Workshop Report
Peer-to-Peer Technical Workshop
10-12 November 2016, Şanlıurfa, Turkey

"Strengthening Social Cohesion in Mediterranean Host Municipalities"
Organized by CMI and GIZ

Contents

1. Context and workshop objectives

The arrival of large numbers of refugees as well as the urban nature of the refugee influx poses a number of significant challenges to Mediterranean municipalities hosting refugees. Municipalities who are at the forefront of the refugee crisis therefore have to adapt and develop adequate coping and resilience strategies. A first peer-to-peer learning workshop was held in Amman, Jordan on May 30 – June 1st, 2016 and laid the foundation for a common understanding of the main issues faced by municipalities hosting refugees. The event allowed to set up a *Host Municipalities Learning Network* and to better convene host municipalities and development agencies on those issues.

During the Amman workshop, a range of solutions have been suggested, namely:

- building social networks among refugees and host communities,
- providing education and community centers to disseminate information,
- creating joint job opportunities to use the economic and social potential of refugees,
- improving basic service delivery e.g. by improving and expanding health care services for both refugees and host communities

Social cohesion has been identified as a key priority and is regarded as crucial for the stability of the region and the peaceful co-existence of different social, ethnic and religious groups within the host municipalities. The Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) jointly organized this two days regional workshop, combined with technical field visits to sites in Şanliurfa and Gaziantep, as a second peer-to-peer technical workshop on strengthening social cohesion and social inclusion. The workshop took place from 10 to12 November 2016 in Şanliurfa, Turkey. Please refer to *Annex 1* for Workshop Agenda and *Annex 2* for Workshop Concept Note.

The workshop was scheduled in the context of the UCLG-MEWA Migration Summit on Migration Management and was held right after the summit. Representatives of Mediterranean municipalities hosting high number of refugees from Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, local government representatives, and relevant social cohesion local and international organizations participated in the workshop. Please refer to *Annex 3* for List of Participants.

The main objective of the workshop was to enhance exchange and knowledge sharing by diving deeper into the topic of social cohesion and social inclusion to share relevant regional best practices and lessons learnt.

The expected results were:

- Further exchange of experiences and innovative practices and solutions on how to strengthen social cohesion and to promote peaceful co-existence between refugees and host communities.
- Identification of potential mid- and long-term solutions, which could support host communities and refugees.
- Development of common methods and strategies from which both municipalities and other actors concerned with social cohesion can benefit.
- Selection of good practices and experiences to be added as a contribution for the Best Practices Compendium for Municipalities Hosting Refugees and possible input to the CMI annual Peer-to Peer Learning event for Host Municipalities, planned in Spring 2017.

2.   Introductory session

The workshop started with **opening remarks of Mr. Nihat Çiftçi, Mayor of Şanliurfa Metropolitan Municipality**. He described the context with regard to the intensity of the refugee influx from Syria to Turkey, specifically to the 14 districts of Şanliurfa. Mr. Çiftçi mentioned that 2.7 million refugees are presently hosted in Turkey, of which some half a million registered refugees are in Sanliurfa, making almost one quarter of the city population. He suggested an estimated number of about 600,000 refugees, including non-registered ones. Five refugee camps hosting about 100,000 refugees have been established and are administrated by the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD). The remaining refugees live inside the city and its surroundings. As Mr. Çiftçi reported, the municipality is trying to integrate them and to encourage joint activities with the host community; however, the city infrastructure and services are overstressed by the increased number of refugees and increasingly require funding. Although the refugee influx to Şanliurfa does not currently pose a major problem, he stated that the longer the Syrian crisis drags and the longer refugees from Syria will stay in Turkey, the higher the probability of a conflict with the host community will be. Finally, he reiterated that in order to adequately respond to this increased refugee influx in the city, funding needs to be mobilized to ensure that services for citizens will not be adversely affected.

