



Rabat Process
Euro-African Dialogue
on Migration and Development



JOINT VALLETTA ACTION PLAN
2017 SENIOR OFFICIALS' MEETING



Analysis Report of the Rabat Process in preparation for the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) of 8th and 9th February 2017

The partners of the Rabat Process agree that progress has been achieved since the Valletta Summit on Migration in November 2015. The Joint Valletta Action Plan (JVAP), which is built around 5 priority domains, forms a coherent policy, the practical implementation of which should allow us to respond effectively to the challenges of migration and mobility.

The partners of the Rabat Process reiterate their adherence to the Valletta principles of solidarity, partnership and shared responsibility. The partners reiterate their commitment and agree to “*respond decisively and together manage migration flows in all their aspects*”. They defend this “*common cause in full respect for human rights and the sovereignty of participating states, taking into account national legislations and specificities.*”

Whilst wishing to broaden the scope of action of the Rabat Process in order to better respond to the new challenges and objectives laid down by the evolving political framework on migration, the partners of the Rabat Process also emphasise their desire to maintain the identity¹, the autonomy and the remit of the Process as a unique regional dialogue. The latter is characterised by a comprehensive approach and a level of trust which is constantly renewed, thereby enable the exchange of constructive discussions in a spirit of partnership.

Efforts and progress achieved at multilateral, bilateral and national level have focused mainly on the implementation of the sixteen priority initiatives for 2016 identified in the JVAP². Key measures have been taken at operational and legislative level. As a reminder, only one recommendation relating to legislation was made for 2016 in the JVAP: “*establish or upgrade national and regional anti-smuggling and anti-trafficking legislation, policies and action plans in countries and regions of origin and transit of migration.*” These results are the fruit of joint efforts of all partners and above all strong mobilisation of the dialogue and governance mechanisms of the Rabat Process and other processes. More specifically, they result from active communication among the partners of the

¹ The Rabat Process is based on the five following principles: a working dialogue, a flexible and balanced approach, a coherent dialogue, committed partners and shared responsibility

² For more detailed information please refer to summary document entitled: “*Draft Analysis of Mapping of the Implementation of the Joint Valletta Action Plan (JVAP)*”

Rabat Process which enabled better monitoring of the JVAP and the drafting of an analysis report in preparation for the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) on 8th and 9th February 2017 in Malta.

Moreover, the partners of the Rabat Process wish to reiterate the mandate which was given to regional dialogues to monitor the JVAP for the period 2016- 2018. The partners emphasise the suitability of the Process as an exchange platform which has demonstrated its capacity to carry out wide-reaching consultations and to create and maintain dynamic dialogue on migration, mobility and development issues over the past ten years.

The current analysis report offers, firstly, a state of play regarding the initiatives, policy and legislation work undertaken by the Rabat Process partners per domain so far. Secondly, it provides an overview of the use of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF). Finally, the Rabat Process partners put forward recommendations to be shared all of the partners of the Valletta Summit at the SOM on the 8th and 9th February 2017 in Malta.

It should be noted that this document is intended to be read together with the “*Draft Analysis of Mapping of the Implementation of the Joint Valletta Action Plan (JVAP)*” which provides a summary of the initiatives undertaken per domain.

The report is divided into three parts:

1. An analysis of progress achieved within the five priority domains and recommendations related to the implementation of priority actions;
2. An overview of use of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) for the Sahel and Lake Chad and North Africa Window;
3. General recommendations in preparation for the SOM on 8th-9th February 2017. Part of these recommendations will focus on the evolution of the Rabat Process and the role to be played by the latter in the new EU-Africa policy framework on migration and mobility.

1. Analysis of the progress in the five priority domains and recommendations regarding the implementation of the priority initiatives

A summary of the initiatives carried out within each domain exists in the document entitled “*Draft Analysis of Mapping of the Implementation of the Joint Valletta Action Plan*”. Beyond this document, the analysis below– which is specific to the Rabat Process –briefly underlines the main achievements and the gaps and priorities identified as a result of the mapping exercises. The analysis is based primarily on the experience of the Rabat Process and the various meetings carried out therein.

