

*(UNHCR Libya Key Informant 1, Tripoli – March 2021)*

Although there is some consultation process with UNHCR, setting the quotas is mostly a political process. That means several factors drive governments to decide on their allocations, but these unlikely include the projected needs in countries of first asylum.

*"The total quota is decided by parliament, by budget process and then ministry of justice decides on various sub-quotas, specifically which countries we should prefer resettlement from and which groups should be included... in the process, before decision is made, our directorate and also directorate of integration we give advice based on our knowledge and we do have a dialogue with UNHCR to give our advice to what groups we should prioritize...but the overall numbers is entirely decided politically."*

*(Resettlement Country Key Informant 1, April 2021)*

As a result, the number of available resettlements is always much smaller than the projected needs<sup>41</sup>.

e. Resettlement countries' criteria.

Another challenge in identifying eligible resettlement cases is posed by the criteria received from resettlement countries. These criteria involve age, nationality, household size, level of education and many other aspects. They are not standardized, and they vary across countries and over time. First, it is not easy for a resettlement team to be aware of exactly what profiles a resettlement country will be accepting. Communication at the country level is necessary and a certain degree of negotiation. Second, it is even more complicated to find those exact profiles among the pool of vulnerable refugees. On the one hand, to be eligible for resettlement a refugee must have specific vulnerabilities. On the other hand, resettlement countries may not accept cases that are "too vulnerable", such as cancer patients or a person with chronic diseases needing life-long medical care. As the key informant of one resettlement country reported, it is common to set a maximum share of refugees with medical needs they are willing to accept:

<sup>40</sup> UNHCR (2020). *Projected Global Resettlement Needs 2019*.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

*"We do have a global commitment with high medical needs we would take, is a percentage of our referrals, but that's managed globally so as local office we need first to get approval from the HQ as it is a global counting."*

*(Resettlement Country Key Informant 2, April 2021)*

Few resettlement countries accept single men, although, given the often-complicated journeys, single men are the typical profile of refugees in Libya.

*"We had a 15-year-old boy Somali that was injured in a detention centre, and he is not in a space where he is given appropriate care. We identified the case 3 years ago and he is departing this month, because he needs a lot of extra assistance, we submitted to five different countries."*

*(UNHCR Libya Key Informant 3, Tripoli – March 2021)*

At times there seems to be a clear disconnect between criteria given by resettlement countries and the characteristics of the refugee population in countries of asylum.

*For example, they need 2 persons out of 5 who are able to work. I understand where they are coming from but the chances in reality that most are disabled or not able to work is quite high, so sometimes there is a real disconnect between what RST country would look for them to integrate and the target population we work with.*

*(UNHCR Libya Key Informant 3, Tripoli – March 2021)*

Like quotas, criteria are set politically by governments at the central level, which usually means the competent ministry, and then approved by parliaments. These criteria match political preferences as well as the needs of receiving municipalities and regions. Budgetary considerations lead to set how many vulnerable cases should be accepted not to become a burden on receiving communities. Thus, it is a complicated balance to reach between resettling those who are most in needs while ensuring that when resettled they can access all the services they need.

*"What we do consider is the receiving capacity in the municipalities...for instance we do need fair and balance composition of the caseload in many respects, especially with respects to health issues, we cannot process only cases with medical needs... we do need to have a balance, we can take medical needs, but we also need normal functioning refugees."*

*(Resettlement country Key Informant 1, April 2021)*

f. Exit procedures.

Another challenge that affects the extent to which outputs can be successfully delivered is the need to obtain an exit permit from authorities in hosting countries. This is practically the only stage where authorities are involved in the resettlement process (as well as Voluntary Returns). Libyan authorities are found to support resettlement, as it is perceived as a burden sharing mechanism that relieves them from a portion of the foreign population, they are hosting. But in

practice they have not always supported a speedy conclusion of the process with frequent delays in issuing exit visas, as reported by one UNHCR key informant:

*"For most part they are happy for people to leave...they grant exit visas, they have fees related...there has been exit visa per individual and also overstay for those who stay irregularly in country...like a penalty fee... and UNHCR is paying but because they don't know how long people have been in country, so authorities have like generic fees for everyone...which now they wanted to increase...we have been in discussion to get exemptions to get the lower fees and this has delayed some departures... it really affects departures for weeks and weeks, which is quite frustrating."*

*(UNHCR Libya Key Informant 2, Tripoli – March 2021)*

To some extent, this factor also influenced the setting of quotas from resettlement countries. Libya is a complex operating environment, because of security concerns and instability. This issue with obtaining exit visas made resettlement countries even more reluctant to scale up their operation, as explained by one representative:

*"Our volumes in Libya are not huge by any means...it is a frustrating environment for sponsors, in normal circumstances we have a good idea how long it would take to RST whereas Libya it is extremely complex we never knew whenever we would get exit permits, when flights would be possible, to have the whole process completed."*

*(Resettlement Country Key Informant 2, April 2021)*

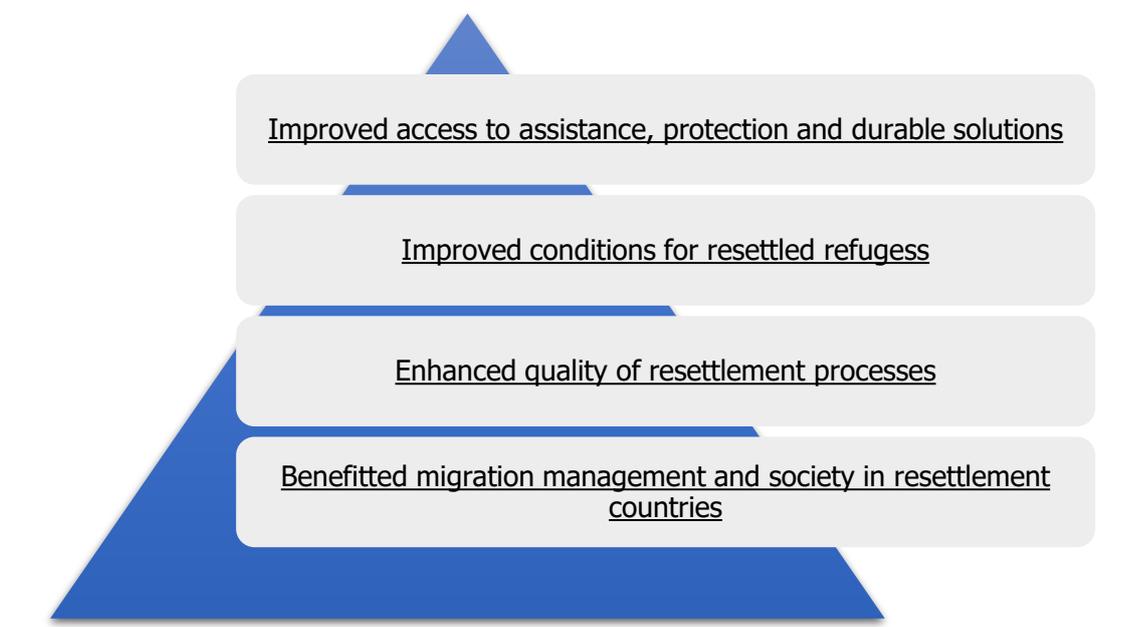
IOM's key informants who were working on Voluntary Returns (AVRR) in Tunisia confirmed that exit procedures can play a determinant role between a successful delivery of outputs and an underachievement on output indicators. The negotiation with the government to obtain a waiver to overstay penalties may take several months. As a result, many migrants resort to alternative solutions making the target difficult to reach.

*"We continue providing social assistance if needed and liaise with authorities mainly MoI, MoFA and ministry of finance to get exemption of penalty for overstay... most of them had already expired their visa... unfortunately this can take quite a while as it has to be coordinated with three ministries. [...]. It is a matter of months, average 2 or 3 months but it can go up to 6 months. [...]. Honestly, I think this is our main struggle."*

*(IOM Tunisia Key Informant 2, Tunis – April 2021)*

#### 4.2.4. Identified Impact

The identified impact of the direct support to flows management component includes:



a. Improved access to assistance and protection.

