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THIS ACTION IS FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

ANNEX II

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the Individual Measure for the multi-country migration programme in favour of the Southern Neighbourhood for 2022

Action Document for Enhancing international police cooperation against migrant smuggling in North Africa

MEASURE

This document constitutes the annual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, and Action plan in the sense of Article 23(3) of NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1. SYNOPSIS

1.1. ACTION SUMMARY TABLE

| | |
|--|--|
| 1. Title CRIS/OPSYS Basic Act | Enhancing international police cooperation against migrant smuggling in North Africa OSPYS business reference: ACT-60773 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe). |
| 2. Team Europe Initiative | No. This Action is not a Team Europe Initiative (TEI) but will contribute to the two TEIs covering regional migration actions namely, the TEI Migration Atlantic Route and the TEI for the Central Mediterranean Route. |
| 3. Zone benefiting from the Action | The Action shall be carried out in North Africa (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia). |
| 4. Programming document¹ | No. |
| 5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives/ expected results | Priority 2 (Strengthening migration and asylum governance and management). The Impact/Overall Objective corresponds very closely to SO2 while both SO1 & 2 (outcomes) contribute to R2.1 and hence SO2 of the said priority in the MIP. Specific Objective 2: Partner countries' capacity and performance to combat migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings is enhanced and broadened. Result 2.1: Capacity and performance of law enforcement agencies and authorities to fight migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings is improved |
| PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION | |

¹ This will fall under Multi-Country Migration Programme for the Southern Neighbourhood (under approval)

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|--|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 6. Priority Area(s), sectors | Priority area 2: Strengthening migration and asylum governance and management, and more particularly on the need to combat migrant smuggling and the criminal groups engaging in it. | | | |
| 7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) | Main SDG (1 only): SDG 16 Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels), (sub goal 16.2 (End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children) Other significant SDGs: SDG 10, sub goal 10.7 (Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation. | | | |
| 8 a) DAC code(s) | Main DAC code – 15190 (Facilitation of orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility) – 100% | | | |
| 8 b) Main Delivery Channel | Public sector institutions – 10000 Other multilateral institutions – 47000 International Organisations – 21000 | | | |
| 9. Targets | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance | | | |
| 10. Markers (from DAC form) | General policy objective | Not targeted | Significant objective | Principal objective |
| | Participation development/good governance | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Aid to environment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Trade development | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Disaster Risk Reduction | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Inclusion of persons with Disabilities | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Nutrition | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | RIO Convention markers | Not targeted | Significant objective | Principal objective |
| | Biological diversity | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Combat desertification | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Climate change mitigation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| | Climate change adaptation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. Internal markers | Policy objectives | Not targeted | Significant objective | Principal objective |
| | Digitalisation Tags: digital connectivity digital governance digital entrepreneurship job creation digital skills/literacy digital services | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | <u>Connectivity</u> Tags: transport people2people energy digital connectivity | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Migration | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| | Reduction of Inequalities | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | COVID-19 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | BUDGET INFORMATION | | | |
| 12. Amounts concerned | Budget line: 14.020110 - Southern Neighbourhood Total estimated cost: EUR 10 500 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 10 000 000 This action is likely be co-financed in joint co-financing by Implementing Partner for an estimated amount of EUR 500 000. | | | |
| MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION | | | | |
| 13. Implementation modalities (type of financing and management mode) | Project Modality Indirect management with the entity(ies) to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.2.1 | | | |

1.2. SUMMARY OF THE ACTION

The proposed regional Action aims to strengthen law enforcement agencies' capacity across North Africa to effectively investigate and prosecute organized crime groups engaging in migrant smuggling. Increased efforts are needed in light of the professionalization of migrant smuggling, witnessed by law enforcement across the region, which indicates that the trade is increasingly taken over by organized crime groups, as opposed to loosely organized informal networks and facilitators driven by ad hoc opportunities.

When smuggled by organized crime groups migrants are treated as mere commodity. As a result, effective law enforcement action against organized crime groups engaging in migrant smuggling will be similar to actions against any other type of organized crime groups. Moreover, as these organized crime

groups act increasingly transnationally, law enforcement action needs to resort to international cooperation similar to that against classical transnational organized crime.

The key to success is therefore police information: as much quality police information as possible, shared as widely as possible across the region and beyond, analysed to make it actionable, and brought in timely fashion to front-line officers, including in the framework of operations.

The proposed Action will contribute to building the capacity of law enforcement actors across North Africa to more efficiently investigate and prosecute organized crime groups engaging in migrant smuggling through enhancing their capacity to gather, manage, share and exploit police information, in particular through structured international cooperation. In addition, it will contribute to disrupting organised crime groups and identifying new groups through targeted police operations. In supporting this, the Action will fully integrate the protection dimension of migration flows throughout its activities.

This action is also expected to contribute to delivering on the Joint vision for 2030 set out at the latest European Union (EU) - African Union (AU) Summit held in February 2022, where leaders agreed on an enhanced and reciprocal partnership for migration and mobility.

The proposed Actions builds on previous experiences developed in the field of law enforcement under the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa – North Africa Window (EUTF-NOA) and other ENI-funded regional programmes and will seek to develop synergies with ongoing and future programmes in the area of border management and anti-migrant smuggling.

