



International Organization for Migration (IOM)  
The UN Migration Agency

## Project Proposal:

### ENHANCING RESPONSE MECHANISMS AND ASSISTANCE OF VULNERABLE MIGRANTS IN TUNISIA

Project type:	RR - Return and Reintegration Assistance for Migrants and Governments
Secondary project type:	PX - Protection and Assistance to Vulnerable Migrants
Geographical Coverage:	Tunisia
Executing agency:	International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Beneficiaries:	Vulnerable and stranded migrants in Tunisia
Partner(s):	Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Women, Family, Children and Seniors, Ministry of Social Affairs, private sector, NGOs and service providers working with vulnerable migrants
Management site:	Tunisia-CO-Tunis-TN10
Duration:	24 months
Budget:	2,000,000.00 EUR

#### Summary

During the first six months of 2021, Tunisia experienced a rapid increase in rescue at sea operations, and with this a significant increase in the need for shelter and other assistance to meet immediate humanitarian needs of rescued and stranded migrants, as well as other protection needs and enrolment in Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programmes from Tunisia to countries of origin as one of the sustainable solutions. With the increase, three IOM operated shelters in southern Tunisia for vulnerable migrants currently operate at maximum capacity.

Without sufficient access to emergency assistance and information about their rights and options available to them, migrants stranded in Tunisia are at higher risk of exploitation, abuse and loss of life in the context of onward movement by sea under precarious conditions. Over the past years, IOM has worked closely with its partners to ensure vulnerable migrants in Tunisia have access to essential services and support, to respond to the growing need for emergency assistance and individual case management support to migrants in vulnerable situations. This includes direct assistance to migrants

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#### IOM Tunisia

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rescued at sea provided upon disembarkation, referral to specialized services and psychosocial well-being interventions, as well as provision of shelter, referrals to the competent authorities or other partner for protection (e.g. in the case of unaccompanied migrant children and victims of trafficking), and AVRR to countries of origin, as well as family reunification options to third countries for stranded children and spouses. The Government of Tunisia relies on IOM to provide this assistance particularly as the number of disembarkations continues to increase.

Following frequent requests from Tunisian authorities for IOM assistance, the proposed project will support the Tunisian authorities and local civil society, in the continued provision of assistance to and protection of stranded migrants, including to further increase the availability of AVRR to those unable or unwilling to remain in Tunisia. The project will bring added value by strengthening the provision of shelter, direct assistance in the form of food and non-food items (NFIs), other individualized services or referrals for protection and assistance, and/or AVRR as one of the sustainable solutions, in response to the increase in rescue at sea operations in Tunisian waters.

The project builds upon Italy's Africa Fund projects "Enhancing Access of Stranded Migrants in Tunisia to Protection and Return and Reintegration" and "Enhancing the Protection of Vulnerable Migrants in Tunisia through Emergency Assistance and Support to Health Surveillance and Service Providers", ending in January and February 2022 respectively, as well as the "Supporting Tunisia's Migration Governance Addressing the Needs of Vulnerable Migrants" implemented under the Regional Development and Protection Programme for North Africa ("RDPP NA") led by the Italian Ministry of Interior, which ended in June 2021. The project is, thus, timely and will complement ongoing programming, including the "EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration" North Africa window ending in October 2022, and the Netherlands-funded "Cooperation on Migration and Partnerships to Achieve Sustainable Solutions" (COMPASS) ending in 2023.

## 1. Rationale

During the first six months of 2021, in response to requests from Tunisian authorities, IOM provided assistance to 1,227 migrants rescued at sea, over four times more than during the entire year of 2020, when IOM assisted 293 migrants rescued at sea. The migrants assisted have fled violence and conflict, seek economic and educational opportunities in Europe, or as often is the case, a mix of both. A notable change observed in 2021 was the proportion of migrants of Bangladeshi origin among migrants rescued at sea assisted by IOM in Tunisia.

From January to June 2021, 15,119 migrants reportedly arrived in Europe crossing the central Mediterranean while during the same period in 2020 the reported number of arrivals was 8,630 migrants, representing a 75 per cent increase. Overcrowded and unseaworthy vessels that often capsize continue causing human tragedies and the loss of lives. An estimated 723<sup>1</sup> migrants perished trying to cross through the Central Mediterranean Route (CMR) between January and June 2021. This represents a four-fold increase when compared to the same period in 2020 (160 deaths between January to June 2020).

