

**Action Document for the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian crisis to be used for the decisions of the Operational Board**

**1. IDENTIFICATION**

<b>Title/Number</b>	Support to a Communication and Information campaign of the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis		
<b>Total cost</b>	Total estimated cost: EUR 3 million Total amount drawn from the Trust Fund: EUR: 3 million		
<b>Country</b>	Europe and MENA region		
<b>Locations</b>	Key focus Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq		
<b>Implementing Partner (s)</b>	Not yet defined (as public tender/procurement)		
<b>Main Stakeholder (s)</b>	The EUTF Syria donors, partners, local and national authorities and EUTF beneficiaries in countries of implementation, EUTF implementing partners, and selected Action implementers		
<b>Aid method / Method of implementation</b>	Direct Management – Procurement of Services		
<b>SDGs</b>	Awareness raising and promotion of SDG's addressed by all EUTF projects SDG 17, Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform SDGs' indicator 17.17. "encourage and promote effective public, public- private, and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships"		
<b>DAC-code</b>	99820	Sector	Promotion of development awareness
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Increase visibility, awareness and understanding</b> for the EUTF Syria among project beneficiaries, implementing partners, national host governments, other key and like-minded donors, the wider EU and global citizenry, as well as within the EU Institutions.</li> <li>• <b>Communicate on the benefits and concrete results</b> of the EUTF Syria's support.</li> <li>• Help reinforce the <b>EU's recognition and position as active and global player</b> #EUGlobalPlayer notably in the response to the Syria crisis.</li> <li>• <b>Improve knowledge of the EU's response</b> to the Syrian crisis among opinion-leaders in the affected countries.</li> <li>• <b>Garner support and recognition</b> for the efforts of the EUTF, as well as the real-life impact the funded projects</li> </ul>		

	have on Syrian refugees, internally displaced people and host communities in the region.
<b>Main Activities</b>	<p>Implementation of an information and communication campaign on EUTF support mainly through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Production of communication inputs for website, press, social media</li> <li>• Organization and support of outreach and advocacy events</li> <li>• Dissemination of communication products</li> </ul>

## 2. RATIONALE AND CONTEXT

### 2.1. Summary of the action and its objectives

This action serves to pursue and increase the development of an information and communication campaign, highlighting the achievements of the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis, (EUTF Syria). This action shall be implemented by one or several service contracts in order to deliver a number of communication services: events and campaigns, professional photographs, multi-media and audio-visual material, publications and graphic material.

The information and communication campaign showcases the real-life impact of the support provided by the EU in response to the Syrian crisis, which demonstrates the solidarity of the EU with the Syrian population, the neighboring countries hosting Syrian refugees as well as internally displaced persons, particularly in Iraq.

The global objective of the action is to further strengthen **the recognition, public awareness and visibility of the comprehensive EU support to address the consequences of the Syrian and Iraqi crisis**, by highlighting its real-life impact and results among defined target audiences in the affected region but also vis-à-vis the general public, donors and stakeholders in the EU Member States.

"The Action aligns to Output (5.1) of the revised EUTF Results Framework, namely "provision of advocacy for refugees"; in particular desired outputs align to Key Performance Indicators on number of individuals reached with outreach, information campaigns and awareness sessions (disaggregated by sex) and number of advocacy initiatives supported at the national and regional level."

### 2.2. Context

As the war in Syria has entered its eighth year, over 5.6 million people have fled their country, constituting the biggest refugee population from a single conflict in one generation and the largest humanitarian crisis since the end of World War II.

Established in December 2014, the **EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis** provides for a more coherent and integrated European response to the massive needs resulting from the Syrian refugee crisis. The Fund primarily addresses the current longer-term resilience and recovery needs of Syrian refugees in neighboring countries in particular for Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq, as well as assisting their overstretched local communities and administrations. In December 2015, the Trust Fund's scope was explicitly expanded to also cover support to internally displaced persons and local communities in Iraq.

In line with the priorities set out at the London conference on Syria in 2016, the Brussels conferences on the Future of Syria and the Region in April 2017 and April 2018, and the *Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework* adopted in 2016 as part of the *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants*,<sup>1</sup> the main objectives of the EU Trust Fund are to foster more self-reliance of refugees, **helping refugees thrive, not just survive**, while at the same time assisting the countries and communities hosting them.

