



9th World Urban Forum

Side Event

Migration, Displacement, and Inclusive Cities: Challenges and Opportunities for Local Governments in the Arab Region

Hosted by: Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI), UN-Habitat Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS)

February 11, 2018

2:00-3:00 PM (Kuala Lumpur time, GMT+8)

Kuala Lumpur Convention Center, Room 410

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

People have been increasingly moving into cities, voluntarily seeking new economic opportunities or escaping forcibly from mounting political conflicts or unprecedented natural disasters. Associated with this development is the overwhelming demand for affordable urban housing, adequate jobs, quality health care, education services, social protection and other basic services in cities. Arab cities were among the world's top destination of migrants and displaced, owing to a multitude of reasons. They currently host 34.5 million international migrants, 18% of the world's refugees and 16.4 internally displaced persons. Although that sudden surge in flows of migrants had different impacts on Arab countries, the protection and inclusion of these new entrants fell primarily upon local government. City leaders have been assuming growing responsibilities of including increasingly diverse newcomers into the urban fabric of their cities and enhancing their accessibility to services and opportunities. With already strained resources and limited capacities, local authorities' response has been mainly precarious, leaving migrants as well as their local residents in conditions of exclusion and vulnerability. Migration, when adequately managed through inclusive urban planning and governance at the local level, could be turned into an opportunity to contribute to the sustainable development of host cities.

Event objectives

The event will emphasize the necessity to support local authorities in establishing frameworks that provide inclusive cities for all. Local authorities from two Arab Cities are invited to present their experiences from the ground in terms of the extent of coordination with national government and challenges hampering an efficient allocation of resources to fulfill the growing needs of an ever-increasing population. The event will aim to come up with concrete entry points and actions that donor agencies, private sector and concerned international organizations can take to support local governments and actors to develop sustainable urban development responses that consider human rights of people at risk, irrespective of their nationality, ethnicity, religion, gender, and occupation. The event will stress the added value of providing a space for exchange, peer-learning and networking among local authorities. It will have the following objectives:

1. To present, through the example of the Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI)-managed "Host Municipalities Learning Network" (comprising 80 local governments in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Turkey and Palestine), the usefulness of an active network supported by continuous discussion dedicated for municipalities hosting refugees for exchanging and learning from each other's experience to ensure the common welfare of refugees and their hosts;
2. To present the findings of the "Arab City Leaders Guide for Migration and Inclusive Cities", developed by the UN-Habitat Regional Office of Arab States, which defines realistic and action-oriented interventions that can be performed at the local level to mitigate migration negative impacts and make a palpable positive difference in the daily-lives of all city residents.
3. To discuss the experiences and benefits of cross-country and regional learning in the perspective on how local economic development can be strengthened by stronger inclusion of refugees and migrants.



Agenda

14.00 - 14.05	Welcoming of participants
14.05 - 14.15	Opening Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Janette Uhlmann, Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI)▪ Soha Farouk, UN-Habitat Regional Office for Arab States
14.15 - 14.35	Panel Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Rami Sharrack, Syrian Economic Forum, Gaziantep, Turkey▪ Mohammad Zawahreh, Municipality of Zarqa, Jordan
14.35 - 14.55	Q&A Session and Open Discussion
14.55 - 15.00	Wrap Up and Conclusions
