



PRESS RELEASE

Municipalities Hosting Refugees from MEWA & Beyond Team Up for Promoting Local Economic Development in Gaziantep, Turkey at the Initiative of the CMI

Marseilles, November 16, 2018 – Between 19 to 22 of November 2018, more than 90 representatives of municipalities, central government focal points, non-governmental and civil society stakeholders, as well as development and humanitarian institutions from Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and Turkey, will meet in Gaziantep, Turkey. In addition, a delegation from Afghanistan and another one from Eastern Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya & Uganda) will also take part in the exchanges between countries from the south on similar local economic development and forced displacement related issues.

Entitled “Local Economic Development in Host Communities”, this gathering of the Host Municipalities learning network, held for its third consecutive year, is organized by the Center for Mediterranean Integration in partnership with the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ), Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality and the World Bank Group, with the support of the World Bank’s South-South Facility, the United Cities and Local Governments Middle East and West Asia Section (UCLG-MEWA), CIHEAM Bari, and the International Labor Organization (ILO).

The main objective of this event is to foster cross-regional exchanges and learning between host communities. Participants will identify, share, and discuss best practices for “developing” their “Local Economies” and how to foster common welfare of refugees and host communities alike, i.e. attracting the private sector, boosting employment, enhancing the infrastructure, resources mobilization, etc.

One of the events’ highlights will be the launch of a Compendium of experiences hosting refugees with a focus on local economic development and host communities. In addition, the CMI will dedicate a full day for deeper engagement and collaboration between local / central governments development organizations and donors’ representatives, so as to foster exchange for the mutual benefit of both refugees and host communities. These four-days exchanges will be further nurtured by interactive technical working groups, and a half-day field visit to a “Women Only Center” and to Gaziantep industrial zone and Syrian-owned factories.

Talking about best practices, the CMI facilitated over the past year, twinning arrangements between towns over local economic development and forced displacement issues. To date, there have been 22 expressions of interests and 6 effectively sealed twinning among host communities. The experiences of twinning arrangements are on this event’s agenda to inspire more municipalities to engage in such exchanges as such smaller scale cooperation towards the advantage of yielding better and tangible results.

This annual meeting event will be attended by Fatma Şahin, Mayor of Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality at the opening session as well as high-level presence from the Mashreq and Afghanistan.

More details:

- For more info on the meeting and the discussions: <https://bit.ly/2OWQVu1>
- For more info on the CMI Mediterranean Refugees and Host Communities Program: <https://bit.ly/2Tfdjh0>
- To download the compendium please click here: <https://bit.ly/2QFoON1>

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