It is foreseen that the Action will be implemented in indirect management with a specialised inter-governmental organisation, namely INTERPOL. INTERPOL is the only global law enforcement cooperation organization with 194 member countries, including all North African countries, who have a combined 351 years of operational cooperation through INTERPOL. All INTERPOL member countries are connected through a secure global police communication system, which allows secure sharing of police information through a dedicated office at national level (the ‘National Central Bureau’). A neutral membership-based organisation, INTERPOL routinely facilitates technical police cooperation away from the spotlight, including between countries that otherwise may not openly cooperate.

The proposed Action is fully in line with priority area 2 of the Multi-Country Migration Programme for the Southern Neighbourhood, which specifically identifies combatting migrant smuggling and criminal groups engaging in it as a key strategy to strengthening migration and asylum governance and management in partner countries.

The Action contributes to the same objectives of the EMPACT Operational Action Plan (OAP) dedicated to the “fight against criminal networks involved in migrant smuggling, in particular those providing facilitation services to irregular migrants along the main migratory routes crossing the external border of the EU and those involved in facilitation of secondary movements and legalisation of residence status within the EU, particularly focussing on those whose methods endanger people’s lives”. This OAP already contains actions related to the Central Mediterranean route. The implementing partner(s) will seek synergies with the EMPACT framework and this OAP.

The Action will ensure complementarities and synergies with the second phase of the Regional Operational Centre for the Khartoum process (ROCK), as well as with the third phase of the Better Migration Management (BMM) programme in the Horn of Africa, both funded under the regional MIP for Sub-Saharan Africa.

2. RATIONALE

2.1 GENERAL CONTEXT

North Africa's five countries have historically been and remain significant countries of migrant destination, transit and departure. Labour migration policies from as early as the 1950s incentivized mobility and played a role in the socio-economic development of several North African countries (World Bank, 2010). Economic, environmental and political instability, as well as migration policies across the region, contribute to the mixed migration patterns observed across the region. In the shorter term, the war in Ukraine is generating a serious threat to food security across the Region. A worsening food security situation may lead to increasing outgoing migratory flows, including towards Europe, which will need to be monitored closely.

The Central Mediterranean route connects Libya and Tunisia to Italy and Malta, while the Western Mediterranean route connects Algeria and Morocco to Spain. The COVID-19 pandemic has not halted arrivals from both routes: as of 11 July 2021, the total number of arrivals in 2021 via the Central Mediterranean route to Italy and Malta is 24,190, increasing by 127% from the same period in 2020, while the total number of arrivals to Spain in 2021 is 14,297, increasing by 59% from the same period in 2020.

In this context of increasing demand for irregular travels to Europe, the recent years have seen an increasing demand for smuggling networks to facilitate entry into many North African countries and for travel towards Europe. Migrants along these perilous routes are often extremely vulnerable to fall prey to trafficking and smuggling networks with serious violations of their rights. Smugglers often abuse of their vulnerability exposing migrants to life-threatening journeys.

Human trafficking and migrant smuggling are forms of transnational organized crime that particularly affect the North African region, with most countries in the region being origin, transit and destination countries. The proximity of North Africa to Southern Europe has made North African countries an attractive hub for irregular migration. Of major concern at present is Libya, as it has become the main hub for trafficking and smuggling routes from Sub-Saharan Africa to European, and Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) countries. The effect of such trafficking and smuggling activities and their impact on development and security in North African countries are complex, posing challenges to governance and stability in the entire region and beyond.

Communities along the main migration routes and on the borderlands engage at various levels and in various forms in the smuggling business and the income generated by smuggling activities is often a vital livelihood, as border areas across North Africa are mostly economically underdeveloped and marginalised areas. Fully conscious of the need to adopt a protection-sensitive approach to combatting migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings, the proposed Action will therefore not target all migrant smuggling actors, but specifically organized crime groups engaging in migrant smuggling, by supporting more effective investigation and prosecution of these groups, while fully integrating the protection-sensitive dimension of migration.

2.2 PROBLEM ANALYSIS

The smuggling of migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa towards Europe is a multifaceted and rapidly evolving phenomenon, where actors range from self-smuggling individuals to informal support networks to established organized crime groups that engage in the smuggling of migrants, sometimes along with commodities such as drugs and weapons.

Despite the lack of hard data on this phenomenon, the first evidences gathered by law enforcement authorities shows that migrant smuggling is undergoing an increasing professionalization, which strongly suggests that the market is progressively being taken over by organized crime groups, with evidence of connections between organized criminal networks and armed groups, as well as terrorist organisations.

As a result, law enforcement strategies against migrant smuggling must adapt and shift towards classical counter organized crime strategies. Law enforcement has a long history of combatting international organized crime groups. Regardless of the nature of their criminal business, some police basics remain fundamental elements of successful police investigation and prosecution of organized crime: investigator level cooperation, information gathering and sharing, actionable analytical products (risk assessments, intelligence reports), solid chain of evidence and judicial cooperation. Cooperation is a key strategy across all those elements and, given the transnational nature of organized crime, these strategies must also be transnational and include international police cooperation.

