

**PRESS RELEASE: MEDITERRANEAN MUNICIPALITIES AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE REFUGEE CRISIS:  
PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING WORKSHOP  
FOR COMMUNITIES HOSTING REFUGEES**

**Amman, June 1<sup>st</sup> 2016** – Representatives of municipalities, central government focal points, non-governmental and civil society stakeholders, as well as development and humanitarian institutions from the Middle East, North Africa (MENA) and Turkey, concluded today a peer-to-peer learning workshop targeting municipalities hosting refugees. The main objective of this event was to foster cross-regional exchanges and learning between host communities on best practices and innovative solutions to attain the common welfare of refugees and host communities.

Municipalities in the Mediterranean are at the forefront in providing assistance to migrants and refugees. While 60% of worldwide refugees live in cities, this figure amounts to 85% in the MENA region. The urban nature of refugee influx poses a number of significant challenges to municipalities, and places great strain on the carrying capacity of host communities.

This two-day event was jointly organized by the Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI), the World Bank Group and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) in partnership with the German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ), the International Rescue Committee (IRC), the United Cities and Local Governments Middle East and West Asia Section (UCLG-MEWA), the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED), and MedCities.

It allowed municipalities to share, identify and discuss concrete actions for more effective responses to the refugee crisis.

The two-day workshop included interactive technical working groups for municipalities covering: municipal collaborations for resilience; service delivery and preparedness; local economic development and labor market inclusion; social cohesion. It also included a half-day field visit to Irbid.

The main discussions revolved around:

- The need to coordinate strategies at the national and local levels in order to face challenges weighing on host communities in Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, as well as selected North African and European cities – namely on service delivery, local economic development, labor market inclusion and social cohesion.
- The priority of combining humanitarian and development work for a short- to mid-term vision to support both Syrian refugees and host communities (work opportunities, housing, solid waste, etc.)
- The need to mobilizing resources and strengthening multi-partner collaborations towards supporting refugee and host communities welfare.

More details:

- More info on the meeting and discussions can be found [here](#).
- More on CMI Mediterranean Refugees and Host Communities Program available [here](#).

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**Media Contact:**

- In Marseille: Zein Nahas, Communication Officer, [znahas@worldbank.org](mailto:znahas@worldbank.org), 0033604677242

- In Amman: Farah Abdul Sater, Communication Consultant, [fabdulsater@worldbank.org](mailto:fabdulsater@worldbank.org), 0033661932375
- In Beirut: Talar Oskeridjian, Programme Support Officer, [talar.oskeridjian@unhabitat.org](mailto:talar.oskeridjian@unhabitat.org), 009611850015 ext. 111

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**The Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI)** is a multi-partner platform where development agencies, Governments, local authorities and civil society from around the Mediterranean convene in order to exchange knowledge, discuss public policies, and identify the solutions needed to address key challenges facing the Mediterranean region. Members of the CMI include Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Tunisia, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region, City of Marseille, the European Investment Bank and the World Bank Group, and the European External Action Service (EEAS) as an observer. Web: [www.cmimarseille.org](http://www.cmimarseille.org); Facebook: CMI Marseille; Twitter: @cmimarseille