The study finds that RDPP NA allowed an increased number of individuals to access protection in the country of asylum and to also benefit from available durable solutions through the RSD process in Tunisia.

RSD has proven to be a protection tool allowing the assessment of needs and vulnerabilities, which can be followed up or flagged to other partners and service providers. A positive RSD outcome also means the person is entitled to specific accompaniment in their social and economic integration in the country of asylum. This includes vocational training, language courses, set up of business plans and job placements. Further, recognized refugees have access to legal assistance and case management in case of specific vulnerabilities. Cases are categorized based on their risk level, and they are followed up on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis accordingly. The outcome of the RSD process could be life changing according to interviewed asylum seekers:

*"If my RSD is positive, I can find a better way... they can help me find a job, make my training and something happen...I can work in Tunisia... If my RSD is positive, I can stay in Tunisia, if I learn the language... if I find those kind of things... because there is a lot of NGOs, they are helping for refugees...if they give me refugee card, I will have better life here."*

*(Rejected Asylum Seeker, Tunis – April 2021)*

The most immediate benefit of being registered with UNHCR is the issuing of an asylum seeker's card. Both asylum seeker's and refugee's card are broadly recognized by authorities in Tunisia. This means that persons of concern can enjoy fundamental rights such as freedom of movement and non-refoulement as described below by a refugee key informant:

*"I was never stopped by the police... sometimes when we are moving from Zarzis and Mednine they stop taxis and minivan to control documents and as soon as*

*we give our UNHCR paper they would let us go. Before we would not go out a lot... if we don't have documents, they keep asking questions."*

*(Refugee Key Informant, Tunis – April 2021)*

In addition, a positive RSD outcome opens the door to employment because work permits are not available to asylum seekers<sup>42</sup>. As described by a rejected asylum seeker, the UNHCR-issued asylum seeker card cannot allow a sustainable livelihood as the legal framework does not allow it in Tunisia:

*"I could not find job; this card is only a road permit...but it is not for work..."*

*(Rejected Asylum Seeker, Tunis – April 2021)*

As the RDPP NA increased the capacity to bring asylum claims to a final decision, the main impact could be evaluated through the increase of the number of people that can be assisted.

b. Increased access to durable solutions.

Besides immediate assistance, durable solutions are made available upon positive RSD outcome. In the case of Tunisia, given the limited number of resettlements, the available solution is mostly local integration. Nonetheless, the increased capacity to process RSD caseload also translates into a greater pool of potential eligible candidates for resettlement. Therefore, for the most vulnerable cases, this intervention has been even more relevant as it provided potential access to resettlement in the case of positive RSD outcome.

Furthermore, a higher number of recognized refugees provides an empirical basis to effectively advocate with resettlement countries to increase their respective quotas for those whose profile does not allow for a durable solution in Tunisia.

*"Without the RSD and the team in place that was secured thanks to the RDPP, this process of protection, processing of cases until a durable solution would not have been possible."*

*(UNHCR Tunisia Key Informant 2, Tunis – March 2021)*

Because resettlement is one durable solutions option, it comes at the end of the status determination process. Effective registration and refugee status determination operations need to be in place for resettlement to be able to deliver intended outputs. Not only resettlement is available only to those refugees who have successfully completed an RSD process, but available quotas are also influenced by the efficiency of registration and refugee status determination units. A higher number of recognized refugees allows UNHCR to advocate for higher quotas. This advocacy aspect was confirmed by a resettlement country key informant:

*"Because UNHCR would advise us, and we would advise the ministry... a more efficient UNHCR team would affect the number of their specific sub-group."*

*(Resettlement country Key Informant 1, April 2021)*

<sup>42</sup> Veron, P. (2020). *Tunisia: Possibilities for reform and implementation of migrant reception and protection*. Country Report, ECDPM.

Also, because of the RDPP NA support and advocacy based on the increased RSD caseload, resettlement departures from Tunisia spiked from 5 in 2019 to 55 in the first four months of 2021<sup>43</sup>. While very small in absolute figures, this is a 1000% increase in relative terms over less than two years.

To a limited extent, a positive impact is found also on those that remains in Tunisia. While there are no formal assessments and statistics, according to UNHCR key informants, there have been instances of recognized refugees who managed to successfully integrate in Tunisia:

*If you look at the Eritreans, who all came in 2018 and triggered this RDPP need in a way, out of almost 100, we have only like 20 people who are still there seeking UNHCR support, but the majority have been able to find a job and to leave the shelter and to rent on their own because even with the language problem, we enrolled them in language classes.*

*(UNHCR Tunisia Key Informant 3, Tunis – March 2021)*

Nonetheless, as further described in section 4.2.5, several important barriers persist to local integration in Tunisia. Key informants providing legal assistance to migrants and refugees highlight positive outcomes cannot be systematic as they largely depend on refugees' capability to successfully navigate a country system which lacks a formal asylum framework:

*Refugees are more accepted, it is not legal but that is how society works... like they can manage to sign a contract in front of municipality with only a refugee card... you have the right to sign contracts, but you need an ID... some municipality agree to recognize UNHCR card as an ID, some administrations are used to see refugees and others don't. There is no legal basis but that is what happens in practice.*

*(Terre d'Asile Key Informant, Tunis – May 2021)*

c. Main impact is on those resettled.

Given the profiling and selection of cases to be submitted for resettlement, the study finds that RDPP-funded intervention had a positive impact on the lives of those who can benefit from this durable solution option. Funding necessary staff to operate the resettlement unit, the RDPP NA contributed to saving the lives of those who, being at risk in their country of first asylum, have been resettled to a safe third country. In a country like Libya, where arbitrary detention, torture and violation of human rights have been documented for several years, this is even more relevant<sup>44</sup>. In 2019, this was the case for 842 Refugees (430 males and 412 females) that were resettled from Libya to mainly Norway and Canada. These refugees, through the RDPP NA

<sup>43</sup> UNHCR (2021). *Resettlement Data Finder*. <https://rsq.unhcr.org>

<sup>44</sup> United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) and Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). (2018). *Desperate and Dangerous: Report on the human rights situation of migrants and refugees in Libya*.

funding, have received the opportunity to start afresh in a country that guarantee their safety and protection.

*"Of course, I agree with them... it's an opportunity, maybe not for me but for the new generation, my son, or my future kids."*

*(Resettled refugee 2 – Bergen, May 2021)*

The RDPP NA contribution to resettlement operations allowed refugees to reach third country destinations as refugees, thus preventing the need to resort to irregular migration. An obvious positive impact is that they can benefit from a regular entry, which is also assisted by integration programmes, as stated by one UNHCR key informant:

*"As much as it is difficult for UNCHR, it is a way for resettlement countries to actually manage migration in a more organized way...and to be able to set up those criteria but also for individuals themselves is a much better way to arrive, it is organized, they are enrolled in courses, medical assistance, their profile is known."*

*(UNHCR Libya Key Informant 2, Tripoli – March 2021)*

These programmes are usually led by receiving municipalities and involve providing housing, clothing, language, and culture classes as well as vocational training. Refugees are normally paid to partake in such programmes, after which they are expected to either start working or continue with further education in the formal education system.

Nonetheless, talking to resettled refugees themselves provides a more nuanced picture. While the positive impact is undeniable, the resettlement experience also brings challenges. For some, the process itself of being resettled has been a painful one as from Libya they needed to go to Turkey (for a technical step-over) and then to Romania where their family has been divided and where living conditions were difficult:

*"It was a long journey...it was Turkey and then Romania... It was very difficult in Romania, it is not suitable to live there for a human being...the place was crowded with many people, it was dirty, it was cold, kitchen was full of insects, cockroaches, and rats...it was two hard months for me, with a son less than one year old...it was like a prison."*

*(Resettled refugee 1 – Bergen, May 2021)*

Another aspect that mitigates the positive impact of the intervention on beneficiary refugees is that families are not necessarily resettled together. Resettlement may also imply leaving part of the family behind<sup>45</sup>. Hence, the positive impact on some members of the households is partly offset by the pain of leaving the loved ones behind in vulnerable situations:

*"I was desperate to get them in the system. I asked and asked but I did not get any help... now I am in Norway, it is very hard to get my family here...they are waiting... Am I happy? No. Was I happy to know that I was going to Norway?"*

<sup>45</sup> This is likely related to family members being registered with UNHCR under separate case numbers.

