

Mainstreaming migration in local policymaking: Training of territorial authorities of Northern Morocco

Local players from the municipalities of Oujda, Nador and Tangiers (Morocco) have been trained on the topics of integration and reintegration by GIZ in March 2017.

For decades, Morocco has been both a country of emigration, immigration and transit for international migrants and asylum seekers. Still, it is only in 2014 and on the instruction of H.M King Mohammed VI that the Moroccan government adopted a national strategy on immigration and asylum. The implementation of this new migration policy requires a great deal of effort of all the actors involved, not only on the national, but also on the local level.

The empowerment of municipal officials in the field of migration all over Morocco can be considered as fundamental for the successful integration of immigrants, refugees and returning Moroccan citizens in the local community and economy. Therefore, since 2015, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) has implemented a project entitled 'Strengthening selected municipalities in the management of migration' (RECOMIG). This project supports 10 selected partner municipalities in the mainstreaming of migration into their local policymaking and the implementation of pilot projects for the integration of migrants and refugees and the reintegration of returning Moroccans. The aim is to strengthen social cohesion and intercultural exchange between migrants and the Moroccan population. By organizing trainings for local actors on integration and reintegration, by enhancing the creation of national and international networks of practitioners working in the field of migration and by financing pilot projects conceived by municipal actors including civil society, GIZ is cooperating with the Moroccan Ministry for Moroccans Residing Abroad and Migration Affaires (MCMREAM) in implementing the new Moroccan migration strategy on the local level.

One of the project's core activities is the design and delivery of a new training cursus on migration held for local civil servants and elected representatives. Representatives of each of the ten partner communities will thus get the opportunity to participate in one of the three training sessions. Building on the experience of the first training session held in December 2016, the second training session has been organized from March 21 to March 23 in Rabat for three municipalities from the north of Morocco: Oujda, Nador, and Tangiers. Three days of intensive training, input, discussions and working groups helped to increase the participants' knowledge on migration related phenomena and find ways to include the migration topic in the local policymaking processes. Among the topics covered were Moroccan migration policy, migration and development, (re)integration approaches and the coordination with other players in the field of migration, for example the civil society, the academia or the media. External observers from the MCMREAM, GIZ and the Regional Council of Oujda were present throughout the training to make suggestions to further improve and adapt the training content methods as to best serve the needs and interests of the participants.

While continuing to support the local actors who already benefited from the trainings and accompanying other activities, GIZ is currently preparing the next training of local players which will take place in April. These trainings, however, are not the ultimate goal but rather a step towards a more sustainable cooperation. By training future trainers so that they become disseminators who engage themselves for the mainstreaming of the migration topic, the project hopes to contribute to the better integration of migrants into Moroccan society.

For further information about the RECOMIG-project, please consult the project's description on the website of the GIZ (in French language): <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/34307.html>