EXPERIENCES IN HOSTING REFUGEES

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN HOST COMMUNITIES
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Its concept and production was led by Janette Uhlmann, Senior Program Officer, with contributions from Gilda Borriello, Consultant. Essential support in the concept development was provided by Sara Boughedir, Nicolas Meyer, and Steve Commins. Karim El Arnaouty, Abigail Garner, Faten Khaleel, and Ahmad Fakih contributed to the compendium’s production. Experiences were provided by members of the Host Municipalities Learning Network and partners.

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### ABBREVIATIONS

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>AFD</td>
<td>Agence Française de Développement</td>
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<tr>
<td>AKDEM</td>
<td>Family, Women Support and Disabled People Centre</td>
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<td>ANCI</td>
<td>Associazione Nazionale Comuni Italiani</td>
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<td>ASAM</td>
<td>Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants</td>
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<td>BMZ</td>
<td>German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
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<td>CARA</td>
<td>Centro di Accoglienza per Richiedenti Asilo</td>
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<td>CIPE</td>
<td>Center for International Private Enterprise</td>
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<td>CMI</td>
<td>Center for Mediterranean Integration</td>
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<td>CSOs</td>
<td>Civil Society Organizations</td>
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<td>CVDB</td>
<td>Cities and Village Development Bank</td>
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<td>DRC</td>
<td>Danish Refugee Council</td>
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<td>ECHO</td>
<td>European Civil protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations</td>
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<td>EHEA</td>
<td>European Higher Education Area</td>
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<td>ESSRP</td>
<td>Emergency Services and Social Resilience Project</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>EUA</td>
<td>European University Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>FNPSA</td>
<td>Fondo Nazionale per le Politiche e i Servizi dell’Asilo</td>
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<td>GIZ</td>
<td>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit</td>
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<td>GMM</td>
<td>Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality</td>
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<td>HE</td>
<td>Higher Education</td>
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<td>HMLN</td>
<td>Host Municipalities Learning Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information Communication Technology</td>
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<td>IDPs</td>
<td>Internally Displaced Persons</td>
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<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
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<td>inHERE</td>
<td>Higher Education Supporting Refugees in Europe</td>
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<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
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<td>İŞKUR</td>
<td>Turkish Employment Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>KRG</td>
<td>Kurdistan Regional Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>LED</td>
<td>Local Economic Development</td>
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<td>LIFE</td>
<td>Livelihoods Innovation through Food Entrepreneurship</td>
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<td>MENA</td>
<td>Middle East and North Africa</td>
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<td>MoMA</td>
<td>Ministry of Municipal Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOPIC</td>
<td>Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
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<td>OSIFE</td>
<td>Open Society Initiative for Europe</td>
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<td>PTSD</td>
<td>Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>RDDP</td>
<td>Regional Development and Protection Programme for refugees and host communities in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq</td>
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<td>RESCUE</td>
<td>Refugees Education Support in MENA Countries</td>
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<td>R-SOS</td>
<td>Refugee Student Operational Support Unit</td>
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<td>SEF</td>
<td>Syrian Economic Forum</td>
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<td>SN</td>
<td>Allileggie SolidarityNow</td>
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<td>SPRAR</td>
<td>Sistema di Protezione Richiedenti Asilo e Rifugiati</td>
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<td>TILOSS</td>
<td>The Insular Lab of Solidarity &amp; Sustainability</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
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<td>UNIMED</td>
<td>Mediterranean Universities Union</td>
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<td>UoM</td>
<td>Union of Municipalities</td>
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<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>USD ($)</td>
<td>United States Dollars</td>
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<tr>
<td>WB</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
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<td>WtPE</td>
<td>Waste to Positive Energy</td>
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INTRODUCTION

Since the start of Syrian Civil War in 2011, neighboring countries to Syria have been hosting a growing number of refugees while struggling with issues of social cohesion and provisions of basic services such as waste management, health, and education. While Turkey is the country hosting the highest absolute number of refugees in the world—most of them from Syria—the Syrian population in Lebanon amounts to a quarter of the country’s total population. At the same time, European countries face a strong influx of refugees, mainly coming from Syria and Ethiopia, with associated socio-economic and inclusion challenges. In this context, the international community seeks to support hosting countries with sustainable approaches for hosting refugees.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the vast majority of Syrian refugees are hosted in rural, urban, and peri-urban areas rather than refugee camps. Seven years after the crisis, Syrian refugees are seen as mid- to long-term residents, rather than temporary ones. They have begun integrating in the host communities, finding jobs and livelihood opportunities in formal or informal settings, and actively taking part in the local economic environment. Syrian refugees grow closer to their host community through everyday life, job opportunities, and education. The increased contact among host and refugee communities can enhance and accelerate the inclusion process and lead to shared growth, social enrichment, and exchange. However, if not managed well, this process can present risks that lead to refugees’ social, economic, and urban marginalization—and eventually poverty.

In addition to the high refugee influx, some of the regions hosting refugees displayed a high unemployment rate even before the arrival of displaced populations. In 2011, the total unemployment rate was 12.9% in Jordan, 17.4% in Greece, and more than 8% in Turkey and Italy, according to ILO estimates. These statistics increase the challenge for hosting countries to provide a better environment for both the original and new populations.

In this context, central governments regulate the main frameworks for hosting refugees and improving the lives of their population with legal, social, and economic instruments. At a different level, local authorities look at the issue from a closer angle, and are better aware of the peculiar needs and advantages of their local environment. They look for solutions and innovation to apply to their context in line with central governmental regulations.

In spite of their unique position, local governments’ staff and elected representatives often lack sufficient resources, capacity, and access to knowledge about other relevant local experiences. To fill this gap, in 2016 the Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI) created the Mediterranean Host Municipalities Learning Network (HMLN) to offer thematic discussions, training opportunities, peer-learning and experience-sharing among the municipalities most impacted by the influx of Syrian refugees.

After the first year of peer-to-peer exchange among local authorities from the Mashreq and Turkey, the network identified a key priority to strengthen local authorities’ Local Economic Development in Host Communities.
Actions taken from local governments derive from the analysis of local challenges, needs assessment, and demographic and geographical factors. Through the HMLN, common priorities have been identified for improving strategic planning and policies, including rapid needs assessments, data collection and analysis, and participatory approaches; opening opportunities to the private sector through improving infrastructures or giving financial and in-kind incentives for investments; developing skills and capacity, and improving regulations and policies through a smoother bureaucracy, decentralization, and restrictions and quotas for refugees. As a cross-cutting area for improving the LED environment in communities hosting refugees, measures to improve social cohesion and inclusion are also needed to avoid feelings of rejection and mistrust between the two communities.

Local authorities and local actors are focusing on these four areas with different means, depending on their needs, strengths, and governmental policies. Local governments are improving their strategic planning for LED with needs and situation assessments to create jobs for hosts and refugees, such as in Sarhan, Jordan (page 44), or by implementing participatory approaches to benefit all local actors such as in municipalities in Italy (page 81). They are opening investment opportunities to new and existing private investors by stimulating the creation of home-based businesses in Zarqa, Jordan (page 48), and reviving the tourism and restoration sector in Tilos, Greece (page 35). Efforts to develop skills in line with local labor market needs include trainings and skill transfers between Syrians and locals in New Balama, Jordan (page 40); Dohuk, Iraq (page 72); and Gaziantep (page 90) and Zeytinburnu (page 98), Turkey. Local authorities are also improving policies to benefit from the influx of refugee entrepreneurs in, for example, Yerevan, Armenia (page 32), and partnering with local organizations such as the Syrian Economic Forum in Gaziantep, Turkey (page 52). Finally, they implement activities to strengthen social cohesion while creating a better environment for all, like in the Union of Municipalities of Middle Bekaa, Lebanon (page 63), Sahab, Jordan (page 86), and Sultanbeyli, Turkey (page 94).

In line with local authorities’ needs, the experiences in this compendium represent an effort to offer new knowledge to municipal representatives, and to demonstrate the power local authorities can have in addressing their particular needs by capitalizing on their unique competitive advantage. Although the HMLN includes only representatives from Syria’s neighboring countries (Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, and Turkey), this compendium also includes experiences from other impacted Mediterranean countries to allow for a broader overview of experiences in hosting refugees from the Mediterranean Region.
Affected by the forced displacement crisis, municipal staff and elected representatives look for innovation and solutions that they can initiate, facilitate, or implement themselves. They rarely have enough resources and access to learn from other relevant local experiences. To fill this gap, and as part of the Mediterranean Host Municipalities Learning Network (HMLN), in 2017 the CMI initiated and published the first “Compendium of Best Practices in Hosting Refugees,” designed for peer-learning and experience-sharing among the municipalities most impacted by the influx of refugees. CMI Program beneficiaries and partners found it very useful and subsequently embarked on the preparation of this second compendium “Experiences in Hosting Refugees: Local Economic Development in Host Communities” in the context of the CMI Refugees and Host Communities Program, as a knowledge product for HMLN. While the first compendium was broader in context, presenting areas of priority service delivery (such as housing or solid waste management) and the transversal theme of social cohesion, this second compendium particularly targets aspects leading to an increased Local Economic Development (LED), including private sector mobilization and job creation for both refugees and their hosts.

OBJECTIVES

This compendium aims to:

- enhance knowledge-sharing and experience-sharing among host communities in the Mediterranean Region to build local capacity in forced displacement contexts;
- increase the potential scaling up of good practices in other communities that are hosting refugees through a peer-learning approach; and
- strengthen reflections among host communities and partners on what is needed for ensuring a livable environment for both refugees and their hosts.

METHODOLOGY

The experiences presented in this compendium have been identified and selected by the CMI Refugee Program team following a call for experiences based on submissions by the HMLN and active partners. Desk review on innovative LED examples in forced displacement contexts complemented the previous identification. In order to facilitate peer-learning and scaling-up among host local governments, the ownership of local governments and other local actors, as well as local multi-stakeholder collaboration was an essential requirement for the inclusion of experiences in this compendium. Experiences were selected alongside the following criteria:

1. **Relevance** to strengthened Local Economic Development (LED) of the targeted area (e.g. economic governance and policies for LED, strategic planning, training and job creation, as well as intersecting themes leading to an increased LED).

2. **Evidence** of a response to actual needs of the targeted population (demonstrated by an assessment and/or by beneficiaries’ feedback or a mid-term analysis for ongoing projects).
3. **Innovation** in the concept and/or process applied.
4. **Collaboration** among different actors, specifically local actors/stakeholders, and participation by the targeted population.
5. **Sustainability and local ownership** to increase the possibility of scaling up, since for most municipalities, it is financing and human resources that are the main constraints in implementing good practices in forced displacement contexts.
6. **Transferability** of the experiences and potential for learning (clear identification of lessons learned—both successes and failures—and recommendations).

Measurement of outcomes and results of each project was carried out by the focal persons in the municipalities and organizations who shared their experiences with the CMI. When provided, data included in the reported results strengthen the evidence.

Emphasizing LED, all the experiences of this compendium focus on sustainable job creation for refugees and their hosts, along several dimensions, such as:
- Improving the way of doing business and the local business environment, and mobilizing private sector’s actors from both the displaced and host communities;
- improving service delivery and infrastructure needed for attracting investments and serving the population;
- developing the skills and education of both communities; and
- including the displaced and the most disadvantaged groups (women, youth, disabled people) in the economy and society.
LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE REFUGEE INFLUX IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

Since the start of the Syrian Civil War, Syria’s neighboring countries have been coping with a very high influx of refugees. In the seven years of conflict, more than 5.5 million Syrians\(^1\) have sought refuge in the Mashreq and Turkey, and a significant number moved toward Europe and beyond. As 92% of Syrian refugees live outside camps\(^2\), Mediterranean local communities are at the forefront of the refugee crisis. At the same time, local governments in other regions (such as Europe and Western Asia) have also experienced a strong influx of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) and struggle with a growing pressure on service delivery, job availability, and social cohesion.

With the protracted nature of the conflict, the refugee crisis has also become a development challenge in addition to a humanitarian one. Although countries differ in geographic position, demographics, labor, and refugee protection laws, access to resources, and economic capacity, local governments hosting refugees face similar challenges and have had to develop extraordinary resources and solutions to host forcibly displaced persons beyond short-term assistance, designing approaches for the mid-term, and seeking to ensure a decent standard of living for all their inhabitants. The development challenge has repercussions on education, health, job opportunities, and livelihoods of both communities\(^3\), and the urgency to take action has been internationally acknowledged in the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals, the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, and the resulting Global Compact on Refugees (currently under preparation).

The need to address both a humanitarian crisis and the related development challenges also increased the capacity of local governments, thanks to renewed development and humanitarian support, which reached various actors on the ground, including local government, the private sector, and civil society. Nevertheless, local governments continue to struggle with insufficient planning and response capacities, as well as ineffective organizational arrangements. They are lacking skilled staff, financing, and innovative solutions to create a better economic environment for both new and original residents. In this framework, standalone solutions are not enough and need to be coupled with long-standing sustainable actions owned by, or designed in close cooperation with, local actors.

\(^1\) As of September 2018. Figures might be higher as they only include Syrians officially registered as refugees under the UNHCR mandate. Source: UNHCR Syrian Regional Refugee Response Portal: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria

\(^2\) UNHCR, August 2018.

\(^3\) World Bank, MENA Economic Monitor: Refugee Crisis in MENA: Meeting the Development Challenge, October 2017.

Solutions to support LED and the creation of job opportunities for hosts and refugees have been identified and discussed in recent national, regional, and international fora. The vulnerability of Syrian refugees and their risk to fall into a poverty trap has been analyzed, along with the need to lead the urban refugee population to self-reliance through shared local economic growth among them and the host populations.

Actions to facilitate refugees’ path to self-reliance and enhance their value added to local host economies involve many levers municipalities can use, such as:

- the legal and fiscal frameworks for access to the labor market;
- the identification of investors already present on the ground and the enhancement of their business capacity through ad-hoc incentives;
- the improvement of the business environment to facilitate entrepreneurship and attract other private investors, including aftercare measures once foreign investors decide to reside and invest in the municipal area;
- the channeling of investments to communities that are hosting refugees;
- scaling up existing public services to boost supply and demand; and
- achieving better matches between existing labor supply and demand.

Actions that local governments can take depend on the national legal framework and labor market, as well as on their economic situation. There are also significant differences within the host countries themselves, deriving from internal peculiarities in the economic and demographic environment, as well as social perceptions and cohesion. As Syria’s neighboring countries host different numbers of refugees, the pressure on their public service delivery, social cohesion, and local labor market differs per country and community.

Due to the variety of social and economic frameworks in which municipalities operate, one single solution to benefit from the presence of Syrian refugees cannot be prescribed. On the other hand, municipalities can come up with innovative solutions by analyzing the local environment and seek their own competitive advantage.

Solutions can be better designed, planned, and implemented through adopting a sound Local Economic Development (LED) approach, namely a cross-sectoral and participatory area-based local strategy that addresses the business climate and economic environment, labor market structure, physical infrastructures, and private sector mobilization. The LED approach also incorporates the local residents’ participation (both of refugees and local population) and relevant features in the contexts of population changes.

The LED approach starts with an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis) that the local authority is facing. It specifically targets the local area following a series of guiding principles that leads to a LED strategy: organization, institutional arrangements, and stakeholder involvement; local needs assessment; strategy making; and implementation.

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8 Together with the LED approach, other local approaches can be taken into account by local authorities, such as the private sector-focused Competitive Cities approach. World Bank, Competitive Cities for Jobs and Growth, 2015.
The Mediterranean Host Municipalities Learning Network (HMLN)

For Jordan, Palestine, and Lebanon network, see next page.

Turkey: 3.58 million registered Syrians

Egypt: 131,504 registered Syrians

Source: UNHCR October 2018

- Turkish Union of Municipalities and Iraqi governorates participating in the Host Municipalities Learning Network.
- Turkish Municipalities participating in the Host Municipalities Learning Network.
Turkey: 3.58 million registered Syrians

Egypt: 131,504 registered Syrians

Iraq: 250,184 registered Syrians
The CMI Mediterranean Host Municipalities Learning Network (HMLN) brings together more than 80 local governments hosting refugees in the Middle East, Turkey, and Europe, as well as development practitioners and experts. The objective of HMLN is to learn from one another’s experiences in ensuring the common welfare of host communities and refugees from a local government perspective.

Facilitated by the Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI) as part of its Mediterranean Refugees and Host Communities Program, the HMLN provides members with peer-learning, capacity building, and expertise sharing. An online platform allows for exchanges on a continuous basis, while regular face-to-face and online trainings and workshops offer targeted learning and discussions on priority themes identified by members.