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<sup>1</sup> IOM Missing Migrants project website consulted 02 July 2021: <https://missingmigrants.iom.int/region/mediterranean>

In Tunisia, the economic situation, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the lack of a comprehensive migration policy and legal framework, offers limited opportunities for the employment and local integration of migrants. This combined with the increase of rescue at sea operations in southern Tunisia, with vessels departing from Libya and entering Tunisian waters in distress, has resulted in an increase both in need for shelter as part of IOM's emergency and immediate assistance as well as an increase in demand for Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) from Tunisia to countries of origin.

The Government of Tunisia relies heavily on the support of IOM to respond to the increased number of disembarkations, including the provision of shelter, direct assistance (such as food and NFIs), referrals to specialized services and/or AVRR from Tunisia to the migrants' countries of origin. Together with civil society partners and in coordination with Tunisian authorities, IOM has established Migrant Resource and Response Mechanisms in three regions of Tunisia: Tunis, Zarzis and Sfax, to ensure a coordinated response to the protection and assistance needs of the target group. Together with its partners, IOM provides migrants in vulnerable situations, including the ones who have been rescued at sea, with protection and assistance that includes the provision of shelter, food and NFIs, health support, family tracing and reunification, legal assistance, referral to specialized services, and information on their rights and available options (e.g., AVRR).

In partnership between IOM and the Tunisian Red Crescent, IOM Tunisia currently operates three shelters in southern Tunisia for vulnerable migrants, including those rescued at sea and migrants referred by the authorities from the land borders. The proposed project will bring added value by further increasing the availability of this emergency assistance, while ensuring the protection of the most vulnerable cases, in coordination with relevant stakeholders, offering opportunities for return and reintegration support, as well as support for other durable solutions.

## 2. Project Description

**Objective: Enhancing the protection and assistance of migrants in a vulnerable situation in Tunisia.**

In response to the increasing demand for assistance to migrants in vulnerable situations, the proposed project will allow IOM to ensure that migrants in vulnerable situations in Tunisia benefit from protection and assistance interventions, including emergency assistance, as well as voluntary return and reintegration assistance, as one of the possible durable solutions. Migrants needing temporary shelter will be referred to such assistance, prioritizing the most vulnerable and within the limits of shelter capacity. Additionally, migrants in a vulnerable situation will be offered referral for further protection and assistance services, as appropriate.

**Outcome 1: Access to short-term humanitarian assistance and to protection is available to the most vulnerable migrants in Tunisia.**

In 2017, together with civil society partners and in coordination with Tunisian authorities, IOM established Migrant Resource and Response Mechanisms in three regions of Tunisia: Tunis, Zarzis and Sfax. Building upon the experience gained and lessons learned, IOM will continue with the regular

updating of the mechanisms to ensure a coordinated response to the protection and assistance needs of the target group in each region.

*Output 1.1: Migrants in vulnerable situations in Tunisia are provided with emergency assistance, vulnerability screening and information on options available, including AVRR.*

With office presence in Tunis, Zarzis and Sfax, IOM Tunisia will closely liaise with the Tunisian authorities and local civil society and private sector partners to provide short-term emergency assistance to vulnerable migrants. Most of the beneficiaries are expected to include migrants rescued at sea, but may also include others, such as migrants referred to IOM from the land border crossing points with Libya and Algeria and other migrants in vulnerable situations. The support will vary based on the situation and needs, but will in most cases consist of shelter, food and NFIs, medical and/or legal assistance and psychosocial support. Once the immediate needs are met, IOM will counsel the beneficiaries on the long-term options available to them, including but not limited to seeking asylum or applying for IOM Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) assistance.

IOM currently supports technically and financially 3 facilities in southern Tunisia providing emergency accommodation and services to migrants. One of the shelters, in Médenine, addresses the shelter needs of families, women and children, while shelters in Zarzis and Tataouine accommodate men only. The shelters cater for the needs of migrants in vulnerable situations, including migrants rescued at sea and the most vulnerable among those being processed for AVRR.

These shelters allow their beneficiaries a 60-day reflection period during which they will be provided with food and NFI-kits, as well as counselling on their rights and responsibilities in Tunisia. During this 60-day period, they can reflect upon the options available, including to seek asylum or apply for IOM's AVRR assistance. Through the proposed project, IOM will provide assistance based on the need, including shelter, food and NFIs to 1,100 beneficiaries.

**Outcome 2: Stranded migrants have access to durable solutions, including Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration assistance.**

The project will allow IOM to provide Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) assistance from Tunisia to countries of origin to additional beneficiaries, in response to an increased demand and need for this assistance.