Unfortunately, law enforcement cooperation across North Africa is very limited. Despite some level of police cooperation taking place under the umbrella of the Arab Interior Ministers' Council, operational cooperation is minimal and there is currently no operational mechanism for regional cooperation in combatting the transnational organized crime groups that operate across the region.

Supporting partner countries' capacity to combat organized crime groups engaging in migrant smuggling, and in particular through international cooperation and coordination, is a priority identified in the New Pact on Migration and Asylum² and in the Joint Communication on a Renewed Partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood. In line with one of the main pillars of the New Pact on Migration and Asylum, reinforcing the fight against migrant smuggling is a priority. As is mentioned in the New Pact and was agreed at ministerial level on 13 July 2020³, the EU should strengthen cooperation with countries of origin and transit to prevent dangerous journeys and irregular crossings. Moreover, supporting partner countries' capacity to combat organized crime groups engaging in migrant smuggling will be at the core of the renewed EU Action plan against migrant smuggling for the period 2021-2025.

Where organized crime groups are well established, supporting classical anti-organized crime law enforcement strategies is critical. Where such organizations are not yet established, these same strategies are equally important to identify and combat nascent criminal organizations and prevent them from establishing themselves in emerging illicit markets. These strategies include information gathering, information management and analysis, risk assessments, bringing actionable information to frontline officers in the field, police operations, and judicial cooperation.

Criminal organizations smuggle commodities such as food, weapons, petrol, drugs, migrants and engage in human trafficking operate across North Africa. As a result, combatting these transnational criminal organisations can only be done through international police cooperation, which should also include neighbouring sub-Saharan countries and EU Member States, who are often the final destination of irregular travels. As a result, the strategies outlined above should all have an international cooperation dimension, including information sharing.

Actionable police information is at the core of any effective strategy against organized crime groups. This requires 1) an efficient capacity to store and manage police information at central level, and 2) the establishment of real-time connectivity to frontline duty stations, including border crossing points, regional criminal police departments, operations rooms for land and sea border surveillance and operational coordination, to allow frontline officers to perform extensive checks and pursue investigations. Although the situation varies per country, law enforcement across the region suffers from insufficient information management capacity at central level and very limited access to police data at field duty stations. For example, Libya does not have a centralized police information system and the Ben Gardane border crossing

² [New Pact on Migration and Asylum | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

³ The joint EU-North Africa political commitment to combat migrant smuggling was reaffirmed on 13 July 2020, when ministers from Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia, along with those of France, Germany, Italy Malta, and Spain and the Commissioners Johansson and Várhelyi discussed cooperation against migrant smuggling in the framework of the Anti-Smuggling Initiative.

point in Tunisia does not have the capacity to perform systematic checks of travel documents even against its own national police databases.

The increasingly transnational nature of organized crime groups makes access to international police information critical to any effective Action against organized crime. INTERPOL hosts the most important global police information databases, including on wanted persons, stolen and lost travel documents and foreign terrorist fighters. The police organization encourages its member countries to make the most extensive use possible of its police data, and in particular through establishing connections to INTERPOL databases directly to frontline duty stations, including border crossing points and other strategic locations or through mobile devices. For this reason, the Council adopted its Common Position 2005/69/JHA on the exchange of information with INTERPOL, later reinforced by Council Conclusions of 1 October 2014 on strengthening the use of INTERPOL's Stolen and Lost Travel Documents (SLTD) database⁴.

In this perspective, extending the access to INTERPOL police information as widely as possible to investigators and key duty stations in the field is critical to law enforcement's capacity across North Africa to identify and disrupt the operations of organized crime groups. While all North African countries have an INTERPOL National Central Bureau (NCB)⁵, which has the ability to perform checks on INTERPOL databases, it is each country's sovereign decision to extend access to INTERPOL resources beyond the NCB, for example to the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) or to border crossing points (BCPs). In North Africa, only Algeria has extensively extended access to INTERPOL data, including to all 35 border crossing points, including Algiers Airport, and to all prefectures (wilayas). Libya has inaugurated a first pilot travel document checking system at the Ras Jadir BCP in July 2021 and Tunisia and Morocco have not yet set-up any extensions.

Moreover, cooperation amongst investigators combating organized crime groups, and in particular those engaging in migrant smuggling, needs to be further structured and supported. This can only be achieved through regular meetings that allow confidence-building and information exchange on organised crime groups of common interest. The region not having any regional mechanism for operational cooperation in combatting the transnational organized crime groups that operate across the region, the only cooperation platform currently allowing operational cooperation between the region's countries is INTERPOL. However, despite the fact that INTERPOL facilitates a Specialized Operational Network on Migrant Smuggling (ISON), which includes representatives from Member States and Europol, the scale of this global network allows for the sharing of good practice, but not for the progressive building of smaller regional-based communities that would be able to develop the kind of trust relationships leading to the sharing of information on active investigations. Furthermore, sharing information allows analysts to work with sufficient data to draw the criminal picture of the phenomenon, further supporting law enforcement strategies against organized crime groups.

Finally, cooperative police operations contribute to disrupting the activities of organised crime groups, not only through arrests of known group members, including based on information obtained through information sharing and analysis, but also through the identification of still-unknown organised crime groups through information obtained from arrested criminals or smuggled migrants.