While the learning agenda in 2016-17 focused on priority service delivery, during the 2nd Annual Workshop in Beirut, Lebanon (May 2017) HMLN members identified LED as a priority theme for knowledge-sharing and capacity building activities within the forced displacement context. CMI HMLN activities focused on this priority theme, through the organization of three webinars, the creation of cross-country twinning arrangements on LED between local governments from the Mashreq and Turkey, and a face-to-face training workshop, “Strategic Planning for Local Economic Development in Host Communities.”

For more information on the CMI Mediterranean Refugees and Host Communities Program and the Host Municipalities Network, please contact us at refugees@cmimarseille.org or visit the program webpage: www.cmimarseille.org/programs/refugees-and-host-communities

The HMLN is continually expanding. Feel free to contact us and join!

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9 The workshop was organized in partnership with UN Habitat, GIZ, and the World Bank, and proposed a training around the UN-Habitat toolkit, “Promoting Local Economic Development through Strategic Planning,” which was customized by the CMI to be applied to the host communities’ contexts.

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Lebanese Union of Municipalities participating in the Host Municipalities Learning Network

Lebanese, Palestinian and Jordanian municipalities participating in the Host Municipalities Learning Network.
LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN FORCED DISPLACEMENT CONTEXTS: EVIDENCE FROM THE HMLN

In May 2017 and January 2018, CMI conducted two surveys among local government representatives participating in the 2nd Annual Workshop of the HMLN (Beirut, May 2017), and a training workshop on Strategic Planning for LED (Amman, March 2018). The two surveys provided a snapshot of the challenges, opportunities, and achievements of local governments in LED in the forced displacement context. For both surveys, the number of respondents reflected the views of the local governments participating in the events.

**FIRST SURVEY:** aimed to obtain a snapshot of their challenges and solutions for improved LED and job creation for host communities and refugees. It included 19 local governments from Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey.

**SECOND SURVEY:** consisted of a self-assessment of their local economic situation which would help them design their LED Strategy. It included 35 local governments across 5 countries: Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine10, and Turkey.

Respondents of both surveys represented a diverse range of towns, primarily small to middle-sized towns (under 300,000 inhabitants), and a few greater urban areas (over 1 million). A common feature was that a large majority hosted a relatively high number of refugees or IDPs—more than 20% of their total population.

The second survey demonstrated that local authorities of the targeted countries have some influence over business regulation (through delivery of licenses for business, building permits, sanitary inspections), and support the economic inclusion of women and youth (through professional/vocational training programs and delivery of benefits). However, it must be noted that responsibilities and resources differ across and within countries. Turkish municipalities, for instance, are given more resources from the central government compared to Jordanian and Lebanese municipalities. On the other hand, Lebanese municipalities benefit from a higher level of decentralization and are entrusted with a broad range of tasks resulting in more independence from the central government11.

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10 Although the Palestinian situation differs from that of the other countries included in the survey in terms of displacement (Palestinian refugees under UNRWA mandate, Palestinian IDPs, and refugees from other countries including Syria), Palestinian host communities were also targeted to show a broader picture with regard to the economic context of municipalities hosting displaced population.

Both surveys showed that local authorities acted to improve their local conditions to respond to the needs of displaced populations. Local governments already started including displaced persons in the development of city strategies; 58% declared in the first survey to have developed a city strategy or planning including actions for the welfare of locals and refugees. And while only 15% of them developed an updated LED strategy, 45% developed planning or strategic approaches which did include elements of LED.

The surveys showed a common perception that the arrival of refugees/IDPs raises several challenges to the local economy. Unemployment is a major concern:

**First Survey:** 74% of local governments have unemployment rates above 15%

**Second Survey:** 74% of respondents considered unemployment as one of the effects of the presence of displaced populations.
Representatives from local governments identified the main impediments to refugees accessing job opportunities as follows: the lack of job offers in formal and informal markets; difficulties obtaining work permits; the insufficient or inadequate skills of refugees; and the lack of information about available jobs.

What is the main problem faced by refugees in accessing job opportunities in your town? (Survey 1)

- Refugees lack information on available job offers: 21%
- None, refugees face no difficulties to find jobs: 21%
- Employers lack information on existing skills among refugees: 26%
- Risk of work abuse for refugees: 26%
- Insufficient and inadequate skills/education of refugees: 32%
- Lack of job offers on the formal market: 42%
- Lack of job offers overall (formal or informal): 37%
- Difficulties to obtain a work permit: 37%

Despite these constraints, the second survey also highlighted new opportunities brought by refugees. For example, 43% of respondents (predominantly Jordanian and Turkish) declared that refugees brought new skills in the local labor market, and 37% (predominantly Lebanese and Turkish) said that Syrian refugees revived some local economic sectors.

In your view, in what way did the displaced population impact the local economic context in your town? (Survey 2)

- Increased unemployment: 74.3%
- Housing tensions: 51.4%
- Livelihood competition: 65.7%
- Revived economic sector: 37.1%
- New available skills: 42.9%
- Increased job for everyone: 2.9%
Local governments hosting a high number of refugees face challenges in the favorable enabling environment of their town, including available financing instruments and resources. The second survey showed constraints at the level of taxation, support for expanding value chains, external funding, informal loans, housing, and energy. On the other end, education, telecommunication, and ICT systems are considered relatively stronger.

**Enabling environment: which factors are currently a strength or a weakness in your town? (Survey 2)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Strength</th>
<th>Weakness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecommunication and ICT systems</td>
<td>54.3%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads, transport</td>
<td>54.3%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built offices, factory space, and land assets</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>54.3%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>54.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for expanding value chains / tax incentives</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>82.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing situation</td>
<td>48.6%</td>
<td>48.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other quality of life</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads, transport</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built offices, factory space, and land assets</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Banking and microfinance: Which resources are sufficiently or insufficiently available for financing businesses on different scales? (Survey 2)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Sufficient</th>
<th>Insufficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Microcredit for small businesses</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private bank loans</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal and/or family loans</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External funding</td>
<td>68.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incentives from central or local governments</td>
<td>77.1%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal and/or family loans</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External funding</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incentives from central or local governments</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Municipal representatives highlighted the need for increased investments as the biggest priority to improve the LED of their town:

**FIRST SURVEY:** showed the need for increased private investments, international financial support, and encouraging entrepreneurship opportunities.

**SECOND SURVEY:** showed the need for additional investments in infrastructures and equipment, incentives to business, financial trainings, and worker skills development.

### What do you think is most needed in your town to improve Local Economic Development? (Survey 1)

- Increased private investments from national sources: 63.2%
- Increased public expenditures from the central level: 26.3%
- Encouraged entrepreneurship opportunities, including household businesses: 36.8%
- Improved access to livelihood and job opportunities for all: 26.3%
- Increased private investments from international sources: 47.4%
- Better business environment (e.g., liberalization of financial sector, internationalization of small and medium enterprises): 10.5%
- International financial support: 47.4%

### What are the main actions that need to be more developed in your town to improve the enabling & business environment? (Survey 2)

- Worker skills development: 74.3%
- Infrastructure investments: 71.4%
- Financial trainings: 71.4%
- Incentives to investors: 42.9%
- Business management trainings: 40%
- Business incubators: 34.3%
- Incentives to business: 34.3%
- Business hubs: 20%
LESSONS LEARNED

There are notable contextual differences between and within the HMLN members. Factors such as the political and socio-economic environment, the size of local governments in terms of population and geographic area, existing legal frameworks, local governmental mandates, fiscal and business environments, and the presence of international aid all influence the project initiation and implementation. These factors will need to be taken into account and put into context prior to attempting to scale up a project in a different community.

Despite the mentioned differences, the experiences shared by HMLN members and partners allow us to draw some common lessons in dealing with a high influx of refugees from a LED perspective.

In May 2017, members of the HMLN met to discuss their challenges and priorities for a strengthened LED. They developed an action plan focused on their priorities in four main domains that affect LED:

- **strategic planning and policies** (e.g. rapid needs assessments, data collection and analysis, participatory approaches);
- **boosting private sector opportunities** (e.g. infrastructures, financial and in-kind incentives for investments, home-based business framework);
- **skills and capacity development** (e.g. vocational training, skill transfers, matching labor offer and demand); and
- **regulations and policies** (e.g. bureaucracy, decentralization, taxation, restrictions, and quotas).

These four priority areas are the starting point for host local governments to learn and take action for a better local environment for hosts and refugees. Lessons learned were developed following every activity of the HMLN, from May 2017 to March 2018. They can be summarized as follows:

**MUNICIPAL LEADERSHIP IS ESSENTIAL TO GENERATE A FAVORABLE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR LED.**

Local governments can play an important role in attracting investments as they can use many levers of action. They manage business permits and procedures, facilitate financial services, offer in-kind support (land, building, physical capital) and financial incentives. They also provide an attractive environment for businesses and employees (family and social services such as education or health care, ease of movement and family reunification). They also contribute to improve the labor market situation by supporting targeted training (vocational and technical), which can be particularly important for youth and women. Local governments can go beyond their initial mandate, and develop innovative solutions for improving their local economies. Strong municipal leadership is a decisive factor for the implementation of businesses, and to develop a city’s competitive advantage.

**ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL.**

Besides their common challenges in hosting refugees and their willingness to enhance private investments and boost their LED, each local government has to develop a unique strategy linked to its own particular features. This includes many factors, some of which cannot be changed. For example, the small size of some towns in terms on inhabitants may make it easier to find donors or external investors as the amount of investments needed is relatively low compared to bigger towns. Conversely, a big city has to put into practice a more sophisticated plan, sometimes to target specific urban areas. Similarly, the economic strength of cities forms their competitive advantage. Low-tech sectors like agriculture or fishing attract different types of investors than areas with high-tech industrial sectors or tourism. Before coming up with ideas about how to improve their LED environment, local governments should carry out specific situation assessments and studies to become aware of their real needs and capacities.
Municipalities may not have enough resources to attract foreign private investors, and need to find alternative and sustainable solutions. Local governments need to have the ability to quickly adapt their plans according to the financial and human resources available. They can, for instance, facilitate the development and sustainability of small businesses (such as shops and restaurants) and home-based businesses by relying on the existing resources they have on the ground, such as the presence of potential investors, or local microcredit institutions. Small businesses are valuable to host communities. They create a network in which small entrepreneurs from the refugee community offer services to other refugees, limit the burden on the municipal budget, and frequently generate more jobs than bigger industries would.

Data collection, analysis, and situation assessment can serve to understand the available resources a municipality can leverage, and identify the most urgent needs of local communities. When municipalities do not have enough resources for in-depth data collection and analysis, they can partner with existing stakeholders, such as local NGOs or CSOs, national, or international organizations. The support of these stakeholders can improve local authorities’ capacities in this matter.

The involvement of stakeholders from both host and displaced communities at every level (local community, private sector, public sector) from the early stage of LED planning contributes to build ownership and trust. It is an essential ingredient of success. However, institutions like chambers of commerce and industry or private sector institutions do not have to be the only stakeholders a municipality consults. The need to also involve local communities, including refugees, in the consultation process is key.

In Sarhan, Jordan, the Municipality made use of its unique competitive advantages by giving incentives to entrepreneurs. In this small town near the Syrian border, new industries brought by a Syrian entrepreneur flourished with the support provided by the mayor (page 44).

On the other end, the bigger municipality of Yerevan, Armenia, incentivized investments by training Syrians on Armenian business laws and regulations, while at the same time offering support for investors’ families through housing and educational support (page 32).

COORDINATION AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY.

Municipal LED interventions are stronger and more effective when enabled and supported by national parameters and policies. A municipal project aiming at increasing LED can start from a national program, or be aligned to it. On the other hand, a local NGO or CSO can complement a local public program by offering additional technical expertise, financial capacities, and human resources. In this case, the municipality can consider these local projects as an additional local asset.

Following the creation of a national program for the local socio-economic inclusion of refugees, more than a thousand Italian municipalities started offering training opportunities to refugees and locals according to the local demand (page 81). They managed to do this thanks to the collaboration with local NGOs offering their capacities and expertise. This collaboration led to job creation and trainings for host communities as social workers, trainers, and similar positions resulting in increased LED.

MUNICIPAL FUNDING AND INVESTMENTS IN THE LOCAL ECONOMY ARE MAIN CONCERNS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.

Municipalities may not have enough resources to attract foreign private investors, and need to find alternative and sustainable solutions. Local governments need to have the ability to quickly adapt their plans according to the financial and human resources available. They can, for instance, facilitate the development and sustainability of small businesses (such as shops and restaurants) and home-based businesses by relying on the existing resources they have on the ground, such as the presence of potential investors, or local microcredit institutions. Small businesses are valuable to host communities. They create a network in which small entrepreneurs from the refugee community offer services to other refugees, limit the burden on the municipal budget, and frequently generate more jobs than bigger industries would.

LED STRATEGIC PLANNING SHOULD BE INFORMED WITH COMPREHENSIVE DATA ANALYSIS AND LOCAL SITUATION ASSESSMENT.

Data collection, analysis, and situation assessment can serve to understand the available resources a municipality can leverage, and identify the most urgent needs of local communities. When municipalities do not have enough resources for in-depth data collection and analysis, they can partner with existing stakeholders, such as local NGOs or CSOs, national, or international organizations. The support of these stakeholders can improve local authorities’ capacities in this matter.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN LED PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION IS NECESSARY FOR ITS SUCCESS.

The involvement of stakeholders from both host and displaced communities at every level (local community, private sector, public sector) from the early stage of LED planning contributes to build ownership and trust. It is an essential ingredient of success. However, institutions like chambers of commerce and industry or private sector institutions do not have to be the only stakeholders a municipality consults. The need to also involve local communities, including refugees, in the consultation process is key.
WOMEN AND YOUTH MUST BE FULLY INTEGRATED IN THE LED STRATEGY.

Women and youth are among the most vulnerable fraction of the population, especially in communities of refugees. Most affected by unemployment, they have, nevertheless, enormous potential for contributing to the local economy. Incentives and efforts from the municipality can lead to the creation of women-led home-based businesses to benefit the whole local economy. Similarly, training programs targeting youth can help build a skilled local workforce in line with local labor market needs.

SOCIAL INCLUSION IS ESSENTIAL WHEN DEALING WITH LED IN FORCED DISPLACEMENT CONTEXTS.

In contexts with a high number of refugees, there is a main risk of widening social tensions by targeting only newcomers as project beneficiaries. In a context of high unemployment and economic instability, longer-term residents from lower income strata might consider newcomers as competitors for low-qualified jobs, fostering negative perceptions about them that are harmful to economic development. This sensitive problem can be addressed by including a sufficient number of original residents and refugees in project activities, or by involving both parties in initial consultations. Finally, projects aiming at fostering social inclusion among refugees and host communities are an important step for refugees’ economic participation and for improving LED.

To answer the stop of imports of foodstuff from Syria and the high unemployment rate among women, the Municipality of Zarqa, Jordan, gave incentives to women through ad-hoc training opportunities to open home-based businesses and create jobs for themselves and their families. This way, a small project with limited budget contributed to job creation, training, and increased supply of foodstuff in the medium-sized municipality (page 48).

Drawing form these lessons learned, HMLN members will continue to exchange and learn about ways to mitigate the stress felt by the influx of forcibly displaced populations, and to create a better economic and social environment for locals and newcomers.
HOW TO USE THIS COMПENDIUM

This compendium, Experiences in Hosting Refugees: Local Economic Development in Host Communities aims to share relevant knowledge about applicable solutions to increase the LED in communities hosting forcibly displaced persons (refugees, returnees, IDPs). It contains 16 experiences from different regions of the Mediterranean covering the following 7 countries: Armenia, Greece, Iraq, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey. Each experience is implemented by local actors, sometimes in collaboration with local, national, or international organizations, and is correlated with a technical template aiming at increasing the potential for scaling up the project. This compendium includes both completed and ongoing projects initiated no later than 2016. Each template begins with a summary including technical features of the project and contact details of project focal point(s), while the following sections dive into:

† The local context in light of the influx of refugees or forcibly displaced persons, and main challenges that led to the project’s creation;
† Main actions and steps taken for implementing the project and reported results with reference to direct and indirect LED components, including evidence for project success and preliminary feedback from targeted beneficiaries, when available;
† Main obstacles, challenges, and risks felt during the implementation phase, together with ingredients of success and innovative aspects; and
† Ideas and comments for project improvement or scaling up in the future, including recommendations from project managers and officers.