Domain 1: Development benefits of migration and addressing root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement

Given the multidimensional nature of the objectives envisaged in Domain 1 and the link to development issues, this domain is the most important in terms of funding (73 % of the total budget

allocated to the JVAP for the Rabat Process region) and number of initiatives identified in the JVAP. As a result, it has retained particular interest among the Rabat Process partners.

Projects under the EUTF's Sahel / Lake Chad window have mainly focused on supporting populations and creating economic and employment opportunities in regions with a high migration potential as part of a comprehensive approach for stability, security and resilience. The partners of the Rabat Process applaud the fact that the EUTF is tackling links between security and development in areas which are particularly affected by security problems, transit, migrant-smuggling and human trafficking. They encourage the EUTF to expand this approach to all such areas in the region. These projects – particularly those aimed at developing the local economy and strengthening local authorities by improving stability in post-conflict areas – thereby improve the link between humanitarian relief and development. The EUTF projects under the North Africa Window focused on improving governance through the strengthening of policies and training.

Numerous bilateral initiatives have sought to better understand the triggers of conflict and instability, to support local actors' efforts for reconciliation and peace building, and to provide multisectoral humanitarian aid (from emergency through to rehabilitation and development) in some of the most vulnerable peripheral zones. Other relevant initiatives offered technical support to local farmers organisations in order to increase productivity, improve management of natural resources, thereby leading to better food security in the region involved. In North Africa, several programmes included the question of civil and human rights.

African partners also continue to carry out development programmes using national budgets and other funding mechanisms. These are mainly based on National Development Plans, and aim to develop agro-industrial projects, create jobs for youth in agricultural or industrial businesses, promote the agri-food sector (national agricultural policies or policies to promote investment), increase the commitment of the diaspora to national development and promote remittances (national policies on diaspora engagement) or to strengthen national and local policies relating to migration (national migration policies and strategies).

Specific recommendations

In order to provide a long-term response to the root causes of migration, and particularly to reinforce the link between emergency aid and development, the partners of the Rabat Process recommend **making full use of the available financial instruments**, particularly the future European External Investment Plan (EEIP) for the creation of economic opportunities (investment and employment) and the range of existing instruments to support public policy, particularly with regards to maternal and reproductive health, food security, nutrition, access to clean water and basic infrastructure, economic development and stability. This integration of the JVAP within the range of financial instruments will ensure the responses outlined in the EUTF continue to be implemented, and that other types of actions mentioned in the JVAP, such as to “*encourage triangular cooperation between Sub-Saharan countries, Southern Mediterranean countries and European ones*”, can be pursued.

In addition, it is necessary to reinforce **the promotion of civil rights and human rights**. Actions for prevention, actions designed to raise-awareness, to provide information on racism or xenophobia, or those with a rights-based approach and a gender-mainstreaming dimension are applauded by the Rabat Process partners.

Finally, it is important to recall that one of the main objectives of the JVAP was to “*address environmental and climate change issues in the most affected regions*”. Despite the existence of programmes to strengthen the resilience of populations to respond to environmental phenomena or to reduce the impact of climate change, **it is necessary to speed up the implementation of initiatives in this field**. The partners of the Rabat Process, guided by their own strategic framework (Rome Declaration and Programme 2014-2017) underline that it is importance to take the consequences of environment degradation and climate change into account.

Domain 2: Legal migration and mobility

The promotion of means and channels of legal migration and mobility which promote economic, human and social development of countries of origin and destination has always been at the heart of the Rabat Process. This choice is reflected in the first pillar of the Rabat Process “Organising mobility and legal migration”. The partners have underlined on several occasions the importance of measures to promote safe and legal migration. These could strengthen regional integration and free movement (including intra-African), promote professional mobility and policies regarding employment and vocational training or focus on the portability of social rights of irregular migrants. Safe and legal migration also contributes to the fight against irregular migration and to reduced vulnerability to human trafficking and migrant smuggling. Finally, the partners underline the importance of promoting legal migration and its contribution to economic and social growth in countries of origin and host countries, and recommend new pathways for legal migration.

In this domain, the EUTF (Sahel / Lake Chad and North African windows) has supported the drafting and introduction of legislation and practice on labour migration through, for example, the provision of information on labour possibilities to migrants, the portability of protection and social rights of regular migrants, the simplification of recruitment mechanisms, the implementation of integration strategies for migrants in host country societies as well as measures to combat labour exploitation.