The take-away messages from the UCLG MEWA International Migration Management Summit was presented to participants by its **Coordinator General, Dr. Leyla Sen**. Ms. Sen emphasized the need to maintain the quality of services and infrastructure (especially in health and education) with increased investments to ensure a good quality of life for both refugees and host communities. She pointed out that local governments were not often direct recipients of international support. According to Dr. Sen, Turkey and the region are reaching the third phase of the refugee crisis: the first phase was the massive arrival of Syrian refugees and immediate coping reaction, the second phase was the organized emergency response. The third phase which implies a longer term approach will require multi-stakeholders, multilevel planning for increased inclusion of the displaced populations. She also commented the coordination process at the regional level including the civil society and the public sector in it: sometimes, the risk would be that of leaving civil society organizations alone to solve the various refugee and migration problems. For this reason, migration management should be done on a rational basis, and should not be shaped on emotional reactions, thus being holistic rather than fragmented into sectors.

In her **key note presentation Ms. Aline Rahbani, World Vision International**, presented the results of a research based on a field study in Jordan and Lebanon. She explained that social cohesion matters, especially in the urban context and in view of its consequences. She cautioned that humanitarian and development interventions, if not carefully implemented, can directly or indirectly contribute to increased tensions. She exposed the risks related to rising social tensions between communities, including: i) the potential to generate a secondary conflict in host countries; and ii) the impact on equitable access to urban amenities and basic services. Ms. Rahbani explained that social cohesion needs to be regarded from the horizontal and vertical perspective, not only regarding relations between groups, but also between groups and governing institutions. Moreover, indicators are crucial to measure social cohesion, and can involve aspects of security, trust in institutions, participation in civic life, measure of intergroup perceptions, perceived threats and social distance. She indicated that in absence of indicators, manifestations of low cohesion can be used as a proxy measurement method. She explained structural (pre-existing vulnerabilities), socio-economic (differences in religious, cultural and social norms) and proximate causes (competition for resources, services and economic opportunities) as drivers of social tensions. Additionally, Ms. Rahbani stated that social cohesion is still poorly defined and operationalized leading to a lack of clarity. Her speech also highlighted the differences between approaches in various countries like Jordan and Lebanon: she emphasized that the centralized response taken by the Jordanian Government ensures that both refugees and vulnerable host communities are well catered for. On the other hand, since Lebanon is having a UNHCR-driven response, the Jordanian example could represent a good practice to be replicated in Lebanon instead of relying only on UN agencies. Finally, Ms. Rahbani presented relevant recommendations for local governments and humanitarian actors. Recommendations for local governments included: better identify drivers and impact of social tensions at the local level; explore opportunities to integrate faith-based networks in social cohesion initiatives; promote pluralism and peaceful coexistence; partner with civil society; collaborate with new technologies for data collection; partner with humanitarian organizations and academic institutions. (see *Annex 4*: *Presentation on Social Cohesion in the context of urban refugees crisis*)

3. Workshop sessions

The workshop was broken down into three sub-themes:

1. Appropriate concepts and flexible strategies and tools to implement and measure social cohesion;
2. Social cohesion as a cross-cutting topic;
3. Building inclusive communities for common welfare through networks.

Each session started with a panel discussion followed by a working group session. Two parallel working groups elaborated on the same sub-theme taking into consideration the sub-theme's objectives and guiding questions. The results of each working group were then presented in the plenary.

3.1 Session I: Appropriate concepts and flexible strategies and tools to implement and measure social cohesion

The first session of the workshop was dedicated to developing comprehensive concepts and flexible strategies, including planning and designing methodologies to measure changes related to social cohesion. It is imperative to define measurable indicators and design appropriate tools to be able to analyze the dynamics of changes. Details of the framing note for this session including the guiding questions can be found in *Annex 5*.

The speakers included: Shaker Bani Khaled, Zaatari Municipality, Jordan; Mandi Larsen, University of Bremen, Germany; and Marion Hörmann, GIZ Regional Program QUDRA (Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq).

The following summarizes **messages, themes and lessons learnt** that emerged during the panel session and the working group discussion:

<u>**Panel session I:**</u>

The experts panel discussed different approaches and common challenges in developing reliable indicators for social cohesion and the difficulties of assessing the level of inclusion in a community. The session provided insights into the GIZ QUDRA's program framework to address social cohesion and to design an appropriate monitoring system and indicators for the four countries covered by the program, namely Northern Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey. In this respect, flexibility of tools and customizing them in the context of each country is essential.