In doing so, the EU Trust Fund bridges the nexus between humanitarian relief and development aid:

- It addresses early recovery, as well as resilience and self-reliance needs of refugees and IDPs, in a manner that also benefits local communities, and preserves the stability of neighbouring countries, and
- It supports countries hosting refugees by investing in health and education, economic development, job creation and integration into labour markets, for both local communities and refugees, especially vulnerable groups such as women and youth.

Despite important efforts from the side of the EU, field actors, such as EU Delegations and NGO's often report on the fact that Syrians as well as local governments and communities at the local level field great efforts in absorbing the substantial refugee numbers, and often lament that more direct support is needed. Many local stakeholders are not sufficiently aware of the significant support provided by the EU, often disbursed and implemented through third parties.

In the EU Member States, and especially given the increasing fatigue and declining attention for the Syrian crisis in media and the public, EU citizens need to be continuously made aware of the nature, size and form of EU assistance being provided in response to the Syrian crisis. An insufficient visibility of EU assistance also has a potential to negatively affect the EU's political efforts to resolve the Syrian crisis and its future role in a post-peace agreement transition and reconstruction.

As neighboring countries continue to host Syrian refugees are under great socio-economic pressure, it is essential to reassure host communities and their governments of the continued EU support throughout this protracted crisis. It is therefore of crucial importance to communicate that, while the EU addresses the needs of Syrian refugees, its support also has a sustainable and transformative impact on local communities, public service infrastructure and institutions.

The need for the EU to be more visible remains. Communication efforts to inform the European public, donors, EU Members States, as well as beneficiaries in partner countries about the EU's comprehensive assistance to those affected by the Syrian crisis need to continue. Therefore, for the present action document, capitalization on the progress made and continuity in the development of these products needs to be ensured in addition to optimization and wide-scale dissemination.

### **2.3. Lessons learnt**

The proposed action is in line with the overall DG NEAR communication strategy, adopted in September 2015, the EUTF internal communication strategy adopted in 2016, and the Joint EEAS-Commission Roadmap for the Southern Neighbourhood adopted in 2017. This approach seeks to enhance and improve the communication, centre it on people and concrete results and hence raise the profile of the EU as an essential and engaged actor in its southern neighbourhood, beyond its financial contributions.

Over the past 18-months, a first information and communication campaign had been launched by the EUTF Syria and produced a substantive number of communication instruments and products, requiring up- dating and scaling. Key deliverables included: four editions of a testimonial brochure "Voices from the Ground", 20 web-clips, 20 teasers, 10 testimonial posters, four mini documentaries, one animated

video, hundreds of high quality photos taken at EUTF projects in Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon, which have been effectively used in all communication products and campaigns (including social media, newsletter, Brussels Syria conference, etc) and successful photo exhibition containing 65 photographs. All videos are hosted on the [EU Neighbours South You Tube platform](#)<sup>1</sup>. A EUTF website is being developed, featuring factual and up-to date information, videos, testimonies and a photo gallery. In order to ensure increased outreach and visibility within and outside the institutions, one side-event to the Brussels II Conference on Syria and the Region and a larger conference and public outreach event<sup>2</sup> have been organised between April and June 2018. The photo-exhibition was displayed one month at the EEAS premises in September/early October 2018 and will become itinerary, starting with the EU Delegation to the United Nations in New York.

Based on the results described above, the EUTF has supported the EU to communicate effectively, beyond the financial support it extends. Through its various outreach activities including conferences, UNGA and thematic events, and communication campaigns, the EUTF has significantly contributed to the strategic positioning of the EU. Host countries in the region have increasingly recognised and appreciated the EUTF as a unique EU initiative to support them in coping with the refugee crisis, and underpinning the EU's solidarity and Compacts with them by concrete and substantial financial means. Given its volume and regional reach, the EUTF has also made the EU a very visible player vis-à-vis the UN system and World Bank, beyond its traditional role as a donor to their programmes.

As the necessity for the EU to communicate with one voice is of increasing importance, the EUTF will also support and integrate communication, outreach and cultural events at Brussels III Syria conference.

As the overall EU communication is moving towards targeted campaigns, the EUTF shall add a campaign dimension to its project communication and will support wider EU campaigns and strategic communication where relevant to ensure that concrete results on the ground can be leveraged for political visibility and communication.