In terms of bilateral cooperation, initiatives have focused on efforts to promote mobility of students, particularly through the European Union’s ERASMUS+ programme, of young professionals and researchers (through the allocation of scholarships and possibilities for internships). Other European instruments have facilitated the mobility of young students coming from North Africa.

In particular, the ERASMUS+ programme has shown obvious potential for increasing the number of opportunities for mobility (« *mobilities* ») in North and Sub-Saharan Africa. The Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions (MSCA) offer funding for researcher exchanges. Since the Valletta Summit, the number of African researchers and organisations applying to MSCA has increased

(25% increase in applications from organisations and 40% increase in researchers). This is a positive indicator, more but awareness-raising could help to further increase participation levels.

Progress achieved by African partners in terms of legislation and policy have focused mainly on the social rights and treatment of migrant works. At European level, regularly measures have been taken, primarily to facilitate the entry of students and researchers and for highly-skilled workers (simplifying and speeding up the qualification and acquisition of the European Blue Card).

Specific Recommendations

The Rabat Process partners recognise that substantial efforts are still to be made and call for the **strengthening of the implementation of initiatives in this priority domain.**

They underline the **importance of legal migration and its contribution to economic and social growth** in countries of origin and host countries, and recommend exploring new ways to promote this.

The partners request that **vocational training for young people in countries of origin and destination are accorded particular attention.**

In particular, the partners of the Rabat Process wish to see significant progress regarding the **facilitation of the issuance of short-stay visas.** The partners encourage visa facilitation in a general manner, as well intensified efforts as part of an approach which strikes a balance between the need for facilitation and security.

Moreover, the partners are pleased to note the opening of negotiations on visa facilitation agreements with certain countries within the Rabat Process and wish to reiterate the commitment made in Valletta to *“engage, in a spirit of partnership, in the creation of positive synergies between negotiations on visa facilitation and discussions in other areas such as readmission...”*

Finally, the EU-Africa dialogue but also the intra-Africa dialogue must be stepped-up and work towards strengthening of a climate of cooperation and confidence, so as to promote exchanges and cooperation between regions and countries with regards to visa facilitation.

Domain 3 Protection and asylum

In keeping with the Valletta Declaration which stipulates among other things, that *“protection must be granted to all those entitled to it in accordance with international and regional instruments. Access to regular mechanisms for protection, such as resettlement, should be reinforced”*, the partners of the Rabat Process confirm once again the need to strengthen international protection and to step-up assistance, including humanitarian assistance.

In terms of legislation and policy, efforts to develop operational plans and strategies for people in vulnerable situations as a result of conflict or crisis are encouraged³. These have helped to ensure a balanced and adequate response to populations in need (refugees, internally displaced people and host communities) and have included measures such as cost-sharing agreements between host-countries and international organisation to cover refugees' medical fees. The partners of the Rabat Process also applaud the strengthening of provisions relating to fundamental rights such as the right to asylum, in national legislation systems.

At the programmatic level, the rapid and determined responses, jointly carried out by European and African partners in order to prevent the loss of human life at sea, are deemed to be essential by the partners of the Rabat Process. The partners encourage the pursuit of these efforts, which must continue to take into account the humanitarian nature of operations at sea, such as the obligation to rescue others and to disembark in safe places; the referral of persons in vulnerable situations and the principle of *non-réfoulement* in conformity with international conventions. Moreover, the Rabat Process partners wish to see the continued inclusion in the JVAP of operations to prevent the loss of human life along migratory routes.

Humanitarian aid continues to be provided by the European Union to refugees, to internally displaced people and to local communities in situations of crisis. This ensures that humanitarian and basic protection needs are met, and helps to reinforce the resilience, security and autonomy of both refugees and host communities.

The wide-reaching Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP) carried out in North Africa is an example of good practice as it uses an integrated, inclusive and development-based approach to respond to forced displacement and as such contributes to the establishment of migrant-friendly services, fostering social cohesion and employment opportunities at community level and enhancing advocacy, research and knowledge-sharing.