A concrete experience on monitoring tools for enhancing social cohesion in host communities was provided by the municipality of Zaatari, Jordan showing social activities on the ground organized for locals and refugees in Zaatari. The key message from the Zaatari experience was that social cohesion was considered from the onset andSyrian refugees were engaged and involved in all decision making processes: their sustained involvement is a key indicator of success in this approach for social cohesion.

Experiences from Jacobs Foundation in Bremen, Germany on how to measure the dynamics of social cohesion over time, including relevant indicators, were explained. The best approach is to use national data to measure changes over time. If data are not available, they need to be collected; however, caution was raised about transferability of concepts and indicators across countries and contexts. A consistent concept and understanding of social cohesion is crucial, as it is important that the indicators to measure social cohesion are relevant to the specific context. For example, voting and participation are often used as an indicator for social cohesion and

inclusion, but if both are not voluntary, the indicator will not be relevant anymore. Finding the right approach is iterative with an ongoing dialogue, having a consistent concept, having a data-base and good reference points to compare.

The provision of multi-service centers in the case of the QUDRA program, which seeks to provide a public space where people can meet and interact with each other, appeared as very important for the enhancement of social cohesion. Activities that include music and games for children in centers can contribute positively to social cohesion. Finally, some indications suggest that social cohesion is higher when levels of education are high and poverty levels are low.

Working groups of session I:

The working groups covered the most relevant topics of the session.

Best practices:

Regarding strategies to increase social cohesion in host communities, it was stated that the provision of services need to take into account and to benefit both locals and refugees, through the following:

- Inclusion of refugees and host community in the municipal planning process, for example through meetings / assemblies involving municipal authorities, the local population and the refugee population.
- Incorporate the concept of social cohesion from the onset in the planning process of measures, incorporating it also in various country plans.
- Data collection on challenges and needs of both municipalities and refugees, so that programs can be adjusted accordingly, such as in Gaziantep or Sultanbeyli

Regarding strategies to measure social cohesion in different contexts:

- Possible indicators already been used by municipalities to measure social cohesion include the number of complaints received by the municipalities, the number of crimes committed in the municipality, (dis)satisfaction of people with services provided and its development over time.
- Different ways of analyzing collected data include the establishment of an own social research center, collection of baseline data for the host community and refugee population, Social Risk Map (Gaziantep) and collection and analysis of data by external consultancy (REACH) (Jordan)

Challenges**:**

- Reliable data is often missing. More data need to be collected and analyzed over time to measure both social cohesion in different contexts and the impact of programs intended to increase social cohesion.

Lessons learned:

- National and regional differences need to be kept in mind when deciding on strategies and programs. Programs always need to be context-specific.
- Data needs to be collected and kept over time, and to be analyzed for actors to be able to measure the impact of programs.

Recommendations:

- Analyze and keep in mind the different characteristics and needs of both local and refugee populations and plan and adjust measures accordingly.
- Include Syrians in the planning and decision-making process, for example through their participation in assemblies, sub-committees etc. If people feel ownership of processes, they are more likely to stay committed to planned measures.
- Collect and share data with all stakeholders, and develop programs accordingly.

3.2 Session II: Social cohesion as a cross-cutting topic (Housing, economic development, and service delivery)

Interventions in the fields of housing, economic development and service delivery have great potential to contribute to social cohesion by improving the living conditions of all members of society. Session II therefore looks into interdependences between social cohesion and selected sectors to foster resilience and peaceful co-existence. Ways of including social cohesion as a cross-cutting issue in developing selected sectors have been discussed and best practices identified. Details of the framing note for this session including the guiding questions can be found in *Annex 6*.

Panel session II:

The speakers included: Önder Yalcin, Director, Municipality of Gaziantep Turkey; Nasri Osman, Head of Union of Baalbek, Lebanon; Haneen Hassouneh, Sarhab Municipality, Jordan; Lauranne Callet, Expertise France QUDRA.

