



Exchanging best practices and improving assistance to unaccompanied or separated migrant children: IOM, UNHCR and UNICEF organize a joint training on the best interest of the child determination process in Tunisia

26-28 June 2014 – IOM organized a three-day training focusing on the best interest of the child determination (BID) process for Tunisian governmental officials and representatives from local non-governmental organizations in Zarzis, Tunisia. Participants in the training, which was jointly organized with UNHCR and UNICEF, included the Tunisian Chief Child Protection Officer, child protection officers, and representatives from the Tunisian Ministry of Development and International Cooperation.

The training aimed to familiarize participants with the BID process and to improve the assistance provided to vulnerable children in Tunisia. It focused on identifying underlying factors and risks associated with child welfare and protection; familiarizing participants with specific interview techniques for children; the Tunisian referral system; and, developing standard operating procedures to ensure that unaccompanied or separated migrant children receive appropriate assistance from the existing services.

Michela Macchiavello, Vulnerable Migrants Specialist, IOM Geneva, and H el ene Legoff, Migrant Protection Division, IOM Tunisia, presented the assistance given by IOM to unaccompanied or separated migrant children.

Gathering together the main stakeholders of the Tunisian child protection system allowed participants to share their knowledge and experience and to put in place a solid working base aimed at improving the assistance offered to vulnerable children. The Chief Child Protection Officer, Mr Mihyar Hamadi, presented the child



Participants at one of the sessions of the training   IOM 2014

protection officers' national database in which all data regarding detected cases is stored. A BID system was also developed for cases of unaccompanied or separated migrant children identified in Tunisia in the future. The training also resulted in the different stakeholders committing to working together in a more integrated way, agreeing on a plan and guidelines for the implementation of a BID process involving all relevant actors in Tunisia.

The event was co-funded by IOM's EU funded programme "Stabilizing at-risk communities and enhancing migration management to enable smooth transitions in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya" (START). The project aims to stabilize at-risk communities in the three countries

through different components including migrant protection which provides vulnerable migrants with comprehensive assistance. Within this framework IOM provides direct assistance or assistance through partnership agreements with governmental and non-governmental organizations; conducts outreach and awareness raising activities, including information and dissemination workshops and trainings; and, carries out research focusing on migrants' health and access to services in Tunisia.



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