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the Action

National law enforcement authorities with responsibility in combatting migrant smuggling in Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia are the Action's main stakeholders, with active involvement of law

⁴ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST%2013525%202014%20INIT/EN/pdf>

⁵ National Central Bureaus are the national offices responsible for cooperation with INTERPOL. As such, although they are part of the INTERPOL network, these offices are not part of the INTERPOL General Secretariat, but rather they belong to national authorities in each country, typically the Ministry of Interior's office for international cooperation.

enforcement from neighbouring sub-Saharan countries and EU Member States. The specific beneficiaries within each country's Ministry of the Interior will be identified following consultation with national authorities in due time.

The main beneficiary countries, along with their sub-Saharan neighbours and EU Member States, are all member countries of INTERPOL, with whom they have a long history of cooperation⁶.

EU Justice and Home Affairs agencies play an increasingly important role in North Africa and will be closely associated to the Action by implementing activities in their respective areas of competence.

- Frontex works at developing cooperation with countries in North Africa, inter alia in the framework of the EU4BorderSecurity programme, but also in the framework of the 2019 Budget Support with Morocco, which includes specific indicators on cooperation with Frontex.
- Europol works at developing cooperation with countries in North Africa, inter alia in the framework of the 2019 Budget Support with Morocco, which includes specific indicators on cooperation with Europol. Negotiations are also advancing towards the signing of a Working Arrangement with Tunisia.
- CEPOL has been implementing projects in North Africa since 2015 and is currently implementing the EUROMED Police V and CT INFLOW programmes in North Africa and the Middle-East.
- Eurojust is implementing EUROMED JUSTICE in North Africa and the Middle-East and is currently negotiating cooperation agreements with Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTPUTS

The Overall Objective (Impact) of this Action is: Law enforcement agencies' performance to effectively investigate national and transnational organized crime groups engaging in migrant trafficking and smuggling across North Africa is improved.

The Specific Objectives (Outcomes) of this Action are:

1. Police information and intelligence for investigation of organized crime groups engaging in migrant smuggling is managed, made actionable and exchanged.
2. Targeted jointly managed police operations to disrupt known organised crime groups engaging in migrant trafficking /smuggling⁷ are undertaken.

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

Contributing to Specific Objective 1

- 1.1 Capacity at central/senior levels to use and manage police information and make available information relevant to investigative units and front-line officers is enhanced.
- 1.2 Capacity of investigative units and frontline officers to access internationally-shared police information is enhanced.

⁶ Beneficiary countries became members of INTERPOL on the following years: Algeria in 1963, Egypt in 1923, Libya in 1954, Morocco in 1957, Tunisia in 1954.

⁷ Migrant Smuggling is the facilitation, for financial or other material gain, of irregular entry into a country where the migrant is not a national or resident ([Migrant Smuggling \(unodc.org\)](https://www.unodc.org/migrant-smuggling/)); Human trafficking involves the recruitment, movement or harbouring of people for the purpose of exploitation ([Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling \(unodc.org\)](https://www.unodc.org/human-trafficking/))

- 1.3 International cooperation related to exchange and use of information between law enforcement agencies combating migrant smuggling in North Africa, as well as with neighbouring Sahel and Sub-Saharan countries and EU Member States is enhanced.

Contributing to specific objective 2

- 2.1 Capacities to undertake joint police operations are enhanced.
- 2.2 Capacities to gather information on organised crime groups engaging in migrant trafficking /smuggling from victims or suspects is enhanced.

3.2 INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES

It is foreseen that the Action will be implemented by INTERPOL. North African countries, who are all members of INTERPOL, have a long history of operational police cooperation through INTERPOL, are all connected through INTERPOL's secure global police communication system, and take part in INTERPOL-facilitated operations.

In implementing the activities described below, INTERPOL will work with its natural counterparts, i.e. each country's Ministry of the Interior, and in particular investigative units responsible for combatting organized crime and migrant smuggling. The specific units will be identified following consultation with national authorities in due time, and may include other stakeholders, as deemed necessary by national authorities.

Indicative activities related to Specific Objective 1

For output 1.1: Capacity at central/senior levels to use and manage police and make available information relevant to investigative units and front-line officers is enhanced, activities could include:

- Provide equipment (i.e. information system software and related hardware) and related training to establish or enhance the police information management capacity at central level;
- Set-up real-time connectivity between key police databases and investigative units and frontline duty stations;
- Provide advice on appropriate management, use and availability of information.

For output 1.2: Capacity of investigative units and frontline officers to access and use appropriately criminal information is enhanced, activities could include:

- Provide equipment (i.e. bandwidth and CPUs) and training and coaching to enhance the capacity of North African countries' INTERPOL National Central Bureaus to enable fluid remote data checks.
- Provide and set-up the necessary technical infrastructures (i.e. network and distant connectivity equipment, computers, scanners) to allow checks against INTERPOL databases in field duty stations, including investigative units (e.g. ISON members – see item below) and border crossing points.

For output 1.3: International cooperation related to exchange and use of information between law enforcement agencies combating migrant smuggling in North Africa, as well as with neighbouring Sahel and Sub-Saharan countries and EU Member States is enhanced, activities will include:

- Create a regional INTERPOL Specialized Operational Network on Migrant Smuggling (ISON) sub-group for North African countries and selected Sahel and Sub-Saharan countries, also including Europol and EU Member States representatives, with regular meetings to share information and build trust; seek operational cooperation with Common Operational Partnerships and European Migration Liaison Officers operating in the beneficiary countries.