*Output 2.1: Migrants are provided with durable solutions including return and reintegration assistance from Tunisia to their countries of origin.*

The project will allow 400 foreign nationals to benefit from IOM assistance to return to their countries of origin with dignity or to have access to opportunities for family reunification. The assistance will include vulnerability screening, counselling to foster an informed decision, pre-departure assistance, including in response to any health measures imposed by authorities in Tunisia or countries of origin, the travel arrangements, airport assistance, as well as provision of escorts for those requiring it, including unaccompanied migrant children, migrants with health needs and elderly migrants. Furthermore, IOM will also coordinate with relevant authorities, civil society partners and IOM missions in countries of destination for family reunification assistance to those requiring it.

A total of 250 migrants will benefit from reintegration assistance under the project. The reintegration assistance may consist of support to initiate economic activities upon arrival, enrolment in an educational program or health assistance, in line with IOM's Policy on the full spectrum of Return, Readmission and Reintegration and its Integrated Approach to Reintegration in the context of Return. Where reintegration assistance in countries of origin is available through other sources such as the EU-IOM Joint Initiative, including Cote D'Ivoire, a country of origin among many AVRR beneficiaries, the project will only cover the costs of travel and pre-departure assistance for the beneficiary in question. This complementarity will ensure the project will maximize number of beneficiaries assisted while guaranteeing that all have access to reintegration assistance.

### **3. Partnerships and Coordination**

IOM's extensive expertise and work at national and regional level with emergency response, migrant protection and assistance and work with authorities at the borders, as well as the organisation's infrastructure and partnerships in North Africa, position it well to respond to the needs identified. The implementation of the project will benefit from IOM's established partnerships and cooperation with the main actors in Tunisia, relevant to the proposed action. Relevant government entities that the project will be implemented in close coordination with include the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Women, Family, Children and Seniors as well as NGOs and service providers working with vulnerable migrants, including the Tunisian Red Crescent and private sector. IOM will also work closely with the local and regional authorities in the regions of Tunis, Médenine, Zarzis, Tataouine and Sfax where the project will be implemented. Moreover, IOM has established effective communications and coordination mechanisms with relevant UN agencies (e.g. WHO, UNHCR, UNICEF, ILO, and OHCHR), as well as country of origin embassies of migrants in Tunisia.

### **4. Monitoring**

The Project Manager will be responsible for the project planning, monitoring and reporting, including compliance between activities and project requirements and controlling the security risks or any other potential threats towards project implementation. To prevent risks related to a changed political will, IOM will maintain close collaboration with the Government, at local, regional and central levels, ensuring a quick adaptability of the project to achieve defined objectives.

The Project Manager will monitor the implementation of the project, regularly verifying the progress and the achievement regarding the defined objectives and the logical framework. Monitoring visits of project staff to Médenine, Zarzis and Tataouine in Southern Tunisia, and Sfax in Eastern Tunisia will allow IOM to assess the realized progress of the activities in relation to the project indicators. These visits will help to ensure that important changes, including in relations between the facilities and the host communities, will be quickly known and implementation of activities adapted accordingly.

Regular meetings will be organized with the staff responsible for the implementation of this project in order to monitor the activities and to prioritize objectives regarding the implementation of recommendations. Related tools will allow IOM to incorporate corrective measures as required. IOM will maintain its database of activities related to assistance to the target group.

## 5. Evaluation

A final evaluation will be undertaken towards the end of the project. The evaluation will assess the extent to which the project has achieved the planned short- and long-term results. The evaluation will specifically assess the project implementation strategies to ascertain their adequacy to the context and alignment to the government priorities and responds to beneficiaries' needs. The purpose of this evaluation will be to document lessons learned and consolidate corrective recommendations for future intervention.

## 6. Results Matrix

	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Data Source and Collection Method</i>	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Assumptions</i>
<b>Objective:</b> Enhancing the protection and assistance of migrants in vulnerable situations in Tunisia.					
<b>Outcome 1:</b> Access to short-term humanitarian assistance and to protection is available to the most vulnerable migrants in Tunisia.	# of coordination meetings held # of MRRM updated	Workshop reports		3	Stakeholders continue to support the MRRM.
<b>Output 1.1:</b> Migrants in vulnerable situations in Tunisia are provided with emergency assistance, vulnerability screening and information on options available, including AVRR.	# of beneficiaries receiving direct assistance and information on durable solutions such as AVRR (disaggregated by sex, age and country of origin)	IOM Beneficiary Database, Activity reports	0	1,100	Local authorities continue to support the planned assistance.
	# of IOM co-managed shelters operating in Tunisia	Monitoring reports	3	3	
<b>Activities that lead to Output 1.1</b>					Local authorities continue to support and request for IOM assistance
1.1.1 Ensure counselling, vulnerability screening, case management and referrals as relevant of migrants hosted in IOM shelters or other migrants in vulnerable situations in compliance with IOM standards and procedures					
1.1.2 Identifying and responding to needs as per situation, including through referrals in the area of health and psychosocial support					
1.1.3 Support to running and operations of shelters in Médenine, Zarzis and Tataouine					
1.1.4 Provision of humanitarian needs to shelter beneficiaries					
<b>Outcome 2:</b> Stranded migrants in Tunisia have access to durable solutions including Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration assistance					International travel resumes after