*No. But I have a son, I don't want him to face the same things that I faced in Libya so I need to make a sacrifice so that my son can have a better life."*  
(Resettled refugee 2 – Bergen, May 2021)

Even when resettlement experience is not as traumatic, such as entailing leaving family members behind, it can still be a complicated process. Integration in a country that refugees have not chosen is not easy and it demands a lot of willingness from their side to be successful. Language is a challenge as well as the cultural shock as described by one resettled refugee:

*"It was mixed feelings because we were settled in a very tiny place, we used to live in a much bigger place in Libya. We asked for a place at least with a kitchen but they say "no you cannot decide" ... for the people generally they don't like to talk, they don't like to socialize...but they are nice when you talk to them."*  
(Resettled refugee 1 – Bergen, May 2021)

Some of the refugees interviewed for this study were struggling with becoming self-reliant as the integration programme reaches the end. For instance, while trained to be doctors, their university degrees are not recognized in the country of resettlement. Such a situation implies giving up their career and resort to any employment opportunity that would allow sustaining themselves and their dependents. While thankful for the opportunity received, they are also suffering from being unable to take full ownership on their future.

The final balance is the result of a mix of personal characteristics of the resettled refugees and the effectiveness of the integration programme. To a large extent, individual motivation and personal drive determined whether resettlement was indeed a durable solution.

d. Impact on the quality of resettlement processes.

An additional contribution of the RDPP NA intervention is on the quality of the resettlement process. Allowing necessary staff to be hired, it increased the number of case workers. Given that the outcome of resettlement operation is a combination of quantity and quality of staff, the result is a higher number of eligible cases submitted as well as a reduction in the number of interviews necessary to collect all needed information. Consequently, this reduces the burden on the refugees themselves, as explained by UNHCR key informants:

*"We need staff and competent staff that can limit the burden on the refugees themselves if they have to repeat their stories over and over...because it is extremely bad to interview them over and over."*  
(UNHCR Libya Key Informant 2, Tripoli – March 2021)

e. Migration management and society in resettlement countries.

A further positive impact is on the resettlement countries. Canada and Norway, as main destination of resettlement from Libya in 2019, have benefitted from the possibility to "choose" the profile of refugees they receive. Acknowledging the challenges in matching the profiles of the refugee population on the ground with set criteria, the RDPP NA intervention contributed to

migration management for targeted destination countries. These countries were enabled to select who reaches their own territories.

The intervention is also found to have potential positive impact on the society in these destination countries. Although difficult to prove, key informants in resettlement countries believe that their own society have benefitted from receiving these resettled refugees. On the one hand, it can make the hosting community perceive itself as playing a part in providing humanitarian assistance to those who are most in need. On the other hand, the direct contact with refugees contributes to maintain the receiving community as an open and accepting society.

*"but there is programme for integration, but there is also a strong feeling that [REDACTED] as a country does want to assist and help but also want the refugees to contribute back to the society...it does have an impact on society of course... so it contributes to society being accepting refugees, with changes over time, and it also makes society feel they are playing their role in responding to humanitarian crises."*

*(Resettlement Country Key Informant 1, April 2021)*

f. Impact on strengthening the institutional capacity.

Libyan authorities play a minimal role in the resettlement operation, which usually consists of the mere issuing of exit visas for those who are selected for departures. Therefore, the study does not find any impact of this programme component on the main objective of strengthening institutional capacity. To a limited extent, this capacity is being reinforced via the training of Libyan national staff.

More broadly, also because of the limited quotas, the impact of the component on the general population of migrants and refugees in Libya is very limited, as recognized by one resettlement expert in a destination country:

*"I don't know how much it contributes to the big picture, but the situation in Libya is extremely difficult for refugees. For those we help it is... in some cases is lifesaving, in other cases is certainly a big improvement for their future."*

*(Resettlement Country Key Informant 1, April 2021)*

g. Impact on staffing beyond life cycle of the intervention.

Although the RDPP NA supported the recruitment of staff for a limited period of time, it contributed to shedding light on some specific staffing needs within the organization. The RDPP NA helped igniting a discussion within UNHCR as involved staff members were not part of the core HR structure of the organization. In the course of 2020, UNHCR Tunisia managed to negotiate with its headquarters, and the regional Bureau in particular, the conversion from a temporary assignment to a longer-term assignment for these positions thus securing longer term positions that would allow to improve the RSD procedures. Not only the RDPP NA supported with immediate staffing needs, but also provided visibility internally to how structural these needs were.

#### h. Potential unintended negative effect on detention.

A potential negative externality could be related to refugee and migrants' detention. If refugees in detention are evacuated via resettlement, this could create an incentive for local authorities to ramp up detention so that more "illegal migrants" can be evacuated from Libya. The risk is inadvertently supporting and legitimizing detention centres. Acknowledging this risk, as of 2019, several INGOs have stopped their operations in detention centres in Libya<sup>46</sup>. This was not found to be the case for the considered RDPP-funded intervention. As long as the focus is on resettling "urban refugees" (i.e., not in detention), this negative effect can be avoided.

#### 4.2.5. *Factors that hinder impact*

This section describes the factors that hindered the potential impact of the programme. Internal challenges are those factors that hinder impact and that are, to a great extent, under direct control of the programme. External challenges are factors that hinder impact and that, to a great extent, are related to the context in targeted countries and are not under the direct control of the programme. The reader should keep in mind that a rigid categorization is not always possible as these factors often overlap.

#### a. Internal: fragmented funding and coordination.

The extent to which refugees can be assisted in their integration process after a positive RSD outcome depends on the level of funding for such activities. Once refugees and asylum seekers are recognized as in need of protection and they are granted the right to stay, it is essential that they are assisted in the process of re-gaining self-reliance. One factor that hinders achieving such an impact is the lack of an overarching strategy within the evaluated programme. If funds are granted for RSD activities only, without including other essential activities, such as livelihood assistance, there is a risk to jeopardize any potential positive outcome of RSD processes. In the case of Tunisia, this possibility was openly contemplated by UNHCR key informants:

*"So, I mean, if a refugee gets the status, but then UNHCR doesn't have any funding to provide for their needs, including covering their food, rent, medical needs, the psychosocial needs, the case management... then it's going to be very challenging... Obviously it's still not easy because the level of funding are not meeting the requirements. So, for instance in 2021 we only have 100,000 US dollars to conduct socio-economic activities in Tunisia, and the requirements are much higher there. I think at least 400,000."*

*(UNHCR Tunisia Key Informant 1, Tunis – March 2021)*

This means the impact of a positive RSD process is hampered by limited chances of providing assistance to recognized refugees. As a result, the number of success stories in Tunisia is limited. According to UNHCR key informants, in 2019 the number of refugees who were hired by a

<sup>46</sup> See, for instance: Norwegian Refugee Council (2019). *The Libya INGO Forum calls for closure of detention centres and the adoption of principled migration policies as they revise their assistance in these centres.* <https://www.nrc.no/news/2019/august2/libya-ingo-forum/>

private employer was 43 and only 6 developed their own business. Impact would be much greater if the planned response was a comprehensive one. This view is shared by implementing partners as well as members of the Tunisian parliament:

*"The most needed thing is mainly some financial support for Tunisia given the economic challenges we are facing, and it is mainly about creating projects for employment of refugees within enterprises in Tunisia...and those could be managed by IOM or UNHCR given their expertise. Projects are there, but not enough to fill all the gaps and all the needs."*

*(MoP Key Informant, Tunis – March 2021)*

In the case of the RDPP NA, this aspect entails also improved coordination with other EU initiatives. For instance, those funded by DG NEAR and DG ECHO. Coordinating with other European donors would allow funding a more comprehensive response that better covers the needs on the ground and achieves value for money, as clearly put by the representative of the EU delegation in one of the targeted countries:

*"UNHCR received a bit from DG Home, a bit from DG Near, and maybe other donors and ECHO... we will never know what is happening with our funds. Instead of a fragmented approach it is better to have a more strategic alliance with UNHCR instead of going through a "projectized approach".*

*(EU Delegation Key Informant 1, April 2021)*

The need to improve coordination at European level was stressed by all key informants from EU delegations across countries of intervention:

*"RDPP is a classic example of a programme of which EU delegation is aware but because we are not in charge, is difficult to ensure overview. It is a programme that all delegations have... They are invented in Bruxelles and parachuted down to the delegation in the country, and unfortunately time and time again we end up duplicating and wasting money."*

*(EU Delegation Key Informant 2, April 2021)*

*"Coordination is completely informal. The delegation has no mandate neither from DG HOME nor from Italy's MoI to monitor activities... it is almost random... the only formal mandate is when projects are approved, and they send me a summary asking for an opinion... I meet IOM weekly, so that is when it comes out that some activities are under DG HOME."*

*(EU Delegation Key Informant 3, April 2021)*

b. External challenge: Refugees' intentions.

