

Press release

IOM Morocco and the Ambassador of Finland sign the 3.5M euros programme “Fostering health and protection to vulnerable migrants in Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen and Sudan”



H.E. Pekka Hyvönen, Ambassador of Finland to Morocco and Ms. Ana Fonseca, IOM Chief of Mission in Morocco.

Rabat-, 17 July – On Friday, H.E. Pekka Hyvönen, Ambassador of Finland to Morocco and Ms. Ana Fonseca, Chief of Mission of the UN Migration Agency (IOM) in Morocco signed the 3.5 Million euros agreement for a third phase of the programme entitled “Fostering health and protection to vulnerable migrants in Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen and Sudan”.

In 2020, the total number of international migrants in the MENA region is predicted to near 40 million. Many migrants in the region face diverse challenges in accessing essential health care services due to a number of factors including irregular status and language barriers. Such disparities impact the well-being of migrants and host communities and undermine the realization of global health goals. High morbidity and mortality among migrants, especially in irregular, forced, or exploitative migration situations is also an underestimated critical health concern.

“At the time when the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) recognizes the importance of promoting migrants and migration inclusive national health policies and planning, the programme, funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, has since 2015 contributed to improving the health and wellbeing of more than **145,000 migrants among the different countries implicated**. Furthermore, **1,140 multi-sectoral stakeholders including health professionals** such as **public health policy makers**, members of civil society organizations, academics and migrants) have proactively engaged in the implementation of migrants-inclusive policies through local and national dialogues.” declared Ms. Ana Fonseca.

The third phase, which will also include Sudan and will be implemented between August 2020 and May 2023, will build on the above achievements and continue improving protection and health conditions of migrants by addressing their unique vulnerabilities and building the resilience through national, regional and international dialogues and existing networks on migration and health.

More specifically, the third phase will support governments and national partners in the six countries achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), the GCM and respective national framework and

priorities with three-fold approach consisting of: (1) national policies and strategies that make provisions for the **health needs and rights of migrants** and their communities in line with international, regional and national commitments; (2) increased accessibility and use of health and **protection services by vulnerable migrants**; and (3) strengthened **multi-sectoral partnership alliances** towards a harmonized and sustainable response to the health needs of vulnerable migrants and their host communities.

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