

Syrian Refugees Report Turkey- Jordan-Lebanon



UCLG Middle-East working group

Executive Summary

UCLG Peace Mission for Syrian refugees¹:

Within the context of the Syrian crisis the UCLG Middle East Working Group organized a Peace mission for Syrian Refugees. From 18-26 March, 2013, at the initiative of UCLG President TOPBAŞ, an international delegation of Turkish, Dutch and French elected officials from local governments and experts from the national associations of local governments in Canada (FCM - Federation of Canadian Municipalities), the Netherlands (VNG - Netherlands Association of Municipalities), Turkey (UMT - Union of Municipalities of Turkey), United Cities France (CUF - Cités Unies France), Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and United Cities and Local Governments Middle East and West Asia Section (UCLG-MEWA), visited bordering municipalities in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan.

The delegation's aim was to deliver a message of solidarity and make a list of needs and report it to UCLG members. After approval received during UCLG Executive Bureau hold in Lyon in June 2013, the members of the UCLG Middle East Working Group has been undertaken their activities in the three visited countries.

Eight months after its mission, the UCLG Middle East Committee has issued this document which aims to provide updates on the situation in Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon. This overview points out the fact that collaboration between NGOs, international agencies and local governments is still marginal. This lack of collaboration represents a big loss of efficiency for aid delivery and it undermines the regional stability by discrediting local authorities.

After 32 months of conflict the Syrian crisis has caused displacement of more than 2 million outside of Syria and more than 7 million internal refugees. UN Agencies and NGOs are currently working on the 6th Regional Response Plan (RRP) which assesses the needs Syrian refugees have to face. While considering the previous RRP's we are forced to observe that local authorities are not included in the planning of its budget. The only initiative for local authorities took place in

¹ *Mission report and recommendations, May 2013 - Municipalities on the Frontline: The effects of the Syrian Crisis on local government in bordering countries (Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon)*

Lebanon with the Community Support Program (CSP); even in this case only a marginal part of the budget allocated to Lebanon has been affected to support local governments (0,1%).

In order to comply with their responsibilities, local authorities are calling for urgent support. The important work deployed by NGOs and UN agencies in the region cannot and should not replace local government tasks and responsibilities, specific support to local governments is becoming critical to guarantee social stability.

In this context the UCLG Middle East Working Group urges NGO's, national and international institutions to include local authorities in their humanitarian response to increase aid efficiency and to protect the region stability.

As the Syrian crisis affects many countries of the Middle East and West Asia region and as an international association of local governments, the UCLG Middle East Working Group calls UCLG members to participate in the actions of solidarity.

As a platform of local and regional governments, UCLG-MEWA will support and promote the municipalities' actions for the Syrian refugees. Sharing of experiences in this field will allow our organization to promote best practices and to structure local authorities answer to humanitarian crisis. Moreover the cooperation among the local governments, NGOs and international organizations should also strengthen the actions of local governments and be more efficient on the ground.

