

Going to town:

A mapping of city-to-city and urban initiatives focusing on the protection of people on the move along the Central and Western Mediterranean Routes

MMC Research Report, April 2022



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Tangier, Morocco, 2016 — A young Senegalese braces against the wind blowing sand as he walks on the city's beach.

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About MMC

The Mixed Migration Centre (MMC) is a global network consisting of six regional hubs (Asia, East Africa and Yemen, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, North Africa and West Africa) and a central unit in Geneva. The MMC is a leading source for independent and high-quality data, research, analysis and expertise on mixed migration. The MMC aims to increase understanding of mixed migration, to positively impact global and regional migration policies, to inform evidence-based protection responses for people on the move and to stimulate forward thinking in public and policy debates on mixed migration. The MMC's overarching focus is on human rights and protection for all people on the move.

The MMC is part of, and governed by, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC). While its institutional link to DRC ensures MMC's work is grounded in operational reality, it acts as an independent source of data, research, analysis and policy development on mixed migration for policy makers, practitioners, journalists, and the broader humanitarian sector. The position of the MMC does not necessarily reflect the position of DRC.

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About UNHCR

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) — the UN Refugee Agency, is a global organization dedicated to saving lives, protecting rights and building a better future for refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people. UNHCR works in over 130 countries, protecting millions of people and delivering life-saving assistance. UNHCR helps safeguard fundamental human rights and develops solutions that ensure people have a safe place to call home where they can build a better future.

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A note on terminology

There is a range of terms used when discussing urban initiatives and the different administrative and organisational entities and forms of local government involved in their implementation, i.e. municipalities, cities, local authorities, etc. “**City**” is the most commonly used term and often serves as a shorthand for all urban or semi-urban entities as a means to facilitate discussion by interested stakeholders. However, the term “city” does not encompass or adequately denote the full range of local-level forms of urban governance. At the same time, “**local authority**” is perhaps the most inclusive governance term, but it excludes actors like local civil society organisations (CSOs), refugees and migrants, and other non-governmental stakeholders. United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) uses the term “**intermediary cities (i-cities)**”, which it defines as “cities with a population between 50,000 and one million people that generally play a primary role in connecting important rural and urban areas to basic facilities and services.” Intermediary cities are home to around 20 percent of the world's population and a third of the global urban population. Because of their scale, intermediary cities can guarantee and provide basic (housing) needs in more efficient and cheaper ways than metropolitan urban areas.¹ Another term used by urban initiatives is “**secondary cities**”, which refers to the size and economic,

¹ UCLG's definition of intermediary cities can be found on their [website](http://www.uclg.net).

social and cultural importance of such locations, contrasted with primary and capital cities. Secondary cities can be intermediary cities and vice versa. This study uses all of these terms but seeks to do so in their appropriate contexts, linking them to their usage by stakeholders. When presenting data from secondary research or interviews, it adopts these terms as used by their original source.

The term “**urban initiative**” is used to refer to the full range of urban programmes and activities, implemented by protection stakeholders in collaboration with cities and municipalities. Urban initiatives can be international and involve multiple partners, as is the case with International Centre for Migration Policy Development’s (ICMPD) MC2CM project, implemented in partnership with UCLG and UN-Habitat. At the same time, initiatives can also describe single programme activities, for instance a counselling service run by a municipality with technical inputs from an external stakeholder such as UNHCR.

UNHCR defines the **protection of vulnerable people on the move** as “all activities aimed at achieving full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and spirit of international human rights, refugee and humanitarian law. Protection involves creating an environment conducive to respect for human beings, preventing and/or alleviating the immediate effects of a specific pattern of abuse, and restoring dignified conditions of life through reparation, restitution and rehabilitation.” Targeting **vulnerable migrant populations**, the International Organization for Migration’s (IOM’s) **protection interventions** include, amongst others, “child protection, risk mitigation, response to and prevention of gender-based violence, counter-trafficking, alternatives to detention, mental health and psychosocial support, land property and reparations and inclusion of persons with disabilities.” Within the sphere of livelihood programming, [UNHCR](#) defines “**social protection**” as “a set of policies and programmes aimed at preventing or protecting all people against poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion throughout their life-course, with emphasis on vulnerable groups.” This includes supporting and working with government social protection programmes “to help support the basic needs of the most vulnerable, to help people develop work and business skills, to provide access to long-term jobs, and to support a range of health and workplace benefits that mitigate families’ challenges.”

A “**person of concern**” is any person for whom [UNHCR](#) is mandated to provide protection, solutions and assistance. This includes refugees, asylum-seekers, refugee returnees, stateless persons, and, in many situations, internally displaced persons (IDPs) including those who may also receive protection and assistance from State and other partners.

MMC normally applies the term “**mixed migration**” to refer to cross-border movements of people including refugees fleeing persecution and conflict, victims of trafficking and people seeking better lives and economic opportunities. See MMC’s full definition of mixed migration and associated terminology [here](#). UNHCR - among other refugee protection actors - applies the term “**mixed movement**”, defined as: the cross-border movement of people, generally in an irregular manner, involving individuals and groups who travel alongside each other, using similar routes and means of transport or facilitators, but for different reasons. People travelling as part of mixed movements have different needs and profiles, and may include asylum-seekers, refugees, victims of trafficking, unaccompanied or separated children, stateless persons and migrants (including migrants in irregular situations or migrants in vulnerable situations). See more on UNHCR’s approach to mixed movements [here](#). In light of the partnership between UNHCR and MMC in publishing this study, the term “mixed movement” is used. Throughout the report, the encompassing term “**people on the move**” is maintained to refer to all people engaging in mixed movement, while the terms “**refugees and/or migrants**” have been kept in the instances in which these were used by key informants.

This study uses the terms **Western Mediterranean Route (WMR)** and **Central Mediterranean Route (CMR)**. The WMR refers to routes that refugees and migrants take through West and North Africa towards sea crossing in the western area of the Mediterranean, departing from Morocco or Algeria, towards Spain. The WMR overlaps with the **Northwest African Maritime Route (NAMR)**, as used by UNHCR programming. The NAMR also includes the Atlantic crossing from West and North Africa to the Canary Islands. The CMR refers to routes that refugees and migrants take through North Africa towards sea crossings in the central area of the Mediterranean, often departing from Tunisia or Libya and to a lesser extent from Algeria, towards Italy and Malta. Refugees and migrants travelling along these three routes are part of mixed movements originating from different regions, including West, North, Central, East and the Horn of Africa, as well as the Middle East and Asia.

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Acronyms

ACPP	<i>Asamblea de Cooperación Por la Paz</i> (Assembly of Cooperation for Peace)
ACRC	African Cities Research Consortium
ANMAR	Federation of Local Authorities of Northern Morocco and Andalusia
ASTICUDE	<i>Association Thissaghnasse pour la Culture et le Développement</i>
CHREN	Centre for Human Rights Erlangen-Nuremberg
CIES	<i>Centro Informazione e Educazione allo Sviluppo</i>
CMR	Central Mediterranean Route
CPI	City Prosperity Initiative
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DIE-GDI	Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (German Development Institute)
FAMSI	Andalusian Fund of Municipalities for International Solidarity
FAU	Friedrich-Alexander-University of Erlangen-Nuremberg
GCM	Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
GCR	Global Compact on Refugees
GMDAC	Global Migration Data Analysis Centre
ICLEI	Local Governments for Sustainability Africa
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JVAP	Joint Valletta Action Plan
KII	Key Informant Interview
LIBMITAF	Libya's Migration Technical Assistance Facility
MC2CM	Mediterranean City-to-City Migration Initiative
MMC	Mixed Migration Centre
NAMR	Northwest African Maritime Routes
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
RBF	Robert Bosch Foundation
SOD	Sudan Organisation for Development
SWP	German Institute for International and Security Affairs
UCLG	United Cities and Local Governments
UCLGA	United Cities and Local Governments of Africa
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR OSE	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' Office of the Special Envoy
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
WMR	Western Mediterranean Route

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Photo credit: © DRC
Techla, Algeria 2021.

1. Introduction

In an increasingly urbanised world, cities are at the forefront of mobility and population displacement. This applies whether people on the move (refugees and migrants) transit cities or settle in them for short or long periods of time. Certain urban centres in East, West and North Africa form key nodes on the CMR and WMR which attract and have become habitual stop-off points for persons in mixed movements. However, while cities can be centres of support or provide attractive opportunities for people on the move, for example in employment and education, they are also locations where protection risks linked to safety and security, xenophobia, discrimination and human rights violations can be at their highest.²

Governments, research institutions and international policy making processes are increasingly recognising the importance of working with cities and municipalities in taking forward their agendas on protection and solutions for refugees and migrants. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and the Joint Valletta Action Plan (JVAP) all reference the importance of including city actors in multi-level governance and cooperation at the local, regional, and national levels to ensure effective protection, asylum and migration governance.³

Existing regional migration dialogues have started incorporating cities in their (current) strategic frameworks and plans. The Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development (also known as the Rabat Process) has included the action point of convening “peer-to-peer meetings between European and African cities, and with other competent authorities [in its most recent strategic framework, the Marrakesh Action Plan (2018)] to enable mutual learning in migration management.” In 2016, UNHCR launched the global campaign Cities #WithRefugees, under the GCR, inviting cities and local authorities all over the world who are working to promote inclusion, support refugees and bring communities together to sign a statement of solidarity and to share stories of initiatives designed to help forcibly displaced people in urban contexts.

As such, the current state of play among development actors and policy makers in countries under the Central and Western Mediterranean Situation shows a strong appetite for city-to-city dialogues and city-level initiatives. The mapping in this report also shows that many city initiatives are longstanding, have gained traction and have made a positive impact on the protection of people in mixed movements. However, others are fledgling and still need to be nurtured past the test phase. Some focus on migration and displacement-specific themes, while others have a much wider thematic mandate. Some initiatives such as the Mediterranean City-to-City Migration Project (MC2CM) and MedCities, have a dedicated geographical focus, which aims to link cities across the Mediterranean in Europe, North Africa and the Levant.⁴ Other initiatives and networks, such as the Mayors Migration Council and the Africa-Europe Mayors' Dialogue, link up members from more diverse geographical contexts. MMC and UNHCR's 2021 Roadmap for Advocacy, Policy Development and Programming highlights the importance of linking cities across regions of origin, transit and destination as a key approach toward strengthening protection for people on the move and for more effective asylum and migration governance along the CMR and WMR.⁵ While the ambition to link cities along the same routes in collective efforts to protect refugees and migrants in mixed movements might appear to be a simple proposition, this report reveals that city initiatives are not often connected in the logic of a routes-based approach.

Within what is a rapidly growing space of city-level initiatives, networks and partnerships, this report seeks to explore the impact and effects of existing city-level initiatives and to see whether any employ an explicit routes-based approach to joined-up city-level cooperation and programming. It argues that such an examination will advance our understanding of what delivers success to city-level programmes aimed at protection for people on the move in mixed movements along the CMR and WMR. Therefore, this report aims to:

1. Shed light on, map and examine city initiatives which aim to enhance the capability and resources of local authorities to improve the protection of people on the move along the CMR and WMR; and
2. Put forward recommendations for actions to be considered within the frameworks of the Khartoum and Rabat Processes under the JVAP, the GCR, UNHCR's Cities #WithRefugees campaign and during the Africities Summit in Kisumu, Kenya in May 2022.

2 Mixed Migration Centre (2020). [Mixed Migration Review 2020: Mixed migration and cities. Urban frontlines for displacement and mobility.](#)

3 For the full texts, see: UN (2018). [Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration](#); UNHCR (2018). [Global Compact on Refugees](#); and Valletta Summit on Migration (2015). [Valletta Summit, 11-12 November 2015 Action Plan](#).

4 For a full list of initiatives, their objectives and hyperlinks to their website, please see Annex I.

5 Bonfiglio, A. et al (eds) (2021). [Roadmap for Advocacy, Policy Development and Programming: Protection in Mixed Movements along the Central and Western Mediterranean Routes 2021](#). UNHCR & MMC.

After a brief explanation of the study's research methodology in Section 2, Section 3 explores how urban initiatives contribute to the protection of people on the move and outlines the activities implemented by urban initiatives. Section 4 maps the geographies of urban initiatives (including cities, municipalities, localities as well as places of settlement versus transit) and their locations along the CMR and WMR in North Africa, East and the Horn of Africa and West Africa and the Sahel. Section 5 examines what initiatives have achieved or plan to achieve. The study concludes with a set of recommendations for action.

Photo credit: © UNHCR/Hallouli Mohamed Amour
Gabes, Tunisia, 2021 — Refugee with chronic disease supported
to access public healthcare services.



2. Methodology

To map existing urban initiatives and their programming activities, MMC began by conducting a desk review of the websites and online portals of such initiatives, focusing on protection and migration terminology, as well as of conference and event programmes, donor and partner webpages and academic and grey literature, to name a few. The review's objective was two-fold: i) to map initiatives and assess their presence online, including identifying connected and/or member cities; and ii) to identify key informants for primary qualitative data collection, including initiative representatives, urban migration experts and local authorities themselves.

Once a sample of key informants was identified, MMC developed three structured interview guides for the different categories of respondents. In total, the research team conducted 21 key informant interviews (KIIs) from October to December 2021. Interviews took place in English, French and/or Arabic and were thereafter transcribed and translated (in the case of Arabic). To analyse the primary qualitative data, the team established a deductive coding scheme based on the broad themes of the research objectives and developed inductive codes that arose from the data itself. In addition to conducting KIIs, MMC attended hybrid and in-person events and workshops relevant to the research, generating research memos from these participatory events as qualitative data to be included within the analysis.