Given the magnitude and the impact of the crisis not only in the region but also within EU borders, there is a common interest and an obligation to seek effective and integrated solutions. In this context and drawing on DG NEAR's communication strategy, "highlighting the impact of the EU's political, technical and financial assistance requires a comprehensive and also targeted approach".

This action will therefore continue to support a unified EU communications framework, while avoiding cross-messaging and an overlap of communication activities between the partners involved.

On a contractual level, lessons have been taken from the current service contract that provides visibility and communication services to the EUTF. That contract (TF-Madad/2017/T04.49) started in May 2017 and finishes in February 2019, and has been used to estimate the cost of future EUTF communication and visibility activities.

## **2.4. Complementary actions**

In order to ensure a unified communication approach, while avoiding cross-messaging and an overlap of communication activities, the following will complement the proposed action:

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NZUcG44W1Zg&index=50&list=PLaGaqba06xpi4YwDTwt0ljL\\_RPptPcjxx&t=285s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NZUcG44W1Zg&index=50&list=PLaGaqba06xpi4YwDTwt0ljL_RPptPcjxx&t=285s)

<sup>2</sup> [Summary of discussions from 20<sup>th</sup> June 2018 EUTF conference is available here](#)

The visibility and communication on EUTF Syria programmes in Turkey will be coordinated with the Facility for Refugees in Turkey (Facility), to avoid cross messaging on the ground.

Close coordination with each EU Delegation involved and other related EU services including the EEAS Strategic Communication Task Force South, DG NEAR A2 communication unit, DEVCO for Iraq related communication will ensure a unified communication approach for EUTF programmes in the countries of operation and in the EU.

At programme/project level, every EUTF implementing partner shall take all necessary measures to communicate about the funding received by the EUTF and communicate in a proactive and concrete manner about the objectives and results of the partnership with the EUTF in line with the EU Commission Communication and Visibility Manual. Each implementer is required to present a comprehensive communication and visibility strategy for their respective target country/community and submit a copy for review and validation to the EUTF.

## 2.5. Donor co-ordination

The Trust Fund is coordinating with its implementing partners and other stakeholders on a regional level including cross border issues. Donors shall be regularly informed about the results of communication and outreach activities supported by this action.

## 3. DETAILED DESCRIPTION

### 3.1. Objectives/Expected Results

The proposed action shall enable an information and communication campaign to enhance awareness and highlighting achievements of the EUTF Syria.

The global objective of this campaign is to **improve the recognition, public awareness and visibility of the comprehensive EU support to address the consequences of the Syrian and Iraqi crisis**, by highlighting its real-life impact and results among defined target audiences in the affected region but also *vis-à-vis* the general public, donors and stakeholders in the EU Member States.

The specific objectives of the information and communication campaign are to:

- **Increase visibility, awareness and understanding** for the EUTF among end-beneficiaries, the implementing partners, national host governments, other key and like-minded donors, the wider EU and global citizenry, as well as within the EU Institutions;
- **Communicate on the benefits and concrete results** of the EUTF's support;
- Help reinforce the **EU's recognition and position as active and global player #EUGlobalPlayer** notably within the context of the Syria crisis.
- **Improve knowledge of and motivation behind the EU's response** to the Syrian crisis among opinion-leaders in the region (i.e. social media activists/bloggers, NGO's, grass-roots and civil society organisations), and
- **Garner support and recognition** for the efforts of the EUTF, as well as the real-life impact the funded projects have on Syrian refugees, internally displaced people in Iraq and host communities in the region.

### **The results to be achieved include the following:**

- Promote the strategic position of the EU as an ally and partner in addressing the pressing needs of Syrian refugees, internally displaced persons and host communities.
- Advocate that the EU through the EUTF is focused on creating sustainable results and acts as an enabler of self-reliance and empowerment.
- Explain why the EU is extending this large scale support in response to the Syrian crisis.
- Dispel misleading information where actively disseminated by third parties and address concerns of all audiences in a factual and neutral manner, without engaging in counter-narratives or counter-propaganda.
- Communicate that the EU is genuinely investing in the future of the Syrian people and internally displaced persons in Iraq, while fully supporting host communities and their administrations with the aim to reinforce local public service delivery in the health, water, social protection and education system.
- Use targeted public diplomacy and awareness raising actions to explain the EU's support and commitment as a trusted and reliable long-term ally offering a concrete and effective response to the grievances.
- Provide factual, accurate and timely information on the Fund's developments and projects to beneficiaries, host communities and administrations, to stakeholders, opinion leaders and multipliers, including journalists from national and regional media in the EU and in partner countries.