This compendium has a particular interest in the intersecting themes of youth and gender. The experiences focusing on these themes will be easily recognizable through the following icons:
SUMMARY OF THE EXPERIENCES

According to host local governments’ needs and priorities, and drawing from the HMLN’s lessons learned and identified areas for support, the experiences collected in this compendium are clustered into four main categories:

- enabling business environment and private sector mobilization;
- public service delivery;
- education and training; and
- socio-economic integration and local employment generation.

As LED is a comprehensive approach, the experiences do not necessarily limit their focus to the theme of the section they are clustered in, but rather can be analyzed through multiple lenses, scaled-up, and serve as an inspiration for the development and implementation of similar projects in small areas, as well as in bigger contexts.

The table below offers a glance of the experiences and their focus, according to the priorities identified by the host local government representatives’ members of the HMLN.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPLEMENTING ACTOR</th>
<th>NAME OF THE EXPERIENCE</th>
<th>SUMMARY</th>
<th>KEYWORDS</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yerevan Municipality, Armenia</td>
<td>Economic Programs for Refugees</td>
<td>Yerevan Municipality implements economic programs aimed at enabling the business environment through the economic integration of Syrian businessmen in the local context, together with social activities for housing of refugees and education programs for young Syrians.</td>
<td>Boosting private sector opportunities; Regulations and policies</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SolidarityNow, Greece</td>
<td>The insular lab of solidarity and sustainability (TILOSS)</td>
<td>TILOSS is a small scale, experimental project that aims to boost the local economy and to inform integration policy design with tangible evidence. It provides shelter and jointly accessible services to Syrian refugees and Greeks on the frontline: the small island of Tilos. It seeks to counter an emerging xenophobic narrative in a European country already facing socio-economic hardship.</td>
<td>Skills and capacity development; boosting private sector opportunities; social inclusion</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipalities of New Balama, Greater Mafraq, and Zaatari, Jordan</td>
<td>Skills and Expertise Exchange between Jordanians and Syrian Refugees</td>
<td>The project aimed to exchange skills and expertise between Jordanians and Syrian refugees. Its main objective is to enable Jordanians with professional and technical skills and expertise owned by Syrian refugees, in order to create job opportunities and enhance entrepreneurial skills.</td>
<td>Skills and capacity development; boosting private sector opportunities; social inclusion</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarhan Municipality, Jordan</td>
<td>Partnerships with the private sector for business creation</td>
<td>The project has created a diversified local economy with partnerships between the municipality, private companies, donors, and the central government to establish a clothing factory providing jobs for women. In addition, the Municipality of Sarhan is building a craft area equipped with all the infrastructures needed by industrial craftsmen to attract more private investment and provide job opportunities. A vocational training center will also be established within the craft area to train and upgrade the skills of youth to work in the various businesses working in the area.</td>
<td>Strategic planning; regulations and policies; boosting private sector opportunities; skills and capacity development</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPLEMENTING ACTOR</td>
<td>NAME OF THE EXPERIENCE</td>
<td>SUMMARY</td>
<td>KEYWORDS</td>
<td>PAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zarqa Municipality, Jordan</td>
<td>Your Job from Home</td>
<td>Your Job from Home aims to provide simple and accessible jobs to certain disadvantaged social groups, by focusing on women and housewives from host and refugee communities. The project will be soon scaled-up to include more Syrian women as beneficiaries.</td>
<td>Skills and capacity development; boosting private sector opportunities</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syrian Economic Forum, Gaziantep, Turkey</td>
<td>Rukhsati Project</td>
<td>This project aims at licensing and formalizing “informal” Syrian businesses in Gaziantep. It also strengthens awareness among Syrian refugee business owners on the Turkish business environment and legal regulations. The project ensured Syrian businesses’ sustainability and development and improved Syrian refugee integration in the Turkish host community, easing tensions and problems deriving from their participation in the informal economy.</td>
<td>Regulations and policies, boosting private sector opportunities</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Section 2. PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPLEMENTING ACTOR</th>
<th>NAME OF THE EXPERIENCE</th>
<th>SUMMARY</th>
<th>KEYWORDS</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ), Jordan</td>
<td>Waste to Positive Energy: Labor intensive waste collection and sorting</td>
<td>Considering the increasing amount of waste in Jordan’s municipalities and the high unemployment rate, this project aims to address the lack of adequate waste disposal services, while at the same time creating employment opportunities for Jordanians and Syrian refugees.</td>
<td>Boosting private sector opportunities, skills and capacity development</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union of Municipalities of Middle Bekaa, Lebanon</td>
<td>Health and Sports Development Project</td>
<td>Due to the lack of sufficient infrastructures in health and education and lack of recreational activities, the Union of Municipalities of Middle Bekaa established several institutions to mitigate tensions caused by the high number of refugees and tough economic conditions.</td>
<td>Skills and capacity development, social inclusion</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Section 3. EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPLEMENTING ACTOR</th>
<th>NAME OF THE EXPERIENCE</th>
<th>SUMMARY</th>
<th>KEYWORDS</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNIMED (Mediterranean University Union)</td>
<td>Higher Education Supporting Refugees in Europe (inHERE)</td>
<td>inHERE aims at sensitizing higher education staff to facilitate integration and access of refugees in European Universities. inHERE is a two-year project co-funded with support of the Erasmus+ program of the European Union.</td>
<td>Skills and capacity development</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIMED (Mediterranean University Union)</td>
<td>RESCUE – Refugee education support in MENA</td>
<td>RESCUE aims to help the Partner Country Universities in Iraq (KRG), Lebanon, and Jordan in structuring an effective response to the refugee crisis, by creating ad hoc units (the Refugee Student Operational Support Unit – RSOS). Specific services and ad-hoc solutions will support refugee students in resuming their academic training path.</td>
<td>Skills and capacity development</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Section 4. SOCI OC O-EC ONOMIC INTEGRATION AND LOCAL EMPLOYMENT GENERATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPLEMENTING ACTOR</th>
<th>NAME OF THE EXPERIENCE</th>
<th>SUMMARY</th>
<th>KEYWORDS</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duhok Governorate, Iraq</td>
<td>Sustainable empowerment in rehabilitation centers</td>
<td>This project leads to the integration of both Syrians and detainees while enhancing economic opportunities through the creation of a confectionery plant in Duhok’s rehabilitation centers (prisons) for women and minors, who will be trained in the production of sweets and quality carpet under the supervision of Syrian experts.</td>
<td>Skills and capacity development, social inclusion</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Interior, Italy</td>
<td>The SPRAR Network</td>
<td>SPRAR (Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees) is a network that puts in place a local and multi-level approach for refugee socio-economic integration. The SPRAR Network makes use of the skills and abilities of local public and private actors, favors multidisciplinary interventions, and facilitates a better understanding of beneficiaries’ needs. It represents a valuable resource for the local host communities by stimulating the development of existing resources, enhancing local synergies, and promoting the creation of new services and opportunities for the entire local community. By doing so, SPRAR recognizes the contribution of both refugees and host communities to local development.</td>
<td>Strategic planning, skills and capacity development, social inclusion</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sahab Municipality, Jordan</td>
<td>Social cohesion and integration of refugees with local communities</td>
<td>Social activities are an essential starting point for a successful integration of Syrian refugees in the host community. This project aims to strengthen communication among all parties to help refugees achieve social stability and mitigate the impact of the economic crisis, as well as to help members of the host community to accept and support newcomers and their contribution to local development.</td>
<td>Social inclusion, skills and capacity development</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaziantep Municipality, Turkey</td>
<td>SADA Women’s Development and Solidarity Center</td>
<td>SADA Women’s Development and Solidarity Center’s overall goal is to support the social and economic stabilization of refugee women, and to contribute to their self-reliance and ability to co-exist with women from the host community by creating a women-only center that provides services to Syrian and host community women.</td>
<td>Skills and capacity development, social inclusion</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sultanbeyli Municipality, Turkey</td>
<td>Local strategy for employment generation</td>
<td>Sultanbeyli Municipality’s employment and vocational education office, developed for local refugees, plays an important role in subsistence of public, private sector and NGO cooperation. It supports effective progress in livelihood, employment, work permits and licensing of workplaces, and vocational education.</td>
<td>Strategic planning, skills and capacity development, social inclusion</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family, Women Support and Disabled People Centre (AKDEM) - Zeytinburnu Municipality, Turkey</td>
<td>Snow Finch Project</td>
<td>This project aims to provide refugee women with adequate labor skills for securing sustainable income. In addition, it also envisages to fulfill their basic needs. Trips into the city and sales stands provide social cohesion and socialization.</td>
<td>Skills and capacity development, social inclusion</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXPERIENCES IN LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Enabling Business Environment and Private Sector Mobilization
Yerevan Municipality implements economic programs aimed at enabling the business environment through the economic integration of Syrian businessmen in the local context, together with social activities for housing of refugees and education programs for young Syrians.

Yerevan, Yerevan Municipality
Economic Programs for Refugees

Enabling Business Environment and Private Sector Mobilization

LEAD AUTHORITY OR ORGANIZATION
Yerevan Municipality

AREA
Yerevan, Republic of Armenia

BENEFICIARIES
Young Syrian refugees, Syrian women, businesses directly benefitting from the program

TIMELINE
2012 – ongoing

HUMAN RESOURCES
Staff from the Armenian Government, Ministry of Diaspora, Municipality and local community.

SOURCES OF FUNDING
Armenian Government

CONTACT
Ms. Anna Stepanyan, Head of Education
Department of Yerevan Municipality
Contact: anna.stepanyan@yerevan.am

Ms. Susanna Gasparyan, Education
Department of Yerevan Municipality
Contact: susanna.gasparyan@yerevan.am
Context and Challenge

Since the escalation of the war in Syria, Armenia began receiving Syrians, mainly in the capital of Yerevan. The Armenian Government and Yerevan Municipality implemented social programs for housing Syrians, as well as programs within local schools and pre-schools for the continuous education of Syrian children.

As Syrians noted a different culture for doing business in Armenia, the Armenian Government and Yerevan Municipality decided to also establish training programs, assistance, and a better business environment to help Syrians’ economic integration in the Armenian business climate context.

Actions and Reported Results

The project went through the following steps:

- **Housing.** The program provided housing solutions for Syrians in Yerevan through state budget funds.

- **Training programs.** The training program focused on economic integration of Syrians and how to do business in Armenia (business registration, obtaining licenses, marketing), helping Syrians to understand the Armenian business environment. It was designed and delivered by the Yerevan Municipality.

- **Enabling business environment.** The industrial zone in Yerevan (1,400 m²) was allocated for free by the Armenian Government for Syrians to organize their businesses. In addition, an administrative office and an info hub will be established inside the industrial zone to provide legal services, accounting, marketing and other services to Syrians doing business in the industrial zone and throughout Armenia.

Reported Results

- **Improved business environment.** The project supported a better understanding of the business environment and facilitated business development for Syrians in Yerevan.

- **Increased refugee socio-economic inclusion and sustained livelihood.** The project assisted Syrians with housing, training opportunities, and a physical space to organize their businesses.

Evidence and Beneficiary Feedback

Results and outcomes are regularly published by the Armenian Government. The Municipality Reports can be found at the webpage of the Yerevan Municipality: http://www.yerevan.am/en/

Beneficiaries comprise 1,200 families with secured housing, with 7,119 Syrians trained on social and economic integration aspects in Armenia. In addition, businesses already located in the industrial zone donated by the Armenian Government in Yerevan benefited from the program. The program is ongoing, and beneficiaries are increasing steadily.
Lessons Learned

Challenges and Risks
A challenging aspect was for the Yerevan Municipality to design and implement the program in a way that would benefit as many Syrians as possible. This posed the risk of setting a group of Syrians apart from the larger community. To avoid this risk, the Municipality targeted activities to both Syrians and locals.

Key Ingredients of Success
The Armenian host community was tolerant and supportive toward Syrians in Armenia. Support was provided by Armenians to help Syrians socialize and integrate into the host society. Accordingly, the host community also supported the Municipality with their trust in the success of the program.

Innovative Aspects
1) The industrial land allocated by the Government is the most innovative feature, as it contributed to economic integration of Syrians.
2) The program used education and training measures to integrate Syrian children, parents, and Syrian businessmen.

Scaling-up
The key approaches of this program are now being scaled up by other Armenian municipalities. Ensuring additional sources of funding beyond governmental funding would enable the implementation of a larger-scale program that could target more beneficiaries.

Collaborations
Stakeholders involved are the central government, the Ministry of Diaspora of Armenia, Yerevan Municipality, and local communities.

The central government arranged the transfer of Syrians to Armenia, the Ministry of Diaspora was engaged in the process of receiving, registering, providing housing and social programs for Syrian refugees, in collaboration with Armenian municipalities and local communities.

During the second stage, Yerevan Municipality established social and economic programs targeting Syrians residing in Yerevan. Other municipalities and communities are also engaged in implementing the relevant components of the project for Syrians residing in other cities.
TILOSS is a small scale, experimental project that aims to boost the local economy and to inform integration policy design with tangible evidence. It provides shelter and jointly accessible services to Syrian refugees and Greeks on the frontline, the small island of Tilos. It seeks to counter an emerging xenophobic narrative in a European country already facing socio-economic hardship.

LEAD AUTHORITY OR ORGANIZATION
Allileggie SolidarityNow (SN)

AREA
Island of Tilos, Greece

BENEFICIARIES
Syrian Refugees and asylum seekers in Greece, mainly families, local population

TIMELINE
October 2015 – ongoing

HUMAN RESOURCES
13 staff members + 2 medical staff members for 6 months

FUNDING AMOUNT
€732,866

SOURCES OF FUNDING
OSIFE and UNHCR through ECHO

CONTACT
Ioakeim Vravas, Head of MEAL & Performance Quality
Contact: ioakeim@solidaritynow.org
www.solidaritynow.org
Context and Challenge

Tilos is a small Greek island with 800 inhabitants, reflecting typical features of a local society with limited resources. Tilians demonstrated a strong solidarity during the refugee emergency, expressing a clear interest in hosting refugees. Without a permanent doctor, seasonal tourism jobs, limited connectivity to other islands, and a decreasing population, Tilos faced many obstacles to strengthen local economic development. Despite an unemployment rate of 20.9% (higher than the average in Greece), Tilos has accommodated 150 people, and provided employment to 13 Greeks and 10 Syrian refugees.

Since 2015, SolidarityNow (SN), along with Tilos Municipality and the support of OSIFE and UNHCR, has been implementing a pilot project aimed at reinforcing refugee integration, while strengthening opportunities for local growth. The project is investing in refugee education, empowerment, and interaction with the local community, and it seeks to establish synergies between the two communities to boost Tilos’ economic potential. The project developed a new working line, linking humanitarian aid to a development perspective, and demonstrated the opportunities and benefits for regional and local economies deriving from refugees’ human capital, labor, skills, and services.

Actions and Reported Results

The project has now reached its final phase, through the following steps:

- **Phase 1.** Establishment of a medical project securing access to healthcare for refugees and locals.
- **Phase 2.** Construction of an accommodation structure to host up to 50 people long-term and provide assistance to 1,022 refugees.
- **Phase 3.** Began a pilot project for smooth cooperation with local assistance to establish services accessible to all, including: provision of psychosocial support, legal assistance, direct cash support, Greek and English language classes, IT courses, recreational activities, information desks, counseling and transportation with accompaniment.
- **Phase 4 (ongoing).** Establishment of a mixed (Greeks and refugees) social enterprise scheme in the livestock sector, reviving the production of the island’s traditional cheese through the creation of synergies between the two communities. Expected outcome of the project is the revival of a traditional economic sector by employing both the local and refugee community.

Reported Results

- **Improved economic situation by boosting the local market.** The project contributed to enhanced economic opportunities through mitigating negative impacts and maximizing opportunities deriving from the presence of refugees:
  - Job creation with the employment of 10 refugees in local businesses (i.e. hotel, bakery, grocery store) as well as 29 people of Tilos’ descent who returned to the island to work in the framework of project’s activities;
  - 10 housing solutions to cover the increased market needs;
  - Direct cash assistance to 34 refugee families;
  - Facilitation of refugees’ access to public administration and services, including issuance of social security number, VAT number, and opening a bank account.
- **Improved public services for both refugees and locals.** The registration of refugee children in the Tilos primary school has led to the expansion of the local school, and to a ministerial decision increasing the number of teachers from three to four, thus benefiting all the children of the island. Moreover, health facilities have been reinforced through the recruitment of a permanent public doctor and a grant for the provision of medical services to the local population in the absence of a stable medical infrastructure. Due to the increased demand for healthcare, a permanent state doctor is now based on the island.

