

Action Document for EU Trust Fund to be used for the decisions of the Operational Board

1. IDENTIFICATION

Title/Number	EU support to the Western Balkans in managing the migration and refugee crisis		
Total cost	Total estimated cost: EUR 21 000 000 Total amount drawn from the Trust Fund: EUR 21 000 000		
Aid method / Method of implementation	Component 1: Direct management - grant to the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Component 2: Indirect Management with IOM – EUR		
DAC-code	16050	Mutlisector aid for basic social services	

2. RATIONALE AND CONTEXT

2.1. Summary of the action and its objectives

The EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis (The MADAD Fund) defines its overall objective as to provide a coherent and reinforced aid response to the Syrian crisis on a regional scale, responding primarily to the needs of refugees from Syria in neighboring countries, as well as of the communities hosting the refugees and their administrations, in particular as regards resilience and early recovery. The Action is also in line and is based on the Strategic orientation of the MADAD fund.

The proposed Action builds on the lessons learnt from two ongoing MADAD projects. In particular, it is expected to adapt EU support for migration management in the wake of the closure of the Western Balkans route, in which migrants/refugees, including Syrian refugees increasingly find themselves stranded, principally in Serbia.

As a result, the proposed Action builds further on the previous MADAD financed Action "EU support to Serbia in managing the migration/refugee crisis/ Balkan route" approved in 2016 in ensuring continuity of support to the reception centres. The proposed Action aims at scaling up and upgrading services in the reception centres in order to meet the needs of migrants for longer term stays: reconstruction/renovation of reception centres, protection measures, vital services such as health and education services, and the provision of assisted voluntary return and reintegration to countries of origin and to ensure equal access to those services.

The **Overall Objective** of the Action is to respond to the resilience needs of migrant or refugee populations in the Western Balkans, in particular in Serbia, through support to the national authorities, including enhancing shelter capacity and delivery of services.

The **Specific Objectives** are to:

- provide adequate accommodation facilities, living conditions and services such as in health and education to effectively respond to the needs of migrants/refugees and asylum seekers by strengthening the operational capacity of the authorities involved in the migration/refugees crisis;
- improve referral, accommodation and protection measures for migrants and asylum seekers in the reception centres/asylum centres and to continue providing support for the assisted voluntary return scheme for migrants not in need of international protection willing to return to their countries of origin.

In line with the MADAD Fund Overall Objective *"to provide a coherent and reinforced aid response to the Syrian crisis on a regional scale, responding primarily to the needs of refugees from Syria in neighbouring countries, as well as of the communities hosting the refugees and their administrations, in particular as regards resilience and early recovery"*, the Action will contribute to the Specific Objective 3 Regional Resilience and Local Development; "To mitigate the destabilising effects of the refugee crisis"; 3.2 'Local and national systems and service delivery capacities in target areas strengthened' of the current Result Framework¹.

2.2 Context

2.2.1 Country context

The refugee and migration crisis along the Western Balkans route has exerted a particularly high pressure on Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Decisions taken in one country along the route have a direct effect on the border of each of the countries downstream and on the number of persons stranded along the route. With the closure of the Western Balkans route in 2016, the number of persons stranded, in particular in Serbia, has increased and will be staying for longer periods. The situation has thus evolved from an emergency crisis situation to one of a more protracted nature that requires additional efforts from the authorities and donors to meet more medium to long term needs.

In the past 20 weeks, since the beginning of 2017, the total number of detected irregular border crossings was 1,542 (the average number per week is about 77). The top 7 nationalities were: Afghan 376, Syrian 330, Pakistani 259, Algerian 176, Iraqi 64, Iranian 38 and Morocco 33.

In Serbia, the estimated number of migrants and refugees is around 7,000 to 7,500 with over 80% accommodated in government-run centres across the country. According to the latest figures from the Commissariat for Refugees and Migrants, 5,935 persons were being accommodated in the 18 reception centres in Serbia. Of these, nearly half are under 18 years of age and 757 are unaccompanied minors. The top five nationalities are Afghanistan (58.4%), Iraq (16.7%), Pakistan (10.8%), Syria (6.7%) and Iran (3.4%).