Another challenge to achieved sustained impact is posed by the fact that a significant portion of the population recognized as refugee is not keen to remain and integrate in the country of asylum. For a variety of reasons, many still plan to go to Europe and other destinations. In the case of

Tunisia, this was reportedly a common finding when undertaking assessments and Focus Group Discussions with refugees:

*"I can't give you any figures, because it's difficult to assess, but when you do focus group discussions with them [...] they do have that discourse and they repeat it again and again, especially the Eritreans, which were one of the nationalities that not only have a high recognition rate, but also whose numbers have increased quite significantly starting from 2019."*

*(UNHCR Tunisia Key Informant 2, Tunis – March 2021)*

c. External challenge: domestic legal framework and socio-economic outlook.

The willingness of many recognized refugees not to remain in Tunisia intertwines with both the lack of a national asylum legislation and the difficult macro-economic situation the country has been going through over several years. These aspects greatly affect the extent to which local integration is possible, as stated by one UNHCR key informant:

*"The socio-economic integration is a big challenge in Tunisia because of the legal framework, because of the socio-economic situation, because in general the awareness of the private sector regarding the refugee status, but we're working on it... but it's really challenging..."*

*(UNHCR Tunisia Key Informant 1, Tunis – March 2021)*

Despite being a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention as well as to the 1969 African Union Refugee Convention, Tunisia does not have a formal national asylum system. The latest Tunisian Constitution (2014) stipulates that "the right to political asylum shall be guaranteed as prescribed by the law. It is prohibited to surrender persons who have been granted political asylum". But a comprehensive domestic legislation to establish a national protection system for refugees and asylum-seekers has yet to be approved by the parliament. As a result, the right to asylum is not yet recognised in the legislation nor in practice<sup>47</sup>. Furthermore, the country is not a signatory to the *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families*.

In practical terms, this means that while UNHCR can replace the government in terms of registration of persons of concern, refugee status determination and issuing documents for both asylum seekers and refugees, there is no national framework that clearly outlines entitlements and rights of asylum seekers and refugees. This means they can access a parallel system of International Organizations and NGOs but cannot really be integrated into the national system. This is a challenge especially at the local municipal level, as clearly explained by one member of the parliament in Tunisia:

*"It is UNHCR that does all coordination and they are doing a huge work when it comes to communication with counterparts especially government as in issuing cards etc... however, the problem is not with issuing the card, the problem is*

<sup>47</sup> Veron, P. (2020). *Tunisia: Possibilities for reform and implementation of migrant reception and protection*. Country Report, ECDPM.

*that there is no legal framework, no public policy for integration, no clear employment rights for them as there is no legal framework nor national strategy... also, there is no experience and no background on asylum seekers issue especially at the local level...if asylum seekers go to the head of municipality, they don't know what to do as if they go to their jurisdiction they don't find anything...so until we have a legal framework set in Tunisia it will be very hard to have such an impact."*

*(MoP Key Informant, Tunis – March 2021)*

In addition, the country economic outlook remains fragile in Tunisia. In 2019 total unemployment rate was at 16.2%, with youth unemployment reaching 36%<sup>48</sup>. Further, the labor law itself is very restrictive and includes a "national preference", which contributes to "irregularising" many sub-Saharan. According to a 1966 law, "foreigners may not be recruited when Tunisian skills exist in the specialties concerned by the recruitment" <sup>49</sup>. Hence, employers need to prove that the job cannot be done by a Tunisian. As a result, formal employment opportunities are limited, as acknowledged by one refugee key informant:

*"There are lot of problems when it comes to work, but the main challenge is that there is no jobs in Tunisia, that's why I'm doing this training so that I can get a certificate ...I did not work before, no I'm not working now since COVID."*

*(Refugee Key Informant, Tunis – April 2021)*

These challenges loom large even when conversating with refugees that are supposed to represent success stories. One key informant had his asylum claim approved, was now receiving financial assistance, and was enrolled in a vocational training to facilitate his access to employment. Nonetheless, he had no plan to stay in Tunisia because of the challenges in finding jobs as well as perceived racism:

*"My plan is to go to another place, I am not planning to stay in Tunis, I don't want to stay in Tunisia. Maybe Canada where I can finish high school. Unemployment rate is huge and there are few chances of employment. I'm not comfortable especially with racism, sitting in public spaces and people even threw stones at me for being black. And there is nothing in Tunisia especially infrastructure when it comes to education that I cannot access."*

*(Refugee Key Informant, Tunis – April 2021)*

d. External challenge: parallel systems hinder sustainable impact.

Because of the lack of a national asylum framework in several targeted countries, UNHCR has stepped in to carry out core activities such as registration and refugee status determination. While contributing to filling a substantial gap, this is somehow creating a sort of parallel system for refugees that are supported by international organizations and NGOs rather than being included

<sup>48</sup> World Bank (2021). *Unemployment, youth total (% of total labor force ages 15-24) (modeled ILO estimate) - Middle East & North Africa, Tunisia*. <https://data.worldbank.org>

<sup>49</sup> Geisser, V. (2019). *Tunisie, des migrants subsahariens toujours exclus du rêve démocratique*. Migrations Société, 2019/3 (177), 3-18.

into the national system. Unless these tasks are carried out with a clear plan to hand over responsibility to the relevant departments in the targeted government, any positive impact will be temporary and not sustainable. This limitation was clearly expressed by both UNHCR key informants and members of the Tunisian Parliament:

*"for the RDPP of course it would be much more beneficial if you're investing in capacitating the government to take over this process rather than given the funding to ensure who is doing it and it's temporary... it's helping many people for the time being, which is great, but sustainability on all levels is not there."*  
(UNHCR Tunisia Key Informant 2, Tunis – March 2021)

*"There is some integration, but it is limited and usually driven by efforts of UNHCR, it does not come organically mainly due to the lack from engagement with local authorities...the legal framework will help a lot... so that they know what their rights are, black on white..."*  
(MoP Key Informant, Tunis – March 2021)

Government representatives in Tunisia acknowledge the lack of national framework as well as inefficiencies in the management of the "migration portfolio" given that several ministries are involved, and they have different political agendas. A migration strategy was drafted in 2013 but has not been approved by the parliament. This deadlock is mostly because of political instability and the government's focus on internal security and economic priorities. Nonetheless, interviewed representatives of the Tunisian Government lament a lack of coordination with international organizations and NGOs. Such a gap was made evident to them by study visits to other countries, such as Sweden and France. In their view, this lack of coordination and the institutionalization of a parallel system for refugees, are supported by European donors' interest in migration in Tunisia on a conditional basis:

*"Only when there were a lot of migrants going through to the EU that neighbor countries are involved for help... otherwise there is not a lot of involvement, so it is only there were a lot migrants to EU that the EU refer to neighboring countries for help and cooperation...this coordination should continue and go on a longer term... migrants is an asset for both receiving and sending countries, especially we now talking about secondary migration."*  
(Ministry of Social Affairs Key Informant, Tunis – March 2021)

Hence, according to Tunisian Government's representatives, EU support should be based on a longer-term vision. Rather than responding when the number of migrants in transit is high or when more Tunisians leave irregularly, there should be a more established partnership. This should entail longer-term support to Tunisia with developing a comprehensive migration strategy and advocating for finalizing an asylum national legislation. In this way, the potential for refugees' integration would increase by having them included in the national system rather than temporarily assisted through an ad-hoc parallel network of international organizations and NGOs that is continuously dependent on short-term funding.