- Facilitate direct access to the INTERPOL secure police communications network to the regional ISON members to allow swifter communication between them, aiming at direct access from the specialized units and regional ISON participants.
- Produce, possibly in partnership with Europol, strategic and operational intelligence reports and risk assessments based on information shared by the regional ISON participants, with a view to supporting investigations and to gaining a better understanding of the role played by organized crime groups in migrant smuggling across North Africa.
- Provide, possibly in partnership with Europol, trainings building the capacity of anti-migrant smuggling and/or anti-organized crime units' to produce risk assessments, with possible CIRAM 2 training provided by Frontex.
- Assist, possibly in partnership with Europol and Eurojust, national law enforcement actors through data, analysis and international coordination in ongoing criminal investigations that touch several countries from the region and outside, targeting criminal networks that extend at origin, transit and destination countries.
- Provide, in partnership with Eurojust, trainings on judiciary intelligence and evidence collection with a view to more effectively supporting prosecution and international cooperation.

The extent of involvement of EU agencies is to be determined in agreement between the Commission and the agencies. INTERPOL will reach out to agencies and verify the extent of their possible involvement in the activities.

Indicative activities related to Specific Objective 2

For output 2.1: Capacities to undertake joint police operations are enhanced, activities will include:

- Conduct cooperative targeted police operations in participating countries, involving INTERPOL and possibly officers from other participating countries, Europol, Frontex and Member States to one or many border crossing points or hotspots.
- Provide support and overall coordination, including through mentoring/coaching activities, in the development of new information and intelligence on ongoing cases against organised crime groups active in the region, including using INTERPOL Notices and Criminal Analytical File on Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking in Human Beings.
- Make checks on INTERPOL's databases, particularly on stolen and lost travel documents, wanted persons, and data collected in INTERPOL Criminal Analytical Files to detect suspected facilitators of migrant smuggling.

2.2 For output 2.2: Capacities to gather information on organised crime groups engaging in migrant trafficking /smuggling from victims or suspects is enhanced, activities will include:

- Support, including through rights-based approach training (including mentoring/coaching), the debriefing of irregular migrants and intelligence gathering from suspects.

3.3 MAINSTREAMING

Environmental Protection, Climate Change and Biodiversity

Outcomes of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening

The SEA screening concluded that no further action was required.

Outcomes of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening

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

Outcome of the Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) screening

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

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this Action is labelled as G1. This implies that gender concerns will be mainstreamed in all activities under this Action to the extent possible, taking into account the challenging and sensitive context in which the Action will take place.

Human Rights

The proposed Action is fully aligned with the existing EU human rights strategies and Action plans. An increased capacity of North African countries to combat organized crime groups engaging in migrant smuggling has to be accompanied by an increased awareness by concerned authorities of suspects' procedural rights and migrants' (including refugees, asylum seekers and victims of trafficking in human beings) fundamental rights, which should be fully compliant with international obligations and standards, and in particular non-refoulement.

Disability

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this Action is labelled as D0. Nevertheless, should persons with disabilities be targeted, special attention will be given throughout the process taking into account the specific situation and the degree of vulnerability.

Democracy

The Action will take a serious and deliberate approach in supporting counterparts to adhere to the principles of good governance such as participation, inclusion, transparency and accountability.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

The Action will take a serious and deliberate approach to conflict sensitivity across all activities, including solid baseline analysis, application of good conflict sensitivity practice in the design and implementation of the Action, and monitoring of conflict sensitivity.

Disaster Risk Reduction

N/A

Other considerations if relevant

N/A

3.4 RISKS AND LESSONS LEARNED

| Category | Risks | Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low) | Impact (High/ Medium/ Low) | Mitigating measures |
|----------------------|---|---|---|---|
| External environment | Political instability in one or several beneficiary countries | medium | high | The Action is coordinated with national stakeholders; where necessary, activities can be conducted remotely (capacity building, technical assistance) or prepared remotely (awareness |

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| | | | | campaigns) to avoid significant delays in the implementation of the Action. |
| Planning processes, and systems | Activities are delayed due to changing priorities by different authorities. | high | low | The Action is designed to allow adaptive programming during implementation to respond to emerging and shifting priorities. |
| | Low engagement of national law enforcement in cooperation mechanism | medium | high | The IP will ensure a Team Leader able to engage senior management levels. As appropriate EU Delegations will engage at political level. |
| People and the organisation | Lack of respect for human rights and 'do no harm' principle | low | medium | Cooperation dialogue by INTERPOL and political dialogue through EU Delegations. |
| | Lack of cooperation between or responsiveness of targeted institutions and staff for technical assistance and/or capacity building activities. | low | medium | The Action's activities must be agreed with national authorities before the launching of the Action. The entire Action will require an overall steering structure. |

Lessons Learned

The Action will build on lessons learned from a range of programmes in the security sector in the North Africa region, including most recently the following:

The ongoing EUTF-funded programme **Dismantling the Criminal Networks Operating in North Africa and Involved in Migrant Smuggling and Human Trafficking** (2019-2022, EUTF contribution: EUR 15 million, implemented by UNODC). The overall objective of this Action is to contribute to reducing enablers of – and mitigating vulnerabilities arising from – irregular migration in Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia by focusing on the dismantling of organized crime groups involved in migrant smuggling and human trafficking. Of particular attention will be the programme's ability to implement activities in the COVID context.

