MC2CM

MEDITERRANEAN CITY-TO-CITY MIGRATION

CITY CASE STUDY
TANGIER

MUNICIPAL SUPPORT TO CIVIL SOCIETY FOR THE SOCIAL INCLUSION OF MIGRANTS IN TANGIER

Implemented by

ICMPD International Centre for Migration Policy Development

UCLG United Cities and Local Governments

UN-HABITAT FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

This case study was developed in the framework of the Mediterranean City-to-City Migration Project (MC2CM), a project coordinated by ICMPD and funded by the European Union and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. The MC2CM project has been working since 2015 with Amman, Beirut, Lisbon, Lyon, Madrid, Tangiers, Tunis, Turin and Vienna to increase the knowledge base on urban migration. Additionally the project has sought to nurture a peer-to-peer dialogue and mutual learning on specific urban challenges such as social cohesion, intercultural dialogue, employment and provision of basic services for migrants, among others. This case study was selected by the Municipality of Tangier in order to showcase a practice that contributes to social inclusion of migrants at the local level.

THE CITY OF TANGIER SUPPORTS CIVIL SOCIETY INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE SOCIAL COHESION AND TO FACILITATE ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES AND HUMAN RIGHTS FOR MIGRANTS

ABSTRACT

Tangier is located at the north-western tip of Morocco and is a gateway between the African and European continents. Due to its geographic position, the city of Tangier has a long history of migration and experiences contrasting immigration profiles. Whereas elite migrants arriving from the global North are widely accepted and welcomed, lower-income migrants from sub-Saharan Africa are perceived as either problematic or as a threat to the city.

In December 2014, the national government adopted the National Strategy for **Immigration and Asylum**, an integrated strategy that defines immigration as an economic, social and cultural opportunity, rather than a threat. The municipal government in Tangier acknowledges its humanitarian responsibility and facilitates access to basic services like shelter, education and health. However, municipal authorities operate with limited financial resources and can suffer from a lack of effective communication and coordination between local, regional and national government levels; this impedes the implementation of a comprehensive approach to migrant inclusion. To fulfil its responsibility, the city of Tangier actively encourages civil society organisations to partner with local government actors around issues of migration. In 2016, the city of Tangier supported five civil society organisations through such partnerships.

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Tangier accommodates approximately 950,000 inhabitants.[1] Over centuries the city has been a space of mobility and encounter for people coming from many different regions, emerging as a melting-pot of different cultures. Residents of Tangier are generally proud of the many civilisations and cultures that have shaped the city's history and identity. However, despite the international character of Tangier, the city experiences contrasting immigration experiences.

Migrants living in Tangier mainly come from Europe, the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa. Whereas elite migrants arriving from the global North are widely accepted and welcomed into society, migrants from sub-Saharan Africa, who mostly see Tangier as a stopover on their journey to Europe, are perceived as problematic or a threat to the city.

This perception has increased after the enactment of more restrictive immigration policies in the Schengen area in the early 2000s, which left more and more sub-Saharan migrants stranded in North Africa's coastal cities such as Tangier.[2] In 2016, officially registered foreigners made up roughly 0.55% of Tangiers's total population; but unofficial estimates are considerably higher. In the same year, civil society organisations estimated that between 25,000 and 40,000 undocumented migrants were living in Morocco; with the vast majority residing in the cities of Tangier, Tetouan and Nador.[3]

In December 2014, the national government adopted the **National Strategy for Immigration and Asylum**, which addresses humanitarian issues (human rights, discrimination, human trafficking and integration) and the facilitation of access to health, education, housing and employment. Furthermore, it defines the shared responsibility of government actors through enhanced national, regional and international governance and cooperation.[4] Within this framework, the municipal government of Tangier acknowledges its responsibility to treat every person living in Tangier with dignity, providing them with access to basic services like shelter, education and health. However, the municipal authorities operate within a weak devolution framework with limited resources and, as such, lack human resources and funds to implement a comprehensive approach to migration at the city level.[5]

IMPLEMENTATION

At the municipal level, procedures for dealing with migrants arriving in the city of Tangier are not standardised. Further, there is no deconcentrated services of the ministry in charge of migration at the level of Tangier, and multilevel-governance on this issue is altogether absent. As a result, there are no set processes governing

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[1] MC2CM City Migration Profile, Tangier, 2017
[2] Ibid.
[3] Bither, Küppers, & Ziebarth, 2016
[4] UNDP, 2017
[5] MC2CM City Migration Profile, Tangier, 2017

the reception and orientation of new migrants, including specified procedures and/or services for vulnerable migrants, such as unaccompanied minors or the elderly.

The failure to promote a comprehensive approach towards migration in Tangier is largely the result of limited human and financial resources as the city lacks a dedicated budget for migration management. This fact is compounded by a lack of statistical data on migration patterns in the city.[6] However, such issues must also be viewed within the context of a decentralisation reform initiated by the government and the King of Morocco after political unrest in 2011. The reform was intended to make state institutions more efficient and transparent in order to enhance political participation. However, the devolution agenda has not been sufficiently advanced to date and key laws and regulations have yet to be passed. This poses a significant challenge for local government operations.[7]

In the absence of a comprehensive municipal and multi-level framework and approach to migration, civil society organisations have emerged to fill gaps in provision. In the case of Tangier, such groups have become increasingly active in the field of migration. Largely focussed on migrants coming from the Sub-Saharan region, civil society groups in the city provide services that aim to increase social cohesion and increase access to basic services and human rights for migrants. In line with the new decentralisation framework, the city of Tangier actively encourages civil society organisations to partner with local government actors around migration issues, and provides funds for such organisations to operate. This collaboration with civil society allows the city of Tangier to fulfil its responsibilities regarding migration indirectly, mitigating the weak regulatory frameworks in which it operates.