- **Increased refugee socio-economic inclusion and sustained livelihood.** The project contributed to sustaining and developing the livelihoods and self-reliance of refugees and vulnerable members of the host community through:
  - comprehensive case management including psychosocial support, legal assistance, counseling, interpretation, information provision, facilitation, cultural orientation, accompaniment and transportation;
  - provision of educational and training services increasing the beneficiaries’ marketable skills (e.g. English and Greek language courses, ICT training and certification);
  - provision of recreational services to adults and children (e.g. music, dance, craft lessons);
  - financial assistance provided for the organizing of cultural and educational activities, including both Greek nationals and asylum seekers.

- **Increased social cohesion between host and refugee populations.** By focusing on both refugees and vulnerable Greeks, underprivileged Greeks were identified and provided with access to the same accommodation facilities and services as refugees, contributing to limit social tensions.

**Evidence and Beneficiary Feedback**

With the involvement of local authorities, the project managed to change the way refugees are perceived, shifting from “victims” to actors within the local economy. By focusing equally on the host community and refugees/asylum seekers, the project secures an inclusive approach and strengthens social cohesion. According to the beneficiary feedback results (April 2017), the ratio of those willing to stay on the island is significantly higher than the overall percentage of beneficiaries willing to stay in Greece. More results follow:

**What beneficiaries say**

“Our life changed since we arrived from Lesvos. We have forgotten our problems in Syria because we had bigger ones on Lesvos. On Tilos, everything has changed; the island and the people are great.”

“Although small, it feels like home again.”

“I like that my children learn Greek. That’s how they’ll advance in their lives.”

More stories from beneficiaries on www.solidaritynow.org
Lessons Learned

Challenges and Risks
- Refugees need transportation for routine medical exams, visits to asylum offices, and referrals for more advanced care. This is a challenge in Tilos, which is not well connected to the mainland or other islands.
- Unemployment figures, mainly for youth, are higher on small and isolated islands such as Tilos. These islands rely on the sectors of farming and traditional tourism, mostly providing seasonal jobs. This economic factor, together with the language barrier, hamper refugees and asylum seekers in accessing the labor market.

Key Ingredients of Success
- serving a concrete vision
- cooperation with local authorities
- building on existing will for solidarity
- respecting the capacity of the island
- use of resources in a jointly accessible way
- continuity of the intervention

Innovative Aspects
The project proved that refugees and host community members are not necessarily competing over the same resources, but that they can mutually contribute to shared growth with their assets and talents. The project identified the gaps and needs of an isolated local economy and used the available resources in a mutual beneficial way for both social groups.

Building on the competitive advantages of the local economy and its strategic priorities, the project aimed to regenerate the developmental aspect of the island, with benefits both for the hosting community and the refugees. The island can thus serve as an innovative example of inclusive development demonstrating the empirical evidence of economic development outcomes for displaced and host populations. Mainstreaming strategies for refugees into national and regional economic planning can enable investment paradigms and financial instruments to enhance local economic development to the advantage of both communities.

Scaling-up
The TILOSS project can serve as an example for small scale integration projects in remote and/or not fully developed areas, countering a common anti-refugee narrative. For scaling up the project, the following actions are recommended:

1. Privilege small-scale initiatives that will build on the aspirations of the local population and will not undermine their pathway to sustainable growth. Tilos’ refugee response was developed from the bottom up and contributed to the community’s self-image.
Collaborations

Solidarity Now has been implementing the TILOSS project in close collaboration with the local authorities and the funding of OSIFE and UNHCR. This cooperation aims to ensure the sustainability and viability of the integration model.

Other forms of collaboration included: Doctors of the World—Greece supported the medical project; the Municipality of Tilos and local volunteers provided basic assistance to refugees; the housing structure was provided with the support of the Open Society Foundations; the Social Care and Development Society of Tilos Municipality is currently collaborating to establish the social enterprise.

Local and international volunteers and project beneficiaries were actively involved in the project, conducting educational activities (e.g. German and Arabic language classes) and recreational activities (crafts, dance, music) for children and adults.
The project aimed at exchanging skills and expertise between Jordanians and Syrian refugees. Its main objective is to enable Jordanians with professional and technical skills and expertise owned by Syrian refugees, in order to create job opportunities and enhance entrepreneurial skills.

LEAD AUTHORITY OR ORGANIZATION
Municipality of Greater Mafraq, United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Business Development Centre

AREA
Municipality of New Balama, Municipality of Greater Mafraq – South District, and Municipality of Zaatari, Jordan

BENEFICIARIES
Jordanians and Syrian refugees, especially youth and women

TIMELINE
July 2016 – May 2017

HUMAN RESOURCES
Specialized and financial training centers

FUNDING AMOUNT
$1.5 million

SOURCES OF FUNDING
WFP and RDDP

CONTACT
Mohannad Mansour Khawaldeh
Contact: mohanad_ing76@yahoo.com


**Context and Challenge**

There are about 650,000 officially registered Syrian refugees in Jordan, most of them living in host communities. One of the most important challenges faced by host communities is finding sustainable livelihood opportunities for both Syrian refugees and Jordanians, as the whole country is facing a high unemployment rate. Combined, the Municipalities of New Balama, Zaatari, and Greater Mafraq host 98,000 Syrian refugees, and have an unemployment rate of nearly 60%, which is mainly concentrated among marginalized groups. Therefore, it is essential to establish local economic development plans and create employment.

In this context, the Municipalities of New Balama, Mafrak, and Zaatari feel the need to enhance local economic development and improve livelihoods by providing job opportunities to their Jordanian and Syrian residents.

**Actions and Reported Results**

The project went through the following steps:

- **Needs assessment and dialogue sessions.** Identification of Jordanian’s training needs and added skills and capacities of Syrian refugees to be shared during trainings.

- **Trainings** were established on:
  - Food production: pickles, dairy products, meat production, pastries
  - Construction: floor tiles, paint, electrical wiring, decoration, gypsum plastering, crushing and plumbing
  - Sewing and embroidery
  - Beauty salons and hairdressing
  - Carpentry and woodworks
  - Agricultural work

- **Selection of beneficiaries.** Jordanians and Syrian refugees were selected according to their applications in each municipality.

- **Phase 1. Training on communication skills.** A 20-day training on communication skills, targeting both Jordanians and Syrians built and strengthened the capacities of participants to facilitate their integration into the Jordanian labor market.

- **Phase 2. Skills and expertise exchange phase with Syrian refugees.** Several 40-day skills exchange activities were held in small groups according to the above sectors. Under the supervision of experts, trainees learned from Syrians’ professional and technical expertise. As an incentive, participants received a daily allowance of 10 Jordanian Dinars (JD), not exceeding 220 JD a month, for a period of no less than three months and a daily transportation allowance of 5 JD for a period of no less than 66 days.

- **Phase 3. Securing job opportunities and creating small businesses.** UNDP supported job creation and the setting up of small businesses for Jordanian beneficiaries, while Syrian refugees supported Jordanian participants for six months through the provision of both professional and technical support.
Follow-up and ensured sustainability. After the project, UNDP will double the personal savings of participants who manage to successfully create a small business for their capital to reach the value of 2,000 JD. Such an incentive will be granted based on beneficiaries’ performance.

Reported Results
- Improved economic situation. The project supported the creation of jobs and business opportunities.
- Increased skills of the labor force. The project trained beneficiaries according to their training needs.
- Improved governance. Through running the project, the local public administration and staff acquired a better understanding of the local labor market.
- Increased social cohesion between host and refugee populations. The expertise and skills exchange between Syrians and Jordanians supported socialization and mutual understanding.

Evidence and Beneficiary Feedback
An early evaluation showed the creation of job opportunities and satisfactory financial returns at the household level.

A young woman who is deaf and cannot speak participated in the sewing training. She started a home-based garment business, and due to the increased demand for her products she now plans to expand it.

An unemployed young boy participated in the plumbing training and opened a small plumbing shop. He is now a business owner wishing to further scale-up his business.

Lessons Learned
Challenges and Risks
A low response rate from Syrians has been the main challenge.

Key Ingredients of Success
- Strong beneficiaries’ motivation
- Project design and coordination according to local needs
- Adequate financial support

Innovative Aspects
This is a pilot project aimed at exchanging professional skills and expertise between Jordanians and Syrian refugees. It also aims at implementing of interventions that support the income of Syrian refugees in host communities, the development of employment skills, and the creation of small projects by Jordanians while at the same time enhancing social cohesion between them.
Scaling-up

The project can be applied in areas with similar conditions. However, available and sufficient funding is the key to expanding the scope of the project.

Recommendations:
- Expand the work on similar projects in Jordan.
- Creation of a comprehensive database, including information on employment status, origin, skills, and residence.
- Training programs should be related to the implementation of projects on the ground.
- Projects should be evaluated periodically.

Collaborations

UNDP and the Business Development Centre – World Food Programme (WFP), RDDP and the National Microfinance Bank
The project has created a diversified local economy within the craft area, to train and upgrade the skills of youth to work in the various businesses working in the area.

**Enabling Business Environment and Private Sector Mobilization**

**Jordan, Sarhan Municipality**

**Partnerships with the Private Sector for Business Creation**

The project has created a diversified local economy within the craft area, to train and upgrade the skills of youth to work in the various businesses working in the area.

**LEAD AUTHORITY OR ORGANIZATION**
Municipality of Sarhan

**AREA**
Sarhan, Jordan

**BENEFICIARIES**
Jordanian and Syrian women and youth, private entrepreneurs, municipality

**TIMELINE**
January 2017 – ongoing

**HUMAN RESOURCES**
10 people to supervise and monitor implementation

**FUNDING AMOUNT**
$700,000

**SOURCES OF FUNDING**
World Bank (Emergency Services and Social Resilience Project), Kuwait Fund, Sarhan Municipality

**CONTACT**
Mr. Khalaf Ayed Assem, Mayor
centuryfe_khalaf@yahoo.com
Mohammad Awad Sarhan, Local Development Unit
mmohammadd@ yahoo.com

Photo credits: Center for Mediterranean Integration
Context and Challenge

The Municipality of Sarhan suffers from a high unemployment rate up to 45% in the local community, especially among youth and women. Moreover, the local economy is weak and relies on the governmental and agricultural sectors. Due to the dependence of the local economy on jobs in the public sector, agriculture and livestock, a main challenge has been the absence of an area for doing business and vocational training center to upgrade labor skills in the sectors of handicraft and light industries (carpentry, blacksmithing, brick and tile making, mechanics and car maintenance, etc.). This issue was exacerbated by the crisis of Syrian refugee flows and the settlement of a large number of refugees due to its position near the Syrian border, the similarity of customs and traditions, and the existence of family ties. The proportion of refugees reached nearly one quarter of the population, with 6,000 refugees—mostly youth, workers, and skilled craftsmen competing with Jordanian citizens on job opportunities. This caused tensions between Sarhan host community and Syrian refugees. This situation prompted the municipality to find ways to create enough job opportunities for all, by encouraging the private sector to invest in the Municipality of Sarhan.

In response to the sharp rise in unemployment and decreasing standards of living, the Municipality established partnerships with private companies and Syrian entrepreneurs to benefit from the presence of skilled Syrian refugees. It created a more diversified local economy that provides enough job opportunities, including for women and youth.

Actions and Reported Results

The project went through the following steps:

- **Preliminary studies.**
- **Consultations** with the local community (citizens and refugees) to ensure their acceptance and support of the project.
- **Communication** with the necessary public authorities to request approval to proceed with the project.
- **Financing.** The municipality reached out to donor agencies and organizations to finance the project (including under the Municipal Services and Social Resilience Project, administered by the World Bank).
- **Job creation.** Creation of a garments sewing factory (satellite factory for an international company) through partnership with the private sector and with support from the World Bank’s Emergency Services and Social Resilience Project. A pickles factory was established by selling municipal land to a Syrian investor.
- **Training and business incentives.** A craft area for doing business as well as a vocational center (15,000 m²) are currently under construction.

**Reported Results**

- **Improved economic situation.** By providing new jobs and a suitable place for businessmen to work, the project has helped attract investments and expand the creation of new crafts and trades local economic sectors. Thanks to its scale economy, it also helped providing job opportunities in the sector of transport and...
other services, as well as increasing the growth of the local economy. The project led to the creation of over 400 direct job opportunities, over 20 indirect job opportunities, together with the reduction of the poverty level in the local community (citizens and refugees) and improved living standards. In addition, the new craft area will lead to the creation of over 250 direct and 100 indirect job opportunities for citizens and refugees. Finally, private investments in municipal land provided the municipality with a new source of income, which helps establish additional projects.

- **Increased economic participation and training for women and youth.** The creation of a clothing factory led to economic and social empowerment of women, increasing their participation in the local labor market. Moreover, the training center will improve young people’s marketable skills.

- **Increased refugee socio-economic inclusion and sustained livelihoods.** The project has created more jobs for Syrians and Jordanians, giving refugees the opportunity to receive a stable source of income, supporting their social and economic integration.

- **Improved urban services.** Plants and factories have been relocated outside the city center, resulting in a cleaner environment for residents.

**Evidence and Beneficiary Feedback**

The project has had a positive impact on inhabitants. It provided a stable source of income to Jordanian and Syrian women through the provision of job opportunities and their economic and social empowerment. According to feedback and comments from beneficiaries given during consultations, the project also helped reduce family dissolution rates. An economic monitoring study also showed that the project injects $70,000 per month in salaries into the local economy, leading to the creation of other economic opportunities and to increasing local business traffic.

**Lessons Learned**

**Challenges and Risks**

- Complying with the timeframe to obtain government approvals.
- Ensuring good preparation and presentation of project to obtain funding and convince private investors.
- Ensuring wide access, given its important role for success.
- Attention to the role of media in making the project a success.

**Key Ingredients of Success**

- Presence of many supporting partners and stakeholders, the local community, citizens and refugees, which brought significant support to project progress.
- Availability of the necessary labor among refugees and citizens.
- Presence of private investors as strategic partners.

**Innovative Aspects**

- Partnering with private investors.
- Focusing on women and youth to economically and socially empower them and benefit from their potential by creating jobs for young women in the clothing factory.
- Benefitting from some municipal resources (land and buildings).
- Providing a source of income for the municipality to establish additional projects.
Scaling-up

The creation of the clothing factory was complemented with the establishment of a craft area and vocational training center in partnership with private investors, currently in the final stage of implementation. After a preliminary study, this project will be soon expanded to include sectors other than crafts and industrial trades in the craft area.

Collaborations

- Ministry of Municipal Affairs
- Ministry of Labour
- The World Bank
- Kuwait Fund (for the craft area)
- Local community including refugees and citizens, through meetings and consultations for assessing needs. The presence of the local community also helped convincing additional partners to adopt the project.
Your Job from Home aims at providing simple and accessible jobs to certain disadvantaged social groups, by focusing on women and housewives in the host and refugee communities. The project will soon be scaled up to include more Syrian women as beneficiaries.

Enabling Business Environment and Private Sector Mobilization

Jordan, Zarqa Municipality

Your Job from Home

LEAD AUTHORITY OR ORGANIZATION
Directed Energies Association, in cooperation with the Municipality of Zarqa

AREA
Zarqa, Jordan

BENEFICIARIES
75 Jordanian women (housewives) / host communities

TIMELINE
January 2017 – August 2017

HUMAN RESOURCES
Project manager, coordinator and trainers

FUNDING AMOUNT
$40,000

SOURCES OF FUNDING
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

CONTACT
Mr. Mohamed Zawahreh / Municipality of Zarqa
zawahreh_m@yahoo.com
Ms Khaleda Hussein / Directed Energies Association
husseinkhaleda@yahoo.com
Context and Challenge

As a result of the Syrian refugee crisis and the presence of 140,000 Syrian refugees in the city of Zarqa, unemployment and poverty have increased within host communities. Due to the lack of opportunities in academic and vocational education, and to some negative perceptions of the local community, women, youth, and disabled persons are the most disadvantaged in finding a job. As imports of foodstuffs from Syria stopped due to the crisis, the Zarqa Municipality started training women and granting licenses for home-based businesses in food production, especially targeting housewives. In the case of home-based businesses, women face modest start-up costs to establish their own business and generate profits for their families.

Actions and Reported Results

The project went through the following steps:

- **Project’s advertisements.** Advertisements for trainings were sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and published on its website. A fixed directory of companies and institutions was created to ensure the largest follow-up to trainees’ businesses.

- **Training** of 80 Jordanian and 20 Syrian women on:
  - Crochet and accessories with natural pearls and gemstones;
  - Dairy products, cheese, jams and pickles; and
  - Traditional and medical soap production and work with natural leather.
  - After each training course, another three-day course was focused on accounting, management, and marketing.

- **Creation of home-based businesses.** Women started their own self-funded businesses, leading to the sales of products to local and foreign communities.

- **E-marketing.** Trainees received support from USAID’s Eshraq Marketing Program for e-marketing and opening their products to new markets.

- **Feasibility studies and follow-up.** The Ministry of Planning’s productivity promotion centers (IRADA Programme) carried out feasibility studies for home-based businesses and follows up on trainees’ work.

- **Business growth.** These new businesses have caught the attention of a donor who started supporting them by providing equipment to improve and expand their businesses.

Reported Results

- **Job creation and improved economic situation:** The project contributed to creating jobs for more than 20 women (housewives) who obtained their home-based business license, as well as several family members employed in the home-based businesses. It also contributed to increasing the household income for these families and improving beneficiaries’ economic situation. This is measured by the increase in sales average in bazaars and exhibitions for each woman.

- **Increased skills:** the project provided housewives with skills to use on the local labor market after completion of the project. In addition, more than 20 of the
beneficiaries became trainers and started to share the experience and skills they have received with additional women.

- **Improved governance:** A new municipal law includes home business licenses for the first time, which enables women to enter the labor market in this way.

**Evidence and Beneficiary Feedback**

According to the Municipality, the training program has received satisfactory evaluation by trainers and trainees. Following the training, women beneficiaries started production and sold their products in many bazaars and exhibitions inside Zarqa and in other cities in Jordan.

**Lessons Learned**

**Challenges and Risks**

- Long and sometimes complex procedures in obtaining licenses, especially related to food and health products.
- Health requirements were perceived as a challenge as they require an extra amount of money for the maintenance and renovation of the working place.
- Excessive cost of renting showrooms and lack of marketing space.
- Lack of financial support for further training.

**Key Ingredients of Success**

- Activate homemade production and focus on how the entire family benefits.
- Empower women and marginalized groups.
- Focus on small projects and market needs.

**Innovative Aspects**

The project does not require a high cost for production and expenses, as home-based businesses do not require fixed costs (e.g. rent).

**Scaling-up**

The number of project beneficiaries will be soon expanded, targeting both Jordanian and Syrian women and providing them access to the market. This project will be implemented with the support of the Intercultural Cities Networks. Other support to expand the scope of the project will also be welcomed.

Recommendations for scaling up the project:

- Improve marketing skills in its various forms (e.g. e-marketing).
- Improve packaging skills.
- Focus on advertising and promotion.
- Stronger involvement of local authorities (municipalities), civil society organizations, and the private sector.
Collaborations

- The Municipality of Zarqa provided a place for selling homemade products and for trainings.
- The Zarqa Chamber of Commerce coordinated with shops to contribute to the sales of products.
- Civil society organizations provided advice, counseling, and participation in project implementation.
- Jordanian private companies supported the project by offering training and marketing products: Amal Ash-Shalabi Lab for the production of yogurt products, the Eclick Company for training and marketing, and Khodharji for training and marketing services.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was the main donor.
This project aimed at licensing and formalizing “informal” Syrian businesses in Gaziantep. It also strengthened awareness among Syrian refugee business owners on the Turkish business environment and legal regulations. The project ensured Syrian businesses’ sustainability and development, and improved Syrian refugee integration in the Turkish host community, easing tensions and problems deriving from their participation in the informal economy.

LEAD AUTHORITY OR ORGANIZATION
Syrian Economic Forum

AREA
Gaziantep, Turkey

BENEFICIARIES
Syrian informal business owners residing in Gaziantep

TIMELINE
November 2016 – February 2017

HUMAN RESOURCES
9 permanent staff

FUNDING AMOUNT
€650,000

SOURCES OF FUNDING
German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

CONTACT
Mulham Al Jazmaty
Maljazmaty@syrianef.org

Photo credits: Syrian Economic Forum
Context and Challenge

Gaziantep is hosting approximately 325,000 Syrian refugees, with 291,000 living outside refugee camps under temporary protection. Most of them work to secure their livelihoods, and some of them have created their own businesses.

According to a survey conducted by the Syrian Economic Forum—which included more than 1,170 trade points—the vast majority of Syrian-owned businesses in Gaziantep are unregistered and operate in the informal market. Syrian business owners lack funding and procedural knowledge to formalize. For example, the cost of registering a small shop in Gaziantep is more than $3,000, which is beyond the capital availability of many owners. Furthermore, difficulties in understanding regulations and procedures due to language barriers means these businesses face many obstacles to their growth. Their informal nature is also reflected in a higher vulnerability in the Turkish society and legal system.

Actions and Reported Results

The Rukhsati project formalized unregistered Syrian businesses in Gaziantep through:

- **Project creation.** Identification of project objectives, definition of the methodology, implementation, monitoring and evaluation tools.
- **Data collection and analysis.** A market survey of Syrian businesses through field visits by Syrian Economic Forum’s staff and an ad-hoc questionnaire to assess business needs.
- **Identification and selection of beneficiaries.** Small and medium-sized businesses in key sectors that can provide more jobs and need support. Beneficiaries were selected alongside the criteria defined by the Syrian Economic Forum and the donor.
- **An introductory seminar** on project objectives and procedures to formalize businesses. All selected beneficiaries participated.
- **Setup of a Support Unit,** which included Arabic and Turkish speaking staff, accountants, and legal consultants. It aimed to register informal Syrian businesses in official records, provide technical assistance to business owners and train them on the Turkish legal and business environment, guide them and help them comply with regulations and laws.
- **Licensing assistance process.** A number of documents were requested of beneficiaries and delivered to the Turkish authorities who monitor the licensing process.
- **Payment of all fees by the Support Unit** to complete the licensing process.

Reported Results

- **Improved public revenues.** With the registration of 217 informal Syrian businesses (accounting for 20% of licensed businesses in Gaziantep) and ensuring their business continuity, the project helped local administrations improve their
revenues through taxes paid by Syrian businesses. Every registered company has to pay a lump sum of $150 per month per employed worker as social insurance tax, and 20% of its profits as income tax. In addition, all beneficiaries pay their due taxes for an average of 148 Turkish Liras, (equivalent to $40 per month).

- **Increased refugee socio-economic inclusion and sustained livelihoods.** The issuance of 96 work permits for Syrians who were previously working informally contributed to the economic stability for 331 employees and their families. By formalizing their working conditions, the project also managed to protect the legal rights of Syrian refugee business owners and employees.

**Evidence and Beneficiary Feedback**

At the end of the project, Syrian Economic Forum’s Monitoring and Evaluation Department conducted two surveys on a random sample of beneficiaries. The two surveys included samples of 50 and 122 beneficiaries. These surveys found that:

- 96% of beneficiaries increased their capital turnover after their business was licensed.
- 50% of beneficiaries plan to increase their number of employees during the coming year and are optimistic about the growth of their businesses.
- 72% of beneficiaries have seen an increase in customers since licensing.

**Lessons Learned**

**Challenges and Risks**

- **Taxation.** 57% of beneficiaries expressed that taxation is one of the biggest challenges to ensure the continuity of their businesses.
- **Work permits.** 71% of beneficiaries showed constraints in obtaining work permits due to local laws allowing the employment of foreigners on the condition of the employment of a quota of locals. This challenge was mainly felt by businesses focused on arts and crafts whose production is mastered by Syrians only, as they must rely on Syrian employees for the expansion of their businesses.
- **Lack of financial inclusion.** Some beneficiaries faced difficulties in opening a bank account and accessing financial services for their businesses.
- **Other challenges:** limited freedom of travel due to temporary protection status, language barriers, and lack of understanding of Turkish regulations.

**Key Ingredients of Success**

Cooperation with Turkish authorities (represented by the Municipality of Gaziantep, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Gaziantep Crafts Association), was the main ingredient of success.

**Innovative Aspects**

For the first time, a knowledge framework for licensing and registration procedures of Syrian investments in Turkey was developed, consistent with governmental laws and procedures.
Scaling-up

- Develop sound selection criteria to identify project beneficiaries. Some selected businesses did not fully meet the selection criteria, resulting in the failure of their businesses due to financial difficulties and inability to pay taxes after the registration process.
- Organize more workshops to explain the rights of beneficiaries and their obligations resulting from the licensing process.
- Clarify the role of legal accountants to beneficiaries, which represents the link between businesses and the Turkish government.

Collaborations

- The Chambers of Commerce of Gaziantep and Istanbul provided data about registered Syrian businesses.
- The Municipality of Gaziantep in cooperation with the Syrian Economic Forum facilitated the procedures for business registration.
- Chamber of Industry of Gaziantep
- Turkish Crafts Association for Small Businesses
Section 2

Public Service Delivery
Public Service Delivery
Jordan, GIZ
Waste to Positive Energy – Labor intensive waste collection and sorting

Considering the increasing amount of waste in Jordan’s municipalities and the high unemployment rate, the project aims to address the lack of adequate waste disposal services, while at the same time creating employment opportunities for Jordanians and Syrian refugees.

**LEAD AUTHORITY OR ORGANIZATION**
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

**AREA**
Governorates of Irbid, Mafraq, Al Balqa, Karak, Madaba, Jerash, and Ajloun, Jordan

**BENEFICIARIES**
Vulnerable Jordanians and Syrians in hosting communities, and refugee-hosting municipalities

**TIMELINE**
September 2015 – October 2020

**HUMAN RESOURCES**
1 project manager, 4 project coordinators, 3 project advisors, 1 construction engineer, 1 administration officer, 1 logistics officer, 1 data management officer

**FUNDING AMOUNT**
€46,000,000

**SOURCES OF FUNDING**
German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

**CONTACT**
Patrick Poehlmann, Program Manager
Contact: patrick.poehlmann@giz.de
Context and Challenges

Jordan is hosting over 655,000 Syrians, with 79% living outside refugee camps. The population increase is putting a strain on municipalities, which are no longer able to deliver adequate public services like waste disposal. This difficult situation could trigger conflicts between Jordanians and Syrians. Additionally, according to the Department of Statistics, Jordan faces the highest unemployment rate in the past 25 years (18.2%). Although the high unemployment is not a result of the Syrian crisis, the public sentiment tends to blame Syrian refugees as the cause.

As solid waste management is a labor-intensive municipal service, the project has been implemented in direct partnership and ownership with municipalities. Their successful cooperation is crucial to reach sustainable outcomes. The project aims to provide livelihood opportunities for vulnerable Jordanians and Syrians while contributing to a relief on the environment, to alleviate tensions between Syrians and the hosting community, and to improve solid waste management systems in partner municipalities.

Actions and Reported Results

The project went through the following steps:

- **Identification of stakeholders.** Following a participatory approach, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MoMA) and selected municipalities were included in the preparation process.

- **Selection of beneficiaries.** An internal structure was created for implementing cash-for-work activities. A project advisory committee was established in each municipality, led by the municipality and consisting of community representatives and a GIZ project coordinator. The committee developed vulnerability criteria and a selection process for the identification of beneficiaries.

- **Cash-for-work activities.** In the initial phase, cash-for-work activities only included waste collection and public awareness raising. Later on, seven waste sorting stations and two composting facilities were built in different locations. The scope of the cash-for-work activities was closely discussed with the municipalities, and was limited to jobs in waste collection, sorting, composting, and awareness raising activities. Municipalities needed to ensure good working conditions, monitored by GIZ, and the project also followed national labor laws, which include the provision of work permits for Syrians.

- **Post-employment services.** Through a partnership with the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) beneficiaries are provided with further services after their cash-for-work contract ends, such as employment trainings, job matching, and small business grants. In addition, DRC takes care of the beneficiaries’ well-being during their cash-for-work contract with a complaint mechanism.

- **Partnerships.** Collaboration with other international NGOs was essential to have a wider outreach of activities. Caritas Jordan was responsible for cash-for-work in waste collection in nine municipalities in order to reach vulnerable people as fast
as possible. Action Against Hunger worked with local cooperatives, which employ mostly women workers. Oxfam provided other cash-for-work opportunities, such as recyclables collection.

- **Monitoring.** The project built a comprehensive monitoring system to monitor the number of cash workers, their well-being, and the performance of the municipalities.

- **Community participation.** To also reach the wider community, the project organized dialogue platforms for all relevant actors (e.g. shop owners, women, youth etc.). Recycling and composting are new to most of local communities, therefore it was crucial to include the public in the planning process to ensure their participation.

**Reported Results**

- **Increased job opportunities and sustained livelihoods.** Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanians can secure their livelihood. The link between cash-for-work activities and infrastructure development has opened job opportunities. Municipalities are able to finance jobs through these facilities on a longer run, even after the completion of the project. In addition, post-employment services help refugees and Jordanians sustain their livelihood.

- **Improved urban services and infrastructures.** The project supports municipalities to improve their municipal services of solid waste management, such as the construction of sorting stations and composting facilities. In a longer term, municipalities will develop further capacities to use such facilities, and therefore improve service delivery.

- **Improved governance.** The participatory approach and dialogue platforms where different social actors discuss solutions for waste management-related challenges improved local good governance processes.

- **Strengthened social cohesion between host and refugee populations.** The project contributed to social cohesion as Syrians and Jordanians are working side by side.

**Evidence and Beneficiary Feedback**

The cash-for-work activities in waste collection led to an increased positive perception of the cleanliness of the municipalities. Of the households surveyed in Irbid, 89% agreed that the municipality is noticeably cleaner than the previous year. As an act of solidarity, in some areas residents provide workers with food and drinks. Moreover, in the Karak Municipality, Syrians strongly disagreed when they were asked if they are discriminated by the Jordanian workers, and a number of questionnaires showed that the majority of workers do not feel discriminated.

**What beneficiaries say**

“The Deir Alla municipality team has visited us..., called me to start working with them in the GIZ WtPE project. We used to be indebted but our burdens have become lighter and we are happier now. I can cover the expenses for winter clothes for my kids and for the rent and a heater, as it is winter now.”

—A 58-year old Syrian man, who came with his family from Homs to Mafraq, had to live with his family at his relatives’ place. Only after he started to work with the project, was he able to rent an apartment for his family, which provided him with a livelihood and dignity.
Lessons Learned

Challenges and Risks

- Exclusion of other nationalities. Due to special Jordanian regulations for Syrian refugees (e.g. the exemption of Syrians from work permit fees), the project targets Syrians and Jordanians only, and it excludes other nationalities (e.g. Iraqi or Yemeni refugees, and Egyptian migrant workers) presenting a possible risk for conflict.

- Informal sector. The project’s recycling activities might have negative effects on informal waste pickers’ livelihood. This can be mitigated through focusing on certain waste streams (e.g. cardboard), which is of lesser importance for the informal sector. The informal sector will be further observed, and in case of distortion, strategies to integrate the informal waste pickers should be discussed and analyzed.

- Corruption and favoritism. The high amount of job opportunities opens the risk of corruption and favoritism. For this reason, the project implementation requires closer monitoring to avoid any favoritism when selecting beneficiaries.

- Distortion of the local labor market and structures. Several cash-for-work projects in Jordan are providing many short-term job opportunities. This might lead to a distortion of local structures, especially if the salaries are not aligned with local salaries.

- People’s rejection of recycling facilities. Most municipalities in Jordan are new to the concept of recycling and composting, hence the risk that the public won’t support the facilities. Including communities in the process and consultations should mitigate this risk.

- Inclusion of women. In spite of the gender equality of the project, jobs in solid waste management are often perceived as male work and it can be socially not accepted that a woman collects waste from the streets. So far, 22.6% of job opportunities provided by the project have been for women. This was possible by reaching out to cooperatives instead of municipalities, and by offering working hours more suitable to women. In addition, women can also be involved as community mobilizers for awareness raising to other women.

- Upholding decent working conditions. It is an ongoing challenge to ensure that each partner is upholding decent working conditions, in line with the labor law and ensuring fair treatment and anti-discrimination of workers. This can be mitigated by an efficient monitoring system.

- Sustainability. Cash-for-work itself is not sustainable and needs to be connected to other measures like infrastructure construction and post-employment services.

- Mental health and psychosocial support. Some of the workers might be severely traumatized. Therefore, it is important that the project does not worsen their situation and well-being. The supervisors need to be aware of this situation and act accordingly, ideally referring beneficiaries to professional counseling.

Key Ingredients of Success

- Involvement of the local community to ensure ownership and continuous support.

