



## Protecting migrants: IOM supports regional governmental consultations to address mixed migration flows to, through and from North Africa

**2 October 2014** – Migratory flows in North Africa, especially in Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia, are characterized by their complexity. Migration to, through, and from North Africa, is shaped by a complex set of drivers including poverty, unemployment, conflicts, political instability, and environmental degradation. As a result, migrants are exposed to a range of vulnerabilities and have diverse protection and assistance needs. To support the three countries' efforts to achieve a coherent and common approach for addressing irregular migration and protecting migrants at the national and regional level, IOM developed the project "Empowering Governments to Address mixed migratory flows and Protect Migrants transiting to, through and from North Africa" (funded by the IOM Development Fund <http://www.iom.int/developmentfund/>). The project serves to continue to build the capacity of the three respective Governments to respond to mixed flows through technical assistance, knowledge sharing and dialogue.

In this context, 28 Government representatives from Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia and the IOM Chiefs of Mission in those countries came together in Rabat on 23 and 24 September 2014 for a regional meeting which is an integral part of this project. This meeting was organized by IOM Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia, in partnership with the Ministry in charge of Moroccans Living Abroad and Migration Affairs in Morocco.

The meeting allowed representatives of the three countries to discuss and share their respective experiences in discussing innovative approaches in the field of management of mixed migration flows. Given that irregular migrants in all three countries face similar constraints related to access to basic public services, protection and integration, and seeing that the three Governments have developed policies to deal with these challenges, three essential topics were discussed



Participants at a national workshop on mixed migration in Morocco. © IOM 2014

during the meeting namely: the protection of migrants, the prevention of and the fight against human trafficking and smuggling, and the implementation of policies to protect migrants and promote their integration in the three countries.

As part of the project, research was carried out on this issue by an independent consultant. The research was based on a comprehensive sociological approach intended to better understand the multifaceted factors that influence migratory flows and migrants' living conditions in each country. Based on the recommendations of the research report, the government representatives reiterated the commitment of their countries to adopt comprehensive and integrated migration policies as a humane approach consistent with international law in the framework of multilateral and renewed

cooperation. The recommendations contained in the report are addressed to Governments, international organizations and civil society. They concern the orientation of policies, migrants' access to services (healthcare, education, justice and employment), the promotion of integration of migrants, and the fight against human trafficking. The final report will be published by IOM in October 2014 in English and Arabic, and will be disseminated in collaboration with the three Governments.

This event was preceded by three national workshops, during which the three countries discussed the research report with other relevant national actors in their respective countries, including civil society, national councils and other Government institutions such as Interior, Justice, Foreign Affairs and Social Affairs.

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