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					COVID-19 related restrictions
<b>Output 2.1:</b> Migrants are provided with durable solutions including return and reintegration assistance from Tunisia to their countries of origin	# of migrants provided with return assistance from Tunisia to countries of origin or family reunification under the project	IOM Beneficiary Database	0	400	The target group remains in need of assistance and accepts to be assisted
	# of migrants provided with reintegration assistance in countries of origin under the project	IOM Beneficiary Database	0	250	Total number of migrants assisted may vary depending on availability of other sources
	# of unaccompanied migrant children assisted through family tracing and BID panels	IOM Beneficiary Database	0	10	Total number of migrants assisted may vary depending on availability of other sources
<b>Activities that lead to Output 2.1</b>					
2.1.1 Pre-departure travel assistance on a needed basis, including Best Interest Determination (BID) for children and risks assessment for other migrants in vulnerable situations 2.1.2 Provision of travel allowance 2.1.3 Coordination for travel to country of origin and/or onward travel assistance, if required 2.1.4 Provision of transit assistance, if required 2.1.5 Provision of operational or medical escort to assist with travel, if required					The target group remains in need of assistance and accepts to be assisted



## 7. Work Plan

Activity	Responsible Party	Time Frame - Quarter							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.1.1 Ensure counselling, vulnerability screening, case management and referrals as relevant of migrants hosted in IOM shelters or other migrants in vulnerable situations in compliance with IOM standards and procedures	IOM								
1.1.2 Identifying and responding to needs as per situation, including through referrals in the area of health and psychosocial support	IOM								
1.1.3 Support to running and operations of shelters in Médenine, Zarzis and Tataouine	IOM								
1.1.4 Provision of humanitarian needs to shelter beneficiaries									
2.1.1 Pre-departure travel assistance on a needs basis	IOM								
2.1.2 Provision of travel allowance	IOM								
2.1.3 Coordination for travel to country of origin and/or onward travel assistance, if required	IOM								
2.1.4 Provision of transit assistance, if required	IOM								
2.1.5 Provision of operational or medical escort to assist with travel, if required	IOM								

## 8. Budget

Description	Unit	Nr. of Units	Unit Cost	Sub-total EUR
<b>A. STAFF Costs</b>				
Staff cost International	Months	24	11,050	265,200
Staff Cost National	Months	24	6,745	161,880
<i>Total Staff Costs (A):</i>				<b>427,080</b>
<b>B. OFFICE Costs</b>				
Office running costs (rents, utilities, communications, security, vehicle..	Months	24	5,588	134,122
IOM Rome support	Lump Sum	1	10,000	10,000
IOM RO Cairo support	Lump Sum	1	5,000	5,000
<i>Total Office Costs (B):</i>				<b>149,122</b>
<b>Total Staff and Office Costs:</b>				<b>576,202</b>
<b>C. OPERATIONAL Costs</b>				
<i>Output 1.1: Vulnerable migrants in Tunisia are provided with emergency assistance and information on</i>		1,100	457	502,200
<i>Output 2.1: Migrants are provided with travel from Tunisia and reintegration assistance in countries of d</i>		400	1,851	740,250
<b>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</b>				
Final Evaluation	Lump Sum	1	15,000	15,000
Italy MFA interlocutors TDY to Tunisia for monitoring	Each	1	4,000	4,000
Field monitoring visit in Tunisia (travel, per diem)	Each	16	500	8,000
Visibility	Lump Sum	1	5,000	5,000
<i>Total Operational Costs (C):</i>				<b>1,274,450</b>
<b>Total (A+B+C):</b>				<b>1,850,652</b>
<b>IOM Overhead (7%)</b>				<b>129,546</b>
<b>Total Budget</b>				<b>1,980,198</b>
<b>Levy (1%)</b>				<b>19,802</b>
<b>TOTAL COSTS:</b>				<b>2,000,000</b>