The **Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants** (GLO.ACT, 2015-2019) was a regional programme implemented by UNODC in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) that aimed at assisting the selected countries in developing and implementing comprehensive national counter-trafficking and counter-smuggling responses. GLO.ACT's Final independent in-depth evaluation⁸ identified planning difficulties, including in reaching an agreement with beneficiary countries, which resulted in significant implementing time being lost. Learning from GLO.ACT, the Commission will make sure, through its Delegations in beneficiary countries and in close coordination with the foreseen implementing partner, to ensure agreement by beneficiary countries before officially launching the programme.

Project Sharaka (ENI, EUR 3 million, 2017-2021), implemented by INTERPOL in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia. The Action will learn from and build upon the

⁸ https://www.unodc.org/documents/evaluation/indepth-evaluations/2019/GLO.ACT_Final_Independent_Evaluation_Report_December_2019.pdf

project's experience in working with North African countries, in particular in the area of international cooperation, data sharing and INTERPOL-facilitated operations.

3.5 THE INTERVENTION LOGIC

The underlying intervention logic for both components of this Action is that:

If, under strategic component (SO1) capacity at central/ senior levels to use, manage and make available information relevant to investigative units and front-line officers is enhanced;

And if, capacity of investigative units and frontline officers to access and use internationally-shared police information is enhanced;

And if, international cooperation related to exchange and use of information between law enforcement agencies combating migrant smuggling in North Africa, as well as with neighbouring Sahel and Sub-Saharan countries and EU Member States is enhanced;

And if assumptions hold, then

Police information and intelligence for investigation and prosecution of organized crime groups engaging in migrant smuggling is managed, made actionable and exchanged.

Equally....

If, capacities to gather information/ and intelligence relative to addressing migrant trafficking/smuggling are enhanced;

And if, capacities to undertake joint police operations are enhanced;

And if assumptions hold, then

Targeted jointly managed police operations to disrupt known organised crime groups engaging in migrant trafficking/smuggling will be undertaken.

In turn, *if both* police information and intelligence for investigation and prosecution of organized crime groups engaging in migrant smuggling is managed, made actionable and exchanged;

And targeted jointly managed police operations to disrupt known organised crime groups engaging in migrant trafficking/ smuggling are undertaken and can be sustained,

then law enforcement's performance to effectively investigate national and transnational organized crime groups engaging in migrant smuggling across North Africa will be improved.

3.6 INDICATIVE LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

| Results | Results chain: Main expected results [maximum 10] | Indicators [it least one indicator per expected result] | Baselines (values and years) | Targets (values and years) | Sources of data | Assumptions |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------|---|-----------------|---|
| Impact | Law enforcement's performance to effectively investigate national and transnational organized crime groups engaging in migrant smuggling across North Africa is improved. | Number of criminal organisations disrupted, disaggregated by location | | | | <i>Not applicable</i> |
| Outcome 1 | 1. Police information and intelligence for investigation and prosecution of organized crime groups engaging in migrant smuggling is managed, made actionable and exchanged. | 1.1 Number of police information and information products made available to investigators and front-line officers (disaggregated by type) 1.2 Number of outcomes as a result of operational exchanges between law enforcement agencies and authorities in the region [MIP Indic PA2-SO1, a2] | Baseline value: 0 | To be determined during contracting stage | N/A | Political commitment and financial resources allow progress in operational police cooperation to be sustained over time |
| Outcome 2 | 2 Targeted jointly managed police operations to disrupt known organised crime groups engaging in migrant trafficking /smuggling are undertaken. | 2.1 Number of joint operations against trafficking or smuggling networks undertaken [MIP Indicator 2.1.1 (PA-2, SO2, a1)] 2.2 Number of investigative leads identified 2.3 Number of suspected facilitators of migrant smuggling/ smuggling networks detected disaggregated by location | Baseline value: 0 | To be determined during contracting stage | N/A | |
| Output 1 related to Outcome 1 | 1.1 Capacity at central/senior levels to use, manage and make available information relevant to investigative units and front-line officers is enhanced. | 1.1.1 Number of central databases set-up/upgraded disaggregated by country 1.1.2 Number of persons trained on chain of evidence (disaggregated by country, sex) 1.1.3 Number of new sites with real-time connectivity established, disaggregated by location | Baseline value: 0 | To be determined during contracting stage | N/A | Senior management levels remain stable |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|-------------------|---|-----|--|
| Output 2 related to Outcome 1 | 1.2 Capacity of investigative units and frontline officers to access and use internationally-shared police information is enhanced. | 1.2.1 Number of new sites with real-time connectivity to INTERPOL databases, disaggregated by country 1.2.2 Number of persons trained (coached) on remote data-checks (disaggregated country, sex) 1.2.3 Number of checks against INTERPOL databases, disaggregated by country | Baseline value: 0 | To be determined during contracting stage | N/A | Information systems are maintained and continually updated |
| Output 3 related to Outcome 1 | 1.3 International cooperation related to exchange and use of information between law enforcement agencies combating migrant smuggling in North Africa, as well as with neighbouring Sahel and Sub-Saharan countries and EU Member States is enhanced. | 1.3.1 Number of operational meetings of the regional INTERPOL Specialized Operational Network 1.3.2 Number of strategic and operational intelligence reports and risk assessment produced, with assistance of INTERPOL 1.3.3 Number of persons trained, disaggregated by theme, sex | Baseline value: 0 | To be determined during contracting stage | N/A | National law enforcement agencies remain committed to international information exchange and accept its implications |
| Output 1 related to Outcome 2 | 2.1 Capacities to undertake joint police operations are enhanced. | 2.1.1 Number of cooperative targeted police operations conducted, supported (coached, etc) by INTERPOL, disaggregated by location 2.1.2 Number of police personnel coached in use of INTERPOL databases | Baseline value: 0 | To be determined during contracting stage | N/A | National law enforcement agencies are committed to operational police cooperation |
| Output 2 related to Outcome 2 | 2.2 Capacities to gather information on organised crime groups engaging in migrant trafficking /smuggling from victims or suspects is enhanced. | 2.2.1 Number of police personnel trained 2.2.2 Number of police personnel competent in debriefing of migrants/intelligence gathering (disaggregated M/F) | Baseline value: 0 | To be determined during contracting stage | N/A | |

