

# LIVE, LEARN & PARTICIPATE:

ENHANCING ACCESS TO SOLUTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH ALONG THE CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN ROUTE



## UNHCR CROSS-REGIONAL APPEAL 2020-2022

A total of **3,536** unaccompanied children arrived by sea in Italy in **2018**, representing **15%** of total arrivals<sup>1</sup>

**75%** of children and youth who took the Central Mediterranean route suffered some form of exploitation, including human trafficking<sup>2</sup>

**3,066** youth **15-24** in detention centers in Libya (**1,463 under 18**)<sup>3</sup>

### CONTEXT

Thousands of refugees and migrants risk their lives at the hands of traffickers and smugglers on dangerous journeys from the Horn of Africa to North Africa. Many are traveling in the hope of reaching Europe through the increasingly perilous journey across the Mediterranean Sea. Others are looking to access protection, employment and other opportunities in North African countries. In their majority, refugees and migrants, moving as part of mixed flows, face life-threatening risks along the route include extrajudicial killings, sexual violence, arbitrary and prolonged detention, starvation, extortion, being left to die in the desert, and forced labour.

In recent years, UNHCR in Egypt, Ethiopia, Libya and Sudan has witnessed the steady movement from first countries of asylum of many unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) and young people seeking to travel within the region or to Europe via Libya. While UNHCR and other organizations have strengthened their presence and assistance to reach more people on the move in need of international protection, many challenges remain with respect to:

- ▶ Reaching out to mobile vulnerable populations under the control of smuggling/trafficking networks;
- ▶ Making sure that children and young people have access to existing national and local support structures and that such institutions have the capacity to respond to their needs;
- ▶ Making services, activities and access to solutions responsive to the needs and aspirations of children and young people on the move;
- ▶ Addressing family separation and the specific needs of unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) facing heightened and additional risks.

UNHCR is committed to launching a major cross-regional initiative across Egypt, Ethiopia, Libya and Sudan beginning in 2020 and for a period of three years targeting at-risk children and youth on the move from the Horn of Africa to North Africa. The initiative will build most notably on the lessons learned from UNHCR's Live, Learn and Play Safe (2014-2016) regional child protection project.

### A CROSS-REGIONAL RESPONSE TO ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The overall purpose of the "Live, Learn and Participate" is to **enhance protection and support services for children and youth across different locations along main transit routes: Cairo in Egypt, Shire and Addis Ababa in Ethiopia, Khartoum and Kassala in Sudan and Tripoli, in Libya** by:

- ▶ Facilitating the delivery of **high-quality case management, care arrangements educational, livelihoods and psychosocial and other services** to children and young people of concern to UNHCR directly or through partners as per identified needs; and
- ▶ **Improving access to livelihood opportunities and solutions including family reunification** through legal assistance and case management support for children and youth qualifying for this solution.

The approach at each target location will depend upon the context in each country and the profile of displaced populations. Interventions will aim to involve children and young people in the design and delivery of programmes with capacity development of children, youth and community or local actors being a central tenet of interventions.

<sup>1</sup> UNHCR, Italy – Unaccompanied and Separated Children Dashboard – December 2018; January 2019, available from: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/67556>

<sup>2</sup> UNICEF, Harrowing Journeys: Children and youth on the move across the Mediterranean Sea, at risk of trafficking and exploitation, September 2017, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/59b7fdd74.html>. Statistics cited include all nationalities as the report did not differentiate between refugees and migrants.

<sup>3</sup> UNHCR Progres database data July 2019

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

**Objective #1: Children and youth are better protected against the risks associated with onward movement, trafficking and smuggling through the strengthening of existing programs**



- ▶ **Support for early identification, referrals, registration and comprehensive case management:** a minimum package of services will be delivered that would include: early identification, best interest procedures and referral to relevant providers with follow up specialized services and identification of family-based alternative care and support arrangements for children;
- ▶ **Strengthened community-based interventions through child/youth-led projects** will provide the basis for the development of intergenerational relationships and promote child and youth decision making and participation in activities that impact upon their lives.

**Objective #2: Alternative care arrangements and support structures are prioritised**

- ▶ **Family-based care will be prioritized and foster programs expanded** through financial support and in the form of foster parent training, community dialogue and establishment and enhancement of monitoring systems to respond to children and young people's needs and vulnerabilities;
- ▶ **Emergency housing and post-arrival reception facilities:** basic first aid, humanitarian assistance and medical/other care through partners, health facilities, and/or specialised SGBV services will be provided to children and youth;
- ▶ **Children "ageing out" will be provided with the tools to succeed** through targeted programming and appropriate transitional support as they enter adulthood;
- ▶ **Accessible and age-appropriate psychosocial support will be provided.**

**Objective #3: Children have access to developmental and livelihoods opportunities**

- ▶ Children and youth will have increased access to educational and vocational opportunities in line with their interests;

- ▶ Recreational and social activities will be enhanced and also benefit host communities in order to engage the minds of young people and foster peaceful cohabitation.



**Objective #4: Access to family reunification and other durable solutions/complementary pathways are strengthened**

- ▶ **A current pilot project on family reunification** which has both a staffing/expert element as well as a legal assistance component will be expanded in all target countries;
- ▶ **Resettlement will be strategically pursued** for children and youth at-risk when it is found to be in their best interest.

**Objective #5: Regional and country-level cooperation and coordination is strengthened to produce better outcomes for children**

- ▶ **Cross-border cooperation** will allow for constant exchange, coordination and consistency of response by relevant stakeholders;
- ▶ **Country-level coordination will be enhanced** and national systems will benefit from increased resources to further capacitate and collaborate with national child protection workforce staff.

**FUNDING NEEDS 2020-2022: 13.3 MILLION USD**