*"I cannot deny that the EU has been providing valuable help, but this help will be not efficient on the ground if we don't have a clear vision on how we deal with migrants in Tunisia."*

*(Ministry of Social Affairs Key Informant, Tunis – March 2021)*

Similarly, as most refugees remains in countries of first asylum, resettlement operations should be coupled with investments in longer-term development programs. Funding should be complemented by advocacy aiming at including refugees within national systems. A hindering factor to achieve sustained impact through resettlement from Libya is linked to the limited number of available resettlement quotas. Hence, humanitarian responses, aiming at providing short-term and emergency protection and assistance, should be linked to longer term programmes. A key hindering factor is that, in practice, refugees do not receive assistance from hosting institutions and have to rely primarily on short term projects.

e. External challenge: barriers to integration lead to irregular migration.

These challenges to successful integration and effective durable solutions also to those recognized as refugees often translates into irregular migration. While there are no detailed statistics, going to Libya to attempt the crossing of the Mediterranean Sea is an appealing option for those who fail to secure access to livelihood in Tunisia.

*"what refugees tell you when you're in focus group discussions is that they want to go to Europe either through resettlement, or taking a boat from Tunisia, or going back to Libya. And then we know there have been cases of people who have gone back to Libya to take a boat through the Central Med."*

*(UNHCR Tunisia Key Informant 1, Tunis – March 2021)*

Although just an educated guess, UNHCR key informants estimated in 300 out of a population of 7,000 those who returned to Libya in 2019, around 4%. As clearly stated by a rejected asylum seeker, irregular migration to Italy and Malta may look like the only option to survive for those who have been denied protection and are receiving no assistance:

*"if I go to Italy or Malta there is better life to me, because I am educated... I was working in a bank, I have experience, even I can speak English...if I go to Italy there is better options because even if I don't have paper I can work for food area or family area...even if I'm trying to get my permit, my visa and process takes 5 years or 10 years, I'm working...but here if I'm staying there is no change, why waste my time here?"*

*(Rejected Asylum Seeker, Tunis – April 2021)*

Therefore, a potential impact-hindering factor to the intervention is that without systematic and coordinated referrals, rejected asylum seekers are prone to resort to smuggling networks. Unless assistance is provided to smooth the transition to self-reliance, irregular migration may be seen as the only solution after the hopes to become recognized refugees have not materialized. One key informant that had his asylum claimed rejected clearly states that returning to Libya is an option for many in his situation:

*"My friends are not reapplying, they are going back to Libya... we are waiting for months, they stopped everything... better to die in Libya...you can find work easily, you can earn money...this country has problems for food... in Tunis 300 or 400 dinars for the home, there is no money for food even if you work... in Libya is easy to find work..."*

*(Rejected Asylum Seeker, Tunis – April 2021)*

f. Internal: the continuum of support for refugees and migrants is fragile.

More in general, a challenge to sustained impact of RSD interventions is related to rejected asylum seekers. Those who see their asylum claims denied are no longer of UNHCR's concern and are left in a practical limbo. On the one hand, Tunisian authorities generally do not practice expulsion and refoulement, implying that rejected asylum seekers can generally remain in the country. On the other hand, they are mostly unable to regularize their situation and become irregular migrants with limited access to protection and no formal support. Given their irregular status, they can only access informal employment either trying to survive in Tunisia or trying to save enough money to attempt the journey to Europe or return home.

*"After waiting for so long, they refused me also... they rejected all my friends, they went back to Libya because they had to survive, this country has no jobs... we don't speak any Arabic...I learnt a little French... I'm working in a café for a bit...then I'm jobless, so I'm trying to speak Arabic...there is no option here, I'm talking to them I want to learn French, but there is no option...I'm talking to them I want to learn Arabic because I want to stay here, but there is no process and then I'm trying outside but it costs 700 or 600 dinars so it's impossible."*

*(Rejected Asylum Seeker, Tunis – April 2021)*

One option for those unable to regularize their situation would be returning home, including through the support of IOM's Assisted voluntary return (AVRR). However, figures for Tunisia are low and the process takes several months, mostly because of documentation with embassies and negotiation with relevant ministries to obtain a waiver on overstay penalties. As a result, many rejected asylum seekers are stranded in the country without sustainable access to livelihood:

*"After 3 months there is a penalty... I'm here for a long time... definitely I have a penalty... If I want to remove the penalty I have to talk to some NGOs, because they have lawyers... if I talk to IOM, they send people to Bangladesh, they can remove this penalty easy... otherwise unless I pay the penalty, I cannot leave this country."*

*(Rejected Asylum Seeker, Tunis – April 2021)*

While they can appeal against a negative outcome, assistance can be stopped after a negative first decision, leaving them in potentially vulnerable situations, as reported by one rejected asylum seeker:

*"They gave a letter saying your RSD was declined, you have 15 days to reapply...then I reapplied... and when I reapply, they stopped everything...if my result is negative then I'm on myself, they stopped everything even they don't pick up the phone, they don't reply my emails...I sent 15 emails, I'm still waiting for my answer."*

*(Rejected Asylum Seeker, Tunis – April 2021)*

In absence of a holistic response that entails support for those who are rejected through the RSD process, this negative unintended effect is inevitable and represent and impact-hindering factor to the whole intervention. While the lack of durable solutions for rejected asylum seekers is clearly not attributable to the RDPP NA, interventions should be designed and implemented factoring these systemic challenges in and planned to mitigate any potential unintended negative effects.

g. Internal: missed follow-up on resettled refugees.

Another factor that has a potential hindering effect on the impact of resettlement interventions, is that there is no follow-up on resettled refugees. This is completely delegated to the receiving country as acknowledged by all key informants:

*"It is entirely up to the receiving country, and it is a bit sad we are not follow-up...I cannot really answer whether UNCHR Norway or Canada would do any follow-up, I don't think so."*

*(UNHCR Libya Key Informant 2, Tripoli – March 2021)*

While the legal sovereign entity - the recipient state - bears the primary responsibility on resettled refugees, it would be positive to monitor and follow-up on arrival and integration. The post-resettlement monitoring would allow evaluating the operation and drawing lessons from all experiences of previous resettled refugees from the same country of first asylum. Moreover, in terms of advocacy and communication, this is also a missed opportunity for resettlement operations to document the impact of their work.

h. Internal: waiting time from submission to departure.

According to key informants in Libya, the average waiting time from submission to resettlement departure is six months. While this timeframe is relatively short as it can take up to four years in other operations, it can also hamper the positive impact of resettlement. Cases selected as eligible for resettlement are usually in a critical situation. In some cases, a waiting period of several months has had detrimental consequences. One such an example is reported in the words of one UNHCR key informant:

*"Usually we try, try, and try, it just takes time, and we hope cases don't die in the time being. We had a baby who had serious illness at birth either late 2020 or early 2021, he was identified immediately but he could not depart, and he died in September."*

*(UNHCR Libya Key Informant 3, Tripoli – March 2021)*

#### 4.2.6. Scenario without intervention

In Tunisia, the RDPP NA supported essential staffing to carry out Refugee Status Determination processes. Had these people not been recruited, the most likely scenario is a worsening of backlogs and waiting time as outlined by UNHCR key informants:

*"if we did not manage to really have the RDPP, it would have been extremely negative for the operation because there was no way we could secure this funding... we have funding from other donors, but their interest is also different, some of them are funding shelter projects, others the capacity building prospects. But we didn't really not have any support for the RSD. So, without the RDPP, which I really count a lot on to continue, the capacity would have been almost equal zero."*

*(UNHCR Tunisia Key Informant 2, Tunis – March 2021)*

Given that already there were about 1,600 people waiting to be processed (almost 50% of UNHCR registered population), it is easy to see how remarkably higher the number of pending cases would have been in absence of the RDPP-funded intervention.