### **3.2. Activities**

Under the supervision and guidance of the EUTF Syria communication team, the implementation of an information and communication campaign for the EUTF will include the following tasks to be carried out in the EU, Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq and if possible in the Mediterranean area.

- **Production of communication inputs for website, press, social media**
  - Provide inputs and content for the EUTF website. To develop creative ways to present EUTF stories and testimonies to ensure that the communication on the EUTF results and efforts always have a human face. "The EUTF Stories" is one feature of the website. Continue to produce content for story-telling activities of the Fund.
  - Produce content on EU support to the Syrian crisis, which can be added to existing EU services websites.
  - Produce press package.
  - Ensure that all print content can be used for social media, in addition to the production of additional content, (Facebook entries, Tweets, blog entries, photo material, videos...) , including editing content for Commission Social Media profiles. Support creative outreach to the population/ beneficiaries that have no access to mass or social media (refugees, IDPs etc., e.g. face-to-face communication, personal meetings, town-halls, etc; also through implementing partners).

- Ensure that all communication products will be available in English, Arabic and Kurdish and additional languages upon request.
- **Organization and support of outreach and advocacy events:**
  - Support organization of communication workshops with implementing partners on communication guidelines, including audio visual production.
  - Provide logistics support, visibility material and information packages for thematic conferences, seminars, dialogue roundtables run by beneficiaries in the region and facilitated by the EUTF and EU Delegations.
  - Support awareness raising and advocacy campaign at universities and schools in Europe and the countries of implementation to better inform about the situation where the EUTF operates as well as the EUTF achievements.
  - Cultural events: assist in organizing local outreach and awareness events, festivals (cultural, business development competitions etc.).
  - Support other creative communication and outreach actions highlighting EUTF assistance, including a scaling up of public diplomacy and awareness raising activities inside the EU.
  - Provide content and logistical support to overall EU communication and outreach events around the Brussels III conference for the Future of Syria and the Region in 2019.
- **Dissemination of communication products**
  - Support of desk research and media relations support.
  - Support the EUTF in establishing a network of information multipliers in the countries of implementation, including regional correspondents of European media, and in particular by disseminating and coordinating the above products through the EU Delegations.
  - Support the EUTF in ensuring local outreach and dissemination of all communication and audio-visual materials in both the EU and Syria's neighboring countries' medias, through the development of a media dissemination plan and the liaison with media outlets.
  - Provision of recommendations for EUTF and EU communication strategy and activities, including a set of indicators for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

### **3.3. Risks and assumptions**

#### Risks:

- Obstacles to access the implementation zone of EUTF projects and direct beneficiaries.
- Obstacles (legal, political, operational) to organize visibility events in host countries.
- Low level of involvement and commitment of partners and related project's actors in producing/collecting visibility and communication materials.
- Difficult coordination with implementing partners for communication and visibility activities.

- Obstacles (legal, political) to organize public diplomacy events in EU Member States.

Assumptions for the success of this action include:

- Stable security conditions and political framework within the host countries, allowing communication activities and collection of visibility materials in the region.
- National and local authorities remain supportive.
- The EUTF communications teams plans and coordinates all communication and visibility activities in the EU and the region to ensure coherence, avoid cross messaging and overlap of communication activities.
- EU representations in EU Member States are supportive, notably in outreach to media.

Mitigating measures

- The EUTF's implementing partners (at contract level) will be requested to address the identified risks to ensure their mitigation.
- Close coordination with communication services in each EU Delegation will be ensured to help mitigate potential risks on the ground: EUDs will be consulted, local sensitivities taken into account and EUDs will also multiply communication and outreach material launched and coordinated at EU headquarters level.
- EUTF Communication strategy has been agreed at DG NEAR's level and is fully in line with the overall DG NEAR communication strategy, adopted in September 2015, and in accordance with the EU's role as a global player and the Joint EEAS-Commission Roadmap for the Southern Neighbourhood from 2017.

