

Executive Committee Meeting
Kampala, Uganda
6 June 2012

Agenda Item No. 4: Business Plan FY12-FY14 Update
Support Document: MENA region joint work programme - Synopsis

Background:

As reported on during the Maputo EXCO and CG meetings, several CA members active in the Middle East and North Africa region have come together around a joint work programme for the region. This short synopsis provides background information.

Recommended Action:

- Provide guidance to the Secretariat on the development of the MENA region joint work programme.

Middle East and North Africa region Joint Work Program

SYNOPSIS

The Arab Spring provides a singular opportunity for the international community to respond in a coherent, collaborative and constructive manner, in which the long-term future of the citizens, cities and countries of the region is the overriding priority. Cities Alliance and the Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI) members¹ active in the Region have therefore decided to respond, work together and create a partnership amongst themselves and with partner cities and governments in the region, to offer support through a Joint Work Program (JWP).

The support offered through this Joint Work Program is guided by a long-term view that specifically seeks to mobilize available local and regional experience and expertise, with international support as necessary. Its activities will revolve around three thematic pillars: (i) strengthening cities for inclusive economic growth; (ii) creating accountable cities and towns; and (iii) promoting subsidiarity.

The primary objective of this Program is to strengthen the process of democratization through inclusive city governance supported by enabling national frameworks in selected partner countries of the MENA Region.

For its first phase (2012 - 2015) the JWP envisages to deliver four particular outputs, which encompass the coherence of effort, technical collaboration, knowledge transfer, and raise awareness for inclusive and sustainable growth. It will be achieved through corresponding activities, such as country and regional projects. Each country or regional project is made up of several individual activities and will be based on a particular framework for collaboration. In this context, both the CMI and CA Secretariats jointly work to define a regional strategy and a country by country approach.

The first country project will be Tunisia with a particular focus on promoting subsidiarity. The JWP will be presented back to back the UCLG conference on decentralization in Tunis, May 29-30, to shed light on this unique collaboration in the Mediterranean region. It will be the opportunity to discuss the potential and challenges of decentralization as well as hear voices of Tunisian local governments. JWP members will present the first results of the needs assessment and cornerstones of such a country project for Tunisia. Furthermore, three studies will be launched, which will carry out national in-depth analysis on an urbanization review, municipal finance, and decentralization. JWP members active in Tunisia will commit themselves to contribute to strengthen the Tunisian decentralization process as identified in the needs assessment and expressed by partners and counterparts in Tunisia.

¹ The JWP members are: Agence Française de Développement (AFD), European Investment Bank (EIB), French Caisse des Dépôts (CDC), French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and the Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, MedCities, UN Habitat, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), and The World Bank.