The panel discussion started with a multimedia presentation titled "**Opening Doors and Minds: Urban Migrant Inclusion in Policy and Practice**" by Manjula Luthria, World Bank, which shed light on the importance of evidence-based approaches highlighting challenges and hurdles of integrating refugees with a specific focus on how perceptions are shaped and how they shape successful integration.

The experts panel discussed experiences of integrating social cohesion in development interventions relating to other sectors, such as service delivery, economic development, and housing. In Turkey, for example, the central government is providing assistance out of obligation: key interventions are targeting health centers, vocational training centers, shelter, language courses, psycho-social support and humanitarian aid. In terms of housing, the presence of refugees reflects in an increase of rent prices and a decrease in supplies. In Gaziantep, for instance, the three elements of resilience - capacity building, social development and needed investment -go hand in hand and due consideration is given to short- and long term solutions. The approach the municipality of Gaziantep follows is based on social justice, human rights and common welfare to address the whole society. Moreover, Gaziantep's program targets everybody with its municipal services. The municipality believes that without doing so, social cohesion will never be achieved: sharing responsibility regarding refugees with their host community is very important.

The Municipality of Baalbek, Lebanon faces a high unemployment rate, depressed economic conditions due to the lack of tourism and precarious security. Key challenges in Baalbek are also shortages of electricity and water supplies, aggravated by the arrival of refugees. This results in more demanding tasks to be faced by the Mayor, particularly if coupled with a capacities shortage. In this case, the Mayor used his business linkages to train and provide

around 300 young Syrian and Lebanese with a job. Such inclusive approach contributes to positive social cohesion

In Sahab, Jordan refugees have contributed in increasing the population from 60,000 to 100,000. Despite its low budget, Sahab Municipality implemented several integration and cohesion activities, including encouraging the exchange of experiences and knowledge between the Sahab population and Syrian refugees. These activities include language courses for Syrian and Jordanian children and textile workshops and other training workshops that lead to employment. In this way, Sahab Municipality succeeded in transforming challenges into opportunities and started to collect waste to create a cleaner environment with the help of its citizens and refugees. This included the start of an awareness-raising campaign in the city of Sahab and its neighborhoods. Both Jordanian and Syrian children are playing a pivotal role in this campaign creating social cohesion. The inclusion of both Jordanians and Syrians contribute positively to social cohesion in Sahab. The representative of Sahab demonstrated such joint action by a series of picture slides.

QUDRA regional program uses three entry points to measure social cohesion: a) Design: Target host community and refugees, b) Create common space where people do meet, c) Targeting youth and children as primary target. Key activities are: peace education, soft psychosocial activities (e.g. developing working skills), youth development, and programming inclusion for people needing protection, women and children with special needs. It is important to build on what already exists in the host community rather than to start new activities that can be felt as alien to them. A key factor in QUDRA is that of following an integrative, inclusive, participatory and flexible approach. It is important to build capacities to be able to absorb funds effectively. This is a prerequisite before responding to requests for more funds by the municipalities QUDRA works with.

Working groups session II:

Best practices from different sectors:

- **Security sector**: Establishment of trust between locals and refugees, for example through meetings and joint social activities. People get to know and trust each other, resulting in an improved security situation.
- **Service Delivery**: Engagement of both locals and refugees in different activities with regards to service delivery (e.g. waste collection, planting trees etc.): people work together and get to know each other, while at the same time basic services are delivered.
- **Employment**: Revitalization of economic sectors:
  1. Example from Lebanon: revitalization of the agricultural sector. While there is an increasing lack of willingness for Lebanese people to work in the agricultural sector, Syrians are willing to do so. Through the setup of factories, the agricultural economy could be revived, while at the same time employment opportunities can be created.
  2. Example from Jordan: revitalization of a region. Through the setup of a factory for food processing, the economy in the region could be revived. Job opportunities for both Syrians and Jordanians were created and high rates of unemployment have been overcome.
- **Housing:** Shared housing opportunities for Syrian refugees and the local communities; enhancement of space for refugees and locals to share housing: example from Jordan

where landlords are given loans to extend their houses, aiming at providing for additional space and lowering rents.

