



PROJECT ROCK

Fighting human trafficking and migrant smuggling in the Horn of Africa

The Situation

Human trafficking and migrant smuggling are lucrative criminal businesses that increasingly employ technological means to expand their reach. Organized criminal networks are using sophisticated methods to target vulnerable people for a profit, with a complete disregard for human life and dignity.

The Horn of Africa is a hub for migration as well as a source, transit and destination region for human trafficking and migrant smuggling. Lack of effective legal frameworks also represent a serious challenge in combatting these crimes.



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Millions of people in and around the Horn of Africa have been forcibly displaced within their own countries or are seeking refuge in neighbouring states. Many migrants are victims of extortion, sexual violence, torture, forced labour and domestic servitude. Given the transnational and organized nature of this threat, cross-border and regional cooperation is essential.

Project aims

The Regional Operational Centre in support of the Khartoum process and the African Union (AU) Horn of Africa Initiative (ROCK) helps national police forces dismantle criminal networks involved in human trafficking and migrant smuggling.

It does this by:

- Promoting information exchange on irregular migration flows and associated criminal networks;
- Enhancing regional capacity to fight against human trafficking and migrant smuggling;
- Fostering international police cooperation;

The Khartoum process is a platform promoting cooperation amongst the countries along the migration route between the Horn of Africa and Europe.

Project Activities

Project Rock involves a range of activities including:

- Gathering intelligence on trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling trends in the Horn of Africa;
- Drafting and disseminating analytical reports on regional modus operandi;
- Coordinating transnational operations;
- Providing investigative and analytical support;
- Delivering training programs on policing with a gender perspective;
- Organizing workshops for law enforcement agencies and judiciary to help fight against human trafficking and migrant smuggling;
- Carrying out capacity building assessments.

Project Rock was initially launched in 2020 for a period of 2 years. Like Phase I, Phase II covers the following 10 countries: Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, DRC, Somalia, South-Sudan, Sudan, Uganda and Tchad.

Timeframe: 2022-2024

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Donor: European Union



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