

**CITY HAVEN PROGRAMME : SUPPORTING EUROPEAN CITIES HOSTING REFUGEES**

 **GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE**

Transit cities and host cities capitals in Europe, Turkey and Lebanon: *Athens, Skopje, Rome, Berlin, Budapest, Beirut/Tripoli, Ankara/Gazientep*

 **THEMATIC SCOPE**

Risk reduction and rehabilitation, city resilience, migration and refugees

 **TARGET BENEFICIARIES**

Host city governments, migrants including youth

 **PARTNERS**

Include

- Norwegian Refugee Council
  - Local governments of transit and host cities
  - United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG),
  - City of Barcelona
  - Union for the Mediterranean
  - European Commission
- \*other partners to be confirmed

 **PROGRAMME SUMMARY**

**Background:** Well over 1 million migrants have made their way to the European Union from the world's top ten refugee producing countries, the largest percentage arriving from Syria. For many, the journey has been perilous with an estimated 3,500 people losing their lives at sea. For those that successfully landed in Italy, Greece or Spain the majority continue to seek asylum in countries such as Germany, Austria, Sweden, France and the United Kingdom – the latter two countries already struggling to cope with stemming the flow of irregular immigrants. Some states have erected physical as well as procedural barriers and response has not been rapid enough in others leading to frustration and sometimes aggressive or violent reactions by both refugees and populations in the temporary host countries. If not properly managed, these tensions could escalate and create longer term resentment. Currently the situation remains dire for refugees in Greece and Macedonia, and increasingly in Italy.

The EU has common standards on the reception of asylum seekers and UNHCR has guidelines on the protection of persons in need but these guidelines and standards are not always operationalized at the city level. Cities need support to provide safe, respectful and dignified reception. In general, as states make the determination of how many people will be hosted in their countries, the potential for uneven standards of service, potential ethnic or economic isolation, and rapidly dwindling resources in those hosting cities is high.

**Goals and objectives:** To respond to these challenges, UN-Habitat has agreed with its main partner, the NRC/NORCAP to co-lead the implementation of the City Haven Programme.

The overall objective of the Programme is to provide for the immediate needs to refugees held in transition countries, compile relevant statistical data to inform more transparently, their capacities, goals and needs for potential long term resettlement in European cities, and build sufficient capacity to receive and settle incoming refugees in line with defined key value principles.

**Activities:** Action will include preparation of common standards of practice, city-to-city learning exchange, guidelines, and technical assistance. This may include assistance in pre-screening programmes in transit countries such as Greece, Macedonia (already in place), Italy and eventually could extend to all transit countries including Malta, Turkey and Lebanon. This would provide host cities with advance planning information for receiving and settling refugees.

Within the City Haven programme, UN Habitat through its City Resilience Programme, will work together with its partners in both the humanitarian and development communities to prepare and disseminate guidelines, and subsequently pilot the programme in other cities, with NRC/NORCAP bringing in its programmes (including ICLA, IDMC, NORCAP) to support integration and (re-) settlement of refugees in European cities.

Working with local governments hosting refugee families, the programme will link to intergovernmental events and establish new norms for urban humanitarian partners. One of the objectives is to work with some cities to champion the urban agenda on these issues. An initial roundtable convened with the City of Barcelona in mid-2016 is planned to launch the guidelines with follow-up meetings in each of the main host country capitals: Berlin, Rome, Athens, Budapest, Beirut and Ankara to extend the reach of the Lighthouse Mayors.

 **UN-HABITAT  
ROLE**

UN-Habitat experience gained through its City Resilience Programme and UN Habitat's One Stop Youth Resource Centres provided the expertise, networks and tools to carry out the objectives and activities of the programme. According to Eurostat 81% of total migrants that have applied for asylum in the EU Countries this year are under the age of 35. The One Stop Youth Resource Centres, established by UN-Habitat, have been operational for 13 years working with marginalized youth populations to provide a safe and generative space and critical services for youth such as job training and health and recreation services.

UN-Habitat also brings vast experience from its partnerships with local governments including its role in the Management Committee on the Compact of Mayors promoted by UN-Habitat and established during Cop 21. In addition, the agency has addressed issues of displaced populations and contributed to durable solutions in many countries including Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Kenya, Kosovo, Lebanon, Pakistan, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Sri Lanka, and elsewhere since 1997. An example of results achieved include restitution of housing and property claims in Kosovo, settlement integration programmes in Bossasso, Somalia and in Darfur, mediated land rights decisions DRC, among many durable solutions for families involuntarily displaced to cities in their own countries or as refugees seeking asylum.

The role of UN-Habitat in this programme includes:

- Assist with setting with implementing partners, liaison offices in transit countries to pre-screen refugees and assemble statistical information on the numbers, nationalities, composition of families, skill sets, and countries or cities they are hoping to settle. This work will provide host city governments with advanced planning information for receiving and settling refugees.
- Prepare the guidelines in consultation with implementing partners.

Organize initial Mayor's roundtable with the City of Barcelona and subsequent follow-on meetings facilitate dialogue within EU cities and establish platform for sharing experiences and dissemination of developed guidelines.

 **MAIN  
OUTPUTS**

The main initial outputs of the programmes are:

- A pre-screening programme in liaison offices in cities of transit countries subject to consultations with those countries.
- Guidelines for all European cities providing minimum standards to address the needs of migrants and establishing principles of delivery, sourcing and managing refugee intake and integration. These would build on NRC's *Dignified Reception Guidelines* and focusing on long term integration. The guideline will address, inter alia: intake approaches and procedures (local government management of initial placements); housing inventory assessments (vacant residential property and other facilities); social service capacities (initial support for basic needs (including psycho-social support)); legal service support (adherence to international law by host cities/families); home service programmes (registration of lost/abandoned property); security and safety (linking to national and international police and ensuring safety of

incoming refugees); age and gender sensitive health and education (medical check and assistance, language, schooling and recreational activities / community integrative activities); cultural sensitization (both for refugees and host cities/families); roles and responsibilities of host families (understanding cultures, managing expectations, contributing and participating in the process); language training, community contributions to learning and community integration; financing sources, fundraising possibilities, local initiatives and accountability; private sector (opportunities for corporate and small business engagement in achieving self-reliance and integration).

- Mayor's roundtable and follow-on meetings to facilitate sharing of experiences and dissemination of guidelines.
- Technical unit to support EU cities and identify capacities in the following categories:
  - *Legal Aid*: Ensuring local resources for legal aid addressing both incoming refugee needs, and international/local legal frameworks are in place.
  - *Urban Planning*: Addressing appropriate inventories of both temporary and longer term housing, social services (including health, education, faith-based, and psycho-social resources) community-based consultation mechanisms, are in place and available.

*Social Planning*: Advisory services for longer term residential, livelihood, orientation, and integration with a focus on age and gender appropriate services.

 **MAIN RESULTS / IMPACT**

The programmes expected impact are:

- Provide for the immediate needs to refugees held in transition countries according to key value principles and on the basis of a planned and informed decision making by the host cities
- Enhance local governments' capacity to receive and settle incoming refugees through provision of advance planning information, exchange on experiences and mutual learning particularly in countries hosting larger populations of refugees.
- Enhance social stability and security in European cities through reduction in social tension between refugees and their transitional host countries.

 **PROGRAMME DURATION**

2 years following operational funding agreement

 **TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET**

US\$ 5.7 million or EUR 5 million