<u>Best practices independently from specific sectors:</u>

- Shift of approaches to adjust to a changed situation. For example, a Lebanese municipality shifted its programmatic focus from social services in 2013 to the economic sector in 2016, when the situation changed requiring increased efforts to overcome high levels of unemployment.
- Different projects carried out not only across sectors, but also on different levels:
    1. Micro-level: with individuals and families
    2. Meso-level: with groups of people
    3. Macro-level: at municipal level
- Focus on scientific research and academic studies to base activities upon.

<u>Challenges:</u>

- The security sector, service delivery, housing and the economy were identified as priority sectors in which municipalities experience the biggest challenges:
    1. Several municipalities located close to the Syrian border expressed their concern on their capacities to handle security aspects, given their lack of resources.
    2. It also appeared that an important share of refugees hosted within communities were located in low income informal housing neighborhoods, sometimes slums, which contributed to increase existing problems in these areas adding a barrier to refugees' inclusion in host communities (challenged access to services) .
    3. Finally, municipalities pointed out that the sense of competition for resources, services and economic opportunities between refugees and host communities was still vivid, and recommended to keep a balance between services provided to refugees and citizen.
- A challenge experienced across sectors was the insufficient and unpredictable funding of municipalities in order to adequately strengthen social cohesion.

<u>Lessons learnt:</u>

- All actors need to be included in efforts to strengthen social cohesion (refugees, host population, central governments, and municipal institutions).
- Context matters. Needs, preconditions and possible solutions vary across countries, but also across municipalities in the same country. Strategies always need to be adjusted accordingly.
- The needs of the target population need to be taken into account. Donors need to address these needs rather than follow their own agenda.
- Social cohesion is not possible if basic needs which go beyond single sectors are not met.

<u>Recommendations:</u>

- Social cohesion must be understood as multi-dimensional. Accordingly, it needs to be mainstreamed in all sectors. Comprehensive and holistic approaches are needed.
- Projects need to be carried out on different levels (micro-, meso- and macro-level) and should be both short- and long-term.
- Develop more public-private partnerships. Reach out to multi-national companies in order to engage them in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects.

- Local leaders need to act as change agents and coordinators: they can initiate policies, act as a bridge between different interests of different groups and sectors and can ensure that activities are cross-cutting.
- Increase the participation of both the local and refugee population in the planning process of programs to increase their ownership and commitment.

Need for follow-up:

- Further networks need to be established to exchange knowledge and create synergies.
- More peer-to-peer workshops are needed, both at the regional and at the national level. As municipalities often do not have the capacity to organize these workshops, support from the international community is needed.
- Another way to share experiences, ideas, concerns and limitations could be to develop descriptions of situation / frameworks of different municipalities that can be shared with other municipalities both of the same and of other countries.

3.3 Session III: Building inclusive communities for common welfare through networks

Session II showed that in order to deal with the challenges of social cohesion, collective multi-faceted and multi-sectoral responses are needed. Even though many innovative approaches for strengthening social cohesion already exist at a community level, there is a lack of systematic sharing of these approaches, impeding access to practice-oriented solutions contributing to social cohesion and peaceful co-existence. Duplications and a lack of coordination between different actors often result in an inefficient use of resources. Opportunities to create synergies and to complement each other are often missed. Sustainable networks and communities of practice could enable municipalities to pool capacities, interests and resources in order to strengthen collective approaches to inclusion and participation.

The third session of the workshop is therefore dedicated to the identification of good practices and / or starting points to establish communities of practice making use of existing networks and strengthening exchange and collaboration between different actors. Details of the framing note for this session including the guiding questions can be found in *Annex 7*.

Panel session III:

The speakers included: Ümit Algan, IMPR, Turkey; Ali Afan, Mayor of Sarhan Municipality, Jordan; Halil İbrahim Akinci, Sultanbeyli Municipality, Turkey; Yasmin Haloubi, Syrian Social Gathering, Turkey.

The experts panel discussed existing approaches of network and cooperation formats and good practice examples to strengthen social cohesion and peaceful co-existence between refugees and host communities at municipal, national and regional level.

The experience from Turkey is that the local administration is important for cooperation and networking as well as for building effective communication. However, there is always a need to define the accurate communication channels. Local differences have to be kept in mind when communicating, and it is important to make use and build on already existing capacities. For instance, networks and partnerships have significantly increased outreach for IMPR Community Centers.