Currently, most migrants stay in Serbia for more than six months, and there are cases in which some are staying more than a year. The Serbian authorities have made considerable efforts to

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-nlargement/sites/near/files/eutf_MADAD_results_framework.pdf

strengthen the capacity for the reception and care of migrants, so that at this time 5,600 places have been prepared for the reception of migrants. However, many remain sheltered in temporary structures or hard-shelters which are often overcrowded and not meeting international standards. In this context, the preparation of additional capacity up to 6,600 as well as the replacement/refurbishment of existing facilities meeting international standards for long-term accommodation is needed.

Despite these efforts, Serbia lacks the resources to cover the necessary equipment, refurbishment and (re)construction and adequate staffing of existing centres let alone the additional capacity needed. The Government has mobilised all necessary and available capacities to address the needs of migrants in Serbia but their capacities are becoming overstretched. Moreover, the prolonged stay of migrants has created additional pressure on similarly overstretched institutions at the local level.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has been severely affected by the refugee crisis, given its geographic location on the Western Balkans migration route to the EU. The country has played an active role and cooperated with neighbouring countries and Member States while working to overcome challenges in managing mixed migration flows transiting through its territory. The EU has reiterated at different levels (visit of Commissioner Hahn in 2016 and 2017, visit of President Tusk in March 2017) the need to continue EU support and further help the country cope with the spill over effects of the Syrian crisis.

The number of migrants and refugees transiting through the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has radically decreased following the Leaders' Statement, the actions of some EU Member States on 7 March 2016, and, the entering into force of the EU-Turkey Statement agreed on 18 March 2016. However, the country continues to face challenges in managing the continuous mixed migration flows and the situation remains volatile and unpredictable.

Further to the assessment of the Commission in approving Action 3 of Special Measure IV, the current situation is likely to persist in 2017 and therefore the continuation of EU support through the MADAD Fund is essential.

2.2.2 Sector context: policies and challenges

The Government of Serbia has adopted a Response plan in case of an increased influx of migrants on the territory of Serbia for the period April 2017 - December 2017 that addresses recent changes to the Western Balkans migration route and its consequences for Serbia.

The main lines of action of the response strategy are as follows:

- Providing emergency assistance to migrants;
- Ensuring the protection of persons who apply for asylum, including, in particular, the protection of children and to ensure the protection of persons who are eligible in accordance with the Law on Asylum;
- Provision of conditions for the reception and care of migrants, including health care and education;
- Working with local communities in order to maintain the level of tolerance towards migrants, which in the previous period was an example for all countries along the route;
- Security of state borders and combatting human trafficking;

The implementation of the Response Plan is already being supported by the EU through two ongoing MADAD projects but while these have proven to be useful in addressing needs identified in the Response Plan, they were prepared at a time when there were fewer reception centres in Serbia and the population of migrants and refugees was mainly transiting the countries along the Western Balkans route and staying for shorter periods.

In the current context, the humanitarian response needs to be adjusted beyond the provision of basic services to address more structural issues in terms of the upgrading and running of reception centres, the continued provision of food and ensuring that educational, health and protection services are not only able to meet the needs of a migrant and refugee population, in particular children, but that equal access to them is ensured in all reception centres.

An important factor to be considered as regards Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is the likelihood that DG ECHO will soon withdraw due to the changing situation and reduce its support in vital areas such as the provision of food and reconstruction work, among others. The EU is committed to ensuring continued support in these areas without any gap; the present Action therefore plays a vital role in that respect in terms of increasing support for the running costs of the centres and reconstruction work.

The present Action therefore proposes to continue support for the activities currently being undertaken under the direct grant to the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs of Serbia and the Delegation Agreement with IOM “EU Support to Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in managing the migration/refugees crisis / Balkan route” and expand them in order to better address the needs under the current migration context. This will not only allow more complete coverage of the network of reception centres in Serbia but will also include other vital activities in the field of health and education to address the needs of long-term stays in the country.

The present Action proposes to continue support to IOM, in particular for the reconstruction/renovation of centres in order to make them more suitable for longer stays and better prepare them for the next winter. The proposed Action also allows for the expansion of ongoing activities such as the assisted voluntary return and reintegration to countries of origin (AVRRs), which is experiencing increased interest on the part of migrants and is on track to exceed the target of 300 returns from Serbia. It further allows for more information and outreach on AVRR to migrants in a larger number of centres. Similarly, it could permit the health activities being carried out by Catholic Relief Services to be expanded as needed. As in the current Delegation Agreement, the decision on the activities to be carried out will be guided by the project Steering Committee composed of the IOM, EU Delegation, Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social, Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Health.