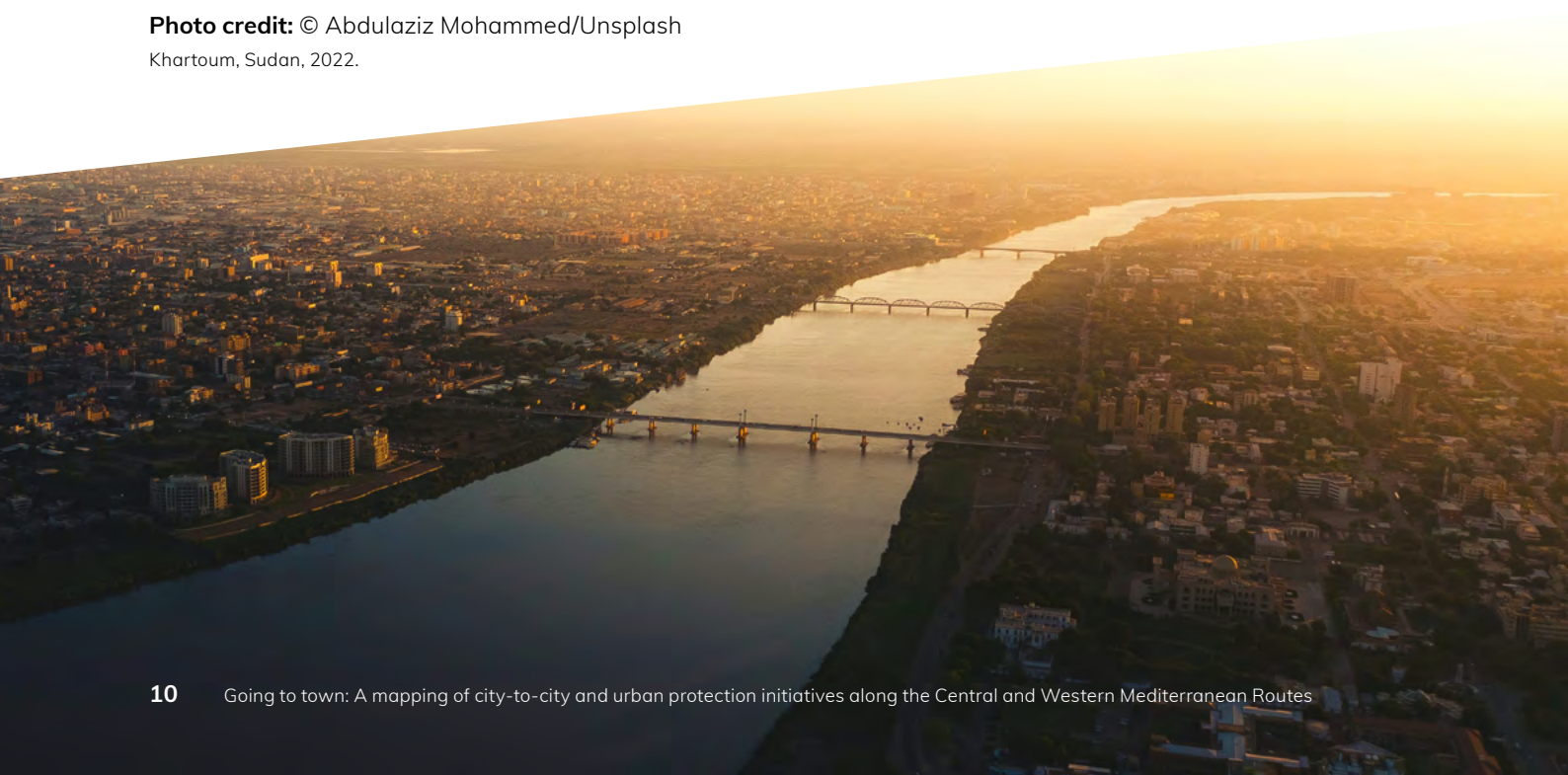
A targeted qualitative survey was also conducted by the UNHCR Office of the Special Envoy for the Central and Western Mediterranean Situation, with UNHCR country operations and Regional Bureaus across the North Africa, East and Horn of Africa and West Africa regions. The survey assessed UNHCR's current engagement with cities and local authorities and priorities to enhance such engagement. MMC triangulated survey responses with KII data.

Once the full report was drafted, MMC and UNHCR organised a series of consultation and validation meetings from February – March 2022 to gather feedback on the study's main findings and recommendations. Meetings included:

1. Two virtual roundtables in English and French with key informants who were interviewed during the data collection phase and who represented local authorities, city-to-city and urban initiatives and experts;
2. Two focus group discussions with refugee and migrant associations in Tunis (Tunisia) and Kassala (Sudan);
3. One virtual roundtable with UNHCR Regional Bureaus and Divisions.

MMC and UNHCR reviewed and integrated the feedback from the consultation and validation meetings in March 2022. Further engagement and dissemination of the report's findings and recommendations is planned to take place at the Africities Summit in May 2022 in Kisumu, Kenya.

Photo credit: © Abdulaziz Mohammed/Unsplash
Khartoum, Sudan, 2022.



3. Mapping: Urban protection initiatives along the CMR and WMR

This section offers a broad mapping of urban initiatives that focus on the protection of people on the move along the CMR and WMR, examining how they contribute to protection and the types of activities in which they engage. Given the temporary nature of some initiatives and their potentially limited online presence, this mapping should not be considered fully exhaustive and does not claim to represent the full set of urban initiatives along the CMR and WMR. It should also be noted that the various activities identified are not mutually exclusive and may coexist within a single initiative. **By defining the activities that comprise urban initiatives, this study maintains that local authorities and external actors can design future programmes that better align with their key objectives. In this way, this mapping intends to serve as a tool for UNHCR and other protection actors to work with cities on determining which protection services are the most appropriate to provide to people on the move present in their territories.**

3.1 How initiatives contribute to the protection of people on the move

This study examines what it means for a local authority, city, or municipality to advance the protection of people on the move. It explores how local level actors who have neither the competencies to determine asylum claims or residence rights nor the “protection” mandate nevertheless further the protection of refugees, other UNHCR persons of concern and migrants. **Interviews with key stakeholders revealed that this occurred in four main ways: “inclusive city” approaches; refugee- and migrant-specific programming at the city level; migration drivers and returnee programming at the city level, and engaging in and furthering national and international refugee and migrant protection goals.**

‘Inclusive city’ approaches

Given that local authorities are the main governing actors interfacing with the public, they “are the ones who know best how cross-cutting vulnerabilities might affect different groups of populations,” a key informant representing UCLG noted. Rather than work with categories of people based on their legal status, “the work they bring and promote, and which they request to be able to do in good conditions, is to deliver basic services to *all* residents,” the key informant added. In this way, local authorities further the protection of people on the move by adopting an “inclusive city” approach. Such an approach can be defined as working towards valuing all residents, regardless of legal status, and addressing their needs equally, without discrimination. By targeting all residents within a locality, local authorities are not exceeding their legal and practical mandates and do not risk potential conflict with national authorities through potentially being identified as protection stakeholders providing assistance to people on the move. Moreover, a key informant representing UN-Habitat noted the importance of connecting an inclusive approach with an area-based approach often applied by humanitarian and development actors, as both approaches target all people living in a given geography.

Inclusive city approaches are implemented in several ways in the various initiatives reviewed for this study. For example, in consultation with local authorities, UNHCR supported the creation of a market in Dori (Burkina Faso) benefiting both host and refugee/migrant communities. In Uganda, Cities Alliance implements the Community Upgrading Fund, which finances the infrastructure of small communities to improve the access of host communities and urban refugees to basic services within a city. Moreover, to ensure that local authorities have the capacity to include the urban poor and refugees with protection needs in their programming, Cities Alliance is collaborating with the Jinja City Council to set up an annual national migration forum that includes participants from cities around Uganda and to organise local workshops bringing all urban stakeholders together to develop a shared vision on how the city should target activities towards the needs of all its residents and how it should manage migration.

Refugee- and migrant-specific programming

Perhaps the most direct example of local authorities working towards the protection of people on the move within their constituencies takes the form of urban programming targeted specifically to refugees and migrants.

The TangerAccueil project coordinated by MedCities works on the reception and inclusion of refugees and migrants, with a designated information and helpdesk. In Greater Tunis, the municipalities of La Marsa and Raoued established comparable *guichets*, or counters, to provide information to refugees and migrants on how to access basic social, medical and juridical services as part of the project Inclusion, Migration, Integration and Governance (I-MIGR) funded by MC2CM and led by the Italian NGO CIES. Also in Tunisia, and similarly supported by MC2CM, the municipality of Sfax collaborates with the NGO Terre d'Asile Tunisie on the project Améliorer la Coordination de la Migration par les Acteurs Locaux à Sfax (ACMALIS), which provides legal aid to vulnerable refugees and migrants.

Moving southward along the CMR, in Kassala (Sudan), the Sudan Organisation for Development (SOD) reported providing legal aid to refugees, migrants and stateless persons, as well as awareness trainings on the arrival and reception of vulnerable displaced populations, targeting local authorities, police, judges and the national Commissioner for Refugees. In the context of data collection and research, the Mayors Migration Council and the Mixed Migration Centre are conducting surveys specifically with refugees and migrants on their experiences, protection concerns and access to basic services in three urban areas in East Africa, as part of the latter's 4Mi Cities project with the objective to create an evidence base on refugee and migrant experiences to inform local authorities and other stakeholders while delivering services and assistance to urban mixed populations. Turning to West Africa, in partnership with UNFPA on the project Youth Migrants in Urban Centers in 2021, MMC carried out qualitative research looking at the sexual and reproductive health and protection experiences of young refugees and migrants in transit in the Sahelian capital cities of Bamako, Ouagadougou and Niamey to inform local authorities and humanitarian actors on experienced and perceived access to health services and protection risks.

Drivers of mixed movements and returnee programming

City-level programming may include elements of mixed movement drivers and/or returnee programming in urban areas, which are places of origin, transit, destination and potential return. Drivers refer to the wide variety of reasons that prompt mixed movements, including economic and educational opportunities, persecution, conflict, climate change and social and political dynamics, amongst others. City-level programming interventions can target potential migrants – those who might embark on precarious irregular movements along the CMR or WMR if they believe they have no livelihood opportunities in their home communities or countries – and for returnees, who may experience re-displacement or remigration if the initial drivers of their movement have not changed since their initial departure. Migrants, refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) might also consider engaging in dangerous onward irregular movements if they assess the level of protection and assistance provided to them is not sufficient, if basic protection conditions are not met or if they see no future in their city of residence in terms of providing long-term settlement and integration.

In Tunisia, Cities Alliance works on inclusive urban planning in inland regions. Within this context, projects in coordination with the municipalities of Jendouba and Kairouan are underway to improve access to basic services for all residents, promote the inclusion of youth and young labour migrants from rural areas in local societies and create more durable work opportunities, including in the sector of responsible tourism. The overall aim for these cities is to better understand migration drivers, retain their aspiring youth, build inclusive societies and discourage individuals from undertaking risky irregular migration journeys. On returnee programming, a representative from the municipality of Kanifing (The Gambia) noted that it is learning from its sister city Freetown (Sierra Leone) on how to actively re-integrate returnees by helping to find them work opportunities in line with local public recruitment policies.

Engaging in and furthering national and international refugee and migrant protection goals

Through joint strategies and advocacy, local authorities might engage in and further advance refugee and migrant protection goals, both on a national level as well as locally, promoting the GCR, GCM and other global agendas. In a number of countries along the CMR and WMR, key informants stressed that national policies and legislation do not adequately provide protection to people on the move, especially in countries that lack domestic asylum and migration frameworks and/or are not signatories to relevant international conventions. In this context, Cities Alliance Uganda works together with cities to create an evidence base and identify good practices to further national advocacy efforts. While national policy and legal frameworks are not easy to change, as a representative from MC2CM explained, the 2030 Agenda and other international frameworks do provide support to local authorities to engage in international dialogues. Furthermore, this key informant added:

“There is a comprehension that their struggle is not only theirs [of cities] but connects to many others around the world. And there is this shared intent to move competences on a national level. The action, moreover, should not only work on the consequences, but also on the root causes. Particularly in North Africa, where cities are both hosting but also sending migrants. They should create inviting and inclusive societies, transforming the famous ‘problem’ of migration into opportunities arising from migration.”

During the Global Forum on Migration and Development in 2019, UCLG Africa supported cities such as Agadez (Niger), Gao (Mali) and Arboua (Morocco) in their advocacy efforts to avoid being framed as “migration hotspots” for refugees and migrants relocated or deported, respectively, from other parts of the world, particularly to prevent the establishment of camps and settlements for people on the move.⁶

This subsection provided an overview how city-level initiatives contribute to the protection of refugees and migrants. **Through key informant interviews, the research team found that activities and programming advancing protection at the city or local-level can take shape and be stimulated through different approaches that vary in how directly they target refugees and migrants, including “inclusive city” approaches, refugee- and migrant-specific programming, mixed movement drivers and returnee programming and engagement to advocate for national and international frameworks to improve the protection of people on the move.**

3.2 Types of activities of urban protection initiatives and local authorities

Based on research carried out by the Friedrich Alexander University of Erlangen-Nuremberg (FAU)⁷ as well as data from interviews with key stakeholders working on urban initiatives, this study identified six main types of activities that advance the protection of people on the move in urban areas.⁸ It should be noted that this list does not claim to be exhaustive, but it highlights different approaches to urban protection programming with local authorities. Within urban initiatives, several types of activities might be connected and/or conducted together, acknowledging the complexity within this field and the different relationships that exist between cooperating stakeholders. Table 1 defines each in turn, their objectives, and provides key examples.