Specific recommendations

There is still work to be done. Current capacity-building activities and EUTF initiatives focus primarily on zones affected by instability and zones of transit and asylum, and which effectively meet the needs of vulnerable people (women in danger, unaccompanied minors, victims of violence or trafficking, etc.). Complementary action should also lead to **strengthening of public institutions, migration strategies and policies in order to improve the management of mixed migration flows and to ensure better protection of people in accordance with national standards and international conventions and the Valletta Declaration.**

In addition, the Rabat Process partners wish to see that **JVAP initiatives continue to prevent the loss of human life along migratory routes.**

³ In April 2016, the EU announced a new political approach with regards EU forced displacement in its communication entitled "*Lives in Dignity: from Aid-dependence to Self-reliance*" aimed at preventing displacement from becoming protracted and gradually ending dependence on humanitarian aid in existing displacement situations.

Finally, it is importance to strengthen measures which consist in **dissuading abusive asylum claims**, which slow down access to asylum services to the detriment of those genuinely in need of international protection.

Domain 4: Prevention of and fight against irregular migration, migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings.

The partners of the Rabat Process are fully committed – both at a national and regional level – to the fight against migrant smuggling and trafficking of human beings⁴ and have collaborated closely on this.

In terms of policy and legislation (i.e. the Rule of Law), partners of the Rabat Process have introduced a wide range of legal and political reforms through the creation, the updating and the alignment of legal frameworks (legislative reforms, development of national and regional frameworks as well as specific policies). Laws on Human Trafficking – comprising general definitions of this concept as well as that of the exploitation of victims in keeping with international legal instruments – have been developed. Changes in national legislation have also been suggested or adopted in order to ensure its compliance with international law.

At an operational level, actions have focused on collecting and processing data, building the capacity of authorities to fight against criminal networks and carrying out targeted information and awareness-raising campaigns. Some of these actions were supported as part of the High Level Dialogues or by the EUTF with the objective of enhancing regional cooperation, ensuring better understanding of irregular migration flows and developing joint tools and strategies in order to fight against human trafficking and migrant smuggling. The Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), have also made significant funds available in this area.

The partners of the Rabat Process encourage comprehensive, inclusive (with particular regard to gender mainstreaming), multidisciplinary and standardised (alignment of norms and common standards) approaches, which at the same time take into account local realities and issues. With reference to the latter, the partners highlight the importance of carrying out actions which offer economic alternatives to populations in regions which are strongly impacted by human trafficking and migrant smuggling issues.

It is important that specific activities and efforts to fight against networks of smugglers and traffickers of human beings continue to be deployed. Such efforts have been based (for the Sahel / Lake Chad region) on the “linking-up” of territories and the provision of logistical and material support (vehicles and equipment for surveillance patrols) etc. In this respect, the Rabat Process partners applaud the upcoming GAR-SI-SAHEL project⁵, which contributes to strengthening the

⁴Rabat Action Plan 2006 ; Paris Cooperation Programme 2008; Dakar Strategy 2011 and Rome Programme 2014.

⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/programme-summary-rapid-action-groups-monitoring-and-intervention-sahel-en_en

operational capacities of national authorities in the West African region by improving their means for effective control of the territory.

Bilateral cooperation between partners in the Rabat Process has also led to the introduction of innovative measures designed, for example, to raise awareness among potential migrants about the risks they may encounter along migratory routes or designed to ensure integrated border management.

However, two particularly topical issues remain: that of sharing information and optimising the use of shared data in order to identify and to target potential smugglers, and that of strengthening networks of focal points. For this reason, the Rabat Process partners applaud the scale and scope of regional or multi-country initiatives such as the West African police information system/WAPIS project. WAPIS aims at organising and standardising the management of information by the police in all countries of the West African region in order to improve law enforcement.⁶

It is also possible to cite the example of the Support for regional cooperation in G5 countries and the Sahel Security College which will contribute to strengthened security in the Sahel as part of the fight against terrorism, major crime and trafficking of human beings in the region.

