

# I-EAC PROJECT TO COMBAT TERRORISM AND TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME IN THE REGION

## 1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The East African Community (EAC) region continues to be challenged by terrorism and criminal activities as well as the side effects of historical inter-state conflicts. The major terrorist threat in East Africa derives from the Salafi-jihadist organization Al-Shabaab, which has lately adopted a more regional strategy, increasing clear-cut terrorist tactics and promoting the emergence of affiliated groups within the region. These issues raise the question of capacity for regional cooperation among the EAC Partner States to effectively control EAC borders, prevent irregular movements and trafficking, as well as detect and prevent cross-border criminal activities and terrorism. Transnational organized crime and terrorism pose a serious threat and challenge to the free movement of persons, goods and capital under the EAC Common Market Protocol.

Safeguarding peace and security in East Africa is key for the EAC ultimate goal of political federation and only a regional approach to peace and security will guarantee stability and development. The Partner States have therefore entrusted the EAC with a broad political mandate in the area of conflict prevention, management and resolution, as well as peace building.

Under the European Agenda on Security (COM (2015) 185 final of 28 April 2015), terrorism and organized crime are two of the three core priorities highlighted and their interlinkages and cross border threat pattern require a multi-faceted and international action. The Agenda shows the need for an effective and coordinated response where priorities such as cooperation in fighting transnational organized crime and terrorism, smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings must be reflected in the targeted use of EU financial instruments.

In addition, the contribution of records and the searches made across INTERPOL databases by EAC countries is very low compared to the global average. East African security and intelligence institutions would benefit from stronger regional and international cooperation to enhance their performance.

## 2. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

### 2.1 Overall objective

The overall objective of the project is to strengthen policing capabilities in the EAC member countries in order to combat terrorism and transnational organized crime, through increased I-24/7 connectivity and interoperability between EAC national systems and INTERPOL databases.

In addition the project will aim to create better synergies between INTERPOL and the EAC in order to strengthen policing capabilities in EAC member countries so that they will be in a position to exchange information more efficiently.

The EAC project will also seek to complement other INTERPOL projects in the region to ensure maximal use of resources and avoid duplication.

### 2.2 Specific Objectives

The three specific objectives of the project are as follows:

#### 2.2.1 Increase regional collaboration

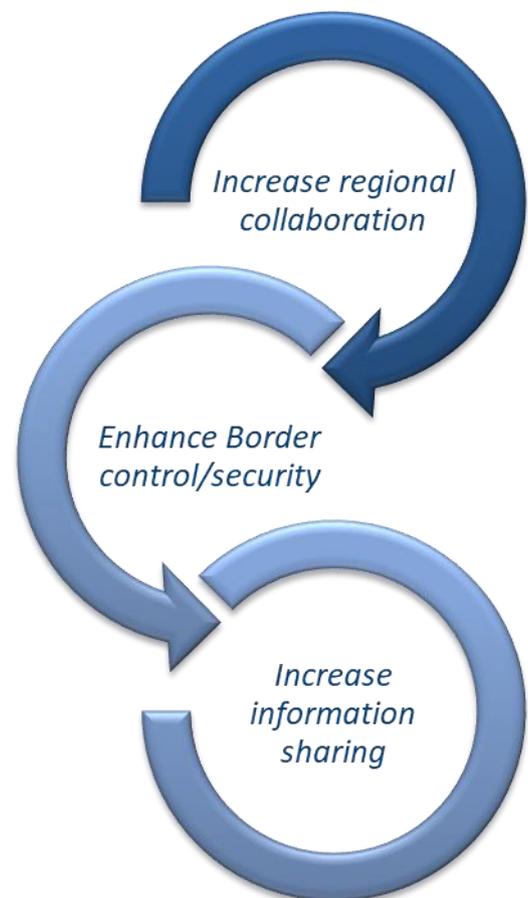
**To Increase** inter-agency cooperation of selected national authorities within the region.

#### 2.2.2 Enhance border control/security

**To Enhance the capacity of frontline officers** and counter-terrorism/organized crimes specialized units, selected border crossing points, seaports and airports through integrated technical solutions (FIND/MIND and WISDM) through their national systems.

#### 2.2.3 Increase information sharing

**To Increase information exchange** and biometric data collection related to the cross-border movement of Foreign Terrorists Fighters (FTFs) and returnees, real time transmission and sharing of information between services at the national, regional and international levels, including through the access to INTERPOL's Global Secure Police Communications System I-24/7 for populating and querying INTERPOL databases.



### 3. FUNDING AND PROJECT PARTNERS

The three main partners of the project are the **European Union**, the **East African Community** and **INTERPOL**. The project is funded by the European Development Fund (EDF) through EU Delegation to Tanzania.



### 4. TIMELINE

The project started in December 2019 and will end in September 2023 (45 months). The main phases of the project are as follows:

- ⇒ **2019:** Initialization;
- ⇒ **2020:** Planning;
- ⇒ **2021:** Execution (**Group 1**);
- ⇒ **2022:** Execution (**Group 2**);
- ⇒ **2023:** Closure;

**Note:** The Groups 1&2 are constituted of three countries selected (out of the six EAC countries) during the planning phase by the steering committee.



## 5. PROJECT'S SCOPE

The project is located at the Regional Bureau for Eastern Africa in Nairobi (Kenya) and covers all six EAC member countries: **Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.**



## 6. OVERALL IMPACT OF THE PROJECT (OUTCOMES)

The project will eventually benefit all the citizens of the EAC member states especially women, children and the vulnerable communities. The specific outcomes will be:

- ✓ National Central Bureaus (NCB) Modernization to strengthen the I-24/7 network;
- ✓ I-24/7 Extended to Airports, Seaports, Land borders and selected specialized units;
- ✓ Capacity Building & Trainings to increase the knowledge and readiness of the end users;
- ✓ Regional workshops & screening operations to test the new capabilities.