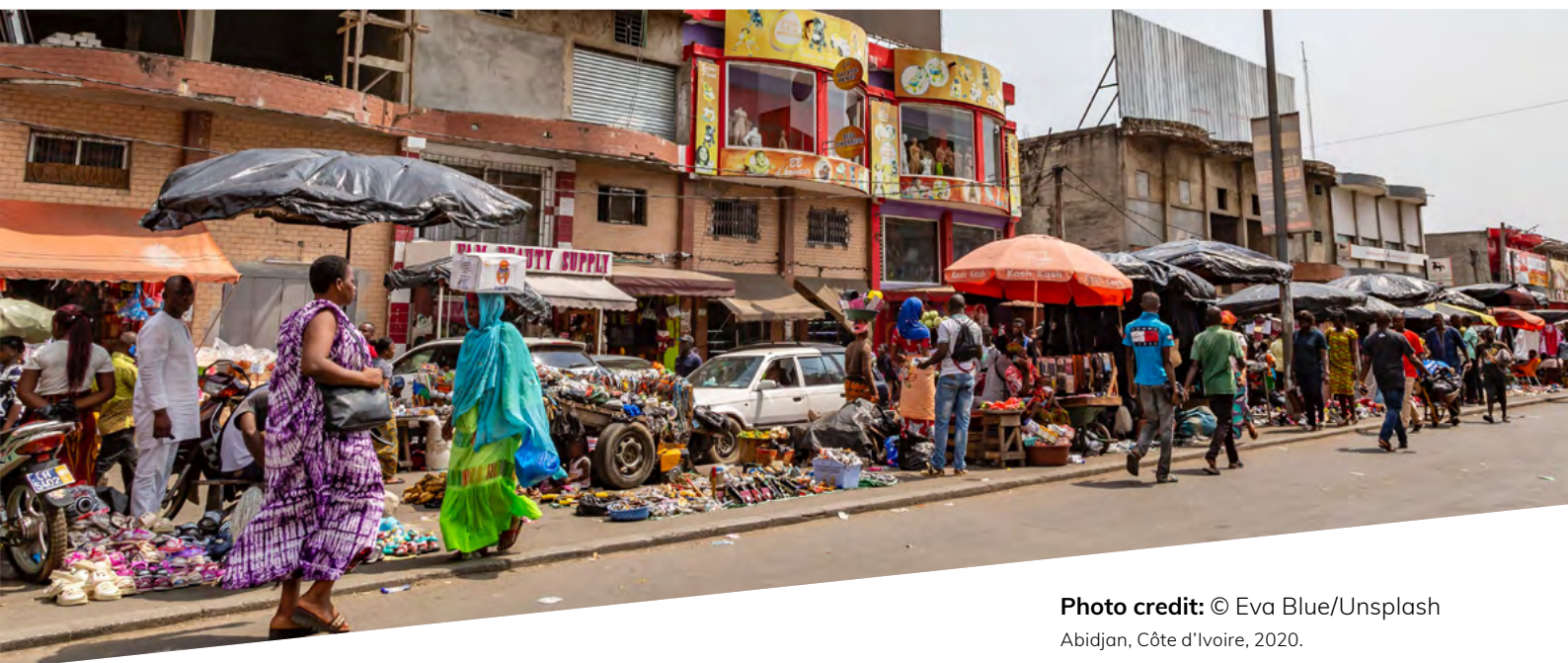


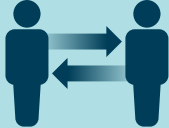

Photo credit: © Eva Blue/Unsplash
Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 2020.

⁶ UCLG Congress (2019). [Africa Position Paper](#).

⁷ FAU is currently engaged in the research consortium Equal Partnerships for Urban Migration Governance, looking at the role of African intermediary cities in migration (also see Annex I).

⁸ Standalone local-level protection programmes with no coordination component – between different cities, between cities and other levels of government or between cities and international initiatives – are not included in this mapping, but feature throughout this report with examples on urban protection programming.

Table 1: Types of activities in which urban protection initiatives engage

Type of activity	Working definition	Objectives	Relevant examples from initiatives
Peer-to-peer meetings and exchanges 	<p>Activities that bring together different cities and/or local authorities to share information and learn from one another.</p> <p>Activities are often organised around a specific learning objective, or theme and involve local authorities with similar experiences or priorities related to mixed movement.</p>	<p>Foster coordination and information-sharing within a country, across countries and/or along mixed movement routes.</p> <p>Match local authorities holding expertise in a specific area with local authorities seeking out such expertise.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MC2CM links up cities across the Mediterranean (Annex I), convening city leaders; civil servants; and local, national and international multi-disciplinary experts. In June 2020, MC2CM organised a four-day online peer-to-peer learning event on communication and migration narratives in contexts of local governance.⁹ • In November 2021, UNHCR's Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Office hosted, with the Mayor of Tunis, the virtual Mayors Forum for Inclusive Cities in North Africa, which included participants from 17 refugee-hosting cities in Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Tunisia and Mauritania. The forum aimed to build a city-to-city platform of good practices, challenges and opportunities related to designing and implementing refugee-inclusive policies.¹⁰ • Cities Alliance convenes regional peer-to-peer dialogues involving nine East African cities (in Uganda, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia) located on mixed movement routes, in which national offices and ministries are also invited to take part. • In September 2021, the states-led Rabat Process held a meeting with national and local authorities along the WMR, recognising that cities are at the forefront of responding to the needs of refugees and migrants.¹¹
Producing data, information, and knowledge resources 	<p>Data collection and research exercises undertaken at the local or city-level, following the recognition of a data and information gap.</p> <p>Activities range from research conducted by individual cities with the support of an international urban initiative or actor, to coordinated efforts by several local authorities.</p>	<p>Fill an information gap and create an evidence base to inform urban protection responses.</p> <p>Provide local authorities with data to legitimise calls for national authorities and international organisations to support them in servicing all inhabitants, including refugees and migrants.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Africa-Europe Mayors' Dialogue is developing an urban population survey to be conducted in Dakar (Senegal), with the IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (GMDAC). The survey examines vulnerabilities and needs – rather than migration status – to identify profiles in need of assistance. • Cities Alliance piloted a census of urban refugees in Arua (Uganda), setting up a collaboration between the local authorities and the Uganda Bureau of Statistics. • UN-Habitat's City Prosperity Initiative (CPI) develops with cities an integration promotion framework, spatial analysis, and a multi-scale decision-making tool. The aim is to identify opportunities and areas for intervention for cities to become sustainably competitive, based on inclusive fundamental human rights principles. • The Mayors Migration Council and MMC are implementing 4Mi Cities – which aims to collect urban data on refugees and migrants, including their access to services, community integration and protection risks – in Arua and Kampala (Uganda) and Nairobi (Kenya).¹² • In 2020, MMC in collaboration with ICMPD, published a set of five urban mixed migration case studies based on data collected at city- and neighbourhood-levels, including Tunis,¹³ Bamako¹⁴ and Nairobi.¹⁵ • MC2CM has worked towards developing city “migration profiles,” based on information collected among city stakeholders and from secondary sources.¹⁶

9 ICMPD (2020). [MC2CM Hosts a 4-day online learning event](#).

10 UNHCR (2020). Mayors Forum for Inclusive Cities in North Africa – 10-11 November 2020. Outcomes Report.

11 'National Authorities, Local Authorities and Migration', 14-15 September 2021, Paris, France.



12 **4Mi** is the Mixed Migration Centre's flagship data collection system, an innovative approach that helps fill knowledge gaps, and informs policy and response regarding the nature of mixed migratory movements and the protection risks for refugees and migrants on the move.

13 MMC (2020). [Urban Case Study Tunis](#).

14 MMC (2020). [Urban Case Study Bamako](#).

15 MMC (2020). [Urban Case Study Nairobi](#).

16 MC2CM (2017). [City Migration Profiles Synthesis Report – Mediterranean City-to-City Migration Dialogue, Knowledge and Action](#).

Type of activity	Working definition	Objectives	Relevant examples from initiatives
Linking to experts 	<p>Connecting local authorities to experts who provide them with technical support.</p> <p>Experts might have a thematic focus (e.g. migration) or technical skill (e.g. grant writing), and may come a wide array of sectors.</p>	<p>Build the capacity of local authorities and/or support them to scale up existing programming related to protection assistance for refugees and migrants.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within Libya's Migration Assistance Technical Assistance Facility, ICMPD in coordination with the EU Ambassador and the UN Representative in Libya, conducted a mission to Sebha, meeting with the mayor and discussing scaling up the city's response capacity to the needs of people on the move.¹⁷ • Through its Global Cities Fund for Inclusive Pandemic Response, the Mayors Migration Council has four strategic partners who provide technical support to the fund's grantees, including Freetown (Sierra Leone). City authorities are receiving support for their Waste-Management Micro-Enterprise Program in informal settlements, which targets migrant youth and aims to improve their livelihoods and the public health of their communities.¹⁸
City partnerships 	<p>Partnerships between two or more cities or local authorities based in different countries, often formed based on mutual interests and priorities.</p> <p>Historically such partnerships have been referred to as "sister cities." When the partnership is between two cities, it is often called "twinning."</p>	<p>Advance shared policy or programming agendas and priorities (e.g., related to mixed movement).</p> <p>Establish relationships for funding opportunities.</p> <p>Exchange on good practices, particularly on procedures and policy implementation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sfax (Tunisia) is twinned with Dakar (Senegal), Oran (Algeria), Safi (Morocco) and Grenoble (France) on several issues, including migration. Many such examples exist, both intra- and inter-continental, but often they are not focused on the protection of people on the move. • The Africa-Europe Mayors' Dialogue, which connects 20 cities (Annex I) has helped form a new partnership between two hubs along the WMR, Dakar and Barcelona (Spain). • In 2020, city members of the Andalusian Fund of Municipalities for International Solidarity (FAMSI) partnered with the Moroccan cities of Al Hoceima, Fnideq and Oujda – which are also included in the network of the Federation of Local Authorities of Northern Morocco and Andalusia (ANMAR) – to lend their expertise and capacity in carrying out a survey on perceptions of migration in the three Moroccan localities.¹⁹ • Partnerships exist between a number of Italian and Libyan cities to provide technical support in the area of migration, e.g. Palermo with Misrata and Parma with Benghazi.²⁰

"I think there are a lot of cities exchanging and speaking with other cities. What is missing is cities and mayors sitting and exchanging with other actors in a meaningful way that brings people together and gives them opportunities. But they also have to know what is actually happening in their cities. [...] Our position is: we don't need more initiatives, but we need those initiatives to strategically work together, and we need the recognition of all actors. We wish that cities access more information in a way that can help them and make them take decisions in terms of helping people of concern, or for the city administration to have better policies. Bringing that together can be really crucial."



Key informant representing the Robert Bosch Foundation

¹⁷ The [mission](#) was organised in coordination with the World Food Programme (WFP).

¹⁸ Mayors Migration Council (2021). [Freetown, Sierra Leone, Waste-Management Micro-Enterprise Program](#).

¹⁹ ANMAR (2020). [Termes de Reference : Assistance Technique pour la réalisation d'une étude sur la perception de la migration dans les villes d'Oujda, Al Hoceima et Fnideq](#).

²⁰ Mentioned by the Mayor of Catania (Italy) during his intervention at the Mediterranean City-to-City Migration Days in September 2021.

Type of activity	Working definition	Objectives	Relevant examples from initiatives
Joint strategies 	<p>The adoption of common agendas or action plans to inform local policy agendas and urban programming.</p> <p>Joint strategies can take the form of task forces or agenda-setting and policy development activities.</p>	<p>To promote collective city action and a coordinated approach to mixed movement.</p> <p>To increase the visibility of city actions and policy agendas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Mayors Migration Council established the Global Mayors Taskforce on Climate and Migration, with C40 Cities and several mayors, including those of Dakar and Freetown. During COP26 in November 2021, the taskforce launched the Global Mayors Action Agenda on Climate and Migration and presented its joint strategic approach in line with the GCR.²¹ • UCLG is developing migration strategies based on the learnings from MC2CM in the Mediterranean, transferring these to other regions through its regional sections. A focus remains on promoting a shared narrative around inclusive cities that provide access to basic services to all residents, including vulnerable refugee and migrant populations. • A working group on Migration Narratives co-led by the Mayors Mechanism in the context of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), advocates for whole-of-society approaches at city levels, launching the 'It Takes A Community Campaign'.²² The working group brings together states, local governments, businesses and civil society groups.²³
Joint advocacy and shared norms 	<p>Cities working together to build support for legal frameworks, norms and policies related to asylum and migration on national and international levels.</p> <p>Norms may range from a shared sense of duty to a legal obligation towards refugees and migrants.²⁴ Establishing norms may involve signing onto charters or pledges.</p>	<p>Promote global norms and agendas, including the GCR, the GCM and 2030 Agenda.</p> <p>Raise the profile of city-relevant topics and strengthen the voice of cities within national and international agendas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UCLG and UCLG Africa engage in regional and cross-regional advocacy efforts and have developed "Waves of Action," which are dedicated to implementing global agendas such as the GCR and the 2030 Agenda.²⁵ Additionally, UCLG Africa's Charter of Local and Subnational Governments of Africa on Migration,²⁶ adopted and signed during UCLG's Africities summit in Marrakech (Morocco) in November 2018 is an example of successful advocacy efforts. • In Tunisia, the cities of Sousse and Sfax work together on joint advocacy efforts in favour of a national regularisation process for migrants. Oujda and Tangier in Morocco, as part of MC2CM, engage in advocacy and social campaigns with the aim of changing the mixed movement narrative at a local level. • In Uganda, Cities Alliance targets national authorities and other stakeholders to advocate for strengthening the capacities and mandates of intermediary cities to respond to the needs of displaced populations.

21 UNHCR (2021). [Climate change and disaster displacement](#).

22 Set up in 2018 and co-steered by UCLG, IOM and the Mayors Migration Council, the [Mayors Mechanism](#) creates a formal link between local authorities and the state-led [Global Forum on Migration and Development](#). It enables cities to influence GFMD discussions and fosters peer-to-peer learning and exchange.

23 The working group's terms of reference can be found [here](#).

24 Bonfiglio, A. (2020). Student Migrant, Refugee or Both? Exploring refugee agency and mobility through tertiary education in Kenya, South Africa and Uganda. ProefschriftMaken Maastricht. <https://doi.org/10.26481/dis.20200220ab>, pp. 42-45.

25 UCLG (2021). [Waves of Action](#). These are typically conceived around four pillar waves: Implementation, Learning, Advocacy, and Monitoring and Follow-Up.

26 The charter includes eight pledges that encourage the peaceful inclusion and integration of refugees and migrants in urban societies. It aims to challenge discrimination towards displaced populations; restrictive legal frameworks and policies that impede or criminalise assistance to these populations and cooperation programmes that try to tackle the "root causes of migration" without involving local authorities.

Having set out the wide range of activities in which local authorities and international urban initiatives enhance the protection of people on the move, one may draw several key insights:

- First, often activities are not mutually exclusive and larger initiatives, such as MC2CM, Cities Alliance and UCLG, are engaged in nearly all of these local, regional and international activities; in this way, they **adopt a multi-faceted approach to advancing city-level mixed movement activities.**
- Second, the six types of activities describe how cities: support each other in building up their individual expertise and capacities, learn and get exposed to new ideas that might not be on their radar, join forces to strengthen calls for change at the national level, and work together at a more global level to advance norms and rights. **In short, cities are not limited by the geographical boundaries of their localities and increased transnational collaboration through city-to-city initiatives give cities the tools to engage in these different ways, while reinforcing and fulfilling their local mandates.**
- Third, **while this transnational collaboration does not necessarily take a routes-based approach along the CMR and WMR, existing city-to-city transnational activities show that the modalities are already in place.** Thus, possible collaboration along mixed movement routes could take the form of peer-to-peer learning, city-to-city partnerships, awareness raising efforts as well as capacity building through the engagement of experts.
- Fourth, **managing relationships at different levels ensures connecting and linking to experts and people on the move at a local level, while internationally they enable broader city-to-city initiatives and potential funding opportunities.**

Photo credit: © UNHCR/Colin Delfosse

Ouallam, Niger, 2022 — Refugees and displaced people work with host community on housing project.



4. Locations: existing and aspired initiatives along routes

This section offers a geographical overview using a routes-based approach of where urban initiatives are located along the CMR and WMR. Qualitative data analysis gives an insight into why certain cities are well-connected to international urban initiatives and protection programming opportunities whereas others are less so or not at all. It also focuses on why initiatives choose to connect to a given city and vice-versa, and examines initiatives that embody a routes-based approach and situate their programming in the context of the CMR and WMR.²⁷

4.1 Rationales for initiatives' selection of cities

The rationales for cities being selected for, or choosing to link up to, city-to-city and urban initiatives are varied and, at times, interlinked. As previously noted in this paper, different initiatives use different (albeit sometimes overlapping) terminology to categorise cities. "Intermediary" cities — a term adopted and embraced by UCLG and UCLG Africa²⁸ — generally play a role in connecting important rural and urban areas to basic facilities and services and have populations ranging between 50,000 and 1,000,000. Because of their scale, it is argued, intermediary cities can more efficiently and cheaply provide services, including basic housing, to their residents than larger metropolitan areas. "Secondary" is a broader classification that often encompasses mid-sized to smaller cities in administratively defined urban jurisdictions. The operational mandate of Cities Alliance is to support secondary cities, promoting investments in and directing policy attention to these urban nuclei. As such, several of its projects focus on collaborating with secondary cities; these include its regional Future Cities Africa Initiative,²⁹ and country-specific programmes in Tunisia, Ethiopia, Uganda and Liberia.

UCLG, as well as some researchers interviewed for this study, prefer to adopt the intermediary cities categorisation, arguing that secondary cities are defined as such primarily in relation to national capitals, whereas intermediary cities are recognised for their connections to not only other large urban centres but also rural areas. Moreover, there is a sense that the term "secondary" is a legacy of the colonial period, used to categorise cities strategically left out of centralised development schemes and which continue to lack significant investment. On the other hand, when looking at the high level of centralised governance of some countries along the CMR and WMR, according to some key informants, it might not always be clear what intermediary cities along routes could contribute to initiatives.³⁰

"In Africa, we [the municipality] only have relations with our neighbours, Algeria, Morocco and Spain. However, we are open to any kind of collaboration with any city. For example, a city like Dakar is important for us, as well as cities in Niger, in Ghana... We have already established good relationships with the embassies of these countries. Hopefully we can have partnership projects."

Key informant representing the municipality of Nouadhibou (Mauritania)

Roles along routes

The role of cities along mixed movement routes as places of origin, transit and/or destination can be a factor determining their inclusion in broader urban initiatives and the types of programming developed. For example, to gain a better understanding of how to enhance protection services, a representative from the municipality of a transit and destination city in North Africa might aspire to have more linkages with cities of origin in West Africa, either directly or through large-scale urban initiatives. An example of a city of origin with a city of destination partnership is the connection between Dakar and Barcelona that stemmed from their involvement in the Africa-Europe Mayors' Dialogue.

27 At the same time, it must be recognised that cities are often (not yet) the key providers of (protection) services to people on the move and victims of trafficking. Also see Leghtas, I. (2021). [Mapping of protection services for victims of trafficking and other vulnerable people on the move in the Sahel and East Africa](#). UNHCR.

28 Neither UCLG and UCLG Africa, however, selects target cities based on this classification; both boast an extensive network of cities and local authorities of very different contexts and geographies. The use of 'intermediary cities' is rather linked to UCLG's Global Agenda and its advocacy efforts, underlining the importance of these cities and the role they play in achieving "inclusive, safe and resilient urbanism", tied to Sustainable Development Goal 11.

29 See [here](#) for details.

30 Key informant interviews with German Institute for International and Security Affairs experts. See also: Angenendt, S., Biehler, N. and Kipp, D. (2021). [Cities and Their Networks in EU-Africa Migration Policy. Are They Real Game Changers?](#) SWP Research Paper #8.

Cities often characterised as places of transit³¹ for refugees and migrants, such as Tamanrasset (Algeria), Agadez (Niger), Dongola and Kassala (both Sudan), tend to be less connected to urban initiatives. This could be due to their more limited abilities to engage international initiatives and actors and the increased challenges in accessing these locations. That being said, refugees and migrants who must transit these cities to resupply, access accommodation, and other services provide an important source of revenue to places of transit.³² This suggests that transit cities could benefit from joining urban initiatives and developing protection programmes.

Access matters

The participation of cities along the CMR and WMR in urban protection initiatives can be affected by issues of access. Some cities are more accessible than others not solely based on whether a city is a national capital. Here, access refers to how readily cities can find/be reached by partners physically, including from a safety/security perspective, and to the degree to which they receive administrative permission to participate in initiatives. Key informants from MC2CM and UCLG said they continuously strove to engage with local authorities in Algeria, Libya and Egypt, adding that the absence of participating cities in these countries created gaps in their dialogues on migration and in the protection of refugees and migrant at local levels. They noted this was primarily due to the high degree of political centralisation in these countries, where asylum and migration are considered a national affair, and where local authorities generally lack mandates to work on or engage in the topic. Furthermore, the key informant representing UCLG added:

“Of course, new active cities arrive at any time [to become part of our network], and new countries that were not present before can arrive, but there is a core group of cities that have a tradition of cooperation. You can see this in Tunisia and Morocco, and so forth. I would mention those two elements. First, the very circumstance of the international relations of those countries, and second the municipality legacy that is stronger in some cities than in others.”

Further south along the CMR, a key informant from UCLG Africa noted that in Sudan — amongst other countries in the region — refugee and migrant reception and integration are dealt with by national authorities and NGOs, with local authorities not having the mandate to be involved in programme and budget design. In contrast, a representative from the Mayors Migration Council mentioned that a partnership with Addis Ababa is now developing as the local administration takes a more inclusive approach to service delivery, framing it as support to internally displaced people and circumventing its limited mandate to work on the protection of refugees and migrants. Finally, an expert from UNHCR noted that in parallel to issues of access, initiatives tend to concentrate on the same municipalities, those with stronger outreach capacity. She argued that initiatives might simply not know enough about less well-connected places and might (inaccurately) assume that these cities are not interested. **This suggests that more should be done to engage in-person in key urban localities along the CMR and WMR.**

4.2 Routes-based programming

A key aim of this study is to understand how urban initiatives situate themselves along the CMR and WMR and adopt a routes-based approach to programming to address the major protection concerns found along these movement corridors. Key informant interview data indicates that while routes-based approaches are certainly not the norm, several urban initiatives do link up cities with the aim of connecting mixed movement routes on a city level. A key example is MC2CM, which connects cities from all corners of the Mediterranean, covering sections of the CMR and WMR between North Africa and Europe. MC2CM has particularly good coverage in cities in Morocco and Tunisia. MedCities, while not a migration-focused initiative, also connects cities in the same geographical area. Although some initiatives could be described as routes-based, it is worth considering how far they are primarily shaped and driven by donor funding and interests. Representatives from MC2CM and UCLG underlined the strong interest to apply the lessons learned from the MC2CM dialogues to other regions, collaborating across regions and along routes, and potentially including elements in the dialogue on migration root causes, as well as advancing larger international norms around the concept of inclusive cities.

31 While contextually characterised as locations of transit, some of these cities might also people on the move, such as is the case for Agadez, hosting third-country national refugees returning from Libya, and for Kassala, hosting Eritrean and Ethiopian refugees.

32 Clingendael (2017) [Migration and Markets in Agadez: Economic alternatives to the migration industry](#).

"The involvement of implementing organisations allowed migration to be mainstreamed into a global network that is UCLG. This is a strong achievement, because the impact is much further than only on the cities of MC2CM. All the work that we're doing is capitalised and further worked on in other regions through UCLG's network."

Key informant representing MC2CM

While not a cities initiative as such, the Rabat Process links up member states along the WMR and CMR,³³ and has recently engaged with cities. These countries are increasingly recognising the essential role of local authorities in migration dialogues. There are several initiatives that encompass cities along the CMR and WMR but which do not actively coordinate around mixed movements or the protection of people on the move with these routes in mind. Examples include Cities Alliance (with active urban programming in Tunisia, Uganda, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso and Liberia), and the Africa-Europe Mayors' Dialogue (with member cities including Tunis, Kampala, Entebbe, Freetown, Dakar and Kanifing). The Mayors Migration Council supports activities in cities in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Uganda and Kenya, but is less active thus far in North Africa. While not routes-based, the Mayors Migration Council also links up cities from different continents and regions to working groups and task forces, including on the interlinkages between climate and migration. The same can be said for C40, which has a number of West and East African cities in its portfolio, but which so far does not explicitly adopt a routes-based approach or connect with cities in North Africa and the Sahel region.

Additionally, although some cities appear more connected to networks than others, and while many of these links are also still rather new and developing, our analysis does point to a wider interest for less-connected cities to join routes-based initiatives that focus on the urban protection of refugees and migrants. A representative from the Mauritanian municipality of Nouadhibou, for example, said his locality hoped to become more connected to migration hubs along the WMR. The municipality of Kanifing (The Gambia) mentioned being particularly interested in working on mixed movement with cities in North Africa — specifically Morocco and Algeria — and recognised the added value of working through initiatives to ensure a process of brokering and sustainable collaboration takes place. A representative of the Tunisian municipality of Sousse reiterated the value of having routes-based city-to-city initiatives, but also mentioned the work that should be done to enhance local capacities and resources before cities across regions could join in a sustainable and impactful way. With upscaled capacities, she added, cities can benefit from city partnerships and exchange good practices. This was confirmed by a key informant representing MC2CM, underlining the importance of trainings on raising funds and writing project proposals, which is a skill in itself, she stressed. A key informant representing UN-Habitat noted that it is a gap that North African cities are not connected within initiatives with cities along different points in mixed movement routes.

In terms of working towards routes-based urban initiatives actively covering the CMR and WMR and linking to cities along these routes in West, East and the Horn of Africa, this study concludes that there is a considerable need for greater work in this area. When asked how to develop more effective protection initiatives for people on the move, partnering on routes-based issues and dynamics, several key informants, including representatives from the Robert Bosch Foundation³⁴ (see box) and the German Institute for International and Security Affairs, argued there was **no need for new initiatives to be created, but rather that existing initiatives should work more strategically and sustainably with cities in developing actionable policies and programming and adopting a routes-based approach. While most initiatives did not express particular plans for upcoming programming, key informants representing local authorities did report aspiring to connect with other cities located on the CMR and/or WMR.**

"In my six years of working on this, the question I get the most is which city is doing the best, and it's the question I ask the least. I just want to highlight that any city can do really well, if given the opportunity, the resources and the knowhow to actually enact programmes."

Key informant representing the Mayors Migration Council

33 In North Africa, Morocco and Tunisia are partners to the dialogue, while Algeria and Libya have observer status.

34 The Robert Bosch Foundation funds a number of migration urban initiatives and city networks, including the Mayors Migration Council and the Africa-Europe Mayors' Dialogue. The foundation was also one of the donors for the 2020 edition of the Mixed Migration Centre's [Mixed Migration Review](#), which focused on cities.

5. Examination of the activities of urban protection initiatives

As previously stated, this study aims not only to map urban initiatives located along the CMR and WMR, but also to examine them, based on the effectiveness, relevance, impact and sustainability of their activities.³⁵ The following subsections will analyse the extent to which activities have achieved their objectives and identify the main challenges that key informants encountered when implementing their activities. The following analysis is based primarily on insights and impressions from key informants' reflections on their own initiatives and highlights elements that respondents emphasised as being particularly relevant to the evaluation criteria. It does not represent the objective assessments of MMC or UNHCR, nor does it aim to systematically evaluate all the urban protection activities along the CMR and WMR identified in Section 3.

5.1 Effectiveness

Effectiveness refers to the degree to which an initiative has achieved its intended (and expected) results and objectives, providing insight on which activities have worked well and which were less effective.

Peer-to-peer meetings and exchanges

At the top of the list of effective activities, most key informants mentioned peer-to-peer exchanges, saying they promoted dialogue between cities and municipalities and provided a forum for sharing experiences of different migration and displacement issues. A key informant from UCLG said such dialogue has helped to spread awareness on migratory realities; this was not always deemed a priority by some cities. Additionally, a civil society activist in Morocco said that the meetings held by MC2CM encourage participating cities to adhere to local agendas on migration, noting that, after peer-to-peer meetings, city representatives are often keener to get involved. From these meetings arise projects of cooperation among the cities themselves.

Linking to experts to build capacity

Several key informants spoke of the effectiveness of linking to experts to build the capacity of municipalities and cities. For some municipalities, urban initiatives and other external partners help to strengthen their voice and agency at the local level. This includes creating training sessions for administrative staff and local governors. A key informant from Sousse mentioned that their municipality participated in a training organised by UNHCR and the Arab Institute for Human Rights that aimed to strengthen the skills of elected officials and municipal executives within local government in relation to migration and asylum programming. The training was, according to the interviewee, an opportunity to learn concretely how to include migration in municipal budgeting and activities, as well as how to discuss possible action plans geared to the protection and integration of refugees and migrants so as to strengthen social cohesion. Training sessions offered by initiatives and/or organisations also offer a space for municipalities — which tend to have limited resources — to discuss their difficulties and identify the solutions matching their needs.³⁶

City partnerships for expanded funding opportunities

Empowering cities also involves facilitating their access to funding opportunities and connections with donors. The Global Cities Fund for Inclusive Pandemic Response (Section 3) provides direct financial and technical support over one year to cities from low-to-middle income countries to set up projects related to public health, livelihoods and inclusive social services. In Freetown, for example, the fund was used to establish a micro-enterprise waste management programme that covers an additional 40 new enterprises. The programme has provided waste collection services to nearly 30,000 households and improved access to economic opportunities for youth — including those from refugee and migrant backgrounds. A key informant from the Mayors Migration Council underscored the importance and success of such a fund in enabling cities' access to financial and technical resources to develop their own programmes, with the caveat that the amount was not large. Founders of the Global Cities Fund are now looking to expand its portfolio as the number of cities involved grows.

³⁵ The criteria were selected based on [OECD's DAC Network on Development Evaluation](#).

³⁶ Key informant interview with MedCities representative.

5.2 Relevance

Assessment of relevance determines whether the objectives and implementation of an initiative or its activities are clearly aligned with the needs of beneficiaries and stakeholders. It also examines whether the target stakeholders consider the interventions to be useful and valuable.

Peer-to-peer meetings and exchanges

Key informants, including those representing large-scale urban initiatives as well as municipalities, said peer learning events were among the most relevant activities. These meetings and events, which are organised around a range of themes related to migration, are useful on two levels.³⁷ First, on a technical level, they afford cities the opportunity to learn from others facing similar challenges with similar resources and provide a space to enhance their cooperation. In this context, a key informant representing the Tunisian municipality of Sfax emphasised the importance of exchanging experiences: “There are municipalities in Eastern Europe, Morocco, [and] Lebanon, for example, which have experienced the same conditions and situations. We learned a lot about how to deal with migrants. We also built links with donors through the Mayors Migration Council.” Second, on the political level, peer learning meetings are connecting cities at a global level. According to the UCLG representative, the conversation with the national level becomes easier when the local level has a relevant position within the global political sphere. **In this way, peer learning and joint advocacy can overlap and enhance both the relevance and effectiveness of their activities.**

“I think in the case of Arua, the census was very critical and useful. [The municipality] managed to cover the entire area and [now] has data that it can use for the purpose of advocacy to access funding.”

Key informant representing Cities Alliance Uganda

Producing data, information and knowledge resources

A number of key informants representing cities noted that the production of data and knowledge resources is a key component in their local management of mixed movement issues, with a key informant representing UCLG Africa stressing the importance of African cities linking up with researchers to bridge information gaps. For the Tunisian municipalities of Sousse and Sfax, as well as for Tangier (Morocco), the migration profiles developed within the framework of MC2CM have helped to provide overviews of movement dynamics within their territories and of the key actors working with refugees and migrants, as well as in building a database that facilitates the development of refugee and migrant programming. This also applies to the census of urban refugees carried out in Arua (Uganda) and piloted by Cities Alliance in collaboration with the city of Arua and the Uganda Bureau of Statistics. A representative of Cities Alliance Uganda highlighted the relevance of the census, explaining that it allowed local authorities to identify vulnerable groups, especially refugees and migrants, in order to improve their lives by ensuring access to economic opportunities (see box). However, the census would have been even more beneficial had it examined the extent of access to basic services for people on the move, the Cities Alliance representative added. For this reason, the 4Mi Cities project by MMC and the Mayors Migration Council intends to provide such complementary information. Additionally, while data collection and research activities might be multi-sited, this study found that their analysis is not necessarily coordinated among the different localities. Several African governments, the African Union, UN agencies and international organisations have invested in establishing African research observatories and statistics centres, including the African Migration Observatory in Rabat, the Bamako Institute for Research and Development Studies and STATAFRIC (AFRISTATS) in Tunis. As of yet, these remain underutilised in their capacity to inform routes-based protection programming, and their growth by international stakeholders should be supported and sustained.

Inclusion of civil society organisations (CSOs) and people on the move

The inclusion of CSOs and people on the move in urban protection initiatives is not directly linked to a specific activity, but rather emerges as a success indicator of relevance. The relevance of activities can be measured by the extent of enhanced cooperation and trust between local authorities, civil society and people on the move. Moreover, including refugees and migrants in the development of urban protection activities would ensure their greater relevance, according to some key informants. A civil society stakeholder in Morocco considered this approach vital to ensuring such populations receive humanitarian assistance and access to basic services. The openness of some local actors and municipalities to opportunities for skills upgrading, funding and cooperation has strengthened their position and power, making them apt focal points and/or coordinators for local multi-stakeholder initiatives, including the private sector alongside civil society. For instance, a representative of the municipality of Sousse noted that it has managed to bring together all stakeholders in the city and to establish a dialogue between them and with people on the move.

³⁷ Key informant interview with UCLG representative.

This was especially evident during the COVID-19 pandemic when a “solidarity committee” bringing together all local stakeholders was created to assist refugees and migrants. On the subject of building mutual trust between local authorities and people on the move, several interviewed representatives of local authorities reported that their municipalities offer services to refugees and migrants regardless of their legal status and include associations and leaders of refugee and migrant communities in organised activities. A key informant from the Mauritanian municipality of Nouadhibou explained that local authorities’ engagement with refugees and migrants has created a kind of solidarity among the local population. In the wider Mediterranean context and in North Africa, however, a key informant from MC2CM pointed out that while there is an active civil society in most connected cities, this multi-stakeholder element of cooperation with local authorities is lacking or unstructured.

Some cities report that their increased engagement in large-scale urban initiatives, as well as their inclusion of people on the move in city-level public consultations, has had a direct and positive impact on the protection of refugees and migrants by improving their access to the municipality and its services, and by creating new types of support services — such as information points and legal assistance — that better target the needs of people on the move. At the same time, a results framework to measure the relevance of activities to the lives and needs of refugees and migrants is still absent among the urban initiatives, as a key informant representing the German Institute for International and Security Affairs also pointed out. **To improve the targeting of the needs of people on the move, UNHCR and international organisations could help support the inclusion of CSOs in city-level protection programming.**

5.3 Impact

Impact encompasses the valued or generated influence of an initiative at the local and/or national level, assessing enduring changes in systems or norms and main achievements.

Joint advocacy and shared norms

Among leading impacts of urban initiatives’ activities is mainstreaming the role of cities in the governance of migration at the international level. This includes the recognition of cities and other local authorities as frontline actors for the reception and integration of people on the move. Moreover, it moves towards acknowledging cities as key to the governance of human mobility,³⁸ and of their mayors within international migration and forced displacement forums. This study found that a key, albeit simple, determinant of success depended on with whom cities collaborated to advance shared norms or further advocacy agendas. **Cities within the same country can strengthen their voices by joining forces to call for certain domestic policies, or work together with cities from different countries to call for regional or international change.**

Local authorities have a role to play within, and are recognised by, global policy instruments such as the GCR and the GCM (which see cities as local actors implementing global strategies), as well as in policy frameworks such as the GFMD. At the Intergovernmental Conference to adopt the GCM held in Marrakesh on the 10th and 11th of December 2018, cities and their networks were highly visible in their lobbying activities and successfully advocated for local authorities to be included in the GCM text.³⁹ UN-Habitat developed and included migration and forced displacement into its New Urban Agenda (NUA) and its catalogue of urban development tools. Another important example of impact is the integration of migration in UCLG’s global agenda.⁴⁰ **Formulating city declarations on global agendas and internationally recognised norms therefore enables cities to legitimise their actions vis-à-vis local inhabitants but also vis-à-vis the national government. However, at the same time, it may also prevent certain cities from joining such declarations if they are not in line with the national authorities’ approach to these frameworks or with the relevant laws and practices at the country level regarding asylum and migration.** Several guiding documents do exist on recommended principles and guidelines for providing assistance to people on the move.⁴¹

“We see the enhanced cooperation between local authorities and civil society. The [MC2CM] project managed to raise awareness among municipalities on their role, and also [led them] to rely on stakeholders in their territories, because indeed they do not always have the capacity to act, for diverse reasons. This is a strong impact that we’re seeing which leads to direct benefits for migrants in the territory.”

Key informant representing MC2CM

38 Angenendt, S., Biehler, N. and Kipp, D. (2021). [Cities and Their Networks in EU-Africa Migration Policy. Are They Real Game Changers?](#) German Institute for International and Security Affairs.

39 Key informant interview with representatives of the German Institute for International and Security Affairs.

40 Key informant interview with MC2CM representative.

41 See, for example, OHCHR (2014). [Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights at International Borders.](#)

Joint strategies

The next set of impacts relate to highlighting the diversity of local and urban inputs into action plans, in order to make them more impactful and have a greater ability for change. A separate key informant from UCLG pointed to the group's varied membership and constituency that reflects the diversity of cities, their positions on migration and their different geographic and political contexts. In the opinion of the key informant representing MC2CM (see box), the project succeeded not only in achieving a diverse membership of local authorities, but also in increasing recognition among cities of their responsibility to promote a more balanced narrative on refugee and migration issues. The change and diversification of narratives around migration have highlighted the role of cities in sustaining social cohesion and guaranteeing the reception of refugees and migrants.

"In Tunisia and Morocco, we see that local authorities are also building on the action's activities and products that have been developed or that they have benefited from, to continue to build dialogue and relationships with their national authorities."

Key informant representing MC2CM

Peer-to-peer exchanges around good practices

The last element of impact identified by key informants related to whether their activities succeeded in sharing good practices or learning materials to other city or local authority stakeholders. Some cities said their increased engagement also enabled them to learn about good practices, and that this knowledge has a direct and positive impact on the protection of refugees and migrants in terms of improving access to the municipality and services, and creating the abovementioned new types of support services that better target the needs of persons on the move.

A key informant from Cities Alliance Uganda indicated that in the context of the alliance's local projects in Jinja and Arua, it has developed a series of learning materials in collaboration with local authorities, related in particular to data collection and the production of knowledge resources. He mentioned, for example, a baseline study in Jinja which was conducted to support the implementation of a Cities Alliance-funded project by the Jinja City Council (JCC), in partnership with Makerere University and ACTogether, in close association with its affiliate, the National Slum Dwellers Federation of Uganda (NSDFU).⁴² The objective of this project is to strengthen JCC's capacity to integrate urban refugees and migrants into the urban economy and to improve their livelihoods and those of people living in slums who are facing migration-related livelihood challenges in Jinja. Furthermore, the representative of Cities Alliance added that existing learning materials also include the Arua census and an associated report, while a comprehensive municipal development kit, an upgrading fund guideline and a financial toolkit are currently being developed. This key informant also mentioned that the alliance is planning to develop a toolkit for slum upgrading, but has encountered difficulties in recruiting a suitable consultant matching the municipality's budget.

The migration profiles of cities also exemplify the learning materials developed by some urban initiatives. For example, for MC2CM, migration profiles contribute to a better understanding of the migration reality in each member city. In this context, while some cities have succeeded in developing and publishing their profile studies, others are still struggling to implement this action.

5.4 Sustainability

Sustainability refers to how long an initiative's activities and benefits last, and to find out whether the activities will continue once the funding/initiative stops and whether they will last financially, economically, socially and environmentally. For the majority of key informants, assessing sustainability was a challenge because of the criterion's dependency on the political context and available resources. An expert from the German Institute for International and Security Affairs suggested that it is more durable to go beyond providing services, to looking at guaranteeing and safeguarding the rights of refugees and migrants. In this way, investing in joint **advocacy and promoting shared norms**, if successful, would have more sustainable outcomes.

City partnerships and peer-to-peer exchanges

Partnerships and peer-to-peer exchanges that integrated opportunities for regular and continued interactions helped ensure the sustainability of urban protection initiatives and, in some cases, promote the development of more

⁴² The project is called "Strengthening Capacity for Urban Migration Management and Migrants' Livelihood Improvement in Jinja, Uganda." The project's baseline study can be found [here](#).

formalised cooperation through joint strategies.⁴³ Additionally, a number of interviewees cited the importance of creating an environment in which local actors appropriate the values of an initiative and adopt them according to their own visions. A key informant representing MC2CM explained that the most effective way to ensure sustainability is to allow local actors to do it their way, rather than having the international community do it.

In terms of the sustainability of funding, most interviewed municipalities described relying on cooperation and partnerships to secure financing from international organisations or donors for urban protection programming. While this approach indeed helps cities that lack sufficient resources of their own to raise external funds, it risks becoming unsustainable if external actors pull out or once the project period concludes. Therefore, key informants argued that the most sustainable activities would require the allowance of cities to generate their own financial resources through the eventual evolution of legal frameworks and the promotion of decentralisation.⁴⁴

“Decentralisation [in Tunisia] is not progressing despite important reforms that could potentially contribute to it. If you look at the legal framework, there is a lot of potential, but nobody dares to be the first to let the municipality manage the budget for example. It takes time and the mayors need to be empowered and have their voices heard.”

Key informant representing MedCities

Similarly, the Global Cities Fund (discussed above in terms of effectiveness) has had considerable success, stressed a representative of the Mayors Migration Council.⁴⁵ This facility was originally launched as an emergency response fund for five cities (across regions) within a year, in order to jumpstart their inclusive responses to COVID-19. The fund has now tripled in terms of both its financial flows and the number of cities involved, which are set to increase to 14 by the middle of 2022.

5.5 Challenges

This section considers the cross-cutting challenges encountered by urban initiatives and local authorities involved while implementing activities. It pays particular attention to challenges of legal frameworks and mandates, political change, administrative and financial resources and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Legal voids

One of the difficulties encountered by many local authorities is an inadequate or absent legal framework that organises and authorises their intervention in, or governance of, mixed movements within their territory. In some countries, national authorities are the sole entity working or the sole entity entitled to work on mixed movements. Local actors are not only absent or passive in this decision-making process,⁴⁶ but are also restricted in managing their local reality without relying on higher authorities. Although some countries have embarked on and implemented decentralisation projects, the power of municipalities and cities often remains limited due to a lack of technical or financial resources, or to resistance from state structures. For instance, in Tunisia, political decentralisation has advanced since the 2011 revolution with the recognition by the 2014 constitution of a participatory local democracy and the election of municipal councils in May 2018. However, the mechanism for cooperation between central and local actors remains poorly defined. This situation complicates the work of municipalities, which lack guidelines to respond to refugee and migration issues.⁴⁷

“With funding, cities against national governments constitutes a problem. I think one key question is how cities can apply for direct international funding without going through the national government.”

Key informant representing the Robert Bosch Foundation

⁴³ Key informant interview with UCLG representative.

⁴⁴ Key informant interview with UCLG representative.

⁴⁵ Key informant interview with Mayors Migration Council representative.

⁴⁶ Angenendt, S., Biehler, N. and Kipp, D. (2021). [Cities and Their Networks in EU-Africa Migration Policy. Are They Real Game Changers?](#) SWP Research Paper #8.

⁴⁷ Key informant interview with Mayors Migration Council representative.

Political will

Political change represents another challenge, especially for external actors working with cities through urban initiatives. A key informant from MC2CM explained that engagement and coordination efforts might vary widely depending on who is leading the migration agenda in a given municipality. Furthermore, inaction or a negative attitude towards migration in some parts of the city's municipal administration or population may impede project implementation as it can make decision-makers (who want to be re-elected) more reluctant to engage in urban protection activities. Due to a lack of clear legal mandates, furthering a city's migration agenda and participating in city-to-city dialogues often seems to depend on the willingness and interest of individuals at the local level.

"It is necessary to give the lead to the municipalities because, in the law of local authorities, there is only one article about migration. And it is always a conflict of understanding because everyone interprets it in his own way. There is no clear text and there is no legal framework."

Key informant from the municipality of Sousse

Scarce resources

As mentioned above in the sustainability subsection, another challenge reported by several key informants is a lack of financial and administrative resources. Municipal budgets are generally constrained. They are intended to meet the basic needs of the local population, and in these contexts, refugee and migration issues are not always a high priority.⁴⁸

COVID-19

The coronavirus pandemic has had (and continues to have) a major impact on municipal budgets and activities because of the widespread socio-economic constraints and associated containment measures it brought about. All efforts have prioritised managing the health crisis, leading many protection activities or projects to be postponed or cancelled. A key informant from Cities Alliance Uganda explained that the health crisis was the biggest challenge that affected the implementation of their project because of the consecutive lockdowns. A number of initiatives, including MC2CM, have opted for online platforms for organising peer-to-peer meetings. A representative from the Africa-Europe Mayors' Dialogue noted that due to its recent foundation — which coincided with the outbreak of COVID-19 — the initiative has not yet been able to organise any formal face-to-face meetings with its member cities. Additionally, the level of inclusion of refugees and migrants in the health response of local authorities has varied considerably. The COVID-19 pandemic revealed the importance of the roles that refugees and migrants play in a given city, as many across the CMR and WMR are often employed in the informal sectors of the economy. Often severely impacted by the health crisis, they faced loss of livelihoods which was coupled for them with homelessness or move to less protective shelters.

Photo credit: © Jean Michel/Flickr

Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 2010.



6. Conclusion and recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

This study sought to provide a broad mapping and examination of urban initiatives that are aimed at making local authorities better capacitated and resourced to improve the protection of people on the move present in their territories, along the CMR and WMR. The report identifies different types of activities implemented by initiatives, aimed at better understanding what drives these initiatives and what determines their success.

Key informant interviews reveal that despite a considerable number of international and city-level initiatives engaged with the protection of people on the move in urban settings, there is a lack of coordination between them, and they often do not engage in joined-up, routes-based approaches, although the aspiration exists. Therefore, delivery of protection and assistance at the city level, does not take into account migration journeys and protection risks and abuses faced by people on the move *per se*, before they arrive in or after departing from a given city. Key informants representing municipalities and civil society, however, emphasised interest in connecting with cities along routes to gain a better understanding of the needs of and risks faced by refugees and migrants residing in their cities, their experiences along journeys and the drivers of their movements, including their aspirations. Through coordination and brokering access, city-to-city initiatives could play a key role in linking up cities along the CMR and the WMR, providing them with a space for dialogue, peer-learning and joint strategies and advocacy.

6.2 Recommendations and key messages

Recommendations and key messages	
For cities and local authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adopting an inclusive and non-discriminatory city approach can safeguard cities' and local authorities' commitment towards providing protection to persons residing in their territories regardless of status, including refugees and migrants, while they are not overstepping legal mandates or putting their authority at risk.• When afforded more space to work on urban protection, including social protection activities, cities and local authorities can more directly target refugees and migrants, for instance, by developing refugee- and migrant-specific programming, or engaging in national and international advocacy for the protection of people on the move.• In contexts where the involvement of cities in urban protection programming would not constrain relationships with national counterparts, enhance dialogue with national authorities to ensure that the decentralisation process in the country allows local actors to fully play their role in the protection of people on the move present in their territories. This includes the ability of cities to seek external funding and to extend municipal services to third-country nationals with social and other more specific protection needs.• Cities within the same country can strengthen their voices by joining forces to call for or reform certain domestic policies, or work together with cities from different countries to call for regional or international change.• Cities are not limited in their actions by the geographical boundaries of their localities. Increased transnational collaboration provides cities the tools to engage on different national, regional and international levels, while reinforcing and fulfilling their local mandates. These same trends should extend to collaborating with sister cities and local authorities along mixed movement routes. Existing initiatives have established transnational collaborations with cities, which can be adapted to take an explicit routes-based approach.• Cities can bolster the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of their protection programming by strengthening their relationships with CSOs and including refugees and migrants in the development of activities.



Recommendations and key messages

For national authorities

- Participate in urban protection dialogues with initiatives and local authorities, either through frameworks such as the Rabat and/or Khartoum Process, or through other types of coordination and relationship-building with local authorities.
- Allow local authorities to seek funding opportunities aimed at service delivery and assistance to all residents of their localities, and recognise the pledges of cities to extend the mandate of municipal services to people on the move in search/need of (social) protection where it is not yet the case.
- In countries lacking domestic refugee and asylum legislation, national governments should work towards establishing such frameworks.

Recommendations and key messages

For city-to-city initiatives

- Initiatives should coordinate and work towards a simplified architecture for coordination, keeping a live inventory of their activities accessible to all. Such an inventory should also be accessible to beneficiaries, with refugee and migrant associations noting the need for increased information sharing on who does what and where.
- Determine activities and their orientation towards protection issues according to mutually defined and tailored objectives by cities and other stakeholders. In other words, urban initiatives should consider their overarching goal in order to identify the most appropriate protection activities.
- Organise and/or stimulate new and existing “whole-of-society” dialogues with the active participation of refugees and migrants, different levels of authority (local and national), civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders to ensure the protection needs of all residents are considered, and they link to development plans and strategic higher-level agendas fostering inclusive societies.
- Work with cities and local authorities towards an inclusive city approach in delivering urban protection, as this can avoid putting cities at risk when they do not have the legal mandate to work on the protection of people on the move. Such an approach also includes working towards safeguarding the fundamental and universal rights of people on the move.
- Strive to enhance the effectiveness of tailored partnerships by linking cities with specific needs or requests to connected cities along mixed movement routes, including and fostering South-South partnerships, that have relevant experience and are thus able to help and share capacity-building strategies or good practices.
- Focus on improving access and in-person engagement visits to intermediary cities along mixed movement routes that are not well-connected to initiatives to enhance the protection of people on the move across routes and along their journeys in local urban contexts. This includes mitigating constraints linked to physical access, little legal mandate for cities to link up with other cities and the assumption that intermediary cities along routes are transit hubs with diverging mixed movement interests and perspectives.
- In addition to the above, consider organising a forum in 2022 to connect intermediary cities along the WMR and CMR, inviting the Rabat and Khartoum Processes and other relevant stakeholders, applying a routes-based approach.
- Connecting to the GCM and GCR and identifying commitments that cities can make towards achieving progress,⁴⁹ encourage national authorities to be flexible in allowing cities to seek funding opportunities and connect to initiatives, and recognise less well-connected cities as potential implementation partners that can receive resources. Acting as a bridge builder, initiatives and development actors in general should seek to balance different forms of relationships with national and local authorities, and foster connections between local authorities, international financing institutions, international organisations and donors.
- Strengthen cooperation with the networks of UNHCR and all UN agencies working on protection and migration issues; their support could act as a catalyst to assist existing international urban initiatives connected to local authorities in East, West and North Africa to work along routes and to develop programmes and sub-working groups specifically aimed at linking places of origin, transit and destination along the CMR and WMR.
- Data initiatives and research projects could work more in coordination with different localities in the analysis and outcome processes to ensure consultation workshops stimulating peer-learning and cross-fertilisation processes, including connecting to cities outside the initial scope of a conceived activity.