4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 FINANCING AGREEMENT

In order to implement this Action, it is not envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with the partner countries.

4.2 INDICATIVE IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD

The indicative operational implementation period of this Action, during which the activities described in section 3.1 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 72 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.2.1 INDIRECT MANAGEMENT WITH AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION

This Action may be implemented in indirect management with INTERPOL as leading implementing partner.

This implementation entails that INTERPOL will have overall responsibility over the Action, while EU Justice and Home Affairs agencies may have joint responsibility over specific activities.

The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria:

1. History of trusted operational police cooperation

INTERPOL enjoys a unique position in global police cooperation and secure information exchange. INTERPOL is the only global law enforcement cooperation organization with 194 member countries, including all North African and Sub-Saharan countries, as well as all EU Member States. All INTERPOL member countries are connected through a secure global police communication system, which allows secure sharing of police information through a dedicated office at national level (the 'National Central Bureau'). A neutral membership-based organisation, INTERPOL routinely facilitates technical police cooperation away from the spotlight, including between countries that otherwise may not openly cooperate.

Developing a permanent mechanism for international cooperation among the five North African countries, as well as with sub-Saharan neighbour countries and with EU Member States will both fall under the mandate of INTERPOL and within the already-established cooperation that the concerned countries have in the framework of INTERPOL.

2. Recognized mandate to facilitate law enforcement cooperation, including in the area of migrant smuggling, at operational level, allowing *inter alia* for the exchange of personal data.

INTERPOL hosts and facilitates operational working groups in all major crime areas, including in the area of migrant smuggling, to foster international police cooperation, including through the exchange of police information. The INTERPOL Specialized Operational Network on Migrant Smuggling (ISON), typically composed of the heads of migrant smuggling units in the represented countries (including EU Member States), facilitates law enforcement cooperation through sharing of information, criminal data analysis and expert meetings. The network includes a representative from Europol and both organisations cooperate closely on migrant smuggling in the framework of Europol's European Migrant Smuggling Centre. Europol does not, however, have Operational Agreements (allowing for the exchange of personal data) with any

one of North Africa's five countries, therefore preventing the agency to facilitate operational data sharing among and with authorities from the region. INTERPOL also acts as a global hub for the sharing of police information through its hosting of a number of global police databases, including on wanted persons and travel documents associated with wanted persons.

3. Experience in implementing law enforcement cooperation project in North Africa

INTERPOL currently implements Project Sharaka (ENI – EUR 3 million, 2017-2021), which supports frontline officers, especially at border crossing points, in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia, strengthen their border security to prevent the travel of terrorists.

4. Experience in facilitating police operations in North Africa

INTERPOL conducts so-called Operations Neptune in North Africa. Bringing together Algeria, France, Italy, Morocco, Spain, and Tunisia, as well as Frontex and the World Customs Organization, these operations are intelligence-led operations targeting foreign terrorist fighters, as well as criminal networks involved in human trafficking, people smuggling, firearms trafficking and drugs trafficking. The Neptune I and II operations, organized in 2018 and 2019, have led to multiple arrests and to the identification of dozens of active investigative leads.

The implementation by this entity entails full implementation of the Action, including through partnerships with EU Justice and Home Affairs agencies, as indicated in point 3 of the present document.