2.3 Lessons learnt

This action will build on the experiences and lessons learned from previous projects under Special Measures and two other ongoing EUTF actions: a direct grant to the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs "Strengthening the capacities in managing the migration/refugees crisis in the Republic of Serbia" and a Delegation Agreement with IOM “EU Support to Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in managing the migration/refugees crisis / Balkan route”. Among them:

- There is increased interest on the part of migrants regarding the programme for assisted voluntary return and reintegration implemented by IOM.
- Administrative, legal problems have hindered reconstruction work.

- There is a need for greater sharing of information among donors, the relevant authorities and other actors (UN agencies, NGOs, etc.) in order to get a clearer picture of who does what in each sector (e.g. provision of food, shelter, child protection, health, education, etc.).
- Reception centres need to be properly staffed in order to ensure their proper functioning and provide vital services for the migrant/refugee population.
- Actions involving a wide range of activities and a variety of partners must have a proper, functioning governance structure in place with clearly defined roles and responsibilities of each participating institution in order to ensure the proper implementation of the project.
- Flexibility is needed in the implementation phase in order to be able to adapt actions to a rapidly changing situation or to new needs that could arise in the course of implementation. The need for quick adaptation to an evolving and unpredictable situation is therefore essential.
- Capacity/building needs in terms of monitoring, information management and planning in migration management will be addressed by Action 2 of Special Measure IV “Support to national authorities to increase their operational activity” which is aimed at strengthening the capacity of the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (SCRM) as the specialised government agency responsible for operating the reception centres across the country and co-ordinating all services provided to refugees and migrants by other governmental and non-governmental bodies and should serve to improve the implementation of the proposed Action.

2.4 Complementary actions

The donor community has provided significant support in addressing the capacity and the humanitarian and urgent needs of the migrants during the previous period, such as:

- The Executive Board of the MADAD Trust Fund approved support to Serbia in the form of a direct grant to the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, Ministry of Interior and Commissariat for refugees and migration in the amount of EUR 7,300,000, as well as an allocation of EUR 7,700,000 to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for implementation of activities in Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The funds are used to cover the running and operational costs of reception centers and the engagement of additional staff, and in cooperation with IOM funds are committed for the reconstruction and equipping of reception centers, establishment of two mobile centers for migrants, the purchase of specialized vehicles with medical equipment, voluntary return of migrants the country of origin, etc.
- The European Commission (EC) approved in 2015 a Special Measure on strengthening the response capacity of the most affected countries in the Western Balkans to cope effectively with the increase mixed migration flows for the amount of EUR 10,000,000., of which EUR 1,500,000 was dedicated to strengthening the operational capacity of the Serbian Commission for Refugees and Migration, EUR 5,500,000 was dedicated to direct support to national and local authorities by providing necessary equipment and supply and EUR 3,000,000 to strengthening the capacity of NGOs to assist the authorities in providing services to effectively manage the migration flows
- In addition, an IPA II Multi-beneficiary programme adopted in 2015 for EUR 8,000,000 is intended as regional aid for capacity building to support the establishment of a protection sensitive system for migration management and information sharing in the region.

- The European Union, through the Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO) of the European Commission provided/secured funds for humanitarian aid in the amount of EUR 24,800,000, as a regional support for Western Balkan countries (primarily for Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) on issues related to mass migrations. Through implementing partners funds were used for: procurement of food, hygiene, health and protection services for refugees and migrants, reunification of families, as well as refurbishment and securing adequate accommodation facilities.

- The EU Civil Protection Mechanism was activated in September 2015. The Ministry of Labour, Employment, Social and Veterans' Affairs, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration submitted to the DG ECHO a list of necessary equipment and goods in the field of migration, which includes mobile showers, toilets, kitchens, beds, mattresses, pillows, blankets, bedding, sleeping bags, containers for accommodation, gloves and masks, generators and water pumps, without the budget estimates for the listed items. The total value obtained through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism is approximately EUR 735,000.

- Out of the annual IPA 2014 program EUR 3,200,000 has been secured for the construction of asylum centres in Serbia managed by the SCRM. The financing agreement had been signed in December 2015.

2.5 Donor co-ordination

The Government of Serbia established a Working Group for Resolving the Problem of Mixed Migration Flows, with an intention to provide coordination and direct the work of competent state authorities in terms of increased migratory pressure. The Working Group is composed of the following Ministers: Minister of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, Minister of Interior, Minister of Defence, Minister of Health, Minister without portfolio responsible for EU Integration and Commissioner of the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration.

To date, three High-Level Donor Coordination Meetings have been organised by the Government since 2015, the latest on 15 December 2016, the main purpose of which was to present the Government's Response Plan for the period April - December 2017, with the aim to enable the provision of international assistance in accordance with the needs in Serbia.

Regular specific sector coordination meetings are organised by the Government that bring together donors, relevant authorities and other actors (UN agencies, NGOs, etc.) in order to share and exchange information on the evolving situation and identify needs.

3. DETAILED DESCRIPTION

3.1. Objectives

The **Overall Objective** of the Action is to respond to the resilience needs of migrant or refugee populations in the Western Balkans, in particular in Serbia, through support to the national authorities, including enhancing shelter capacity and delivery of services.

The **Specific Objectives** are to:

- provide adequate accommodation facilities, living conditions and services such as in health and education to effectively respond to the needs of migrants/refugees and asylum seekers by strengthening the operational capacity of the authorities involved in the migration/refugees crisis;
- improve referral, accommodation and protection measures for migrants and asylum seekers in the reception centres/asylum centres and to continue providing support for the assisted voluntary return scheme for migrants not in need of international protection willing to return to their countries of origin.

3.2. Expected results and main activities

Expected **Results** related to Specific objectives are as follows:

Component 1

The proposed Action will continue and expand the work foreseen under the direct grant to the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs “Strengthening the capacities in managing the migration/refugees crisis in the republic of Serbia” (TF-MADAD/2016/T04.28) in order to meet the needs of migrants and refugees in the current situation and include additional activities such as education and health.

1.1 Asylum and reception/transit centres sufficiently staffed and fully operational in order to address the needs of migrants and asylum seekers;

Main activities which will support the accomplishment of identified results are:

- Support for the running costs of reception centres for migrants and asylum seekers. Asylum, reception and centres for accommodation of unaccompanied migrant minors, are facing important challenges in terms of securing minimum accommodation quality and basic living conditions in asylum and reception centres in Serbia. The direct grant will be used to support the Government in financing the operational costs relating to the centres including: accommodation, electricity, heating, laundry, communal services, water and sanitation, in order to secure basic living conditions, secure hygiene of the centres and accommodation of migrants and asylum seekers (for approximately 6,600 migrants and asylum seekers, including UAMMs).
- Ensuring adequate staffing of reception centres for migrants and asylum seekers. Due to the longer average length of stay, the establishment of new centres and changes in the needs of the migrants due to their prolonged stay in Serbia, the existing staff is not sufficient to ensure the effective functioning and management of centres, especially in relation to protection needs. In order to meet these needs, the Government estimates that it must employ approximately 689 persons to ensure the proper management and functioning of reception centres and to provide services to migrants and asylum seekers, such as information provision, identification of vulnerable cases, referral to competent institutions, translation, hygiene, reception services, etc. As in the ongoing MADAD action this grant will cover the costs of accommodation, meals for staff as well as fuel and maintenance for the vehicles used to transport staff to and from reception centres across the country.

1.2 Health care services for refugees/migrants provided

The Action will provide support for the provision of health care services to migrants in Serbia at medical centres in the public health system. The health care services and interventions

provided to migrants in Serbia via the public health system include: laboratory and diagnostics, urgent care, treatment by specialists, hospitalization, delivery, vaccination of infants and children in line with the immunization schedule, ultrasound diagnostics, gynaecological examinations, ambulance transportation and services to protect public health such as disinfection, deratisation and disinsection.

In addition, this Action will continue to support the provision of basic medical and translation services in reception centres in Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia currently being provided by IOM under an ongoing MADAD contract and which will complement the services provided by the public health system.

1.3 Access ensured to quality education to migrant and refugee children in Serbia in the municipalities where centres for migrants are located through:

- their inclusion in mainstream education;
- provision of quality non-formal education programmes and;
- support to relevant national institutions to coordinate educational activities and services.

It is expected that around 2,300 refugee and migrant children from 5 to 18 years of age will participate in structured learning activities through formal and non-formal education.