49 Brandt. J. (2018). [Implementing the Global Compact for Migration: Ideas for city engagement](#).

Recommendations and key messages

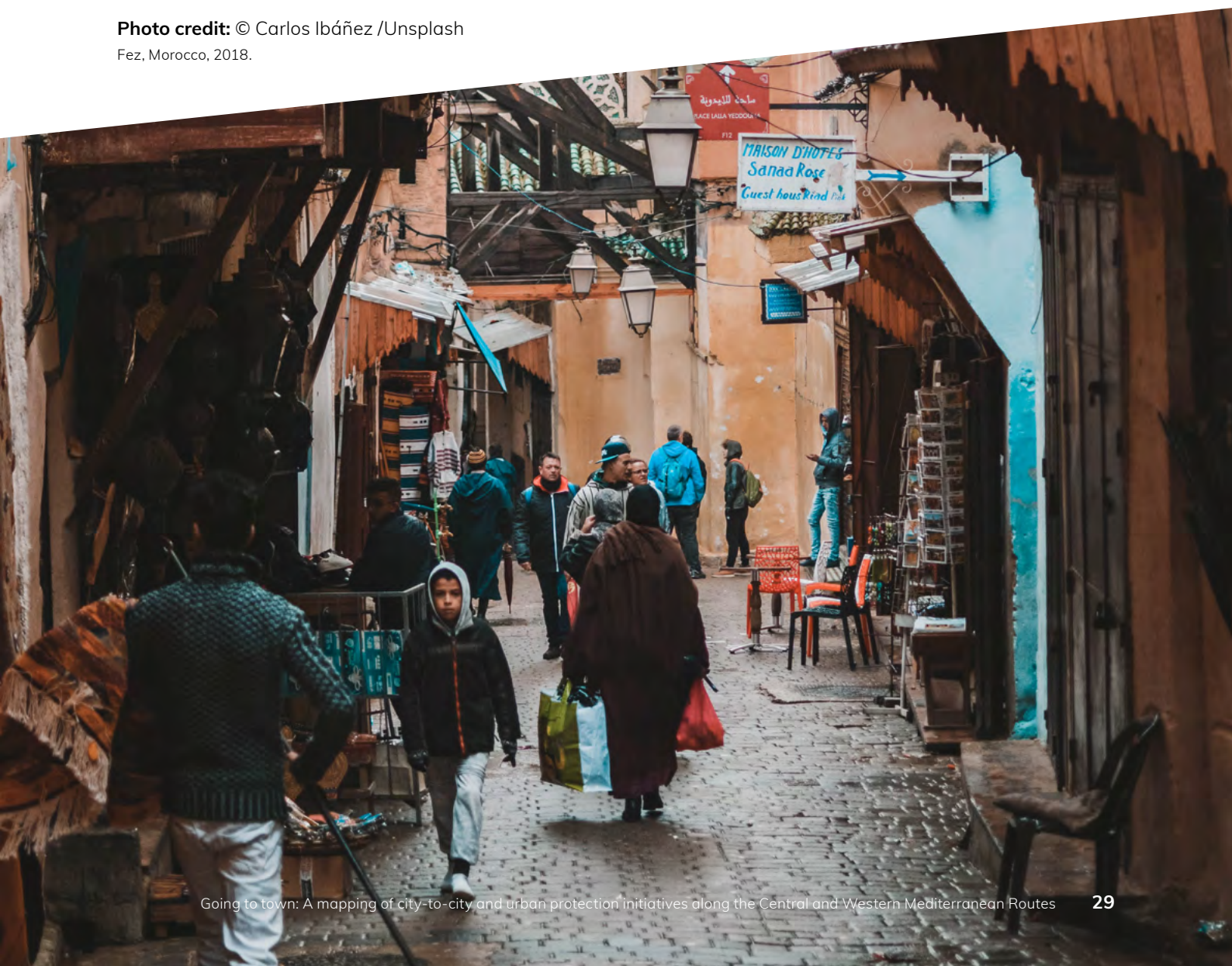
For urban protection actors



- Protection actors should support programming in intermediary cities, as such cities are defined by their connections to other locations and how they service as crossroads along the CMR and WMR.
- Protection actors could enhance their scope of working with cities and local authorities and provide more adequate protection support to people on the move and their relatives through including programming for returnees at a city level.
- Help promote inclusive dialogues with the active participation of civil society, refugees and migrants, different levels of authority (local and national) and the private sector to ensure the protection needs of all residents are considered, and they link to development plans and strategic higher-level agendas fostering inclusive societies.
- Coordinating data, information and knowledge production activities is indispensable for routes-based protection programming.
- In contexts where people on the move report challenges with regards to their interactions and relationship with local authorities, UNHCR could broker this relationship and communicate with local authorities on their behalf.
- Increase efforts to engage in-person in key urban localities along the CMR and WMR, including with refugee and migrant associations to strengthen their connectivity to UNHCR and urban protection actors, and ensure their participation in urban protection programming.
- Through its GAIN Network and other coordination mechanisms, UNHCR could help and convene existing international urban initiatives develop programming and sub-working groups that link places of origin, transit, and destination along the CMR and WMR.

Photo credit: © Carlos Ibáñez /Unsplash

Fez, Morocco, 2018.



Annex I. Preliminary list of identified initiatives and networks

This annex aims to provide a non-exhaustive overview of initiatives and networks identified by the research team, and to serve as a tool for stakeholders engaging in urban protection activities. It focuses on cities and local authorities located along the Central and Western Mediterranean Routes in North, West, East and the Horn of Africa. It should be recognised that often times, these cities might also have connections through initiatives and networks with peer cities in other world regions. In this case, only the cities that fall within the geographical scope of this study are listed.

1. City-to-city dialogues, networks and funding mechanisms

Mediterranean City-to-City Migration (MC2CM) A city-to-city network linking up cities around the Mediterranean. Its main objectives are to enhance peer-to-peer dialogue, to support mutual learnings on urban challenges linked to migration, and to shift the narrative around migration. Link to initiative.	Connected cities MOROCCO – Casablanca / Oujda / Rabat / Tangier / TUNISIA – Sfax / Sousse / Tunis Implemented by ICMPD, UCLG and UN-Habitat
The Africa-Europe Mayors' Dialogue A platform of African and European mayors working together to deliver innovative and practical solutions for human mobility in and between their cities. The dialogue aims to create opportunities and improve the lives of all urban residents, including migrants, helping to redress the power imbalances that persist between the two continents. Link to initiative.	Connected cities THE GAMBIA – Kanifing / GHANA – Accra / LIBERIA – Monrovia / NIGER – Agadez / SENEGAL – Dakar / SIERRA LEONE – Freetown / TUNISIA – Tunis / UGANDA – Entebbe / Kampala Hosted by ODI Supported by Mayors Migration Council / Robert Bosch Stiftung / Open Society Foundations
The Mayors Migration Council Consists of a group of mayors from different corners of the world focused on the global response to migration. Its main objectives are to empower and enables cities with access, capacity, knowledge, and connections to engage in migration diplomacy and policymaking at the international, regional, and national level. Link to initiative.	Connected cities BURKINA FASO – Ouagadougou / THE GAMBIA – Kanifing / ETHIOPIA – Addis Ababa / NIGERIA – Lagos / SENEGAL – Dakar / SIERRA LEONE – Freetown / SOMALIA – Mogadishu / TUNISIA – Sfax / UGANDA – Kampala
C40 Cities A network of mayors of nearly 100 world-leading cities collaborating to deliver the urgent action needed right now to confront the climate crisis. In partnership with the Mayors Migration Council, it seeks to tackle the intertwined challenges and opportunities of migration and climate change in cities. Link to initiative.	Connected cities CÔTE D'IVOIRE – Abidjan / ETHIOPIA – Addis Ababa / GHANA – Accra / KENYA – Nairobi / NIGERIA – Lagos / SENEGAL – Dakar / SIERRA LEONE – Freetown

The Global Cities Fund for Inclusive Pandemic Response <p>An initiative to respond to the unmet needs of cities as they support migrants, refugees, and IDPs during COVID-19. It provides direct financial and technical support over one year to cities from low-to-middle income countries to implement projects related to public health, livelihoods, and inclusive social services. Link to initiative.</p>	Connected cities <p>BURKINA FASO – Ouagadougou / THE GAMBIA – Kanifing / ETHIOPIA – Addis Ababa / NIGERIA – Lagos / SENEGAL – Dakar / SIERRA LEONE – Freetown / SOMALIA – Mogadishu / TUNISIA – Sfax / UGANDA – Kampala</p> Implemented by <p>The Mayors Migration Council, IOM, UNHCR and UN-Habitat</p>
The Global Mayors Task Force on Climate and Migration <p>Brings together a core group of leading mayors from around the world willing to accelerate local, national and international responses to the intersectional challenges of climate and migration in cities. Link to initiative.</p>	Connected cities <p>SENEGAL – Dakar / SIERRA LEONE – Freetown</p> Led by <p>Mayor of Freetown (Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr) and Mayor of Dhaka North (Mohammed Atiqul Islam) in partnership with the Mayors Migration Council and C40.</p>
The Mayors Mechanism <p>Formally links local authorities to the state-led Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), alongside civil society and the private sector. The Mechanism creates opportunities for cities to influence the GFMD discussions and provides them with opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and exchange. It establishes a platform to interact with States, civil society and the private sector, and provides avenues to bolster innovative solutions. Link to initiative.</p>	Connected cities <p>Flexible constituency (overlapping with connected cities from steering committee)</p> Steered by <p>Mayors Migration Council / UCLG / IOM</p>
Cities Alliance <p>A global partnership fighting urban poverty and supporting cities to deliver sustainable development. Its main objective is to enhance the well-being of urban populations by delivering innovative, multi-sectoral solutions to urban poverty. Cities Alliance mostly conceives projects on local levels, working directly with local authorities and civil society. Link to initiative.</p>	Connected cities⁵⁰ <p>BURKINA FASO – Bobo Dioulasso / Dedougou / Dori / Ouagadougou / Tenkodogo / CHAD – N'Djamena / CÔTE D'IVOIRE – Abidjan / Cocody / ETHIOPIA – Adama / Dire Dawa / Mekelle / Jijjiga / GHANA – Greater Accra Metropolitan Region / GUINEA-BISSAU Bissau / KENYA – Kakuma / Kalobeyei / Nairobi / LIBERIA – Greater Monrovia / MAURITANIA – Nouakchott / MOROCCO – Tetouan / NIGER – Niamey / NIGERIA – Lagos / Port Harcourt / SENEGAL – Dakar / SIERRA LEONE – Freetown / SOMALIA – Gabiley / Marka / TUNISIA – Ajim / Béja / Gabès / Houmt Souk / Jendouba / Kairouan / Médenine / Midoun / M'saken / Sidi Bouzid / Tataouine / Greater Tunis / UGANDA – Arua / Entebbe / Fort Portal / Gulu / Hoima / Jinja / Kabale / Kampala / Koboko / Lira / Masaka / Mbale / Mbarara / Moroto / Soroti / Tororo</p>

⁵⁰ Cities Alliance's constituency and connections with cities is varied and changes over time. This list is an impression of cities and local authorities who are currently or have recently been involved in dialogues or benefiting from projects and funding.

UNHCR's #CitieswithRefugees <p>A global campaign within the framework of the GCR, inviting cities and local authorities worldwide to sign a statement of solidarity of working towards promoting inclusion, supporting refugees and bringing communities together in urban settings. Link to initiative.</p>	Connected cities <p>ETHIOPIA – Dire Dawa / MOROCCO – Marrakech / NIGER – Niamey / NIGERIA – Calabar / Ogoja / Cross River State / SOMALIA/SOMALILAND – Berbera / Bosaso / Hargeisa / Mogadishu / TUNISIA – Médenine / Sfax / UGANDA – Kampala</p>
UN-Habitat's City Prosperity Initiative (CPI) <p>A global initiative that enables city authorities, as well as local and national stakeholders, to identify opportunities and potential areas of intervention for their cities to become more prosperous. Communications and engagement with local authorities might be conceived through national dialogues or directly at the local level. Link to initiative.</p>	Connected cities <p>CPI is active in more than 300 cities around the world, including: EGYPT – Alexandria / Arish / Armant / Aswan / Banha / Belbeis / Greater Cairo / Damietta / Edco / El-Badary / El-Fayum / El-Kharga / El-Mahalla El-Kubra / El-Mahmoudeya / El-Mansoura / El-Maragaha / El-Minya / El-Sadat / El-Suez / El-Zagazig / Hurghada / Ismailiya / Kafr El-Sheikh / Kafr Shukr / Marsa Matruh / Menouf / Port Said / Qena / Sherbin / Siwa / Sohag / Tal Kebir / ETHIOPIA – Addis Ababa / Mekelle / GHANA – Accra / KENYA – Nairobi / LIBERIA – Monrovia / NIGERIA – Lagos / MOROCCO – Casablanca / Marrakesh / TANZANIA – Dar es Salaam / TUNISIA – Monastir / Tozeur / UGANDA – Kampala</p>
Tony Blair Institute for Global Change <p>Supports political leaders and governments to build open, inclusive and prosperous societies in a globalised world, through developing policy and advising governments. Link to initiative.</p>	Connected cities <p>THE GAMBIA – Kanifing / SIERRA LEONE – Freetown</p>
The World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) <p>A global network of cities and local, regional, and metropolitan governments and their associations. Through collaboration, dialogue, cooperation, and knowledge-sharing, It is aiming to represent, defend, and amplify the voices of local and regional governments. Link to initiative.</p>	Connected cities <p>Over 240,000 cities, localities, town and other local authorities worldwide.</p>
United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLG Africa) <p>Established as the African section of the world organization UCLG (United Cities and Local Governments), UCLG Africa now boasts a membership of 44 national associations of local governments from all regions of Africa, as well as 2000 cities that have more than 100,000 inhabitants. Moreover, UCLG Africa designed the Charter of Local and Subnational Governments of Africa on Migration, which African local and subnational governments can adopt and adhere to (see list of cities here in right table). Link to initiative.</p>	Connected cities/associations <p>BURKINA FASO – Dedougou / Zam / CHAD – Association nationale des Communes du Tchad / GUINEA – Carbone Guinée (NGO) / MALI – Bamako / Gao / MAURITANIA – Nouakchott / MOROCCO – Al Hoceima / Rabat / NIGER – Agadez / SENEGAL – Bounkiling / Ballou / Diarrere / Mpal / Dakar / TOGO – Notsé / TUNISIA – Sfax / Sousse / UGANDA – Kaabong / Local Government Association</p>