4.3 SCOPE OF GEOGRAPHICAL ELIGIBILITY FOR PROCUREMENT AND GRANTS

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply, subject to the following provisions.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this Action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.4 INDICATIVE BUDGET

| Indicative Budget components | EU contribution (amount in EUR) | Third-party contribution, in currency identified |
|---|------------------------------------|---|
| Objective 1: Police information [and intelligence] for investigation and prosecution of organized crime groups [engaging in migrant smuggling] is managed, made actionable and exchanged composed of | | |
| Indirect management - cf. section 4.2.1 | 8 000 000 | 250 000 |
| Objective 2: Targeted jointly managed police operations to disrupt known organised crime groups engaging in migrant trafficking /smuggling are undertaken composed of | | |
| Indirect management- cf. section 4.2.1 | 1 900 000 | 250 000 |
| Evaluation – cf. section 5.2 | 100 000 | |

| | | |
|---|-------------------|----------------|
| Audit – cf. section 5.3 | | |
| Communication and visibility – cf. section 6 | N.A. | |
| Totals | 10 000 000 | 500 000 |

4.5 ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be set-up. It will be chaired by the EU and the beneficiary countries and will involve part-taking EU Agencies and EU Member States. The EU may decide to invite other actors after consultation with the beneficiary countries, if deemed relevant. The PSC will provide strategic and overall guidance, and global oversight of the implementation of the Action under the specific contract, including assessment and exchanges of good practices. The PSC will provide an overarching framework for discussing emerging priorities. The results of the consultation process will, on one hand, inform the formulation of possible additional project funded Actions and provide strategic guidance to ensure coherence between national initiatives (i.e. programme-funded Actions) and the overall regional context. The Steering Committee will meet once a year.

The coordination at national level will mainly include EU institutions, EU Member States, relevant national authorities and international organisations. The main stakeholders will unite in a Project Steering Committee where the implementation of the Actions and related capacity building will be coordinated and approved. Since the Action relates to the security sector, (I)NGOs will not be involved.

The involvement of national stakeholders will ensure ownership and sustainability of the overall programme and of the programme-funded Actions while contributing to the improvement of inter-institutional coordination and migration governance at national and regional level.

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

5. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1 MONITORING AND REPORTING

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this Action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the Action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the Action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (Outputs and direct Outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the log-frame matrix (for project modality) and the partner's strategy, policy or reform Action plan list (for budget support).

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

Roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring:

As stated in the Better Regulation, to be comprehensive, the monitoring system put in place must also cover the objectives of the Action. Implementing partners' monitoring system is therefore expected to measure, and report, on progress in relation to the planned outputs, outcomes and impact of the Action by means of

RACER (Relevant, Accepted, Credible, Easy, Robust) and SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-related) indicators related to a baseline situation. A balanced indicator system should also include both quantitative and qualitative indicators as well as gendered indicators to be able to monitor gender equality. In addition, considering the multi-country nature of this Action, indicator values will be measured, and reported, both on a country-by-country basis and in an aggregated manner.

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

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

This Action does not specifically foresee to provide support to and strengthen the partner country's M&E capacities to monitor progress.

Given the nature and the geographical scope of the Action, baselines and targets will be provided by the implementing partner at contracting level at the end of the inception phase. Information will be collected during the inception phase by the project team in close consultation with other stakeholders and beneficiaries. Information will be collected by the implementing partner(s) through desk research and field assessment missions, with particular attention to studies and surveys already published, a baseline survey and interviews. The finding of the baseline survey will be reviewed during the mid-term/ex-post evaluations.

Stakeholder representatives will be members of the Steering Committee where their participation will be discussed and decided during the inception phase of the agreement. Monitoring and reporting related issues will be discussed starting from the kick off meeting and during the inception phase where baselines, targets, procedures and roles will also be discussed and defined.

Gender equality will be mainstreamed in the implementation of the agreement where disaggregated data will be collected at this regard.

The monitoring and reporting of the Action will be conducted centrally by the monitoring and evaluation unit to be established within the project team of the regional implementation unit and in close cooperation with the local implementation units established in the targeted location.

Indicators values will be measured on a country-by-country basis and whereas possible on a disaggregated basis.

5.2 EVALUATION

Having regard to the importance of the Action, a mid-term evaluation will be carried out for this Action or its components via independent consultants contracted by the Commission. It will be carried out for learning purposes, in particular with respect to launch a second phase of the Action when relevant.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partner country and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination⁹. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up Actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

If it is confirmed that Regional Migration Programme Actions can access funds from the “NDICI Global allocation”, the financing of the evaluation shall be covered by another measure constituting a Financing Decision. If this is not the case, around 1% of the Action total budget will be dedicated for an evaluation under a framework contract.

5.3 AUDIT AND VERIFICATIONS

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

6. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

Communication and visibility is a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions, to advertise the European Union’s support for their work to the relevant audiences.

To that end they must comply with the instructions given in the [Communication and Visibility Requirements of 2018](#) (or any successor document), notably with regard to the use of the EU emblem and the elaboration of a dedicated communication and visibility plan, to be completed for every action at the start of implementation.

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

Communication and visibility measures may be funded by another measure constituting a Financing Decision. For the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action, the Commission may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, as part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union. Visibility and communication measures should also promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds.

Effectiveness of communication activities on awareness about the action and its objectives as well as on EU funding of the action should be measured.

Implementing partners shall keep the Commission and concerned EU Delegation/Office fully informed of the planning and implementation of specific visibility and communication activities before work starts.

⁹ See best [practice of evaluation dissemination](#)

Implementing partners will ensure adequate visibility of EU financing and will report on visibility and communication actions as well as the results of the overall action to the relevant monitoring committees.