- The education sector authorities are able to better respond to refugee and migrant children's' needs

The Action foresees support for the implementation of the National School Welcome Programme, which has already been developed by the Ministry of Education, UNICEF and partners, through the establishment of a pool of trainers, delivery of training to schools in all of the municipalities where transit/asylum and centres for unaccompanied minor migrants exist and provision of school grants.

- Schools and pre-schools in municipalities where transit centres are established are equipped and supported to enrol refugee and migrant children

School grants will be used for: a). Implementation of the School Welcome programme (provision of school equipment and didactic materials school supplies to migrant and refugee children; fostering supportive school and local community environment; engagement of translators and staff/teachers for Serbian language classes in the initial period), b). Development and implementation of an accelerated education programme for children and adolescents who have never been in school or have only completed some level of primary school, c). Delivering modular vocational education and training programmes and d). Provision of adequate access to pre-school education.

- Access and attainment in education for children eligible for mainstream education is ensured

Outreach activities and increasing participation of refugee children from 5,5 to 18 years old will be achieved through recruitment of local education integration coordinators in all municipalities. In order to provide safe access and non-segregated education, transportation of children should be provided.

- Good quality non-formal education to refugee and migrant children and adolescents is provided

The non-formal education programmes should contribute to development of key competences for life-long learning so as to facilitate continuation of education of children through obtaining relevant knowledge, skills and attitude. Guidelines for non-formal education programmes developed by UNICEF will ensure that minimum quality standards of the non-formal education programmes are met. Support to quality development of non-formal education programmes in all centres: capacity building through on-line and classical trainings, coaching and provision of adequate resources. Support to optimum coverage with non-formal education programmes in all centres through coordination of different service providers (NGOs, schools...) as well as through support to direct implementation.

- Support the Ministry of Education to ensure a coordinated approach to education of refugee and migrant children and further policy development

The following activities are planned among others: Documenting and analysis of effective measures: scaling-up of successful programmes; monitoring of student achievements and well-being in schools; consultations and knowledge exchange; strengthening education in emergency coordination mechanism and development of stronger community of practice for education of refugee and migrants children and adolescents through the country.

Component 2

The proposed Action will continue and expand the work foreseen under the Delegation Agreement with IOM “EU Support to Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in managing the migration/refugees crisis / Balkan route” (TF-MADAD/2016/T04.24). It is proposed to continue and expand implementation of the current contract in order to address Serbia’s more immediate needs, in particular in terms of the reconstruction/renovation of centres in order to make them more suitable for longer stays and better prepare them for the next winter.

The top-up could also allow for the expansion of ongoing activities such as assisted voluntary return and reintegration to countries of origin (AVRRs) which is on track to exceed the target of 300 returns from Serbia. The top-up would allow for more information and outreach to migrants in a larger number of centres. Similarly, the top-up could permit the health activities being carried out by Catholic Relief Services to be expanded as needed. As in the current Delegation Agreement, the decision on the activities to be carried out under the top-up will be guided by the project Steering Committee composed of the IOM, EU Delegation, Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social, Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Health.

2.1 Migrants and asylum seekers benefit from improved accommodation facilities in reception centres in Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The Action will continue to support the improvement of accommodation conditions in Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia being undertaken in the current action by IOM under the previous MADAD action, which consists of the renovation and refurbishment of facilities as well as the provision of furniture and additional equipment as needed.

Support for reception centres in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will continue via IOM in the provision of health and translation services, sanitary and waste management services, as well as electricity and water supply and regular maintenance.

2.2 The humane and dignified *return and reintegration* of rejected asylum seekers, and persons residing irregularly in the Republic of Serbia and other countries in the Western Balkans, who wish to return voluntarily to their country of origin is facilitated.

- Direct AVRR support will be provided for up to 300 rejected asylum seekers, and irregular migrants wishing to voluntarily return to their country of origin.

The Action will continue to ensure the provision of assisted voluntary return and reintegration support, aimed at rejected asylum seekers and migrants stranded in Serbia and other countries in the Western Balkans, who wish to return voluntarily to their country of origin, which is currently being carried out under the ongoing MADAD contract being implemented by IOM.

- Mobile teams to inform irregular migrants in detention of the assisted voluntary return and reintegration assistance.

