



CENTER for MEDITERRANEAN
INTEGRATION | CENTRE pour
l'INTÉGRATION en MÉDITERRANÉE
مركز التكامل المتوسطي



WORLD BANK GROUP



PROGRAM

Launch of the Joint World Bank
and UNHCR report:

“THE WELFARE OF SYRIAN
REFUGEES: EVIDENCE FROM
JORDAN AND LEBANON”

CROSS-REGIONAL LEARNING
EVENT BETWEEN THE MASHREQ
AND EUROPE ON HOSTING
REFUGEES

FEBRUARY 15, 2016

9:00AM - 6:00PM

PARIS, FRANCE

AFD MISTRAL BUILDING - AUDITORIUM
NELSON MANDELA, 3 PLACE LOUIS ARMAND,
75012 PARIS, FRANCE

With the support of:





CENTER for MEDITERRANEAN
INTEGRATION | CENTRE pour
l'INTÉGRATION en MÉDITERRANÉE
مركز التكامل المتوسطي



WORLD BANK GROUP

CONTEXT

The five year Syrian conflict is having disastrous humanitarian, social and economic consequences both in Syria and in neighboring countries. With over 220,000 dead and about 7.6 million internally displaced Syrians (IDPs), the Mashreq region and Turkey are facing an unprecedented and protracted refugee crisis that places an extraordinary burden on host countries and communities. Syrians have massively fled their country, and the number of registered Syrian refugees in the Mashreq has reached more than 4 million, while 500,000 have already applied for asylum in Europe as of September 2015 (UNHCR), more than half of which are under the age of 18. Syria's neighboring countries are bearing the brunt of the Syrian conflict's regional impacts, placing additional strain on the scarce resources and fragile economies of Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq. Indeed, refugees fleeing conflict spend substantive time in their host country before beginning to return in small numbers. The refugee situation is bound to last, and is already showing spillover effects in Europe. Host countries are providing the international community with a global public good, and need to be supported in return. If left unaddressed, the refugee crisis will have dire socio-economic and political consequences in the Mediterranean region and host countries alike.

As the Syrian crisis rages on, humanitarian and development organizations are coming together to bridge the historical divide between their approaches. For the first time, the World Bank Group and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees have joined forces to share and analyze data on Syrian refugees living in Jordan and Lebanon in order not only to better understand the welfare of refugees, but also to help create a more sustainable system to address their needs. An in-depth understanding of the poverty situation affecting refugees is all the more important in order to identify ways of turning elements of the crisis into opportunities. Indeed, international experiences have shown that under certain

circumstances, refugees can contribute to their host countries' economies by becoming economic actors in their own right. Yet, analytics are still scarce on the potential for the transition of "refugees as a liability" to "refugees as an asset".

RATIONALE

The joint WB/UNHCR report "The Welfare of Syrian Refugees: Evidence from Jordan and Lebanon", and its policy recommendations will be launching this first discussion. The report sheds light on the socio-economic situation of Syrian refugees in both countries, and warns against the poverty trap threatening them, arguing that this would be a policy impasse for refugees, host governments, host communities, and the future of Syria alike. It presents valuable analytical data and insights into the economic welfare and labor market impact of refugee communities in the Mashreq, and illustrates the extent to which the welfare of refugee and host communities are inextricably linked. This implies that economic welfare and inclusion policies must address refugee and host communities together in order to succeed. Lebanon and Jordan in particular have especially valuable experiences to share in this regard.

The second focus of this event will address the mid-term issue of refugees building livelihood and self-reliance through the creation of economic opportunities, based on the White Paper entitled "The Syrian Refugee Crisis in the Medium-Term: What Next?" This paper lays out important policy recommendations on how to build on short-term humanitarian objectives for refugee relief in order to work towards refugee welfare in the medium-term. In order to succeed, steps towards ensuring the success of refugee return must be taken now: humanitarian and development organizations have an essential role to play in this process. The Report and White Paper that form the backbone of this discussion illustrate the analytical and operational gains that take place when humanitarian (UNHCR) and development (WB) actors join forces.



Furthermore, this discussion will open a **cross-regional exchange between Middle Eastern and European hosting countries** by facilitating knowledge-sharing between MENA host countries as well as South-North dialogue to help European host countries learn from their Mashreq counterparts, who have been hosting Syrian refugee populations for over four years. The Mashreq countries are coping with a constant increase in refugees, thereby gaining significant experiences which can inform host communities' efforts across the Mediterranean and Europe.

OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

- To foster cross-regional mutual learning and knowledge-sharing on the analytical findings and policy implications of the WB/UNHCR Study “The Welfare of Syrian Refugees: Evidence from Jordan and Lebanon”, and the White Paper “The Syrian Refugee Crisis in the Medium-Term: What Next?”
- To share strategies and best practices on supporting host countries and creating welfare for host communities and refugees, based on the experience of host countries in the Mashreq and Europe
- To contribute to bridging the divide between humanitarian and development work for a short- to mid-term vision for Syrian refugee welfare to emerge
- To mobilize resources and strengthen multi-partner collaborations

TARGET AUDIENCE

This event is aimed at humanitarian and development work institutions, donors, national and local government representatives, regional organizations, academics and researchers.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- UNHCR, WB, The Welfare of Syrian Refugees: Evidence from Jordan and Lebanon, 2015 (<http://bit.ly/1VaazeF>)
- Ewen Macleod, Paolo Verme, White Paper: “The Syrian Refugee Crisis in the Medium-Term: What Next?” (<http://bit.ly/1XhIAvg>)

About the CMI Mediterranean Refugees and Host Communities Program

*As a regional hub for innovative knowledge on urgent Mediterranean and cross-regional issues, the CMI, in collaboration with the WB and UNHCR, is initiating a discussion series on “Supporting refugee inclusion for common welfare in host countries”, building on the innovative analytical work produced by its members and partners. This series targets host governments, development partners, humanitarian lead agencies, donors and experts in the MENA region and beyond, in order to discuss key issues and identify solutions to forced displacement. It is embedded in the wider **CMI Mediterranean Refugees and Host Communities Program**, which aims at contributing to the regional response to the current refugee crisis in MENA and its spillover effects in Europe through “Just-in-Time” knowledge dissemination. It supports cross-regional exchange between Middle Eastern and European hosting countries by facilitating knowledge-sharing between MENA host countries as well as South-North exchanges.*

[Mediterranean Refugees and Host Communities Knowledge Action](http://bit.ly/1PRVgmZ) (<http://bit.ly/1PRVgmZ>)

Launch of the Joint WB/UNHCR report:
“The Welfare of Syrian Refugees. Evidence from Jordan and Lebanon”
Cross-regional Learning Event between the Mashreq and Europe on Hosting Refugees

8:30 **PARTICIPANT REGISTRATION**

9:00 **WELCOME ADDRESS**

Mourad Ezzine

Manager, Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI)

Marie-Hélène Loison

Head of Mediterranean and Middle-East Department, Agence Française de Développement (AFD)

INTRODUCTION

Ferid Belhaj

Country Director for the Middle East, World Bank

François Reybet-Degat

Deputy Director for the Middle East & North Africa, UNHCR

The introduction will highlight the latest developments of the Syrian refugee crisis and the current socio-economic needs of refugees and host countries in the Mashreq and Europe, while referring to the latest key political and financial efforts undertaken at the international level.

OPENING ADDRESSES

H.E. Sejean El Azzi

Minister of Labor, Lebanon

H.E. Prof. Nidal Alkatamine

Minister of Labor, Jordan

Launch – “The Welfare of Syrian Refugees: Evidence from Jordan and Lebanon” and its Policy Implications

9:30–11:00 **Session 1: Presentation of “The Welfare of Syrian Refugees: Evidence from Jordan and Lebanon”, WB/UNHCR report**

PRESENTATION:

Paolo Verme

Senior Economist, Poverty Global Practice, World Bank

Ewen Macleod

Head of the Policy Development and Evaluation Service, United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR)

Moderator: Ferid Belhaj

Country Director for the Middle East, World Bank

The report analyzes available data on Syrian refugees living in Jordan and Lebanon in order to achieve a better understanding of refugee welfare while working towards the creation of a sustainable system to address their needs. Panelists will discuss the study’s results in light of existing analyses on refugees’ and host communities’ welfare in the Mashreq region and globally. Current actions undertaken to support their welfare will be highlighted.

PANEL DISCUSSION:

Feda Gharaibeh

Director of the Humanitarian Relief Coordination Unit, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Jordan

Bashir Osmat

Advisor on Social Policies to the Minister of Social Affairs, Lebanon

Andrew Harper

UNHCR Representative for Jordan

Mireille Girard

UNHCR Representative for Lebanon

Sami Atallah

Director, Lebanese Center for Policy Studies (LCPS), Lebanon

Dawn Chatty

Emeritus Professor of Anthropology and Forced Migration and Former Director of the Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, UK

Q&A with the audience

11:00-11:15 **Coffee Break**

11:15-12:45 **Session 2: Presentation of the White Paper: “The Syrian Refugee Crisis in the Medium-Term: What Next?”**

PRESENTATION:

Paolo Verme

Senior Economist, Poverty Global Practice, World Bank

Ewen Macleod

*Head of the Policy Development and Evaluation Service,
United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR)*

Moderator: François Reybet-Degat

*Deputy Director for the Middle East & North Africa,
UNHCR*

The White Paper argues in favor of a new social contract between the international community and host countries. It discusses recommendations aimed at addressing the poverty trap threatening Syrian refugees and vulnerable host communities in the “medium term” by fostering local economic growth and economic inclusion.