- Creation of a sustainable infrastructure. Solid waste management will be more sustainable and jobs can be financed directly by the municipalities.
- **Partnership with the municipalities** to give them the lead and ensure continuity.
- **Continuous effective monitoring system** is helping to steer the project accordingly, including the presence of project staff in municipalities as well as the complaint mechanism through a third independent actor. In regular feedback sessions, beneficiaries can give their feedback and ideas for improvement.
- **Post-Employment Services** to follow up with the beneficiaries after the cash-for-work jobs are concluded offer beneficiaries more options to improve their livelihood, and prevent feelings of disappointment.

**Innovative Aspects**

In spite of the usual use of cash-for-work in humanitarian situations, this project connected cash-for-work to an existing technical field, supporting the development of solid waste management in Jordan and also providing vulnerable Jordanians and Syrians with livelihood opportunities. By utilizing direct partnerships with municipalities and the provision of infrastructure, the project connects the need for work and a better solid waste management system.

**Scaling-up**

In the case of scaling up, the context of the intervention needs to be carefully evaluated, and experiences shared with other cash-for-work projects. In countries where many cash-for-work interventions are implemented, coordination is important. Flexible standard operating procedures could be developed to support these processes.

The “Waste to Positive Energy” project and post-employment services have already been expanded and the focus now shifts more to sustainable activities like recycling and composting.

**Collaborations**

The project is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) with a signed implementation agreement with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs as a political partner. The Ministry provides access to the municipalities as implementing partners of the project.

Several international NGOs are additional implementing partners of the project in order to increase the outreach and to pilot different implementation strategies.

Local communities and refugees are included in the processes in several ways: through the project advisory committee, in public hearings before the construction of recycling facilities, and in monthly dialogue platforms.
Due to the lack of sufficient infrastructures in health and education and lack of recreational activities, the Union of Municipalities of Middle Bekaa established several institutions to mitigate tensions caused by the high number of refugees and tough economic conditions.

LEAD AUTHORITY OR ORGANIZATION
Union of Municipalities of Middle Bekaa

AREA
Union of Municipalities of Middle Bekaa, Mekseh, Lebanon

BENEFICIARIES
Lebanese and Syrians

TIMELINE
June 2016 – ongoing

CONTACT
Mr. Mohamed El Bast
Mohamedelbastrais@gmail.com
Context and Challenge

The Union of Municipalities of Middle Bekaa and its seven Municipalities (Qabb Elias, Bouarij, Anjar, Majdal Anjar, Bar Elias, Mekseh, Marijat) are concerned with guaranteeing equal services to the Lebanese host community and Syrian refugees to meet their needs and contrast economic, social, and educational disparities in a context with a high unemployment rate.

There are approximately 63,000 Syrian refugees in Qabb Elias; 23,000 in Majdal Anjar; 20,000 in Bar Elias; 19,000 in Anjar; 4,500 in Mekseh; 700 in Bouarij; and 400 in Marijat. These municipalities all experience poverty, lack of sufficient income, unemployment, increased consumption of natural resources, competition over jobs, polarization of social services and subsidies, and absence of data concerning their distribution. Most of these municipalities also suffer from the lack of necessary supplies to meet emergency needs, lack of funding, and insufficient budget allocation for the education sector. Children and younger generations are the most affected and deprived of their right to affordable, quality education. Moreover, the lack of recreational, cultural, and educational places for youth sometimes creates tensions within families.

Actions and Reported Results

In order to face those challenges, the Union of Municipalities of Middle Bekaa established:

- The Mekseh clinic, which provides medical assistance to Syrians and Lebanese of all ages.
- The Mekseh school to provide education to Syrian students at all levels.
- The Bouarij clinic, providing medical assistance and medications.
- The Bouarij sports complex, which covers a large area, including a basketball court and a football pitch, and offers many sports and recreational activities.

Reported Results

- Job creation. The project led to the creation of new job opportunities such as doctors, nurses, cleaners, organization workers, event planners, as well as some jobs for youth interested in sports activities.
- Increased social cohesion between host and refugee communities. The project let people to cooperate and work together, creating integration, mutual acquaintances, and capacity to live together and coordinate with one another.

Evidence and Beneficiary Feedback

According to the Union of Municipalities, the project received positive feedback from Syrians. However, the quality of services received was not sufficient for the local population.
Lessons Learned

Challenges and Risks
- Lack of adequate financial resources
- High number of refugees resulting in a demographic change

Key Ingredients of Success
- Collaborative environment
- Awareness-raising campaigns for youth
- Allocation of a special budget for the education sector

Innovative Aspects
- Development of relationships between people to alleviate existing tensions
- Creation of job opportunities
- Creation of entertainment for all ages and genders
- Provision of a clinic to provide timely first aid

Collaborations
- Union of Municipalities of Middle Bekaa
- Non-governmental organizations
- Civil society organizations
Section 3

Education and Training
European, UNIMED
Higher Education Supporting Refugees in Europe (inHERE)

inHERE aims to sensitize higher education staff to facilitate integration and access of refugees in European universities. inHERE is a two-year project co-funded with support of the Erasmus+ program of the European Union.

FUNDING AMOUNT
€279,401

SOURCES OF FUNDING
European Commission, Erasmus+, KA2 – Strategic Partnerships.

CONTACT
Marcello Scalisi, UNIMED - Mediterranean Universities Union
Contact: m.scalisi@uni-med.net
Cristina Stefanelli, UNIMED - Mediterranean Universities Union
Contact: stefanelli@uni-med.net
Website: www.inHEREproject.eu

LEAD AUTHORITY OR ORGANIZATION
UNIMED (Mediterranean Universities Union)

AREA
Europe

BENEFICIARIES
EU Higher Education staff and faculty members who are working on issues related to student refugees, or who are willing to initiate integration actions.

TIMELINE
September 2016 – August 2018

HUMAN RESOURCES
staff members at the participating institutions

Photo credits: World Bank
Context and Challenges

In the context of the refugee challenge in Europe, Higher Education (HE) aims at providing opportunities for refugees to access the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and to facilitate their integration.

Initiatives to integrate refugees in HE in Europe are widespread and diverse; they depend on national contexts, priorities, and legislations. Although most policies across the EU associate access to HE with students’ financial situation, a number of EU universities are launching small and large-scale initiatives aiming at social integration, academic integration, and opening minds.

Actions and Reported Results

The project went through the following steps:

- **Awareness-raising and sensitization.** The project sensitizes higher education governance, facilitating communication and institutional support within and outside the university.

- **Good Practice Catalogue.** The project collected and analyzed good practice examples of higher education approaches and initiatives in a wide range of situations that focused on refugees and displaced students. Facilitating the identification of successful patterns of integration which have the potential to be easily scaled up, the catalogue aims to serve the academic communities in Europe and beyond as a source of information as well as to enable exchanges and collaboration.

- **Guidelines for University Staff Members.** The training orientation to university staff empowers universities to take an active stand and further scale up successful approaches and practices. A document sets a number of guidelines to improve or initiate assistance activities for integrating refugee students within the university. The guideline document is an important tool to share results and lessons learned throughout Europe and to motivate other higher education institutions to implement their refugee-related actions. It also raises stakeholders’ awareness about opportunities and strategies for the integration of refugees in higher education.

- **Living Lab.** The living lab is intended to be a user-centered, open-innovation ecosystem where staff members from different universities in Europe will design, explore, experience, refine, and evaluate new practices and policies in real-life scenarios to facilitate the integration of refugees in higher education. It will operate through webinars and online events.
Lessons Learned

Key Ingredients of Success
inHERE addresses inclusive education, attracting refugees from conflict-affected countries into higher education as a core condition for the success of the 2011 EU Higher Education Modernization Agenda. This success will be obtained by empowering the higher education staff. It allows them to take an active stand in facilitating access and integration of refugees and IDPs into the European Higher Education Area.

Innovative Aspects
inHERE builds upon relevant policies and is innovative in the following ways:
- It brings together universities and networks of universities in order to maximize the visibility and the impact of its activities, thus avoiding fragmentation of interventions.
- It aims to harmonize and rationalize the ongoing initiatives at the European level.
- It introduces innovative forms of peer-learning and guidance for university staff members.
- It fosters social inclusion of those who are typically excluded from education.
- While the majority of actions in favor of the refugee students is run at local and institutional levels, this project operates transnationally, with the aim to give an integrated response, taking into account the variety of national and institutional contexts.

Reported Results
- Increased refugees’ livelihoods. Through easing the access of refugees to higher education, the project can help increase the livelihoods and skills of refugees in Europe, eventually contributing to a successful integration of refugees in host countries.
- Improved governance and better coordination among European Universities. The project can strengthen knowledge sharing, peer-support and academic partnership to facilitate integration and access of refugees in European Higher Education Area.
- Increased social dimensions of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) through recommendations to higher education institutions, networks, and policy makers on the strategies that can be put in place to support the integration of refugees.

Evidence and Beneficiary Feedback
The interest and involvement of beneficiaries and stakeholders have been higher than expected. Universities are responding very well to the project activities and are willing to share their experience and knowledge. This is a first success indicator in terms of potential impact of the pilot project.
Scaling-up

The inHERE Good Practice Catalogue (GPC) is the first main output of the project. It is the product of an in-depth analysis of almost 300 initiatives from 32 countries of higher education institutions and organizations committed to welcoming refugees that have participated in EUA’s Refugees Welcome Map campaign through early 2017. The map continues to be open for submissions from institutions worldwide via the following link: http://refugeeswelcomemap.eua.be. Cases for the Good Practice Catalogue have been arranged under 11 topical categories and have been selected on the basis of a set of criteria, focusing on impact with regard to the integration of refugees into academics and social life.

Beyond the numbers of refugees reached, criteria for selection have included the potential for upscaling and transferability; response to the actual needs of the refugee populations; collaborative and sustainable initiative structures; and integration into the university mission.

The Good Practice Catalogue can be consulted at: https://www.inhereproject.eu/

Collaborations

- UNIMED - Mediterranean Universities Union, Italy (coordinator)
- Sapienza University, Italy
- University of Barcelona, Spain
- Campus France, France
- EUA - European University Association, Belgium
- UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (associate partner)
RESCUE aims to help the Partner Country Universities in Iraq (KRG), Lebanon, and Jordan in structuring an effective response to the refugee crisis, by creating ad hoc units (the Refugee Student Operational Support Unit – R-SOS). Specific services and ad-hoc solutions will support refugee students in resuming their academic training path.

**LEAD AUTHORITY OR ORGANIZATION**
UNIMED, Mediterranean Universities Union

**AREA**
Iraq (KRG), Lebanon, Jordan

**BENEFICIARIES**
Local Higher Education Institutions

**TIMELINE**
October 2016 – October 2019

**HUMAN RESOURCES**
2 focal points per university for the project management, plus 4 staff from UNIMED fully involved in the process of quality of coordination

**FUNDING AMOUNT**
€947,665

**SOURCES OF FUNDING**
European Commission, Erasmus+, KA2 – Capacity-building in the Field of Higher Education

**CONTACT**
Raniero Chelli, UNIMED
Contact: r.chelli@uni-med.net
Marco Di Donato, UNIMED
Contact: m.didonato@uni-med.net
RESCUE aims to reinforce the capacity of higher education institutions in responding to the refugee crisis, thanks to the R-SOS activities. R-SOS activities are directed towards refugees, IDPs, and local communities in order to reduce social and local tensions, integrating students rather than dividing them.

R-SOS Units operate following both a horizontal and a vertical dimension. While the empowerment of services already available will build the horizontal dimension mainly through study orientation, the vertical dimension will work to further develop these services to fit the needs of universities and students.

Actions and Outcomes
The project went through the following steps:

- **Needs assessment.** A needs assessment of partner universities was conducted regarding the refugee influx and best practices.

- **Action planning.** On the basis of the first results and the selected best practices, a specific, tailor-made action plan is currently being designed to suited the needs of each target university.

- **Launch of R-SOS Units.** Following the action plans’ definition, at least one pilot course per R-SOS Unit will be launched and their operation will be monitored and supported by European experts in order to optimize their functioning. The project also plans to include NGOs, governmental organizations and other international organizations in the training process.

- **Dissemination.** In the future, at least one conference per year will be organized for dissemination and awareness purposes in each one of the partner countries.

Reported Results
- **Improved governance.** R-SOS Unit staff supports a better orientation process for refugees, IDPs, and local students towards scholarship opportunities and their access to international mobility schemes.

- **Improved capacities of local staff.** R-SOS Unit staff benefit from high-level training from EU universities through a capacity-building scheme.

- **Improved networking for local universities.** R-SOS Unit act as a local hub for gathering information, set up link with NGO’s and interact with local Institutions.

- **Increased refugee education and skills.** Refugees have a better understanding for accessing various university services, and can improve their education and qualifications.

- **Increased social cohesion between host and refugee populations.** R-SOS Unit activities help students enjoy the same rights and equal access to education opportunities. Refugee students are increasingly integrated into the local community.

Evidence and Beneficiary Feedback
This is a relatively new project. For the time being, refugees and IDPs in Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq (KRG) are welcoming the R-SOS Unit creation, mainly acknowledging that R-SOS staff will guide them towards local university services and other international opportunities.
Lessons Learned

Challenges and Risks
- Tensions with local communities.
- Problems in recognition of refugees’ prior learning.
- Low level of English for academic purposes and career.
- Applying one solution for all is not possible. There is a need for tailored assistance.
- Local tensions can frustrate project activities by reducing partners’ mobility.

Key Ingredients of Success
- Actions are designed to address real needs which are based on a detailed needs analysis defined together with local actors.
- Design of action plans for the R-SOS Unit implementation providing tailored solutions for each partner.
- Actions are coordinated on the ground together with other project and activities.
- Continuous consultation process with local partners.

Innovative Aspects
The project will create a new unit in order to implement new services for students and to enhance capacities of local staff. In this respect, the inclusion of NGOs and governmental organizations in the training process of university staff in targeted countries is innovative. A permanent observatory on refugees/IDPs crisis in relation to education/higher education can lead to a better understanding of education as a tool to mitigate the crisis and provide a useful instrument to avoid the risk of a “lost generation” while also preparing for a possible return to their home countries.

Scaling-up
The following recommendations can be derived from the project for scaling up:
- The promotion of a coordination system among all actors can play a supportive role to higher education institutions in the region in order to avoid fragmentation and duplication.
- General revision of scholarship criteria could benefit both refugee and local students.
- Avoid a regional, generalized approach in favor of a tailored, local approach with particular attention to local higher education institutions’ needs and constraints.
- Always involve the local communities in order to avoid social tension.
- Increase the number of countries involved in the project. An envisaged scaling-up activity could be targeting Syrian IDPs as well.
Collaborations

- Central government and local authorities.
- NGOs and civil society organizations were involved during the needs assessment visits in every targeted country to learn more about the local situation and to include them in future dissemination activities for refugees.
- Universities in the MENA region and Europe.
- Collaboration with other EU funded projects in order to maximize the impact and guarantee R-SOS Unit sustainability.
Section 4

Socio-Economic Integration and Local Employment Generation
Socio-Economic Integration and Local Employment Generation

Iraq, Duhok Governorate

Sustainable Empowerment in Rehabilitation Centers

This project leads to the integration of both Syrians and detainees while enhancing economic opportunities through the creation of a confectionery plant in Dohuk’s rehabilitation centers (prisons) for women and minors, who will be trained in the production of sweets and quality carpets under the supervision of Syrian experts.

LEAD AUTHORITY OR ORGANIZATION
Duhok Governorate Administration represented by the Office of the Deputy Governor

AREA
Hitit Detention Centre for Women and Minors / Duhok, Iraq

BENEFICIARIES
217 detainees, of which 130 are minors (male and female)

TIMELINE
February 2018 – February 2019

HUMAN RESOURCES
Experts in the production of sweets and handmade carpets, labor supervisors and product marketers from the refugee community as well as detainees.

FUNDING AMOUNT
Sweets production project: $85,000
Handmade carpets project: $82,000
Building expansion: $3,835,000

SOURCES OF FUNDING
Government funding (expansion of the prison building) and funding from the private sector (carpet production)

CONTACT
Behzad Ali Adam, Deputy Governor of Duhok
behzad.1955@yahoo.de
Context and Challenge

The Duhok Governorate is located in the Kurdistan region and is hosting 85,779 refugees according to the UN. The fiscal crisis and high unemployment rates fuel tensions between refugees and the host community. In addition, the Duhok Governorate also suffers from the terrorist acts of Daesh, an increasing number of detainees, and the lack of capacity in rehabilitation centers (prisons).

