

Within the framework of the project [Structural Integration of the Informal Sector in the Municipal Solid Waste Management in Tunisia](#), an [expert meeting](#) took place on 21 August in Tunis. The aim was to brainstorm ideas for the pilot actions in the two municipalities where the project will be implemented, Ettadhamen Mnihla and La Marsa.

Over 35 representatives from the municipalities and the public sector, NGOs, the private sector and international experts on the field attended the event. A presentation of the aspects necessary for all pilot actions formed the base of the discussions. Following several meetings with all target groups – the waste pickers, the collectors, the municipalities and public institutions – it became clear that any (successful) pilot action needs to include both aspects of **social and technical integration**.



Actions that relate to [social integration](#) include a variety of matters, such as creating a syndicate, or another suitable organization of barbéchas and collectors to represent their interests, as well as facilitating their access to the administration through a community liaison office (or a specialized department) at the level of the municipality. Similarly, this could contain support in accessing health care and social security services. The ideas were precise, and a division of responsibilities started taking shape during the meeting. A further meeting between the informal sector representatives and the members of relevant administration was requested. For the pilot actions, the municipalities also chose various options for [technical integration](#), including door to door collection of dry waste by barbéchas (both municipalities), door to door collection of source segregated wet and dry parts in areas of Ettadhamen Mnihla where public services are weak, and an installation of mesh boxes (cages) for separate collection of PET relying on a cooperation among barbéchas in La Marsa.



A [presentation about the Egyptian experience](#) added new ideas and insight to **techniques of engagement, experience with self-organization and steps towards entering into agreements with the municipality for service provision**. Egypt is an excellent case study on this topic, as it is currently making successful steps towards the integration of the Zabaleen, the informal waste pickers that have characterized the solid waste management of Cairo for a long time. The current experience of the Zabaleen entering into contracts with the municipality is made

possible by decades of work on formalization and their long experience as informal sector collectors and recyclers.

The meeting's participants formed **two working groups** to develop the ideas and propositions for pilot actions within this framework. In the **working group on social integration**, the responsible stakeholders were identified for the different parts of the pilot actions. The participants discussed and exchanged ideas about ways to enlarge the group of barbéchas attracted to the project, in order to ensure social equity in the process of selecting pilot project zones and participants to the pilot project.



In the **group discussing technical integration**, the need for piloting different approaches became clear. The technical and financial issues that need to be negotiated between the informal sector and the municipalities became clear. These include consensus about zoning, schedules, cleanliness levels and shared responsibility for cleanliness, access of the informal sector to pilot zones and the need for collection equipment and municipal infrastructure.

For all of these actions, communication and sustained stakeholder consultation need to continue. A series of meetings between the Informal Sector representatives and various stakeholders are foreseen for the next months.

You can find all presentations from the day as well as a photo documentation on the project's website [here](#).