PANEL DISCUSSION:

Alain Bifani

Director General, Ministry of Finance, Lebanon

Hayder Mustafa Saeed Sinjawi

*Director General for Coordination, Ministry of Planning,
Kurdistan Regional Government, Iraq*

Mukhallad Omari

*Director of the Policy Division, Ministry of Planning and
International Cooperation, Jordan*

Abdullah Al Dardari

*Deputy Executive Secretary, UN Economic and Social
Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA)*

Nadim Karkutli

*Manager of the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the
Syrian Crisis, DG NEAR, European Commission*

Q&A with the audience

12:45-14:00 **Lunch**

Cross-regional Learning between the Middle East and Europe on hosting Refugees in the Mid-Term

14:00-15:30 **Session 3: Bilateral experiences towards supporting refugee and host country welfare**

PRESENTATIONS:

H.E. Prof. Nidal Alkatamine

Minister of Labor, Jordan

Hala El Helou

*Advisor on Humanitarian & International Affairs to the
Minister of Social Affairs, Lebanon*

Asterios Bouzias

Diplomat, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Greece

Bruno Codispoti

*Head of Program Development and Fundraising, Italian
Refugee Council, Italy*

Kristof Tamas

*Director and Head of Secretariat of the Migration Studies
Delegation (Delmi), Sweden*

Natassia Fry

Kompis Sverige, NGO, Sweden

Moderator: Olivier Ray

*Head of Crisis Prevention & Conflict Unit, Agence
Française de Développement (AFD), France*

Presenters will share their experiences on hosting refugees in the Mashreq and Europe to date and discuss existing and potential mid-term policies for the socio-economic welfare of host countries and refugees. Lessons that can be learnt from the 4 years-long hosting experience of Mashreq countries will also be highlighted, as well as ways forward to further adapt policies in the long-term.

DISCUSSANTS:

Regina Bendokat

“Save Me”, NGO, Konstanz, Germany

Q&A with the audience

15:30-15:45 Coffee Break

15:45-17:15 Session 4: Creating Conditions for Shared Prosperity and Economic Growth for Refugees' and Host Communities' Welfare - Spotlights on Innovative Actions and Experiences

PRESENTATIONS:

H.E. Sejean El Azzi

Minister of Labor, Lebanon

Rami Adwan

*Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants, Lebanon:
"Employment and Incentives for Return (Lebanon STEP Program)"*

John Speakman

Advisor, World Bank: "Special Economic Zones in Jordan"

Ahed Zyadat

Project Director, Emergency Services and Social Resilience Project, Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Jordan

Önder Yalçın

Head of the Migration Office, Gaziantep Municipality, Turkey

Matthias Schulze-Boeing

*Head of Department for Employment, Statistics, and Integration Policies, City of Offenbach am Main, Germany:
"Local Labor Market Integration"*

Presenters will discuss innovative actions and experiences supporting economic growth and the socio-economic inclusion of refugees and vulnerable populations in host communities. These include innovative labor market policies, support at the municipal/local level for the delivery of priority services, and empowering refugees for better return conditions. Participants will highlight their successes and raise challenges facing the implementation of these initiatives, as well as scaling-up options.

Moderator: Haneen Sayed

Program Leader, Human Development, World Bank

Q&A with the audience

Addressing the Financial Gap - Financing Modalities for the Refugee Crisis

17:15-17:45 Session 5: Mobilizing resources and strengthening multi-partner collaborations towards supporting refugees' and host communities' welfare

PRESENTATION

Franck Bousquet

Director, Regional Programs, Partnerships and Integrated Solutions for the MENA Region, World Bank

Alain Bifani

Director General, Ministry of Finance, Lebanon

Nadim Karkutli

Manager of the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis, DG NEAR, European Commission

This session will focus on ongoing initiatives that aim at addressing the ongoing financing gap in order to support refugees' and host communities' welfare in the mid-term. In particular, the "MENA financing Initiative", co-led by the United Nations, the Islamic Development Bank and the World Bank and European efforts in response to the Syrian crisis will be presented.

17:45-18:00 Conclusion and next steps towards fostering Cross-Regional Learning

H.E. Prof. Nidal Alkatamine

H.E. Sejean El Azzi

Mourad Ezzine



CENTER for MEDITERRANEAN
INTEGRATION | CENTRE pour
l'INTEGRATION en MÉDITERRANÉE
مركز التكامل المتوسطي



With the support of:

