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مركز التكامل المتوسطي

PRESS RELEASE

Mayors Unlocking the Potential of Refugee Entrepreneurship to Boost Local Economies

Municipal representatives from the South-Eastern Mediterranean, Afghanistan and East Africa build their response capacities to forced displacement through strategic planning for Local Economic Development in their cities

Amman, Jordan, 30 June 2019 – 48 representatives of municipalities and local governments from Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Turkey, as well as Afghanistan, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda hosting refugees and internally displaced persons, as well as experts and representatives of international organizations, are gathered in the Jordanian capital Amman to explore mechanisms for boosting local economies in the context of forced displacement.

“Forcibly displaced populations are not evenly spread through the host countries but rather tend to concentrate in some regions, and especially in some cities” explains **Blanca Moreno-Dodson, Manager of the Center for Mediterranean Integration.**

“Regional and municipal governments are in a strategic position to address the needs of the displaced, as well as supporting the communities hosting them. In an unprecedented manner, the Global Compact for Migration acknowledges their key role; yet their planning and response capacities are not always taken into account in national and global fora. Local Economic Development strategies, specially designed to include displaced populations, can attract private investments and foster job creation, leading to inclusive growth” she adds.

Opened by Dr. Yousef Shawarbeh, Mayor of Greater Amman Municipality, this capacity building workshop on “Strategic Planning for Local Economic Development” is jointly organized by the Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI), the German Development Agency (GIZ), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the World Bank, with the support of Greater Amman Municipality (GAM), the South-South Exchange Facility, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Rescue Committee (IRC), World Academy for Local Government and Democracy (WALD) and the United Cities and Local Governments Middle East and West Asia Section (UCLG-MEWA).

This five-day training is organized in the framework of the CMI-managed Mediterranean Host Municipalities Learning Network, a network focused on strengthening capacity and service delivery in host communities through inter-municipal and inter-regional targeted learning and periodic training workshops on strategic planning for local economic development and private sector mobilization.

The capacity building workshop is held for the second consecutive year drawing from requests of the HMLN members upon the success of the first one, held in Amman as well. Participants will attend an intensive training to explore and learn mechanisms through which local governments can create economic opportunities for both host and refugees’ communities. This year’s program focuses on private sector mobilization, facilitation of refugee entrepreneurship and home-based businesses in the framework of a Local Economic Development (LED) Strategy. Over five days, participants will develop their capacities in designing LED strategic plans by applying existing expertise and analytical tools to their own context and by learning from peers’ experiences in developing LED strategies in the context of an influx of refugees, IDPs, or returnees.

Selected champions of the Mediterranean Host Municipalities Learning Network will also share their town’s experiences in turning the presence of refugees and migrants into an asset. Representatives of Madaba, Amman (Jordan) and Bethlehem (Palestine) municipalities will present their twinning arrangement formed thanks to CMI-led exchanges and how their strategic plans adapted to the presence of displaced, thus encouraging more cities to follow their example. Additionally, and in an effort to combine theory with practice, a field visit to a waste management factory in Madaba run jointly by GIZ and the Municipality where both Jordanians and Syrians work and to the Mujtama’e Center in Amman, a community center jointly run by GAM and IRC boosting entrepreneurship, training and capacity building for locals and refugees alike are also on the program. The CMI report “Experiences in Hosting Refugees: Local Economic Development in Host Communities”, will also be showcased.



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More details:

- For more info on the meeting and the discussions: <https://bit.ly/2Ruhsx4>
- For more info on the CMI Mediterranean Refugees and Host Communities Program: <https://bit.ly/2Xo5kmC>
- To download the compendium “Experiences in Hosting Refugees: Local Economic Development in Host Communities”: <https://bit.ly/2FtJxCq>

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

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