In the following, a civil society initiative supported by the city of Tangier is briefly outlined: **the Association Tadamon (solidarity)**.

ASSOCIATION TADAMON

The Association Tadamon for the support of children in need (**Association Tadamon pour le soutien des enfants en difficulté**) was created in 2001 and is based in Tangier. Their main objective is migrant integration, and the main beneficiaries are women and children from disadvantaged communities within local and migrant populations. Amongst other initiatives, the association invested into improving the city's local "Children Protection Centre". The association works with public institutions as well as local and international non-governmental organisations to allow children to access education, and to facilitate access to literacy courses and legal awareness training for women.

Furthermore, the Association Tadamon deploys animation and entertainment programmes as a tool for improved social cohesion between the migrant and host

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[6] Ibid.
[7] Houdret & Harnisch, 2017
[8] Association Tadamon, 2017

community. Building on this approach, the association initiated an Arts Festival for Migrants (**Festival des Arts des Migrants**) in Tangier, which took place in April 2017.[8] The Festival allowed migrants from the sub-Saharan region to produce cultural performances and thus gave them a platform to display their cultural traditions and practices. The Festival aimed at raising multi-cultural awareness, contributing to improved understanding between different cultures, the dismantling of cultural barriers and the promotion of social and cultural cohesion between the migrant and host community.

FINANCING AND RESOURCES

The city of Tangier provides an annual budget for the support of civil society organisations according to fixed guidelines. At the time of writing further details regarding sums committed and allocation requirements were unavailable to the research team.

RESULTS AND IMPACTS

In 2016, five civil society organisations have received financial support by the city of Tangier for their operations in the field of migration. The city has set up a committee, which overviewed the tendering process and evaluated the organisations' applications.

Additionally, every province in Morocco now has a Committee for Civil and Social Affairs, which decides and defines the priorities in the given area. One of these defined priorities is to build migrants' capacities and enhance their social and economic opportunities.

BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES

In Tangier, the main barriers and challenges regarding migration are experienced in the fields of economic, social, and cultural integration. The lack of expertise, financial resources and limited communication and coordination between local, regional and national authorities impede the implementation of a comprehensive approach to migration governance, and is stalling any decisive action on migrants inclusion at the city-scale'. Another challenge emerges from social tensions "stemming from growing antipathy against migrants and refugees, sometimes resulting in violent confrontations".[9]

In regards to initiatives by civil society organisations, one emergent challenge is the fact that their approaches are often selective in focus. This risks the proliferation of efforts that target "migrants with a high potential for a successful integration and neglecting migrants who already reside in difficult situations".[10]

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[9] Bither, Küppers, & Ziebarth, 2016, p. 17

LESSONS LEARNED

In recent years, a shift in the perception of migration at local government level has been observed in Tangier. This is linked to national efforts such as the introduction of decentralisation reforms and the adoption of the **National Strategy for Immigration and Asylum** in 2014. It is further linked to an economic upturn recently experienced in Tangier. The resulting demand for increased labour supply, has led the municipal authorities to build on the city's attraction for internal and external migrants and recast migration as a potential contributor to the economy. Indeed, with the expansion and development of Tangier's port, there is an increasing need for low-skilled labourers. This said, to this day, the city of Tangier has not implemented new labour-oriented integration measures. Whereas the changing attitude towards migration represents a desirable development, it also bears the danger of further distinguishing between skilled and unskilled migrants.

Despite the insecurities around government-led initiatives for the integration of migrants, the municipality displays interest in expanding its knowledge in this area. This can be seen inter alia in its involvement in learning partnerships, such as the Mediterranean City-to-City Migration project. This again, is a welcomed change; especially as good practices have rarely been documented and shared amongst stakeholders in the past, which has reduced the leverage effect of existing initiatives. Well managed, an active learning exchange "could foster the capitalization, exchange and up-scaling of best practices and lessons learned"[11] and could contribute to a comprehensive, multi-stakeholder approach to migration in Tangier. The city of Tangier's involvement in functioning networks of exchange has the potential to further raise awareness around such issues. Campaigns for social cohesion through economic, social and cultural integration of migrants could be launched alongside with training opportunities for the local authorities to build up local expertise.

[10] Bither, Küppers, & Ziebarth, 2016, p. 18
[11] Ibid., p. 19

REFERENCES

The case study builds on information from the MC2CM Tangier City Migration Profile and has been complemented with information from the following sources:

- Bither, J., Küppers, I., & Ziebarth, A. (2016). A Tale of Three Cities: New migration and integration realities in Istanbul, Offenbach and Tangier. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

- UNDP. (2017). Mainstreaming Migration Into National Development Strategies. Retrieved December 5, 2017, from Country Overview - Morocco: http://www.mainstreamingmigration.org/country-overview/morocco

- Houdret, A., & Harnisch, A. (2017). Decentralisation in Morocco: The current reform and its possible contribution to political liberalisation. Bonn: Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik.

The example of civil society initiative builds on written information shared by Association Tadamon and on information published on its website:

- Association Tadamon. (2017). FAM Tanger. Retrieved October 31, 2017, from http://famtanger.com/

No interviews have been conducted.

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