**3.4. Crosscutting issues**

- All communication and outreach campaigns must be people-oriented and easily understandable. This can be achieved by prioritizing using audio-visuals, infographics, storylines, testimonies, photo exhibitions, and documentary screenings, mindful of the differentiation in messaging for Syrian, Lebanese, Jordanian and Iraqi beneficiaries. The campaigns must place the targeted individuals and groups at the centre and thus ensure respective ownership.
- Messaging will have a human face, empathic, honest, transparent, direct, unambiguous, neutral and conducive to a highly sensitive human and political environment and be gender-sensitive and gender-balanced.
- All messaging and communication activities will be developed and planned in collaboration with the EUTF management and in consultation with EU Delegations in the respective host countries.

**3.5 Stakeholders**

**Stakeholders of this action will be:**



- The EUTF donors,
- Local and national authorities and EUTF beneficiaries in countries of implementation,
- The EUTF implementing partners,
- EU services with whom the action will be coordinated: EU Commission (DG NEAR/DEVCO/COM/FPI/ECHO), European Parliament, EEAS, EU Delegations,
- EU Member States, citizens, media and press, civil society and opinion leaders
- Media, press, opinion leaders and civil society in EUTF countries of operation
- The selected contractor.

### **3.6. Contribution to SDGs**

This action seeks to ensure that all communication, information and outreach activities will promote and raise awareness about the SDG contribution of each project.

### **3.7 Intervention logic**

This action is cross-cutting and therefore comes in support to the other EUTF interventions by reinforcing the overall communication and visibility of the EUTF, within the framework of the overall EU communication and visibility strategy.

## **4. Implementation Issues**

### **4.1 Financing agreement, if relevant**

In order to implement part of this action, it is not foreseen to conclude any financing agreement with a government of the partner countries, referred to in Article 184(2)(b) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012.

### **4.2 Indicative operational implementation period**

The indicative operational implementation period of this action is identical to the end of implementation period of the EUTF.

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3.2 will be carried out is 35-months.

### **4.3 Implementation components and modules**

Given the nature of the action, the main channel of implementation will be the direct management of one or several procurement contracts, following appropriate procurement procedures as outlined in the EU Financial Regulations.

The rules and templates applicable for this EUTF Syria action will be the same as those applicable to actions directly financed under the budget, with the additional flexibilities foreseen for the EUTF as described in its constitutive agreement and in the 'Companion' and the 'Practical guide on contract procedures for European Union external action' (PRAG).

- The main mode of implementation of this action will be achieved through the launch of a call for tender, using the Framework Contract (FwC) procedure, for the conclusion of a long-term service contract. This will allow the continuation of the on-going communication campaign being implemented by the current Service Contract ending in February 2019 (TF-Madad/2017/04.49).

- Based on the results of this FwC contract, an extension in time and in budget could be envisaged, within the limit authorised by the financial rules mentioned before, and depending on the decision on EUTF extension.

- Separately, ad-hoc tenders could be launched to provide services for unexpected events and visibility needs, in particular the organisation of specific events in Jordan or Lebanon or other major political EU related events, within the timeframe of this Action Document and the EUTF duration.

#### 4.4 Indicative budget

<b>Module</b>	<b>EU contribution (amount in EUR)</b>	<b>Indicative third party contribution</b>
Procurement through service contracts	3.000.000	N.A.
<b>Total</b>	3.000.000	N.A.

#### 4.5 Performance monitoring and reporting

Monitoring of results for this action will be done at the level of the service contracts for each contractual deliverables and following contractual reporting obligations.

This action being a supportive measure of the EUTF implementation, developed at horizontal level, will not be included in the EUTF Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

#### 4.6 Evaluation and audit

Evaluation and audit of the action will be conducted at the level of the service contracts itself under the specific rules as described in the contract, in terms of reporting, verifications, checks and audit. This action being a supportive measure of the EUTF implementation, developed at horizontal level, will not be included in the EUTF Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. If necessary, ad hoc audit or expenditure verification assignments could be contracted by the EUTF.

#### 4.7 Communication and visibility

The nature of the action itself is related to communication and visibility purposes, and therefore does not require any communication and visibility mechanism.