*"The process takes a long time...in my case it took 1.5 years....and the result was zero...if they give me answer in one month later, I'd look for another option...even there is a lot people they are waiting for one year...then one year for the card... if they are rejected, they will die here. The problem was the waste of time, they have to make it earlier, time is valuable."*

*(Rejected Asylum Seeker, Tunis – April 2021)*

A higher number of pending cases would have translated into a lower number of persons of concern being able to enjoy their right to stay, and to access protection as well as any form of economic assistance. Consequently, the number of those considering alternative options, such as irregular migration via Libya, would have increased.

Without the RDPP NA intervention security would have also been an issue. The capacity to process more cases reduced the tension in the shelters, where applicants are hosted, and mitigated problems of overcrowding. A likely consequence in the absence of the RDPP NA would have been an increase of security incidents related to applicants' frustration for not having their asylum claims processed. This could have posed a serious threat to stability in Southern Tunisia, which was already suffering from instability because of the economic and employment situation<sup>50</sup>. A member of Tunisian parliament describes this scenario as a "catastrophic humanitarian situation":

<sup>50</sup> See, for instance: Matta, S., Appleton, S., & Bleaney, M. (2018). The microeconomic impact of political instability: Firm-level evidence from Tunisia. *Review of Development Economics*, 22 (4), 1590-1619.

*"Their presence is very important and crucial, and without them it would be a catastrophic humanitarian situation...they are filling all the gaps although they are not alone as there are many CSOs working on providing assistance to migrants and refugees...but without them probably the situation would be unbearable for Tunisia."*

*(Member of Parliament Key Informant, Tunis – March 2021)*

Similarly in Libya, the most likely scenario is that UNHCR would have not been able to fulfill the resettlement quota because of insufficient staffing capacity. On the one hand, this would have a negative impact on the eligible refugees that would have not benefitted from this durable solution option. On the other hand, it would have had detrimental consequences on following years as resettlement countries would have reduced their quota allocations to Libya given the inability to reach committed resettlements in 2019.

The absence of the RDPP NA funding would have also impacted on the quality of the process. Reducing the number of case workers would have reduced the quality of the information, implying that communication with refugees would have been fragmented thus further extending the duration of the process. As a result, a higher number of refugees would have opted for alternative options, including irregular migration.

*"I can tell you of several people that they had to wait for so long that they decided to go by sea, and whether they made it or not I cannot tell you."*

*(UNHCR Libya Key Informant 3, Tripoli – March 2021)*

#### 4.2.7. Recommendations

Based on the findings outlined above and related discussion in previous sections of the report, a list of recommendations has been formulated with specific reference to the component of RDPP NA that includes all activities aiming at supporting target countries with mixed-migration flows management (such as RSD, RST and AVRR).

4.2.a Indicators commonly used across countries should have standardized definition and measurement. For instance, "RSD processed case" should be clearly and consistently defined. At present, it is not entirely clear how a "processed case" is defined and measured. Similarly, RRFs should not be the only indicator to measure output for resettlement operation. To increase transparency, it is also recommended that the measuring of indicators is clearly spelled out and figures mentioned in RDPP NA reports should match figures provided via publicly accessible datasets. For instance, RDPP NA reports indicate that 842 individuals have been resettled from Libya in 2019, while UNHCR's resettlement data finder ([rsq.unhcr.org](http://rsq.unhcr.org)) reports 515 persons departed from Libya in the same year.

4.2.b When funding resettlement operations, Members States and EU donors should consider projected needs when setting their quotas. As highlighted in the report, a hindering factor to the potential impact of the RDPP NA is that the number of available resettlements is limited. Financial allocations to RST interventions should be coupled with adequate allocations of quotas to respond to identified resettlement needs in targeted countries.

- 4.2.c RDPP NA actors should plan a holistic response that allows providing protection and assistance throughout the RSD process. RDPP NA actors (namely UNHCR) should aim at providing as comprehensive as possible assistance to asylum seekers and refugees in targeted countries from registration to economic self-reliance. Implementing partners and donors should consider that concentrating RDPP NA funding on fewer countries but for a wider range of activities could maximise the impact of their interventions. For instance, this could ensure that refugees in Tunisia can receive adequate socio-economic support after a positive RSD outcome.
- 4.2.d While accounting for respective mandates, RDPP NA actors (namely IOM and UNHCR) should ensure that persons of concern are assisted throughout the spectrum of potential outcomes of RSD processes. The RDPP NA should offer a holistic response that assist and protect vulnerable migrants as they fall out of UNHCR concern in case of negative outcomes to their asylum claims. RDPP-funded interventions should be coordinated to mitigate potential unintended negative effects as rejected asylum seekers transition out of UNHCR concern.
- 4.2.e RDPP NA donors and involved Member States should pressure for and contribute to obtaining established partnerships with targeted countries for the management of exit processes. This should include the ruling of exit visas and overstay penalties that would facilitate both resettlement and assisted return operations.
- 4.2.f As much as possible, RDPP NA actions should aim at including migrants and refugees in national systems in targeted countries. For instance, this means supporting the education of persons of concern through existing public schools. Creating/supporting alternative systems of services to fulfil fundamental gaps in hosting countries should remain a short-term temporary solution. Any further assistance to targeted countries should be made conditional to the formulation of credible plans that allow handing over key activities that are currently under the full responsibility of RDPP NA implementing partners.
- 4.2.g The coordination of RDPP NA actions with other EU interventions and broader development programmes in targeted countries should be enhanced. RDPP NA actors should contribute to “country-based” approaches, rather than project or programme-based responses. At the very least, formal consultation and feedback mechanisms should be put in place with EU delegations in targeted countries.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The RDPP NA, through its Protection Pillar, aims at strengthening third countries' institutional capacity to provide adequate reception, access to international protection and durable solutions for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. This study investigated the extent to which implemented interventions in Phase I to III (July 2016 to December 2019) contributed to achieve the expected impact.

The key finding is that completed projects, by achieving specific objectives, brought several improvements in targeted countries. The capacity building component contributed to improve coordination and assistance to disembarked individuals in Libya. To some extent, it also improved acceptance of international organizations and humanitarian agencies that, for instance, have been granted greater access to disembarkation points. In Egypt, the action has contributed to increase awareness of refugees' issues and recognition of UNHCR-issued cards. In turn, the enhanced recognition of refugees' documents has led to greater freedom of movement and decreasing instances of arbitrary arrests.

The RDPP NA component that focused on providing direct support to mixed-migration flows management (including RSD, RST and AVRR) has contributed to increasing access to assistance, protection and, to some extent, to durable solutions in Tunisia. In Libya, through the support to resettlement operations, RDPP NA funds have contributed to provide life-changing opportunities to resettled refugees that have been enabled to move to a safe third country.

Nonetheless, despite documented improvements, several hindering factors have limited the contribution of considered interventions to the overall action's objective. The action's impact was to be measured against its contribution towards strengthening targeted countries' capacity to provide adequate reception, protection and durable solutions for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. This contribution has been found to be modest. The hindering factors are mostly related to the operational environment and context in targeted countries. Although they are not under the direct control of the programme and implementing partners, they should be accounted for when designing interventions to enhance the potential (future) impact of the action.

Based on the main findings discussed in previous sections as well as identified hindering factors, several key recommendations have been formulated. Some recommendations were specific to project design and related logical framework, and they have been outlined in Section 3.2. Other recommendations were specific to the capacity building component, and they have been outlined in Section 4.1.7. A third list of recommendations were specific to activities aimed at providing direct support to mixed-migration flows management and they are outlined in Section 4.2.7.

This concluding section provides a condensed summary of the main recommendations that should be considered by RDPP NA donors and implementing partners not to dissipate the potential impact of the action:

## Operational Recommendations

1. **FORMULATE A CLEAR THEORY OF CHANGE.** The action should formulate a clear *Theory of Change* that spells out what changes are expected because of implemented activities. This would enable an effective impact evaluation of the programme. Implementing partners should outline how achieving specific objectives contributes to obtaining the intended impact. They should also explicitly state what are the logical steps that lead from outputs to outcomes and from outcomes to impact. Clear indicators should be provided at each level of the logical chain.
2. **FACTOR CONTEXTUAL CHALLENGES INTO PROGRAMME DESIGN AND ADOPT MITIGATION STRATEGIES.** RDPP NA actors should have mitigation strategies to minimize potential negative unintended effects. For instance, RDPP NA actors should plan a holistic action that reduces the risk of placing sectors of the migrant population outside of protection services and durable solutions as they transition out of UNHCR's mandate. As much as possible within existing Coordination Fora and distinctive mandates of each agency, RDPP NA actors should coordinate the design and implementation of Work Packages (i.e., projects) that minimize any potential vacuum of assistance on the ground.
3. **ATTACH CONDITIONALITY TO FUTURE ASSISTANCE.** Any further support to third countries' entities with documented record of sub-standard performances at respecting human rights and international protection standards should be made conditional to a demonstrable improvement in compliance. Similarly, additional funding should be made conditional to a realistic commitment by recipient countries to take responsibilities for key tasks (such as RSD) that are currently under full responsibility of RDPP NA implementing partners. Whenever possible, while strengthening the capacity of third countries to provide adequate reception, access to international protection and durable solutions, related activities should not be entirely delegated to actors that are not yet equipped to guarantee the respect of internationally recognized minimum standards. For instance, SAR operations in Libya should not be entirely delegated to the Libyan Coast Guard (LCG) given the documented record of abuses.

## Strategical Recommendations

4. **EMBED INTERVENTIONS IN LONGER TERM PLANS AND STRATEGY.** RDPP NA funded capacity building and support to third countries' entities and institutions should be included into a broader strategy that goes beyond the life cycle of one phase of the programme. Similarly, credible plans should be formulated to allow handing over of key activities (such as registration and refugee status determination) to targeted governments. Implementing partners should clearly demonstrate how proposed interventions fit within, and contribute to, these longer-term plans. DG Home and RDPP NA actors should consider that in absence of such plans the impact of similar interventions is likely to remain limited. Creating/supporting alternative systems of services provision should remain a short-term temporary solution to fulfil fundamental gaps in hosting countries.

5. **REDUCE FRAGMENTATION OF FUNDING AND ENHANCE COORDINATION.** RDPP NA donors and implementing partners should consider that the current fragmentation of funding is hindering the potential impact of funded interventions. A more efficient solution could be reducing the number of countries funded under the RDPP NA including a wider range of activities that would ensure a more adequate response to the needs in targeted countries. For instance, this could better allow RDPP NA actors to plan a holistic response that provides protection and assistance throughout the RSD process, including to those with negative outcomes. Further, coordination of RDPP NA actions with other EU interventions and broader development programmes in targeted countries should be enhanced. RDPP NA actors should contribute to “country-based” approaches, rather than project or programme-based responses.

## ANNEX 1 – Classifying Success Cases

Phase/ AWP	Country	Partner	1.1 Training/ capacity building	SUCCESS	RATIONALE	1.2 Support flows mgmt processes	SUCCESS	RATIONALE
2015	Egypt	UNHCR		M	Overachieved 813/200 of trainees but no targets are set for two other indicators.	X	M	Contradicting figures on RSD from 29,755 to 26,570. No info on time lapses.
2015	Libya	IOM	X	H	3/3 trainings and 3/3 meetings achieved. Additional capacity building completed as per final report.	X	M	Rehabilitation of 3/3 DP and 3/5 DC.
2015	Libya	UNHCR	X	M	All training indicators achieved or overachieved, but SOPs remain pending.			
2015	Niger	UNHCR	X	H	Higher number of trainees achieved. 55 initiatives achieved but missing target.	X	L	Lower cases of processed RSD.
2015	Tunisia	IOM	X	M	6/4 reports achieved. Other indicators missing.	X	H	AVRR achieved 210/200.
2016	Algeria	IOM				X	M	Achieved on AVRR but not on reintegration packages and SOPs.
2016	Algeria	UNHCR	X	L	Underachieved 38/60 and 30/150 training participants.			
2016	Egypt	IOM	X	H	More “community outreachers” trained, but limited component.	X	M	Overachieved on returns, but not implemented activities on Sudan.
2016	Egypt	UNHCR				X	M	Registration achieved; waiting period depends on nationality.
2016	Egypt	STC	X	H	Overachieved training targets.			

2016	Libya	UNHCR	X	H	Overachieved both training indicators.	X	M	Overachieved RST but underachieved Voluntary Repatriation.
Phase	Country	Partner	1.1 Training/ capacity building	SUCCESS	RATIONALE	1.2 Support flows mgmt processes	SUCCESS	RATIONALE
2017	Egypt	STC						
2017	Egypt	UNHCR	X	H	Overachieved 386/200 trainees.	X	M	Overachieved RSD target but not achieved on waiting period.
2017	Libya	IOM	X	L	Mostly delayed because of COVID.	X	L	Mostly delayed because of COVID.
2017	Libya	UNHCR				X	H	Overachieved 337/233 RRFs.
2017	Niger	UNHCR	X	M	Mixed output results.			
2017	Niger	UNICEF	X	M	8/8 trained, 91/100 referred, 23/300 trained on data.	X	M	331/264 UAM assisted; 312/358 reunifications.
2017	Tunisia	IOM	X	L	Underachieved 0/2, 0/2 and 1/3 seminars. 1/2 workshop on data collection.	X	L	Underachieved 26/100 AVRR.
2017	Tunisia	UNHCR	X	L	Underachieved 12/20, 0/1, 12/20.	X	H	Overachieved 404/100 processed RSD.

*Notes: each Work-Package has been assigned to a category: L = low success; M = medium success; H = high success. This categorization is based on the outputs delivered against related indicator as per grant documents. It did not take into account the reasons for underachievement, and it should not be intended as an evaluation of each work-package.*

## ANNEX 2 – List of key informant interviews

<b>Date</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Target Country</b>	<b>Component</b>
March 1, 2021	IOM Libya	Libya	Capacity Building
March 8, 2021	UNHCR Tunisia	Tunisia	Direct Support to flows mgmt
March 8, 2021	UNHCR Tunisia	Tunisia	Direct Support to flows mgmt
March 8, 2021	Parliament	Tunisia	Direct Support to flows mgmt
March 9, 2021	UNHCR Tunisia	Tunisia	Direct Support to flows mgmt
March 10, 2021	UNHCR Egypt	Egypt	Capacity Building
March 10, 2021	UNHCR Egypt	Egypt	Capacity Building
March 12, 2021	Rejected Asylum Seeker (Bangladesh)	Tunisia	Direct Support to flows mgmt
March 15, 2021	UNHCR Egypt	Egypt	Capacity Building
March 15, 2021	UNHCR Libya	Libya	Direct Support to flows mgmt
March 16, 2021	Refugee (South Sudan)	Egypt	Capacity Building
March 17, 2021	IOM Libya	Libya	Capacity Building
March 17, 2021	UNHCR Libya	Libya	Direct Support to flows mgmt
March 17, 2021	UNHCR Libya	Libya	Direct Support to flows mgmt
March 18, 2021	Refugee (Sudan)	Egypt	Capacity Building
March 25, 2021	Refugee (Sudan)	Tunisia	Direct Support to flows mgmt
March 25, 2021	Asylum Department of the Norwegian Immigration Services (UDI)	Libya	Direct Support to flows mgmt
March 28, 2021	Libyan Coast Guard (LCG)	Libya	Capacity Building
March 28, 2021	Department for Combatting Illegal Migration (DCIM)	Libya	Capacity Building
March 29, 2021	Ministry of Social Affairs	Tunisia	Direct Support to flows mgmt
March 30, 2021	EU delegation to Libya	Libya	Country Expert
April 1, 2021	EU delegation to Tunisia	Tunisia	Country Expert
April 14, 2021	UNHCR Algeria	Algeria	Capacity Building
April 20, 2021	EU delegation to Egypt	Egypt	Country Expert
April 21, 2021	American University in Cairo	Egypt	Country Expert
April 21, 2021	UNHCR Algeria	Algeria	Capacity Building
April 22, 2021	Canadian Embassy to France	Libya	Direct Support to flows mgmt
April 22, 2021	IOM Tunisia	Tunisia	Direct Support to flows mgmt
April 26, 2021	American University in Cairo	Egypt	Country Expert
April 27, 2021	Libyan Red Crescent (LRCS)	Libya	Country Expert
April 29, 2021	American University in Cairo	Egypt	Country Expert
May 4, 2021	ASGI	Libya	Country Expert
May 4, 2021	Terre d'Asile	Tunisia	Country Expert
May 6, 2021	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Egypt	Capacity Building
May 7, 2021	Amnesty International	Libya	Country Expert
May 7, 2021	IOM Tunisia	Tunisia	Direct Support to flows mgmt
May 25, 2021	Resettled refugee (Iraq)	Libya	Direct Support to flows mgmt
May 25, 2021	Resettled refugee (Syria)	Libya	Direct Support to flows mgmt
June 24, 2021	MSU representative	Italy	
June 24, 2021	UNICEF	Niger	
June 25, 2021	MSU representative	Italy	

### ANNEX 3 – List of secondary sources

Title	Reference	Type	Main Focus
RDPP NA Grant Agreement 2015		Grant Document	RDPP NA
RDPP NA GA Amendment 2015		Grant Document	
RDPP NA Final Report 2015		Grant Document	
RDPP NA Grant Agreement 2016		Grant Document	
RDPP NA Carillon Notification 2016		Grant Document	
RDPP NA Final Narrative Report 2016		Grant Document	
RDPP NA Grant Agreement 2017		Grant Document	
RDPP NA Amendment 2017		Grant Document	
RDPP NA Mid-term Report 2017		Grant Document	
AWP 2015 Indicator Monitoring Tool (draft)		Management Tool	
AWP 2016 Indicator Monitoring Tool (draft)		Management Tool	
AWP 2017 Indicator Monitoring Tool		Management Tool	
Domain analysis for qualitative public health data.	Atkinson, S., & HAP, M. A. E. (1996).	Scientific article/book	
The success case method: find out quickly what's working and what's not.	Brinkerhoff, R. O. (2003).	Scientific article/book	
Adding a time-series design element to the success case method to improve methodological rigor: An application for non-profit program evaluation.	Coryn, C. L., Schröter, D. C., & Hanssen, C. E. (2009).	Scientific article/book	
Qualitative methods for health research.	Green, J., & Thorogood, N. (2018).	Scientific article/book	
Handbook on impact evaluation: quantitative methods and practices.	Khandker, S., B. Koolwal, G., & Samad, H. (2009).	Scientific article/book	
A summative evaluation of RCT methodology: an alternative approach to causal research.	Scriven, M. (2008).	Scientific article/book	
Post-deportation risks for failed asylum seekers.	Alpes, J., Blondel, C., Preiss, N., & Monras, M. S. (2017).	Scientific article/book	Egypt
Surviving in Cairo as a closed-file refugee: socio-economic and protection challenges.	Aziz, N. A. (2017).	Report	
Out of sight out of rights: Rejected asylum seekers and closed-files individuals in Egypt.	Abdel Aziz, N. A. (2018).	Scientific article/book	
Perceptions of Iraqi Refugee Integration in Egypt and Jordan: A Secondary Analysis.	Büyüm, A. M. (2021).	Scientific article/book	

Non-governmental/civil society organisations and the European Union-externalisation of migration management in Tunisia and Egypt.	Cuttitta, P. (2020).	Scientific article/book	
Hosting guests, creating citizens: Models of refugee administration in Jordan and Egypt.	Davis, R., Benton, G., Todman, W., & Murphy, E. (2017).	Scientific article/book	
Measuring the Self-Reliance of Refugees.	Leeson, K., Bhandari, P. B., Myers, A., & Buscher, D. (2020).	Scientific article/book	
Investigating self-settled Syrian refugees' agency and informality in southern cities greater Cairo: a case study.	Montaser, M.S. (2020).	Scientific article/book	
Migrant and refugee mobilisation in North African host states: Egypt and Morocco in comparison.	Norman, K. P. (2020).	Scientific article/book	
Urbanization, informal governance, and refugee integration in Egypt.	Norman, K. P. (2021).	Scientific article/book	
Refugees in Egypt: practices and prospective law.	Sharafeldin, N. (2020).	Scientific article/book	
Refugee Entitlements in Egypt.	The Center for Migration and Refugee Studies (CMRS) (2020)	Report	Libya
Captivity, Migration, and Power in Libya.	Al-Dayel, N., Anfinson, A., & Anfinson, G. (2021).	Scientific article/book	
Europe watches as a shipwreck takes place off the coast of Libya.	Alarm Phone (2021)	Report	
La Libia scarcerata Bija, uno tra i trafficanti di uomini più pericolosi e feroci.	Albanese, F. (2021).	Newspaper article	
Search and rescue, disembarkation, and relocation arrangements in the Mediterranean. Sailing Away from Responsibility?	Carrera, S., & Cortinovis, R. (2019).	Working Paper	
Letter to Prime Minister of Italy, Strasbourg, 31 January 2019.	Commissioner for Human Rights, Council of Europe (2019).	Report	
Letter to Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy, Strasbourg, 13 February 2020.	Commissioner for Human Rights, Council of Europe (2020)	Report	
Deported before experiencing the good sides of migration: Ethiopians returning from Saudi Arabia.	De Regt, M., & Tafesse, M. (2016).	Scientific article/book	
No escape from hell: EU policies contribute to abuse of migrants in Libya.	Human Rights Watch (2019).	Report	
IOM Statement: Protecting Migrants in Libya Must be Our Primary Focus, 4 February 2019.	IOM (2019).	Report	
The Libya INGO Forum calls for closure of detention centres and the adoption of principled migration policies as they revise their assistance	Norwegian Refugee Council (2019).	Report	

in these centres.				
Desperate and Dangerous: Report on the Human Rights Situation of Migrants and Refugees in Libya, 20 December 2018.	OHCHR and UNSMIL (2018).	Report		
Libya: Multi-Sector Needs Assessment. Migrants and Refugees.	REACH (2020).	Report		
«Torturatori di Stato». Il giudice: Libia, abusi nelle prigioni ufficiali.	Scavo, N. (2020).	Newspaper article		
So-called Libyan Coast Guard attacks people in distress, 30.04.21.	Sea-Watch (2021).	Report		
Nearly there, but never further away.	Tinti P. (2017).	Report		
Messina, condannati per tortura a 20 anni tre carcerieri del lager libico. «Sentenza storica».	Toscano, S. (2020).	Newspaper article		
<a href="#">ABD AL RAHMAN AL-MILAD.</a>	United Nations Security Council (2018).	Report		
2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Eritrea.	U.S. Department of State (2020).	Report		
Libya: War and migration strain a broken health system.	Zarocostas, J. (2018).	Scientific article/book		
Tunisia's role in the EU external migration policy: crimmigration law, illegal practices, and their impact on human rights.	Badalič, V. (2019).	Scientific article/book		
Migration and employment interactions in a crisis context: The case of Tunisia.	David, A. M., & Marouani, M. A. (2015).	Scientific article/book		
Tunisie, des migrants subsahariens toujours exclus du rêve démocratique.	Geisser, V. (2019).	Scientific article/book	Tunisia	
Tunisia, country of destination and transit for sub-Saharan African migrants.	Mercy Corps-REACH (2018).	Report		
Youth and mixed migration project.	UNFPA (2017).	Report		
Tunisia: Possibilities for reform and implementation of migrant reception and protection. Country Report.	Veron, P. (2020).	Report		
Unemployment, youth total (% of total labor force ages 15-24) (modeled ILO estimate).	World Bank (2021).	Dataset		
Refugees, migrants, neither, both: categorical fetishism and the politics of bounding in Europe's 'migration crisis'.	Crawley, H., & Skleparis, D. (2018).	Scientific article/book		
Crossing: How We Label and React to People on the Move.	Hamlin, R. (2021).	Scientific article/book	Europe	
Desperate Journeys. Refugees and migrants arriving in Europe and at Europe's borders, January-December 2018.	UNHCR (2019).	Report		
Refugee Population Statistics Database.	UNHCR (2021).	Datasets	Registration and RSD	
Monthly detection of illegal border crossings.	Frontex (2020).	Datasets	Irregular Migration	
Projected Global Resettlement Needs 2019.	UNHCR (2020).	Report		
Resettlement Data Finder.	UNHCR (2021).	Datasets	Resettlement	