It is proposed to continue supporting the mobile teams established in the current MADAD contract with IOM. These teams will continue to service the reception centres for migrants and ensure counselling and provide information on the availability of the AVRR assistance, its benefits, country of origin information, protection mechanisms in place, reintegration packages available, eligibility criteria, and procedures needed to comply with and other relevant information.

3.3. Risks and assumptions

The assumptions for the success of the project and its implementation include:

- The Governments in the Western Balkans region and all public institutions remain fully committed towards securing an adequate response to the increased needs of migrants in the region;
- The EU and international community continue to provide support to address the increased migration flows in the Western Balkans region;
- Efficient coordination with all relevant institutions and service providers in securing adequate response to migrants needs is ensured;
- Local level authorities, communal services and service providers are interested and willing to support the Government in managing the migration influx in their country;
- High level of cooperation with LSGs is ensured;
- Irregular migrants and rejected asylum seekers are willing to voluntarily return to their country of origin;
- Strong cooperation and coordination among regional (on the Western Balkans route) stakeholders and international partners providing direct assistance to migrants including both tracing and restoring family links and anti-human trafficking activities is ensured;
- An adequate governance structure with clearly defined roles and responsibilities of each participating institution in order to ensure the proper implementation of the project is established.

The main risks are:

- The overall situation can dramatically change depending on the migration trends from Turkey and Greece, with unpredictable duration, leading to an open-ended crisis;
- Changes and restrictions to border controls at each stage of the route including at destination countries could have a significant impact as bottlenecks may be created, more people may feel compelled to seek alternative routes, and others may become stranded;
- Relevant government counterparts and implementing partners may encounter difficulties in implementation as the mass migration flows strain the capacities of officials to engage in additional activities, which might delay planned activities or hindering their implementation;
- Delays and difficulties in implementation due to an unclear division of roles and responsibilities among the participating institutions;
- AVRR activities are dependent on the willingness of beneficiaries to engage in the activity, and it may be difficult to anticipate the number of cases. Closure of existing border crossings in different countries and potential new migratory routes via Romania or other Western Balkan countries may require additional resources for the implementing partners;

Mitigating measures have been considered, including:

- The Working Group for Resolving the Problem of Mixed Migration Flows in Serbia is regularly meeting and following development of the situation in the field;
- Regular contacts with neighbouring countries to exchange information on migration flows and trends are ensured;
- Regular meetings with the donor community in order to secure emergency response and support upon need are organized;
- SCRM continues to build capacities to adequately address increased influx of migrants in Serbia;
- Donor coordination meetings on migration regularly organised in order to inform donor community on current needs;
- Regular donor coordination meetings ensures alignment, coordination and coherence of international assistance;
- Maintaining a flexible approach to be able to adapt the evolving needs, close contact and coordination with government officials;
- To tackle the identified potential risks, the IOM will continue to coordinate participating authorities to ensure implementation of activities is in line with the capacities for counterparts to participate;
- The lessons learned from the ongoing projects in the region funded under Special Measures and the Madad Fund will be applied to the two components in the proposed action.

3.4. Cross-cutting issues

The project will be implemented in a non-discriminatory manner with equal opportunities observed and firm guarantees that distinctions will not be drawn on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, religion or other possible grounds in any regard. Gender equity principles will be respected in the implementation of all project activities.

The Action will target the specific needs of women and minor migrants and refugees, in particular unaccompanied minors, who represent a significant proportion of migrants/refugees in the Western Balkans. The expected outputs of the Project will enable all vulnerable groups to live in a secure environment, and to assure that their full scope of rights is preserved and respected.

The governments and EUD regularly and frequently engage with local and international civil society organisations on the issue of migration. CSOs are invited to and actively participate in sector specific coordination meetings (shelter, accommodation, provision of food, health, children's rights, etc. The EU has funded two projects through EIDHR to strengthen the capacity of local CSOs in Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in monitoring, reporting, advocacy and networking in the field of migrants' rights.

The project anticipates utilization of domestic building materials that are acceptable according to current criteria and standards for environmentally safe practices.

3.5. Stakeholders

In Serbia, key stakeholders of the Action are institutions represented in the Working Group for Resolving the Problem of Mixed Migration Flows as follows: Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Science, Technological Development and Minister without portfolio responsible for EU Integration. In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia these include the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Interior and the Crisis Management Centre which holds a coordinating role in crises, including the migration crisis. In addition, all other relevant national institutions, such as local self-governments on whose territory asylum and transit centres are located, other service providers such as NGOs in the field, donor community, etc. are also participating and are important for successful implementation of the Action.