One of the most pressing challenges in the Governorate is the integration of Syrian refugees. In addition, the social rehabilitation of inmates is also a serious constraint. In this context, the project aims at helping detainees to be productive during their time of arrest and detention by benefiting from the skills of Syrian refugees.

Actions and Reported Results

The project went through the following steps:

- **Economic feasibility study** to assess the project of sweets production and sales.
- **Extension of the prison building.** Several meetings were held with competent authorities, who agreed to involve the Syrian labor force to complete the extension of the building.
- **Equipping the prisons** with a plant to produce sweets and a hall to manufacture quality carpets, as well as all necessary tools and materials needed to start and promote the activity.
- **Trainings for detainees.** Under the supervision of Syrian experts, detainees will be trained on sweets production and on manufacturing quality carpets.
- **Marketing of products.** Products will be sold in markets and event halls, and remote ordering will be available through a website and social networks.

Reported Results

- **Improved economic situation.** The production and sales of sweets and handmade carpets contributes to increasing private investments and reviving economic sectors.
- **Rehabilitation of detainees and empowerment of the local workforce.** Upon release of detainees, they will have mastered the skills necessary to set up small enterprises and to find a job in confectionery plants or carpet factories.
- **Increased refugee socio-economic inclusion and sustained livelihood.** The project contributes to the integration of refugees into the production and marketing process of products and provides job opportunities and sustainable livelihoods.

Evidence and Beneficiary Feedback

The Governorate and beneficiaries accept and support this project.

It is possible to foresee the effectiveness of this project from the success of a similar project carried out by the Mountain Media company in the Zirka Prison for men in Duhok in March 2017. With the help of foreign trainers, 15 detainees were trained on carpet manufacturing, for a financial return of $40,000.
Lessons Learned

Challenges and Risks
- Risk that the prison administration may use detainees for their personal benefit to produce free-of-charge confectioneries for associates, which would have the opposite result to what is expected.
- Consolidation of the new sweets market. Customers may be sceptic as the prices will be lower and goods will be produced by detainees.

Key Ingredients of Success
- Low expenses due to absence of fixed costs (e.g. no rent, reliance on renewable energy).
- Project accepted by the government as a new rehabilitation approach.
- Willingness of detainees to be trained so they have skills for entering the workforce after they are released from prison.

Innovative Aspects
This is the first project to pair local economic productivity with social rehabilitation, by relying on renewable energy (solar energy) and all local stakeholders (host community, refugees, detainees) to produce high-quality and low-cost goods.

Scaling-up
The production and growth of products will encourage scaling-up in other Iraqi social rehabilitation centers, as well as in neighboring countries who wish to provide economic opportunities while rehabilitating the society and creating social cohesion in fragile contexts.

As a recommendation, the project should provide as many tools and raw materials as possible to increase the production and to provide detainees with a greater opportunity to participate in the labor market.

Collaborations
Local authorities, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations provide and organize the project. The refugee community will provide assistance in designing and implementation, training detainees on sweets production, continuous supervision and marketing of products, and construction labor.
The SPRAR (Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees) is a network that puts in place a local and multi-level approach for refugee socio-economic integration. The SPRAR Network makes use of the skills and abilities of local public and private actors, favors multidisciplinary interventions, and facilitates a better understanding of beneficiaries’ needs. It represents a valuable resource for the local host communities by stimulating the development of existing resources, enhancing local synergies, and promoting the creation of new services and opportunities for the entire local community. This way, SPRAR recognizes the contributions from both refugee and host communities to local development.

LEAD AUTHORITY OR ORGANIZATION
Ministry of Interior and National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI)

AREA
Italy

BENEFICIARIES
Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the Italian territory

TIMELINE
2016 – ongoing

HUMAN RESOURCES
Approximately 10,000 local staff, of which 50% part-time or consultancy contracts.

FUNDING AMOUNT
€35 per beneficiary per day

SOURCES OF FUNDING
National Fund for Asylum Services (FNPSA)

CONTACT
Daniela Di Capua, SPRAR Director
dicapua@serviziocentrale.it
info@serviziocentrale.it
website: http://www.sprar.it
Context and Challenge

In 2016, Italy received 123,600 applications for humanitarian protection and recorded the highest number in arrivals of migrants and refugees, mainly coming from Nigeria, Pakistan, and Gambia.

The SPRAR Network was created following some successful local experiences targeting refugees in 2002 and was jointly implemented by NGOs and local authorities. In 2016, the Network was expanded and enhanced in light of the rise in number of asylum applications. The Network now comprises more than 1,100 municipalities and 775 SPRAR centers across the Italian territory. SPRAR centers are managed by local governments on a voluntary basis and function within a coordination framework of the Ministry of Interior and the Italian Association of Municipalities (ANCI). They ensure a central service of information, promotion, consultancy, monitoring, and technical support to local authorities. Focused on the local level, SPRAR centers give ownership to municipalities who voluntarily chose to integrate refugees, and aim to make use of and enhance existing local resources for a successful socio-economic integration of refugees and a continuous interaction with the local context in which SPRAR centers are located.

Actions and Reported Results

The following steps are necessary to open and manage a SPRAR center:

- **Refugees’ admission** to SPRAR centers is managed by the SPRAR Central Service upon request of local authorities or other local entities (prefectures, police stations, associations), according to the number of available places.

- **Funding.** Pursuant a Ministerial Decree, each SPRAR center manages funding for beneficiaries’ livelihoods, courses, and trainings with support from the National Fund for Asylum Services (FNPSA).

- **Local cooperation.** The local authority may cooperate with one or more local entities (NGOs, private associations, training centers, public hospitals, etc.) to manage the SPRAR center. These entities must have a relevant experience in taking charge of applicants and holders of international protection.

- **Courses and training offer.** To allow refugees access to courses, each SPRAR center has to monitor the local offerings of trainings and activities, sign an agreement with local public or private entities offering those services, and contribute to the development, enhancement and implementation of the local training offer. Except in the case of inadequate local offerings, new ad hoc courses are established under a collaboration between the municipality and the training entity.

- **Integration projects.** Refugees are hosted by SPRAR centers for six months (renewable one time), and can take part in integration projects where they attend trainings for a successful integration. Each integration project aims at the successful socio-economic integration of beneficiaries through social and employment-oriented activities. Although each municipality is free to design
the course offerings, a minimum number of activities must be ensured:

- **Italian language courses** leading to a recognized certification.
- **Professional training and training internships** aimed at beneficiaries’ qualification, retraining, specialization, and improvement of skills. Type of courses are chosen according to the local training offerings and local labor market needs.
- **Post-training employment services and housing guidance** upon completion of the integration project.

**Reported Results**

- **Improved local economic situation.** The project contributed to the employment of approximately 10,600 host community members in activities and trainings supported by SPRAR centers (e.g. interpreters, social servants, trainees, etc.). Moreover, despite the tough economic situation affecting employment opportunities, 895 refugees have found jobs following their completion of training internships.

- **Increased skills of refugee and host labor force.** Over 73% of beneficiaries have attended at least one training course, and 3,800 host community members benefitted from training activities.

- **Improved governance and public/private coordination.** Local governments gained a greater ownership of the refugee integration process. Synergies have been established locally with NGOs and associations involved in the integration and training offerings, resulting in the creation of networks involving all local actors. It increased coordination among institutional, public, and private entities (e.g. public health units, training institutions, volunteering associations, schools, sports, and cultural associations).

- **Increased refugee socio-economic inclusion and sustained livelihoods.** 41.3% of beneficiaries have successfully completed their integration project, while only 29.5% have voluntarily left a SPRAR center before the end of their project.

- **Increased social cohesion between host and refugee populations.** SPRAR centers encourage collaboration and cooperation among the host and refugee communities. This is shown by a number of joint social activities (e.g. taking care of the local historical and cultural heritage of the territories, mutual exchange on revived cultural techniques, such as restoration of antique furniture) which have created synergies between beneficiaries and local communities.

**Evidence and Beneficiary Feedback**

Beneficiaries’ socio-economic integration is guaranteed by the constant monitoring conducted by the SPRAR Central Service on the activities locally managed by municipalities. The SPRAR Central Service constantly updates a database of local integration activities and courses, which differ among SPRAR centers. In 2016, the most frequently provided services were health services (20.9% of total services), cultural mediation (17%), social assistance (14.9%), socialization activities (14.9%), job placement (10.5%), and legal guidance (8.2%).
Lessons Learned

Challenges and Risks
- The decision of opening SPRAR centers and implementing activities is voluntary and not decided by the central government on municipalities. This may affect the number of centers and activities offered each year and can be weakened by political changes.
- Some local contexts can be weaker than others—such as pre-existing difficulties of social and health support, inadequate public transportation, higher unemployment rate, local impoverishment due to emigration—resulting in increased demand for integration services for beneficiaries. Such factors can be obstacles to a socio-economic integration process.

Key Ingredients of Success
- The multilevel governance, decentralization, and the shared local responsibility of the SPRAR Network;
- The use of already existing resources, which stimulates the local development of trainings and services offered for both host communities and refugees;
- The voluntary nature of local authorities in participating in the SPRAR network; and
- Creation of local synergies among various local actors contributing to SPRAR centers.

Innovative Aspects
The SPRAR Network does not follow humanitarian criteria, but instead offers interventions specifically customized for the integration of several different categories of refugees and asylum seekers (ordinary, suffering from mental illness and/or physical disability, unaccompanied minors). The innovative aspect is the involvement of local authorities in the design and implementation of integration projects in collaboration with all relevant local actors and according to local needs and constraints. Through this approach, beneficiaries’ integration can be widespread and distributed in various local contexts, and activities can be adapted to the local socio-economic contexts.

What beneficiaries say
Ichbahal is a 27-year-old Pakistani man. When his father was arrested, he was forced to flee alone and sought refuge in Europe. After a long journey, he arrived in Italy and was hosted for a year in the Caltanissetta’s Government-led Asylum Seekers Center (CARA). Then, due to his need for medical assistance, he was transferred and hosted in the Rome SPRAR center co-managed by Kairos NGO which specialized in PTSD and mental health. Thanks to the support received in the SPRAR center, Ichbahal got an internship at a haute couture house. Moved by his passion, he managed to take over a small economic enterprise tailoring repairs. Two months later, a microcredit helped him obtain a VAT number, register his enterprise, obtain the license and sign the rental contract. Although he has now successfully completed his integration project in the Rome SPRAR center, he often comes back on Sundays to meet friends, other beneficiaries, and SPRAR staff. Three years after his arrival in Italy, Ichbahal is no longer the scared and suffering young man who arrived in Caltanissetta, but a businessman in a European city.
Scaling-up

Due to a high interest by local authorities in joining the SPRAR Network, the project will expand in the upcoming years while keeping in mind two main levers:

i. to keep the choice of opening a SPRAR center voluntary so as to avoid possible local resentment among host communities deriving from a top-down approach, and

ii. to incentivize local authorities’ choices of opening SPRAR centers by showcasing the concrete and additional benefits of hosting and integrating refugees.

Collaborations

The SPRAR Network was born after a collaboration among the Italian Ministry of the Interior – Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration, the National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI), and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Funds are managed by the National Fund for Asylum Services (FNPSA), and the Network operates thanks to cooperation among central, regional, and local governments, local NGOs and associations, and other local stakeholders.
Social activities are an essential starting point for a successful integration of Syrian refugees in the host community. This project aims to strengthen communication among all parties to help refugees achieve social stability and mitigate the impact of the economic crisis, as well as help members of the host community to accept and support newcomers and their contribution to local development.

LEAD AUTHORITY OR ORGANIZATION
Municipality of Sahab, Cities and Villages Development Bank, Ministry of Municipal Affairs under the Emergency Services and Social Resilience Project (ESSRP)

AREA
Municipality of Sahab, Jordan

BENEFICIARIES
Members of the local community and Syrian refugees, especially children, women, and people with special needs.

TIMELINE
January 2015 – December 2015

HUMAN RESOURCES
Municipality staff, non-governmental organizations, volunteers

FUNDING AMOUNT
$50,000

SOURCES OF FUNDING
Funding is under the Emergency Services and Social Resilience Project which is funded by a special multi-donor trust fund, and managed by the World Bank.

CONTACT
Dr. Wafaa Abu Samra, Cities and Villages Development Bank, report author
Email: abusamra.wafa@yahoo.com

Eng. Nidal Hourani, Cities and Villages Development Bank, ESSRP Deputy Project Manager
Email: nidal.hr7@gmail.com
Context and Challenge

Following the outbreak of the Syrian crisis in 2011, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan experienced a high influx of Syrian refugees. The Municipality of Sahab recently became an independent municipality, administratively and financially, and this affected its ability to provide services to the local community. With the increasing number of refugees, the provision of basic services has become a burden, as Syrian refugees in 2015 were 30% of the total population in Sahab.

The Municipality of Sahab faces enormous pressure on health, education, and infrastructure services. Moreover, the difference in cultures and customs between the Syrian and the local community make it necessary to strengthen social integration, enhance communication between the two communities, and identify their needs.

Actions and Reported Results

The project went through the following steps:

- **Identification** of a project management unit and main project partners.
- **Preparation of a plan of social activities** through community proposals and seminars held continuously via website and social media.
- **Financing.** Allocation of a $50,000 sum for social activities.
- **Needs assessment workshops.**
- **Social gatherings:** Eid celebrations, tree planting, provision of playgrounds for children.
- **Training courses for women.** Educational courses for women to empower them and help them create their projects.
- **Mitigation of social conflicts.** School bags were distributed to Jordanian and Syrian children to reduce the negative social impact deriving from charity actions directed at Syrian only.
- **Awareness-raising campaigns targeting high school students.** Organization of awareness sessions for youth in schools to integrate the refugee community with the Jordanian community.
- **Activities for people with special needs** from the Syrian and host communities aimed at sharing their needs, such as joint workshops and sports activities and competitions.

Reported Results

- **Increased economic opportunities for women.** Joint activities and five educational courses for Syrian and Jordanian women led to the creation of three home-cooking economic projects by women, who are promoting the sale of their products via social networks.
- **Increased social cohesion between the host and refugee communities.** About 70% of Sahab residents (refugees and Jordanians) have benefitted from the socialization activities.
Evidence and Beneficiary Feedback
Activities were defined based on the social needs of targeted groups.

PLANTING TREES

DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOLBAGS

ACTIVITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

EID CELEBRATION
Lessons Learned

Challenges and Risks
One of the most important challenges is the emergence of new social needs due to the influx of new refugees to the region, along with the difficulty posed by limited funding.

Key Ingredients of Success
- Participation of the local administration, headed up by the mayor, in all activities.
- Role of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and the Cities and Villages Development Bank in the project.
- The involvement of members from both communities in designing activities that enhanced social cohesion and joint participation.
- Inclusion of projects for vulnerable groups such as children, women, and people with special needs.

Innovative Aspects
- Involving youth in organizing the work
- Creating social networks to reach all parties
- Training courses to create projects between the two communities

Scaling-up
In order to foster social cohesion between Syrians and the local community, the Municipality of Sahab will develop an entertainment and social center during the second phase of the project with the aim to increase cohesion between refugees and Jordanians, and integrating new refugees into the community.

Collaborations
- Local associations
- Schools
- Municipality of Sahab
- Cities and Villages Development Bank
- Ministry of Municipal Affairs
- World Bank
Socio-Economic Integration and Local Employment Generation
Turkey, Gaziantep Municipality
SADA Women’s Development and Solidarity Center

SADA Women’s Development and Solidarity Center’s overall goal is to support the social and economic stabilization of refugee women, and to contribute to their self-reliance and ability to co-exist with women from the host community by creating a women-only center that provides services to Syrian and host community women.

LEAD AUTHORITY OR ORGANIZATION
Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality and UN Women

AREA
Gaziantep, Turkey

BENEFICIARIES
Syrian and host community women, girls, and children

TIMELINE
August 2017 – ongoing

HUMAN RESOURCES
Project manager, project associate together with necessary staff in the center (ASAM), trainers (ILO) and women’s empowerment consultants (UN Women).

FUNDING AMOUNT
$1 million

SOURCES OF FUNDING
Government of Japan

CONTACT
Önder Yalçın, Head of Migration Office, Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality
Contact: +90 507 8451717
www.gantep.bel.tr

Photo credits: Gaziantep Municipality
Context and Challenge

Gaziantep Municipality is one of the Turkish cities most affected by the refugee influx deriving from the Syrian crisis, hosting more than 400,000 refugees. The massive influx of refugees to Turkey has had an enormous impact on local communities. As a consequence, Gaziantep has experienced a huge pressure and demand on municipal services, infrastructures, human resources, and budget. Tensions between Syrian refugees and the host community are increasing, and participation of Syrians in the labor market is low, especially among women, thus resulting in a lack of self-sustainability and the need for external support.

Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality’s Migration Policy has a humanitarian and resilience approach based on gender equality, social justice, and human rights. The Municipality has responded to the Syrian crisis through providing various kinds of support, from ensuring basic needs, to finding creative ways to enhance integration, providing education, employment, health services, social services, and humanitarian aid. Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality puts high emphasis on trying to eliminate the negative socio-economic effects of this global crisis, with both short-term and long-term actions to provide an immediate response.

In this framework, the creation of SADA Women’s Development and Solidarity Center aims to mitigate social tensions in the society, support the social and economic inclusion of refugee women, and contribute to their self-reliance and ability to co-exist with women from the host community.

The women-only center provides women from the Syrian and host community with:
- a protected social space with childcare, referral services and language, vocational, and empowerment skills development;
- a platform for dialogue, co-existence and the development of joint empowerment activities in Gaziantep, Turkey.

Actions and Reported Results

The project went through the following steps:

- Outreach program. Design of an outreach program to the most marginalized and vulnerable women in the community, implemented for Syrian refugee women in the area, encouraging them to use the services provided in the center.
- Spatial accessibility and gender perspective. Establishment of SADA Women’s Development and Solidarity Center in a building that is fully accessible, safe and secure for handicapped beneficiaries and children. A gender perspective is ensured in project activities together with women empowerment programs.
- Capacity building and trainings. Trainings for both Syrian and Turkish women and girls were carried out. Basic life and market-oriented vocational and technical training courses include: Turkish language courses (basic and advanced level), patient registration, packaging, hair dressing, and skin care. Courses aim at addressing the
needs of the women, and are open according to the demand identified during outreach, and also according to local market needs. All courses are officially certified.

- **Mentoring and advisory services.** A mentoring/role model system for empowerment of women is provided as well as legal advice on work permits and job security.

### Reported Results

- **Increased refugee socio-economic inclusion and sustained livelihood.** Refugee women have access to a women-only center that provides them with a protected social space, childcare, and referral services. Women are encouraged to join social life as well as the labor force and acquire necessary skills and knowledge to establish their own business. Their chances for economic stabilization and overall safety increases, while the risks of falling into poverty traps and resorting to exploitive informal labor markets decrease.

- **Increased refugee skills to match job demand.** Refugee women and host country nationals residing in Gaziantep have gained necessary skills and knowledge to seek job opportunities.

- **Increased social cohesion between host and refugee populations.** The project gave women a chance to meet and carry out joint activities by organizing women’s empowerment programs, supporting them to participate in dialogue meetings, social and cultural events, and to engage in common community level projects. Women from refugee and host communities are socially engaged with each other. The project contributed to diminishing negative stereotypes and enhancing long-term social cohesion and social stabilization.

### Evidence and Beneficiary Feedback

The number of beneficiaries entering the center and using its services has far exceeded the original yearly target numbers, with over 1,800 registrations in two months. Women are explicitly sharing their wish to participate in further courses. The registration system in the center provides evidence for the number of women attending courses, their basic needs and vulnerabilities, referrals and participation in activities. Simultaneous monitoring and evaluation is being carried out, to be reported in the end of the project year.

**What beneficiaries say:**

“Greetings from Syrian women to Turkish women! It is a challenge for Syrian refugees to live in the community here, especially with women’s rights and education. For Sada Women’s Center, I want to say that every woman has dreamed of this center for a long time. I am participating in the patient registration course in the center. In here, I feel like a hopeful woman! I have a lot of fun here, where my Syrian and Turkish friends treat me and each other like sisters. I would like to thank Sada Women’s Center and its employees for their support and cooperation with us.”
Lessons Learned

Challenges and Risks
- A needs assessment being carried out in seven cities in Turkey shows that some Syrian women are hesitant to participate in the labor market.
- The number of Turkish beneficiaries is considerably lower in comparison with the Syrian beneficiaries.
- Based on consultation with the beneficiaries, transportation costs are a burden to beneficiaries, which may have a negative impact on sustainability of their course attendance.

Key Ingredients of Success
The project offers courses and trainings tailored to the needs of beneficiaries and to local labor market needs, thus securing its success for the long run.

Innovative Aspects
The project uses the local and international expertise and experience by bringing together the Municipality, UN Women, ASAM, and ILO to join forces in enhancing women empowerment and resilience.

The innovative approach is demonstrated by the creation of a center with a holistic approach for women’s empowerment, integrating diverse services and approaches of socio-economic empowerment, protection, and social cohesion.

Scaling-up
- Better ensure sustainability of the center and the activities being carried out by securing funding.
- Build on best practices to open similar centers in other municipalities in Turkey and throughout the region.

Collaborations
The project is implemented by UN Women in partnership with the Gaziantep Municipality, Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants (ASAM) and International Labor Organization (ILO), with funding from the Japanese Government.

A local network was developed with the relevant local authorities, social service organizations, and the other UN institutions in the region, including UNHCR, IOM, and WFP.
Sultanbeyli Municipality’s employment and vocational education office was developed for local refugees and plays an important role in subsistence of public, private sector, and NGO cooperation. It supports effective progress in livelihood, employment, work permits and licensing of workplaces, and vocational education.

**LEAD AUTHORITY OR ORGANIZATION**
Sultanbeyli Municipality

**AREA**
Sultanbeyli
İstanbul, Turkey

**BENEFICIARIES**
Syrian Refugees, Local People

**TIMELINE**
June 2016 – ongoing

**FUNDING AMOUNT**
€222,000

**CONTACT**
Halil İbrahim Akinci, General Coordinator
Contact: ibrahim.akinci@sultanbeyli.bel.tr

Mehmet Aktaş, Corporate Relations and Projects Coordinator
Contact: mehmet.aktas@sultanbeyli.bel.tr

Rukiye Güler, Translator/Interpreter
Contact: rukiye.guler@sultanbeyli.bel.tr
Website: www.multeciler.org.tr
Context and Challenge

The Syrian refugee crisis affects the economic and social aspects of Sultanbeyli, hampering economic activities which already face tough socio-economic conditions. This leads to economic losses and limits access to quality public services.

Since 2016, the Sultanbeyli Municipality Employment and Vocational Education Office has been carrying out a comprehensive strategy, aiming to improve the skills of registered Syrian refugees, to increase their employability and access to the labor market, and to increase awareness on the legislation of work permits. The office aims to:

1. increase the labor market participation to facilitate the access of Syrian refugees and locals to decent jobs;
2. support the creation of favorable environments for business development and economic growth in selected sectors, and create new entrepreneurial opportunities for Syrian refugees and host communities; and
3. help Syrian refugees obtain work permits and ensure the formalization and licensing of the businesses opened by Syrian entrepreneurs.

Actions and Reported Results

The project went through the following steps:

- **Needs Assessment.** A consultation was held to seek information on the kinds of programs to provide to both locals and refugees and to determine the appropriate training models, taking into account needs, opportunities, and challenges.

- **Vocational training and employment services.** Classes were developed in line with local labor market needs, including Turkish language classes, vocational guidance, and facilitation job placement upon completion of the training.

- **Informative meetings** were held in close cooperation with the Ministry of Labor and Social Security on work permits regulations, targeting employers’ organizations, public institutions, NGOs and Syrians under temporary protection.

- **Advisory services for Syrian and Turkish employers.** Counseling services were provided regarding the Temporary Protection system and work permits for foreigners in order to increase awareness on the importance of registered employment, work permits, and administrative procedures.

- **Awareness studies** were conducted on the web, social media, and other means of communication to raise awareness of the importance of using positive and non-discriminatory language.

- **Sultanbeyli Municipality works closely** with a number of public institutions and NGOs at central and local levels, and includes Arabic-speaking support staff.

**Reported Results**

- **Enhanced economic situation and job creation.** Vocational training courses contributed to increasing the labor market participation in textile, clothing,
construction, and auto repair businesses. Both Syrians and locals benefitted from the courses, and some beneficiaries were hired in the private sector.

- **Increased refugee socio-economic inclusion and sustained livelihood.** Vocational training courses eased Syrian refugees’ access to the local labor market, improved their livelihoods, and increased business opportunities.

- **Increased social cohesion between host and refugee populations.** The joint participation of locals and Syrians in vocational training programs contributed to increasing social cohesion.

**Evidence and Beneficiary Feedback**

A total of 160 Syrians and locals benefited from the vocational training programs in Sultanbeyli and gained certificates to facilitate their employment.
Lessons Learned

Challenges and Risks
There was a lack of cooperation to ease the project’s organization, resulting in slowing down the process and system.

Key Ingredients of Success
- Financial stability
- Awareness of the situation in the field

Innovative Aspects
The project adopts a holistic approach to deal with the major issues deriving from the presence of refugees, while at the same time generating services for the host population. Instead of temporary solutions, a longer-term and sustainable perspective is put forward. Effective coordination, data collection, and follow-up on beneficiaries’ socio-economic inclusion makes the project innovative.

Scaling-up
The Sultanbeyli Municipality Employment and Vocational Education Office and its holistic approach can be further scaled up in other locations by using this project as a model. By sharing the database system and other tools used in the program with other municipalities, the socio-economic needs of all refugees living in Turkey could be addressed with an inclusive approach.

Collaborations
- The Ministry of Labor and Social Security and United Work collaborated in activities related to work permits and licensing procedures.
- The Ministry of National Education collaborated in the provision of Turkish language courses, arts and vocational training courses, preparation courses for exams and organization of training courses.
- Welthungerhilfe and Sequa collaborated in the organizing of vocational courses.
- Refugees and Asylum Seekers Assistance and Solidarity Association collaborated in financing.

Effective cooperation has been also developed with Turkish institutions, such as the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, the Ministry of National Education, General Directorate of Lifelong Learning, İSKUR, as well as with international organizations such as United Work, Sequa, GIZ, Welthungerhilfe.
Socio-Economic Integration and Local Employment Generation

Turkey, Zeytinburnu Municipality
Snow Finch Project

The project aims to provide refugee women with adequate labor skills for securing sustainable income. In addition, it also envisages to fulfill their basic needs. Trips in the city and sale stands provide social cohesion and socialization.

LEAD AUTHORITY OR ORGANIZATION
Family, Women Support and Disabled People Centre (AKDEM) and Zeytinburnu Municipality

AREA
Zeytinburnu / Istanbul, Turkey

BENEFICIARIES
Refugee women (Syrians and other nationalities) living in the Zeytinburnu district

TIMELINE
November 2015 – ongoing

HUMAN RESOURCES
11 staff members: 4 trainers from Zeytinburnu Public Education and Evening School; 3 staff from AKDEM; 2 trainers from Refugee Rights Association; 1 health trainer from Public Health Center.

FUNDING AMOUNT
$115,000 (2015–2017)

SOURCES OF FUNDING
Zeytinburnu Public Education and Evening Art School: 19% of total funding.
Public Health Center and Refugee Rights Association: 4% of total funding.
Municipality of Zeytinburnu: 77% of total funding.
The Olivium Shopping Center provides sales stands for free.

CONTACT
Bihter DAZKIR ERDENDOĞDU
Contact: bdazkir@zeytinburnu.bel.tr
Context and Challenge

Zeytinburnu is Istanbul’s district with the highest concentration of refugees at 8.63% of the total population. Refugees usually work in the informal sector with low-skilled jobs for a low rate, such as the textile sector. Informal employment and informal businesses are the main challenges in the local economy. Therefore, strengthening refugees’ labor and adaptation skills is crucial for better socio-economic development of the district. For this reason, this project targets women because of their high level of vulnerability compared to other refugee groups, and aims to increase their integration in the local society by increasing their self-esteem through targeted trainings.

The Family, Women Support and Disabled People Centre (AKDEM) conducts adaptation programs for migrants and refugees in the Municipality of Zeytinburnu. The AKDEM Integration Department was established in 2009 for assisting the needs of migrants—foresighting the potential problems that refugees, asylum seekers, and stateless people may encounter—and conducting applied integration programs which lead to better social cohesion.

Actions and Reported Results

The project has been led and organized by Zeytinburnu Municipality and the Family, Women Support and Disabled People Centre (AKDEM) since 2015. Its purpose is to help women who have already taken part in other AKDEM activities, such as Turkish language courses, to develop their skills in order to improve their livelihood. The following activities were implemented:

○ Technical workshops and skills development. Four workshops of 520 hours each (on felt-fabric, bead, soapstone, and waste material) were established. Three trainee groups, composed of twelve women each, attended workshops and courses. These women, aged 35-55, are many different nationalities, such as Bulgarian, Iraqi, Moroccan, Albanian, Pakistani, Georgian, Syrian, Uzbek, Afghani, and Russian.

○ The Migrant Women Club. Established in 2015 under AKDEM’s activities, the Migrant Women Club created the “Kar Sercesi” (Snow Finch) brand for selling products produced by refugee women trainees in the local market, and then sold by refugee women in the local shopping mall.

○ Complementary courses. Besides workshops for skill development, women also participated in sanitation, gynecology and family planning, nutrition and healthy life, official rights, household economics, child development and health, and Turkish language courses. Each course is a total of 21 hours.

○ Socialization and social cohesion. Cultural trips in Istanbul help refugee women familiarize themselves with Turkish history and create the right environment for socialization. This way, their sense of belonging to the host city and society increases.

In 2017, the project entered a new and effective phase with the assistance of UNHCR. Thanks to the provision of ten textile machines, a technical workshop will be established, and work and production paths will start among beneficiaries. Marketing and sales trainings will also be organized for the project team members leading to a holistic way of implementation of the project, to include both the Turkish host community and refugees.
Lessons Learned

Challenges and Risks
For some of the beneficiaries, the lack of childcare during workshop hours was one of the biggest challenges, as it would have prevented them from a regular attendance. Therefore, AKDEM opened a kindergarten inside the center to encourage mothers to participate. As a lesson learned, taking into account traditional gender roles for women while the training program is designed is crucial to ensure reaching project goals.

The second challenge was a small number of local women who complained that the activities for refugee women only, which provided a remarkable lesson for the project to adopt a more inclusive approach in the future.

Key Ingredients of Success
The name of the project is, in itself, a success. “Snow Finch” is a bird of passage which does not leave its land until the circumstances get so atrocious its home is inhospitable. The analogy between the snow finch and refugee women provides a significant level of awareness and sensitivity. Moreover, due to the approach of the project (ensuring skills development, language, family planning and genealogy, sanitation and child caring courses), refugee women are supported in many aspects of life. This multifaceted implementation of the project is certainly a key ingredient of success.

Innovative Aspects
“Snow Finch” answers to a vast number of beneficiaries’ needs. First, the project targets one of the most vulnerable segments of refugees, which is composed of women, and indirectly their children. Once women successfully complete Turkish language courses for better integration, they are able to attend other, more advanced courses related to other needs, such as sanitation, family planning, child development, and home economics. The large number of trainings and courses offered is the most innovative aspect of the project, as women receive all trainings related to their needs, in addition to skill development workshops, with a step-by-step approach.

Reported Results

- **Improved economic situation among refugees.** The promotion of the “Snow Finch” brand and its products contributed to improving the economic situation of refugee women.
- **Increased refugee socio-economic inclusion and sustained livelihood.** Beneficiaries have produced over 1,000 handmade products. Their sales helped refugee women have an opportunity for ensuring a sustainable livelihood.
- **Steps toward social cohesion between host and refugee populations.** Sales stands are mostly set in the shopping mall and all events are organized by the Zeytinburnu Municipality to ensure a fruitful hub for gathering local people and refugees. Local women have an opportunity to listen to the story of the “Snow Finch” as well as those of refugee women who had to leave their homelands to survive, which increases social cohesion and mutual understanding.

Evidence and Beneficiary Feedback
AKDEM has succeeded to create a safe place where people feel free and at ease. Feedback was provided by beneficiaries regarding their improved self-confidence, knowledge, and awareness about the town environment and mechanisms. In particular, the connections made with local people while selling their products in shopping malls and stands gives refugee women self-confidence in addition to income opportunities.
Scaling-up

- An agreement with local employers can guarantee jobs for beneficiaries after the completion of their trainings.
- The target group should also include local women in order to reduce tensions between locals and refugees, to ensure social cohesion and integration, and for the creation of job opportunities for women from both the host and refugee populations.

Collaborations

The project is an example of collaboration among public institutions (Zeytinburnu Public Education and Evening Art School and Zeytinburnu Public Health Center), the private sector (local shopping mall), and NGOs (AKDEM and Refugee Rights Association).