In the case of Sultanbeyli Municipality, a network and a communication channel were established in order to better face the challenge of social cohesion between host and refugee communities. The municipality collected data on refugees through surveys and field visits and then conducted a meeting with different associations (governmental and non-governmental organizations, at national and international level) that could have reached out to refugees, to which they submitted the data under a confidentiality agreement. This created a network, and currently 10 to 15 NGOs actively are working with the municipality. It is important to create an interest in such cooperation. The collection of relevant data by the municipality was crucial, since it was shared with its partners (institutions and NGOs). Furthermore, it is important that experiences are shared with other municipalities: in this respect, GIZ helped Sultanbeyli municipality in building a communication network for data exchange. Following Sultanbeyli's example, best practices and good examples of networking should be shared. Sultanbeyli municipality utilizes information from NGOs and from other organizations. This system makes data and information available to everybody in the field, thus contributing to knowledge-sharing and building. Sultanbeyli, being a district of Istanbul, took the advantage given by its geographical proximity with Turkish central administration to establish channels of communications with it through regular exchanges with the ministry of domestic affairs, the migration department and the ministry of family, which allowed for better coordinated support to the refugees.

In Sarhan, Jordan, the partnership with the private industry helped to alleviate unemployment problems. This created employment for both refugees and Sarhan host community, showcasing cooperation between refugees and host community improve social cohesion. The mayor of Sarhan demonstrated such cooperation through his presentation, showing joint meetings between the local community and refugee representatives. An example of social cohesion practices in Sarhan was a street cleaning campaign by children of both refugee and host communities.

Other participants stated that there is broad integration and social cohesion in Lebanon. Main partnerships are made with donors, who provide funding to support the resilience of towns and villages hosting a high number of refugees. However, in the case of Lebanon there does not seem to be much exchange of experiences between the various municipalities. Much more can be done to enhance and encourage the peer-to-peer learning among municipalities, especially if they are in same vicinity.

The Syrian Social Gathering (SSG) NGO, based in Turkey, organized workshops with organizations in order to develop enhanced coordination between them, aiming at sharing experiences and knowledge. In this case, working together is a success factor. A network is important for cross-learning, peer-to-peer exchanges and for benefiting from best practices. SSG representatives presented practical examples of such cooperation: joint meetings between local community and refugee representatives, children playing and learning, and music lessons/performances engaging both communities: host and refugees.

Working groups session III:

Best practices:

- Partnerships were also established with universities and with the private sector.
- First step in the refugee response: map what is already there (NGOs, state institutions, IOs / INGOs / UN) and form networks through convening and sharing of information (Sultanbeyli).

- Regular meetings between different actors: both coordination meetings and thematic meetings (Sarhan).
- Creating networks across sectors, also including the private sector (Sarhan).
- Creating networks across levels (local, national, international) to avoid over- or underfunding of specific regions and coordinate response (Jordan).
- Collaboration with the central level is also key to deliver certain services such as health, education and family support.
- Collaboration between municipalities and NGOs is key, and - given that knowledge and resources are shared – the municipality can coordinate offering a different, additional support.
- UCLG-MEWA: Coordination of activities carried out by local authorities, the private sector and other sectors.
- GIZ: Multi-service center in Turkey with the specific objective to create networks of actors at field level and to bring different actors and service providers together

Challenges:

- Each situation is characterized by the existence of multiple service providers, actors, standards, laws, and regulations that differ across countries, regions and communities. This makes it difficult for actors to comprehensively and fully understand the situation and find adequate responses.
- Sometimes a lack of collaboration / coordination between municipalities and NGOs jeopardizes effective action.
- In some cases, it is difficult for Syrian NGOs to reach out to Municipalities, or Municipalities completely refuse to cooperate with them.

Lessons learnt:

- If actors work alone they will not succeed to foster social cohesion. Therefore, networks and partnerships are needed for all actors to act together, create synergies and learn from each other.
- The media play a big role in raising awareness and providing information. Thus, partnerships with the media are crucial for all stakeholders.
- Processes need time: Allow processes to happen and allow more time to produce results.