African Cities Research Consortium <p>Led by the University of Manchester, the consortium includes centers of research excellence, frontline humanitarian responders, effective policy influencers, vibrant local government networks, and deeply rooted civil society groups. It aims to generate insights and evidence that will help improve the living conditions, services and life chances of all city residents, particularly for disadvantaged communities.</p> <p>Link to initiative.</p>	Connected cities <p>ETHIOPIA – Addis Ababa / GHANA – Accra / KENYA – Nairobi / NIGERIA – Lagos / Maiduguri / SENEGAL – Dakar / SIERRA LEONE – Freetown / SOMALIA – Mogadishu / SUDAN – Khartoum / UGANDA – Kampala</p>
Equal Partnerships for Urban Migration Governance <p>By bringing together urban migration actors from different contexts and levels of governance, the project aims to inspire practical ideas and develop policy recommendations for equal partnerships in urban migration governance in intermediate cities in North, West and East Africa, through participatory knowledge creation, outcome-oriented dialogues and networking of potential cooperation partners.</p> <p>Link to initiative.</p>	Connected cities <p>GHANA – Kumasi / TUNISIA – Sfax / UGANDA – Gulu (confirmed thus far)</p> Implemented by <p>Centre for Human Rights Erlangen-Nuremberg (CHREN) / Friedrich-Alexander-University of Erlangen-Nuremberg (FAU) / German Development Institute (DIE-GDI) / Samuel Hall / UCLG Africa.</p>
The International Observatory of Mayors <p>An international network of cities and a platform for the exchange of experiences, knowledge and innovative urban practices related to social cohesion, inclusion and community safety in cities.</p> <p>Link to initiative.</p>	Connected cities <p>ALGERIA – Algiers / BENIN – Cotonou / Porto-Novo / BURKINA FASO – Ouagadougou / CÔTE D'IVOIRE – Abidjan / MALI – Bamako / MOROCCO – Al Hoceima / Casablanca / Fez / Rabat / SENEGAL – Dakar / Thiès / TUNISIA – Carthage / Sousse / Tunis</p> Hosted by <p>The City of Montreal</p>
Local Governments for Sustainability Africa (ICLEI) <p>A global network working with more than 2500 local and regional governments committed to sustainable urban development. Active in 125+ countries, the network aims to influence sustainability policy and drive local action for low emission, nature-based, equitable, resilient and circular development through peer exchange, partnerships, and capacity building.</p> <p>Link to initiative.</p>	Connected cities <p>BENIN – Cotonou / Porto-Novo / Groupement Intercommunal des Collines / BURKINA FASO – Sabcé / CÔTE D'IVOIRE – Grand-Lahou / ETHIOPIA – Addis Ababa / GHANA – National Association of Local Authorities / LIBERIA – Monrovia / KENYA – Nairobi / Nakuru / MALI – Bamako / MAURITANIA – Rachid / MOROCCO – Chefchaouen / NIGER – Niamey / NIGERIA – Amuwo-Odofin Local Government Area / Ajeromi-Ifeledun Local Government Area / Ido Local Government Area / Isoko South Local Government Area / Mushin Local Government Area / Lagos State / SENEGAL – Dakar / Médina-Mary / Nioro du Rip / TOGO – Lomé / UGANDA – Entebbe / Jinja / Kampala / Kasese / Kawempe Division (Kampala)</p>

Andalusian Fund of Municipalities for International Solidarity (FAMSI)	Connected cities
<p>Articulates, promotes, and coordinates the work of Andalusian local governments, social and academic entities, and the social and solidarity economy, in a network of local and global cooperation and action. The network aims to promote, from the public interest and with a territorial approach, the objectives of social, environmental, and economic sustainability included in the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda. It is also a member of the MC2CM initiative.</p> <p>Link to initiative.</p>	<p>MOROCCO – Al Hoceima / Fnideq / Larache / Martil / Nador / Tetouan / Oujda</p>

ANMAR Federation of Local Authorities in Northern Morocco and Andalusia	Connected locations
<p>Aims to improve the quality of life of the territories and populations that its member local authorities are responsible for managing, and to give a voice to local authorities in international development agendas and cooperation policies of the two countries that comprise the Federation's territory. The ANMAR Federation is also a cooperation agency for its members, providing technical advice, creating meeting spaces, and generating opportunities for cooperation between Morocco and Andalusia. It is also a member of MC2CM initiative.</p> <p>Link to initiative.</p>	<p>36 municipalities and 6 other local governments in MOROCCO, including: Al Hoceima / Assilah / Berkane / Chefchaouen / Fnideq / Ksar El Kebir / Larache / Tetouan / Oujda</p>

2. City-level urban protection initiatives

Improving the Coordination of Migration of Local Actors in Sfax (ACMALS)	Location
<p>Aims to establish coordination mechanisms between local authorities, public services, and CSOs, strengthening thereby the capacity of local actors and improving access to socio-economic rights through a reception centre providing legal and social assistance to migrants.</p> <p>Link to initiative.</p>	<p>TUNISIA – Sfax</p>
	Conceived / developed through
	<p>MC2CM</p>
	In partnership with
	<p>Terre d'Asile Tunisie</p>
Inclusion, Migration, Integration & Governance (I-MIGR)	Locations
<p>The objective of this activity is to develop the cooperation between the different stakeholders at local level on migration, through improving data management and knowledge, and to promote a real and fair discourse on migration by strengthening the intercultural dialogue. To achieve its objectives, the action aims to organise coaching days for municipalities on the inclusion of migrants, develop training on migrants' rights, create an information brochure on migrants' rights, set up an information office for guidance on services offered to migrants and organise open days on migration.</p> <p>Link to initiative.</p>	<p>TUNISIA – La Marsa / Raoued</p>
	Conceived / developed through
	<p>MC2CM</p>
	In partnership with
	<p>The Centre for Development Information and Education (CIES) / the Tunisian Union of Social Solidarity (UTSS) / UN-Habitat</p>

La Marsa Artistic Cohesion Aims to strengthen the social inclusion of migrants in the city of La Marsa through joint artistic activities and evidence media communication, which increase the positive contribution of migrants to the local development. Link to initiative.	Location
	TUNISIA – La Marsa
	Conceived / developed through
	MC2CM
Nador Social & Sustainable The focus of this action is to contribute to the development of social and sustainable cities in Morocco, through fostering social inclusion in the Nador province. It aims to train media professionals to counter negative stereotypes on migration, enhance stakeholders' capacities on migration; raise public awareness on a more balanced narrative on migration and organise the 'Interculturality Week'. Link to initiative.	Location
	MOROCCO – Nador
	Conceived / developed through
	MC2CM
TangerAccueil This action aims to reinforce the role of the municipality of Tangier as a structuring actor for migrants' social integration and access to rights and services. It includes setting up a "one-stop-shop" for migrants' services, reinforcing the capabilities of municipal staff, and establishing an 'Immigration Council' to organise migration stakeholders' services. Link to initiative.	Location
	MOROCCO – Tangier
	Conceived / developed through
	MC2CM
Governance & Interculturality The objective of the action is to increase cultural diversity through fostering a fair and realistic vision of migration through improving cooperation between local and regional authorities and promoting dialogue frameworks for local migration governance policies. Link to initiative.	Locations
	MOROCCO – Al Hoceima / Fnideq / Oujda
	Conceived / developed through
	MC2CM
Nador an Active City for Living Together The objective of this action is to contribute to the development of social and sustainable cities in Morocco, through promoting inclusive discourse on migration and encouraging dialogue, mutual understanding, and participative democracy in the city of Nador. Link to initiative.	Location
	MOROCCO – Nador
	Conceived through
	MC2CM
	In partnership with
	ANMAR / FAMSI
	Location
	MOROCCO – Nador
	Conceived through
	MC2CM
	In partnership with
	ACPP / ASTICUDE

Living Together Aims to improve the territorial planning and social cohesion of migrant populations for the construction of more welcoming and habitable neighbourhoods in Morocco. Link to initiative.	Location MOROCCO – Tétouan Conceived through MC2CM In partnership with ANMAR
Migration in Casablanca This action aims to increase the positive contribution of migration to the local development in the city of Casablanca to foster social cohesion between migrant and host communities. It aims to reinforce the engagement of the Municipality to address social protection and discrimination risks encountered by vulnerable populations settled within the less fortunate neighbourhoods of the city. To achieve those goals, a number of activities were set up, including conducting field visits and dialogue sessions to identify the needs and vulnerabilities of the population (women, youth, and migrant workers, conducting a training of municipal staff on rights-based migration governance, and 3 training to municipal and neighbourhood staff on technical and communication skills, establishing migration Coordination Unit (MCU) and “Salon of Migrants” to host social gatherings and cultural events for migrants and host communities. Link to initiative.	Location MOROCCO – Casablanca Conceived / developed through MC2CM In partnership with UN-Habitat
Towards Evidence-Based Migration Policy-Making in the City of Rabat This action aims to accompany the efforts of the city to improve the current migration action and strategic planning, strengthen its data collection capacities, and enable it to monitor migration flows and resulted vulnerabilities at the city level through, for instance, establishing Municipal Migration Observatory to support local decisionmakers with migration governance approach at the local level, organising a participatory workshop to identify solutions to address vulnerabilities and identify evidence gaps and conducting a capacity-building workshop for decision-makers on the use of migration data. Link to initiative.	Location MOROCCO – Rabat Conceived / developed through MC2CM In partnership with UN-Habitat
“Vers une gouvernance migratoire partagée” Within the framework of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and through a series of workshops, the action promoted the sharing of information between the different actors in order to guarantee a better visibility of the interventions implemented and a better identification of the needs of migrants for the post-COVID-19 response via the identification of the needs and priorities of the actors on the ground. Link to initiative.	Location MOROCCO – Oujda / Rabat Conceived through MC2CM In partnership with IOM / UCLG Africa / Madrid City Council

4Mi Cities	Locations
<p>The Mixed Migration Centre and the Mayors Migration Council (shortened to MMC², given the matching acronyms), working in close partnership with city governments designed and implemented a pilot data collection project called 4Mi Cities. MMC² developed and applied a new 4Mi toolkit to find out specifically about refugees' and migrants' urban experience in a way that can support improved policy and service provision at the city level. Managed by the Mixed Migration Centre, 4Mi offers a regular, standardised, quantitative and globalised system of collecting primary data on mixed migration flows through a unique network of field monitors situated along frequently used routes and in major migratory hubs. Link to initiative.</p>	<p>KENYA – Nairobi / UGANDA – Arua / Kampala</p>
Libya's Migration Technical Assistance Facility (LIBMITAF)	Locations
<p>This project aims at contributing to strengthening the Libyan national mechanisms for addressing regular and irregular migration. Specifically, the project aims to connect with both national authorities and Libyan CSOs, supporting their role in the process. In this framework, a mission was organised to the city of Sebha in southern Libya to discuss the needs and priorities of the municipality with Libyan and international stakeholders, including the Mayor of Sebha, the EU Ambassador to Libya, and several UN representatives. Link to initiative.</p>	Cities in LIBYA
	Implemented by
	ICMPD
	In partnership with
	EU Trust Fund for Africa / Libyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) / Libyan Ministry of Interior (MoI) / Libyan Ministry of Justice (MoJ) / Libyan National Team for Border Security and Management (NTBSM) / Libyan House of Representatives (HoR) / Libyan Ministry of State for Migration Affairs / Libyan CSOs

Annex II. Qualitative data collection

Key informants: Initiatives / Networks

Date of interview	Initiatives / Networks	Location
2/11/2021	Madar Network	Sousse (in-person)
2/11/2021	Cities Alliance Uganda	Kampala (remote)
4/11/2021	UCLG	Barcelona (remote)
4/11/2021	MedCities	Barcelona (remote)
6/11/2021	UCLG Africa	Rabat (remote)
8/11/2021	Africa-Europe Mayors' Dialogue	London (remote)
17/11/2021	Mayors Migration Council	New York (remote)
24/11/2021	MC2CM Initiative	Malta (remote)
12/12/2021	UN-Habitat	Nairobi (remote)

Key informants: Experts

Date of interview	Experts / NGOs / civil society	Location
5/11/2021	ASTICUDE	Nador (remote)
12/11/2021	UNHCR Geneva on City Networks	UK (remote)
18/11/2021	Migration representative of Burkinabe national authorities	Ouagadougou (remote)
18/11/2021	Local stakeholder	Oujda (remote)
24/11/2021	Malian migration researcher	Bamako (remote)
26/11/2021	German Institute for International and Security Affairs	Berlin (remote)
1/12/2021	Robert Bosch Foundation	Berlin (remote)
2/12/2021	MMC East Africa and Yemen	Nairobi (remote)
7/12/2021	International NGO working in Libya	Tunis (remote)

Key informants: Local authorities

Date of interview	Local authorities	Location
9/11/2021	Municipality	Sfax, Tunisia (remote)
15/11/2021	Municipality	Sousse, Tunisia (in-person)
16/11/2021	Municipality	Kanifing, The Gambia (remote)
17/11/2021	Municipality	Nouadhibou, Mauritania (remote)



About the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

The UNHCR is a global organisation dedicated to saving lives, protecting rights and building a better future for refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people. UNHCR works in over 130 countries, protecting millions of people and delivering life-saving assistance. UNHCR helps safeguard fundamental human rights and develops solutions that ensure that people have a safe place to call home where they can build a better future.

For more information visit:
unhcr.org and follow us on @refugees

About the Mixed Migration Centre (MMC)

The MMC is a global network consisting of six regional hubs and a central unit in Geneva engaged in data collection, research, analysis and policy development on mixed migration. The MMC is a leading source for independent and high-quality data, research, analysis and expertise on mixed migration. The MMC aims to increase understanding of mixed migration, to positively impact global and regional migration policies, to inform evidence-based protection responses for people on the move and to stimulate forward thinking in public and policy debates on mixed migration. The MMC's overarching focus is on human rights and protection for all people on the move.

The MMC is part of and governed by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC). Global and regional MMC teams are based in Copenhagen, Dakar, Geneva, Nairobi, Tunis, Bogota and Dhaka.

For more information visit:
mixedmigration.org and follow us at @Mixed_Migration