Furthermore, the partners of the Rabat Process support the efforts undertaken in Niger and in Agadez in particular. These efforts focus on the creation of a coherent political and operational framework achieved through strengthening Nigerien structures with budgetary support from the European Union, and through the creation of a national multi-stakeholder coordination framework on migration. However, more emphasis should be on the development and coordination of organisational and systemic capacities. New and innovative methods of cooperation are already being undertaken by the joint investigation team to combat irregular immigration, human trafficking and people smuggling. This comprehensive pilot approach in a major transit country helps to strengthen the impact of ongoing actions in Niger, such as increased information sharing and management, improved cooperation between the policy and the judicial system. Similar initiatives could be replicated in other countries of the region, supported by the introduction of a coordinated response on human trafficking and migrant smuggling among the countries of Rabat Process. In this respect, the partners applaud the implementation of a global action against human trafficking and migrant smuggling (GloAct⁷).

The partners of the Rabat Process also acknowledge the efforts made to place the notion of the victim and the protection of victims' rights, safety and dignity at the core of the fight against human and migrant trafficking, as well as those designed to give particular attention to unaccompanied minors. In this respect, a manual entitled "*ECOWAS Support Procedures and Standards for the Protection and Reintegration of Vulnerable Children on the Move and Young Migrants*" came into force in November 2016. This technical document establishes procedures for identifying, providing

⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/trust-fund-projects/west-african-police-information-systemwapis_en

⁷ The countries in the Rabat Process benefit from the expertise of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in the development and implementation of legislation against human trafficking and migrant smuggling

first aid, evaluating, taking action and the referrals process with regards to the reintegration of children.

Finally, the partners of the Rabat Process recall the importance of linking domains 4 and 5 of the JVAP in order to guarantee the impact of measures to prevent irregular migration and the fight against human trafficking and migrant smuggling. Indeed, it is important that irregular migrants who are not in need of international protection can return home quickly and do not remain stranded, vulnerable and exposed to the risk of exploitation. It is also important to provide protection, support and / or assistance (i.e. consular assistance, economic, medico-psycho-social support) to victims of trafficking who find themselves stranded and in a vulnerable situation.

Specific recommendations

The partners of the Rabat Process reiterate the importance of the measure to combat migrant smuggling and human trafficking, and call for **strengthened cooperation in this area**, both at national and regional levels. They call for permanent support to countries in the region in the area of the **integrated border management**, the compilation and sharing of information, and **strengthening of networks of focal points and regional cooperation**.

They also recommend strengthening and multiplying initiatives and public policies targeting unaccompanied minors.

Finally, the partners underline the importance of establishing coherency between domains 4 and 5 in order to ensure the effectiveness of measures to prevent irregular migrants and those aimed at dismantling networks of human traffickers and migrant smugglers.

Domain 5 Return, re-admission and reintegration

The partners of the Rabat Process recognise that this priority domain receives considerable interest and should generate more attention, particularly as it enables tangible results to be obtained on the volume of irregular migration flows. The partners also wish to renew their commitment to the principle of shared responsibility.

Within the Sahel / Lake Chad window of the EUTF, results have been noted regarding the identification and modernisation of civil registry systems and the digitalisation of fingerprints (mainly through programmes to strengthen civil registers and to establish biometric files) and reintegration assistance offered to migrants. The package of measures related to migration, adopted at the meeting of the EUTF Operational Committee in December 2016 for the Sahel / Lake Chad region, made the issue of return and reintegration a priority. The multi-country initiative supported by the EUTF⁸ aims to offer protection to 60,000 stranded migrants as well as voluntary return and durable reintegration for 23,000 migrants in their home communities through individual, group and

⁸Multi-country initiative. The IOM (International Organization for Migration), EU member states and 14 countries in the Lake Chad and Sahel region including Libya. The actions will aim to strengthen capacities of the authorities and civil society in countries of origin and transit for the management and monitoring of returns and will provide voluntary return assistance for migrants wishing to return home

community schemes. It is also relevant to mention the introduction, within the scope of AMIF, of a mechanism to help build readmission capacity, the availability of funds to support the voluntary return of victims human trafficking. Moreover, the European Return Fund has provided measures to support the reintegration of migrants returning from Europe.

Joint progress has also been observed within the framework of political dialogues engaged by country partners and extending structural cooperation between country of origin, transit and destination. Indeed, High Level Dialogues to promote cooperation between states on issues of migration, in particular on the subject of return and readmission, have been initiated⁹. The partners of the Rabat Process consider it important that progress in this area continues to be achieved and that this dialogue is translated into practice through the improvement of practices to make cooperation on readmission more efficient, through the identification of irregular migrants without travel documentation and the delivery of travel documentation (such as consular *laissez-passez*) in a timely manner, and are pleased that negotiations on readmissions agreements are being put into place.

Moreover, numerous countries are working on the development of policies and strategies in order to respond to problems encountered with respect to migrant returns, including forced returns. These have enabled the facilitation of voluntary repatriation for refugees (tripartite agreements, drafting of standard operating procedures within the framework of voluntary returns and reintegration), the development of return plans for nationals who come into difficulty whilst living abroad, and discussions on possible reintegration services to migrants who are forcibly repatriated.

The Rabat Process partners believe that it is important to fully respect obligations in international law with regards to the readmission of its own nationals¹⁰, in full respect of human dignity and of the principle of *non-réfoulement*. They also recognise the necessity to strike a balance between: the protection of rights and the respect of sovereignty; between the priority of voluntary and informed return¹¹ and the necessity of the credible perspective of forced return as a means to fight irregular migration¹².

Furthermore, and although by no means is it a condition for the return of irregular migrants, the notion of sustainability and measures for local and national reintegration must be at the root of any approach in this priority domain. In particular, planning for durable reintegration must be based on a comprehensive support strategy beginning upon the pre-departure and arrival phases, with concrete measures and projects to strengthen return with the help of relevant actors such as European agencies responsible for return and integration, and International Organisations.

⁹In keeping with the conclusions of the European Council of June and October 2015,

¹⁰In keeping with Article 13 of the Cotonou Agreement

¹¹A definition on voluntary and informed return was established during the Thematic Meeting on Return, Readmission and Reintegration held in May 2016 in Brussels as follows: “*by informing and communicating clearly and in a coherent manner (in the phase preceding the return) on the possibilities of voluntary return and the support that can be provided by the destination country, by maximising the opportunities for interaction and communication at local level in both the origin and destination countries, and by maximising potential cross-cutting activities.*” <https://processus-de-rabat.org/en/>

¹² Please refer to domain 5 of the Valletta Action Plan with regards to strengthening cooperation whilst: “bearing in mind the obligation of each state under international law including Article 13 of the Cotonou Agreement for its signatory parties to readmit its own nationals in full respect of human dignity and of the principle of *non-réfoulement*”

Numerous projects on voluntary return and reintegration are carried out within the framework of bilateral cooperation.

Finally, planning for reintegration must be based as far as possible on existing national systems and must take into account the different national contexts and the needs of different groups of migrants, including those who have been forcibly returned. In this respect, those projects which include linkages with national employment agencies correspond perfectly to this recommendation. Finally, planning must reinforce collective and community strategies and approaches, by also involving civil society in European and Africa countries and providing information and regular communication on possibilities of voluntary return.

Specific recommendations

The partners of the Rabat Process acknowledge that this priority domain is the source of much interest and **should generate more attention; more efforts should be made on both sides and more coordination in terms of communication.**

The partners recognise that it is important that progress in this domain continues to be achieved and that political dialogue **is translated into action through the improvement of practices** to make cooperation on readmission more effective.

The notion of sustainability and measures of local and national integration should be at the foundation of every initiative implemented within the scope of this priority domain.

2. Overview of use of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (Sahel / Lake Chad and North Africa windows)

The partners of the Rabat Process recognise that the EUTF is an innovative instrument in terms of its reactivity, its ability to provide a rapid response, and its increased flexibility. The EU Emergency Trust Fund has clearly demonstrated its added value as a complementary financial instrument, able to achieve results of benefit to all parties in the field of migration management and the promotion of stability. Interventions are guided by the principles of subsidiary and complementarity, in order to avoid overlapping and to create synergies with interventions being financed by other financial instruments, in particular National and Regional Indicative Programmes.

The identification of priorities for the EUTF results from both an in-depth dialogue between African and European partners and a range of national and regional actors, but also from quantitative and qualitative analysis of the situation in the field, based on expertise developed by partners and by European Union Delegations. This ensures a clear and in-depth understanding of local contexts, and improved identifications of key geographical regions, beneficiaries and those partners best-placed to implement projects.

The EUTF (Sahel / Lake Chad and North Africa windows) was able to allocate almost 1 billion euros in the space of one year. During the EUTF Committee meeting in December 2016 and faced with new challenges in the area of migration, members of the Board approved an extension of the scope of the fund to 3 new countries, namely Ivory Coast, Ghana and Guinea¹³. The portfolio of projects demonstrates that a balance between the five different pillars of the JVAC has been sought: During the first part of 2016 and in response to requests from partners, the EUTF decided to concentrate more on the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement. Following on from the Communication in June on Partnership Frameworks, the EUTF also stepped-up efforts to ensure better migration management, including improved border management, security and questions of return, readmission and reintegration. The portfolio of project also indicates that a balance was sought between the two different axes of the operational framework, namely i) preventing irregular migration and forced displacement and facilitation migration management as well as returns ii) developing initiatives for stability security and resilience. The partners of the Rabat Process applaud this quest for a balanced approach in keeping with the Valletta Declaration, and hope that the new geographical focus and changes being to the functioning of the EUTF (which began in December 2016) will be continued.

However, the partners of the Rabat Process suggest increased mobilisation of other resources and financial instruments so as not to limit the efforts of the European Union and the EUTF, whilst at the same time continuing to ensure respect for the principles of subsidiarity and complementarity, and coherence in the use of these financial instruments according to well as the geographical restrictions and nature of each. At the same time, the Rabat partners commit to reinforcing their own efforts to fully integrate migration issues into development and cooperation as well as national and regional development policies.

In addition, the partners of the Rabat Process wish to speed up the implementation rate of initiatives approved by the EUTF operational committees. Most of the projects are in start-up phase and it is still too early to see important results in the field. The shortening of the identification and formulation phase by the EUTF¹⁴ was certainly a step forward in light of the emergency context, and 60% of the EUTF projects had received contracts as of mid-December 2016. However, the partners of the Rabat Process reiterate the importance of finalising the contracting process as quickly as possible. They call upon operating agencies to continue to take the necessary measures by adjusting their planning and internal procedures so as to show results as quickly as possible, whilst ensuring the involvement of national administrations and authorities in beneficiary countries.

Finally, the EU Trust Fund for Africa has generated strong political interest which should also be translated into full ownership of all initiatives identified. Whilst also continuing to involve national and local authorities, projects must ensure increased involvement of the private sector and civil

¹³In December 2016 the Board of the EUTF resolved to step up cooperation in the fight against smuggling, to address root causes by swiftly implementing projects, and to extend the geographical coverage of the EU Trust Fund for Africa to Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Guinea ("*Second Progress Report: First Deliverables on the Partnership Framework with third countries under the European Agenda on Migration*") https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/second-progress-report-1_en_act_part1_v11.pdf

¹⁴The length of the process leading to the approval of an action (from identification to adoption) was reduced from between 12-18 to 3-4 months

society organisations, as lead implementing partners, co-implementing partners, or as the main beneficiaries of capacity-building initiatives.

Ownership is also achieved by working with local communities. The local dimension is essential and should form an integral part of approaches used in each of the 5 priority domains. The flexibility of the EUTF means that it is able to reformulate its own strategic priorities in accordance with the strategic guidelines laid down by the Board of Trustees (the choice, for example, to concentrate on national rather than international priorities and the identification of new beneficiary countries etc.). In this respect, the re-evaluation carried out in December 2016 by the EU Trust Fund for Africa, was welcomed by the Rabat Process partners¹⁵.

Specific recommendations

The partners of the Rabat Process would like to see the continuation of the **geographical and functional “re-balancing”** begun by the EUTF in December 2016.

Increase the implementation rate of those initiatives which have been approved by the Operational Committee of the EUTF.

3. General recommendations in preparation for the SOM on 8th - 9th February 2017

The partners of the Rabat Process recognise that the Valletta Summit on Migration and the Joint Valletta Action Plan have had a positive impact on the visibility and on the scope and reach of the Euro-African dialogue on migration and development. Migration matters have never been so central to national and regional priorities, and so at the heart of the UE-Africa political framework, of which Valletta is now part. In addition, a new dynamic, brought about by new operational plan and an innovative financial strategy (i.e. the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa) has given added impetus to the requirement for an operational dialogue, which has been at the heart of the Rabat Process since the Dakar Strategy of 2011, and was subsequently confirmed by the Rome Declaration and Programme of 2014. Indeed, during the past 10 years the Rabat Process has developed political and operational recommendations which mean that the objectives of the JVAP can be more easily achieved, and which guarantee a positive impact. In this context, the Rabat Process partners put forward the following recommendations:

- 1) The partners of the Rabat Process **call for the dialogues** on migration which have been initiated to **be pursued** at both national and regional levels, in order to fully implement the reciprocal commitments of the JVAP. They also call for **strengthened coherence** between the **different frameworks** including the Partnership Framework, which contribute to the dynamic of the JVAP, in particular the Rabat and Khartoum processes. The identity, autonomy and scope of action of each individual regional dialogue on migration, in the Euro-African context, shall be preserved. This alignment will allow us, above all, to recognise the concerns of those countries which are not included in the framework of

Valletta or other cooperation frameworks, and to respond to these. As such, the possibilities created by the future European External Investment Plan should be fully exploited in collaboration with African partners.

- 2) The partners of the Rabat Process recall the **importance of the EU-Africa Framework** and request that the JVAP be allowed to feed into the ongoing discussions in preparation for the EU-Africa Summit of November 2017. It is also important to recognise **the Intra-African and regional integration processes** (Regional Economic Communities and the African Union) and the role that the latter may play in the follow-up of the JVAP.
- 3) The partners of the Rabat Process call for the **mobilisation of the whole range of existing resources and instruments**, beyond the EUTF, in order to implement the JVAP and as such to contribute to the stability and the fight against the root causes of irregular migration in the long-term.
- 4) The partners call for the identification and implementation of **actions of a regional nature** in order to ensure better coherence of actions between countries of origin, transit and destination, in particular along migratory routes.
- 5) The partners call for equal attention to be afforded to the 5 domains of the JVAP. They **reiterate the importance of continuing this “re-balancing” of the EUTF which began in December 2016**, both with regards to the priorities, the involvement of new partners according to the political context and commitments and at the operational level, between the 5 priority domains of the JVAP.
- 6) The partners of the Rabat Process underline the importance of **involving all relevant actors** in order to bring about effective implementation of the JVAP and the follow-up of the Valletta Summit, in particular regional organisation, local authorities, civil society organisation and in particular diaspora organisations. The abilities of the diaspora, its expertise and resources coming, mainly, from remittances and the facilitation of the latter, must be mobilised by all partners in order to achieve the objectives of the JVAP.
- 7) The mapping exercise which has already been carried out is essential in the sense that it provides an initial visual overview of the progress of the implementation of the JVAP. However, in order to complete this first stage and to obtain a long-term, structured and detailed vision of all of the initiatives, legislation and public policy changes which contribute to the achievement of the objectives of Valletta and their level of achievement in real time, the Steering Committees of the Rabat and Khartoum processes have identified a certain number of conclusions following on from the Stocktaking Meeting technical stock-taking meeting on the state of play of the implementation of the Valletta Action Plan on the 21st and 22nd June 2016 in Brussels. One of these conclusions was to **identify a technical long-term reporting instrument for the JVAP**, which could be used by both processes. This instrument should enable a follow-up of the implementation of the 5 priority domains of the JVAP to be carried out, including in terms of results of the initiatives carried out. The

Rabat Process partners support the efforts which will enable this instrument to be established. This instrument will be developed by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD). A prototype will be presented at the SOM in Malta. This follow-up exercise will provide the necessary data for a possible political evaluation.

- 8) To encourage the creation of a “**record of good practices**” in order to highlight flagship projects which have generated examples of best practice, and to provide examples which can be successfully replicated elsewhere within the context of the JVAP. Communication on progress and on best practices will be ensured.

- 9) The partners of the Rabat Process encourage the partners of Valletta to **reiterate the principles of cooperation** of the Valletta Declaration. They invite the Valletta partners, during the SOM, to **take into account the content of the present Analysis Report**, and the **recommendations put forward**. As such, and based upon the recommendations put forward, the partners of the Rabat Process encourage the **identification, in line with the needs, in the short, medium and long-term of future priorities**, or the updating of current priorities, above all the 16 priority initiatives. Defining priorities for 2017, using the same model as that used in 2016, is one possibility. The **development of a calendar** for future meetings of the Valletta partners is also deemed useful.