Recommendations:

- Establish further partnerships with various actors from different fields (international organizations, academic or research institutions etc.).
- Create partnerships with the private sector. Try to tap into the potential of multi-national companies, for example through CSR activities.
- Create networks not only between partners of the same sector, but between sectors.
- Coordinate efforts carried out in different sectors to avoid duplications.
- Create networks both across and within institutions. Focus on the transfer of knowledge and make sure that knowledge is not lost, for example if people change their job position.
- Create networks across social classes.
- When networks and partnerships have been developed, partners should assess the context, identify needs and solutions, and plan possible approaches together to ensure the action of all partners.

- Make use of local resources, which provide low-cost solutions (for example through volunteers, including among the refugee population).
- Create networks between cities and rural areas.

Need for follow-up:
- Enhance the existing networks and partnerships between different municipalities, NGOs and international organizations to foster knowledge-sharing.
- More peer-to-peer learning is needed, not only through workshops but also through field trips, mutual visits and more informal exchange.
- Develop a shared database with information on all projects and activities carried out, actors involved, support provided etc.

4. Technical Visits

Technical visits to the Harran Container City (AFAD Temporary Protection Center), the "International Middle East Peace Research" (IMPR) Humanitarian Urfa Community Support Center in Sanliurfa, the "ASAM Peace and Art Center" in Gaziantep and the Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality Arts and Vocational Center offered participants the chance to see first-hand projects which improved local service delivery in the field of Social Cohesion allowing cross-learning and possibly replication of such best practices.

Crucial aspects concerning social cohesion that could be observed during the technical visits included:

Harran Container City (AFAD Temporary Protection Center)

The facilities of this refugee camp hosting 11,000 Syrian refugees include a health center and mobile health units. The camp has a primary and a secondary school that follows the Syrian curriculum and teaches in Arabic language. Turkish classes are available as extra-curricular classes. The camp has a large playground and child-friendly spaces operated by volunteers and aid agencies such as UNICEF. At the center of the Harran Container City there is a community hall, constructed together with refugees to allow for social gatherings and meetings. A number of pavilions are scattered around the area to provide public spaces.

Different vocational training opportunities are offered in the camp e.g. a garment skills center supported by UNIDO. However, "guests" (as refugees are officially referred to in Turkey) residing in the camp have to request a permission to leave the camp for a fixed period of time and are not allowed to have a work permit in Turkey.

IMPR Community Center

Staff includes Syrian and Turkish nationals as well as a number of Syrian and other volunteers. About 40 employees provide the following services in and outside the center:

- Outreach and information on available services, basic rights, livelihood support, health, and protection including home visits to Syrian families;
- Psychosocial support in the center including psychological counseling, life skills training, children-friendly spaces, leisure activities, such as chess courses and art and music workshops;

- Vocational training for women (hair dressing, tailoring) with certificates;

- Medical counseling and health awareness sessions, support to refugees with special needs;

- Legal support and protection of women's rights;

- Intercultural activities and language courses, excursions for children from host and refugee community.

ASAM Peace and Arts Center

The ASAM Peace and Arts Center in Gaziantep opened in April 2016. The project aims to improve protection conditions of Syrian refugees and to empower them by building the capacity of the most vulnerable members of the community. The center intends to create a healthy environment for refugees and the host community through a wide range of arts, recreational and public awareness activities.

ASAM offers a variety of arts (painting, sculpturing, and handicraft) and music classes (guitar, singing, piano, traditional instruments) as well as recreational activities such as sports, cooking, movies etc. to different age groups (smaller children between 7 and 10 as well as youth between 15 and 19). Visitors had the chance to see the result of these classes in a short concert performed by youth from different age groups. The center does not only promote interaction between Turkish and Syrian children, but also encourages interaction across different age groups, thereby creating and strengthening support networks in the community.

Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality Arts and Vocational Center

The center offers courses including vocational trainings for adults tailored to the need of the local labor market (e.g. gastronomy) as well as language classes and basic skills such as computer trainings.

