



**THEME [INCO.2012-1.3]
INCONET – Mediterranean Partner Countries**

Deliverable N.: D4.1

Title: Third digital workshop notes and proceedings

Funding scheme: Coordination and support action

Project Acronym: MEDSPRING

Project Coordinator: CIHEAM-IAMB, Claudio Bogliotti

Grant Agreement n°: 311780

Acronym of partner: SCOM

Dissemination level: PU (Public) (otherwise CO: Consortium)

Coding: example: MEDSPRING/WP4/D4.1/V1/Digital workshop2

Official delivery date: M40

Project start: 1 February 2013

Project duration: 48 months

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1. Summary

Within the activities of the WP4, S-COM and LVIA organized the third Digital Workshop entitled “**Nexus to Migration**”. Differently from the previous workshop, the third Digital Workshop has not been streamed live, but the participants’ contributions have been recorded and then collected in a single video that has been shared publicly through AgoraMedSpring and the project’s social media channels. With the collaboration of FOCSIV in the identification of the participants, the third Digital Workshop focused on the relationship between resources—food, water and energy—and migration in the Mediterranean region. The video “Nexus to Migration” is available here: <http://agora.medspring.eu/en/articles/nexus-migration-3rd-medspring-digital-workshop>

2. Introduction and rationale

As part of the activities of the WP4, the organization of the Digital Workshop had the general objective of contributing to stimulating participation and discussion of civil society and stakeholders on research and innovation accounting for the selected societal challenges via digital channels. In particular, the Digital Workshop on “**Nexus to Migration**” had the objective of addressing the nexus which links **forced migration movements to host communities and the ensuing strain on common resources, such as land, food, water and energy**.

Nowadays there are over 65 million people who are forcibly displaced by conflicts and violence, yet this figure increases dramatically once we take into consideration the effects of poverty and inequalities, of degrading environmental conditions and of land grabbing. Some among the top hosting countries belong to the Mediterranean area, with Turkey welcoming 2.5 million refugees (as registered by the UNHCR in 2016), Lebanon 1.1 million and Jordan around 660.000. The theme of forced migration raises thorny issues for local communities in many parts of the Mediterranean and is becoming – or, at least, hopefully it will become – a key element in the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation. In fact, resources are already scarce in several countries, especially in the Middle Eastern area, and important flows of people put under pressure the limited availability of these public or private goods. In turn, this tension creates social resentment and fosters xenophobic attitudes, which lead to the dismantling of a harmonious coexistence. Environmental drivers can exacerbate the issue, with climate change spiraling the depletion of water reserves, land use and droughts.

3. Digital Round Table

Participants

Thanks to the collaboration of the Italian NGOs platform **FOCSIV**, of which LVIA is a partner – Volontari nel mondo (www.focsiv.it), the third Digital Workshop featured three speakers currently residing in the Mediterranean region:

Giulia Capuani is a master student of Human Rights and Humanitarian Action at Sciences Po University (Paris). She obtained her BA in International Development from the University of Essex, UK. She has been project assistant for organizations such as the Jesuit Refugee Service France and the René Cassin International Institute of Human Rights, focusing her activities on migration. Recently, she has collaborated with FOCSIV as policy assistant, specializing in the situation of migrants in the Middle East.

Teresio (Terry) Dutto (Focsiv) graduated at Lumsa University in Management of no-profit organizations. Volunteer for years in Africa with LVIA, he has been consultant for Caritas

Italiana since 1992, working on several missions in foreign countries, with particular reference to international emergencies - in Albania, Rwanda, Bosnia Herzegovina, Armenia, Moldova, South Ossetia, North Ossetia, Iran, India and Indonesia. In 2012 he was appointed by the Spagnoli-Bazzoni association as responsible of a project for building a school at the orphanage of St. Marcellins Village, Harare, (Zimbabwe). Since 2014, he has collaborated with Focsiv in a project in Iraq in favour of some local minorities (Christians, Yazidis, Turkmens) in Kurdistan, based in Erbil.

Gaby Daw (Caritas, Jordan) is grants officer at CARITAS Jordan, where he is responsible for compiling impact reports also on other services stakeholders. He worked for ten years at the UN refugee agency (UNHCR). In 2002, he started working at Caritas Jordan as a caseworker, looking after refugees and extremely vulnerable individuals' vital needs; he then became project officer in 2006, monitoring and overseeing projects implementation.

Fr. Cedric Prakash, is a human rights activist and is based in Lebanon where he works as Regional Advocacy and Communications Officer at the Jesuit Refugee Service (Middle East and North Africa Region). He graduated from the Bombay University; after his graduation he worked first at the All India Catholic University Federation (AICUF) and then in Taize (France), helping to prepare the World Council of Youth. In July 1974, he joined the Jesuits in Gujarat. In 1987, he was appointed the Director of St. Xavier's Social Service Society (SXSSS). In 2001 he founded PRASHANT, the Ahmedabad-based Jesuit Centre for Human Rights, Justice and Peace, of which he has been the Director until January 2016. Fr. Prakash is a visiting faculty in some colleges, universities and seminaries - among these: Marquette University in Wisconsin (USA), Eastern Mennonite University in Virginia (USA), and the Development Education Summer School of the European Union in Slovakia) His work in advocacy and human rights has been recognized by several national and international awards.

Key themes

The International Association for the Study of Forced Migration (IASFM) describes forced migration as “the movements of refugees and internally displaced people (those displaced by conflicts) as well as people displaced by natural or environmental disasters, chemical or nuclear disasters, famine, or development projects”.¹ The Digital Workshop “Nexus to Migration” explored the nexus which links forced migration movements to host communities and the ensuing strain on common resources, such as land, food, water and energy, by posing to each participant the following questions:

- Which are the main challenges that arise from the coexistence of refugees and host communities, especially with reference to the management of vital resources, such as land, water and food?
- In the contemporary Middle East and North Africa, the major driver of forced migration is conflict. Conflict dynamics have an impact on people's access to food, energy, and water. What are the initiatives that can mitigate this impact and make communities more resilient?
- The destination of most people fleeing from conflict as well as natural and environmental disaster is Europe. What can Europe do to address the current flows and what is

¹ Forced Migration Online (FMO) (2007): What is Forced Migration? *Refugee Studies Centre*, Oxford <http://www.forcedmigration.org>, 20 March 2007.

predicted to become a new category of environmental refugees?

- Which is the winning layout for governments, civil society and international organizations to collaborate in order to address and prevent the deterioration of the situation? In other words, how shall the different entities work together in order to act in the most efficient way for the beneficiaries? What should research institutes investigate more to support humanitarian and development needs in the Middle East?
- In your opinion, can problems arising from the coexistence of forced migrants and host communities, in particular with regard to the management of vital resources such as land and water, be amplified and exacerbated by climate change phenomena, such as droughts and soil depletion? If so, do you have any information or experience on this? Is it possible that in the next future there will be phenomena of environmental displacement?

The speakers focused on three geographical realities that are particularly affected by forced migration in the Middle East and North Africa region: the Kurdistan region of Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon.

The video “Nexus to Migration”

The video “Nexus to Migration” is available here: <http://agora.medspring.eu/en/articles/nexus-migration-3rd-medspring-digital-workshop>

The video has been published on AgoraMedSpring and has been widely circulated through the project’s social media channels.

4. Conclusion

The Digital Workshop on “Nexus to Migration” raised important points for discussion. The diversity of the points of view expressed by the participants contributed to feed the dialogue on the interconnection of the themes developed throughout the MedSpring project and current dynamics and processes in the Mediterranean region.