4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

4.1. Financing agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not foreseen to conclude a financing agreement with the partner country.

4.2. Indicative operational implementation period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3.2 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 29 months, latest date of implementation 14/12/2019² from the approval of this Action Document by the Operational Board.

² The implementation period of the contract must remain within the duration of the Trust Fund (currently 15 December 2019).

4.3. Implementation components and modules

Component 1: Direct award to the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs of the Republic of Serbia (MoLEVSA). The Ministry, which heads the Working Group on Mixed Migration Flows, will be the lead applicant and key coordinator with the following institutions as co-applicants and beneficiaries of the action: Ministry of Interior, Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development. MoLEVSA is currently implementing a direct grant awarded under the previous EUTF action document in partnership with the Ministry of Interior and the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (CRM). In that case, a governance structure has been established through detailed inter-institutional operational agreements which clearly defined the roles and responsibilities of each participating institution in order to ensure the proper implementation of the project. A direct grant to MoLEVSA is justified because the beneficiary is in a legal or factual monopoly situation.

As Chair of the Government Working Group on Mixed Migration Flows, MoLEVSA is charged with coordinating Serbia's response to the migration crisis. Moreover, it is currently implementing an ongoing MADAD contract which activities will be continued and expanded under the proposed Action.

Component 2: Indirect management with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). This implementation is justified because the IOM is mandated to deal with migration management and is exclusively capacitated to exercise its mandate. As above, it is also currently implementing an ongoing MADAD contract which activities will be continued and expanded under the proposed Action to ensure business continuity of EU support to Serbia and FYRoM.

4.4. Indicative budget*

Module*	Amount of total budget
Direct grant to the Government of Serbia	16 000 000
Indirect management with IOM	5 000 000
Total	21 000 000

* Communication and visibility funds will be included in the various components

4.5 Performance monitoring

Monitoring shall be ensured primarily through EU Delegations in-country and in particular with the assistance of specific Trust Fund field & liaison officers posted within the EU Delegations. In addition, the EU Trust Fund is planning to launch an independent M&E exercise to accompany all Fund programmes and ensure that targets are met and lessons learnt can be incorporated into other EUTF actions. The purpose of the MADAD EUTF Monitoring and Evaluation Framework would be to assess, across various levels, the degree to which the Overall Objective of the Trust Fund has been achieved. Partners implementing this Action will comply with the ad hoc Monitoring and Evaluation Framework developed for the MADAD Fund as well as with the reporting requirements and tools being developed by the EU Trust Fund. The monitoring and evaluation exercises mentioned above will represent milestones in the implementation of the activities. These regular assessments will constitute a

basis for a possible decision of suspension or revision of activities, should the conditions on the ground not allow for their proper implementation.

4.6 Evaluation and audit

On project level a budget for monitoring, evaluation and audit will be foreseen. Projects shall carry out an obligatory final evaluation, and one external audit per year. Whenever possible, evaluations will be jointly carried out by partners.

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 audits or expenditure verification assignments for one or several contracts.

4.7 Communication and visibility

While communication and visibility of the EU is a legal obligation for all external actions funded by the EU, to date the visibility of the EU's support to the Syrian crisis, in particular in neighbouring countries affected by the crisis, has been insufficient. The public perception is that the EU is not addressing the Syrian crisis, when in fact it is the largest donor. The lack of visibility to the EU's actions weakens the EU's political traction in the region and its standing in Europe.

Therefore, communication and visibility is an important part of all MADAD Fund programmes factored into the implementation in order to underline its importance at all stages of the planning and implementation of the Programme.

All visibility actions by MADAD Fund implementing partners outside areas of conflict should be stepped up. Each implementer will have to draw up a comprehensive visibility and communication plan for their respective target country/community and submit a copy for approval to the MADAD Fund and relevant EU Delegation. The related costs will be covered by the budgets of the contract as part of the project.

The measures shall be implemented by the implementing consortium/ia, its contractors, and/or its grant beneficiaries. Appropriate contractual obligations shall be included in, respectively, procurement and grant contracts.

The Communication and Visibility Manual for European Union External Action together with specific requirements to highlight the MADAD Fund shall be used to establish the Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action and the appropriate contractual obligations.