In addition, it offers a wide range of recreational and creative programs (all kinds of arts and handicrafts, theatre, etc.), especially for children. All courses are free of charge and open to all members of society so that they provide a good opportunity for refugee and host children to get in contact and reduce social distance and language barriers, both for children and youth as well as adults.

More details of the various technical visits can be found in the Annex 8.

5. Takeaways, Lessons Learnt & Next Steps

In the last session of the workshop, participants reflected on a) takeaways & lessons learnt and b) next steps for follow up as related to social cohesion and inclusion. The evaluation forms results were analyzed and clustered around headings as below. Details of the results of the evaluation can be found in *Annex 9*.

Takeaways & Lessons Learnt

Concepts & Tools
- Reinforcing social cohesion in theory and practice with diversity of approaches, tools.
- Social cohesion is a problem with different aspects, it is very complex and there is a need to know more to address it.
- Context matters within a country and across countries: there are no blueprint solutions but tailor-made solutions to social cohesion.
- Importance of working on social cohesion including related follow up and evaluation.
- Importance of working with both host communities and refugees with support to municipalities in executing development projects.
- Importance of cooperation and transparent interaction between municipalities, central government, NGOs and donors.
- Many participants underlined that the workshop helped them gain a clearer idea about the topic. "I had a large idea about social cohesion but after the workshop I got a clearer idea and concrete examples that were very helpful".

Exchange/Networking/Coordination
- Participants discovered expertise from other countries in dealing with refugees and improving social cohesion and benefited from experience of peers.
- Participants learned models on employment promotion. Learning from the successful experiences in collaboration between all the involved parties (municipalities, refugees, host communities, NGOs and INGOs), and the importance of coordination: "It is obvious that municipalities, NGOs, and private sector should work closer to have more concrete and positive results".
- Direct contact and cooperation between municipalities, host & refugee communities, INGOs and NGOs.
- Learning from different regions and different type of stakeholders on the question of social cohesion, and realizing that both some problems are very similar and some other really depend on the local context.
- Meeting mayors from different countries.
- Participants were exposed to work on the ground through the field visit (camps, NGO and municipal centers).
- Mutual understanding of expectations, limitations and opportunities of municipalities, NGOs and donors.
- Good to know that municipalities have a will to implement projects and willing to cooperate with NGOs.
- Importance of coordination.

Media and Communication
- Importance of social media, press and media to improve and build capacities of municipalities in communication and social cohesion. Accordingly, importance of networking using social media.

- Teaching values of peace and acceptance of the other to improve communication between host and refugee communities.

Best Practices
- Success stories of participants.
- Fieldtrips exposed best practices.
- Providing work opportunities for host communities.
- NGOs and municipalities working together to improve social cohesion.
- Finding better ways to host refugees.
- Central government is supportive of municipalities' efforts like in Turkey and Jordan.
- Techniques to improve social cohesion between host communities and refugees.

Next Steps and Items for follow-up (participant questionnaire)

Tools & Resources
- Compile best practices and examples: creating employment, effective communication, monitoring/evaluation/indicators, etc.
- Solutions and tools to implement social cohesion strategies: training through concrete examples, tools and methodologies.
- How to improve the local economy, create job opportunities for both refugees and host communities and tackle down unemployment.
- How to engage research and academic institutions.
- Data collection and analysis.
- How to target children and vulnerable groups.
- Techniques to improve social cohesion between host communities and refugees.
- Role of media in shaping and framing social cohesion (adequate communication).
- Role of private sector in urban areas (cities) response.
- What are criteria for municipality readiness?

Technical Visits
- Visits to municipalities and areas where refugees live (camps, cities etc.).
- Visits of successes locally and in Europe.
- Exchange visits among municipalities.

Capacity Building
- Train municipal staff.
- Exchange also on other topics than social cohesion. e.g. Solid waste management., Building resilience.
- Monitoring/Evaluation/Impact measurement.
- Fundraising: ways to get support to municipalities.
- How to face challenges met by the municipality: financial problems, corruption.
- How to deal with early marriages among Syrian refugees?

Networking
- Donors, central government and European municipalities with relevant experience.
- Linkage to refugees and host communities to hear their needs.
- Linkage with media, academia and private sector.