



Agulhas

Applied Knowledge

Strengthening the Resilience of Syrian Women and Girls and Host Communities programme:

Final evaluation

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Evaluation team: Hana Asfour and Anne Hammerstad (team leaders), Alexandra Plowright, Bryon Gillespie, Merve Kan (Turkey), Rebaz Nuri (Iraq), and Sabreen Abdel Rahman (Jordan). With support from Agulhas analysts Trisha Chauhan and Mazvita Mutambirwa.

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Cover photo: Participant at a photography workshop for Syrian and Turkish women organized within the context of the Regional Madad Programme. Photo credit: Vanesa Suarez.

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List of abbreviations

AAP- Accountability to Affected Populations
CSO – Civil Society Organisation
C4W – Cash for work
C&V – Communications and Visibility
DG NEAR – EU Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
DGMM - Directorate General of Migration Management (Turkey)
DPPA – the United Nations Department for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
ECARO – UN Women Europe and Central Asia Regional Office
EII – Extended individual interviews
EUTF – European Union Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis (the Madad Fund)
FGD – Focus group discussion
GBV - Gender-based violence
HPF – Humanitarian Partners Forum
IDP – Internally displaced person
ILO – International Labor Organization
INGO – International non-governmental organisation
JNCW- The Jordanian National Commission for Women
KII – Key informant interview
MEL – Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
NGO – non-governmental organisation
OECD DAC – The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee
PMT – Programme Management Team (PMT)
RIMA – Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis
ROAS – UN Women Regional Office for the Arab States
ROM – Results-oriented monitoring
SGBV – Sexual and Gender-based Violence
SME- Small and medium-sized enterprises
SuTP – Syrian under Temporary Protection
ToC – Theory of Change
TPR – Temporary Protection Regulation
UNCG – UN Communication Group
UNDP – United Nations Development Programme
UNEG – United Nations Evaluation Group
UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VAW – Violence against Women
WFP – World Food Programme
WLI- the Women Leadership Institute
3RP – Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan in Response to the Syria crisis

Executive summary

This report presents the results of the independent evaluation of UN Women's Strengthening the Resilience of Syrian Women and Girls and Host Communities ("Madad") programme and offers lessons and recommendations for future programming on gender equality and women's empowerment.

The Madad programme

The Madad programme was a regional programme implemented in Iraq, Jordan and Syria. Its multi-dimensional strategy aimed to:

- **enable women's empowerment:** addressing economic vulnerability and violence by increased access to recovery and livelihood opportunities, paired with comprehensive protection services and support to national justice structures to promote accountability for violence against women.
- **promote a culture of peace and co-existence:** supporting women to lead and engage in peacebuilding, reconciliation and conflict prevention. Bearing in mind the importance of involving men in work on gender equality and women's empowerment, the programme engaged men as partners, champions and advocates for women's increased empowerment, including their engagement in the labour market.

The programme was funded by the European Union Regional Trust Fund

in Response to the Syrian Crisis (EUTF) and was implemented in multiple locations through a range of partnerships. Key to programme delivery was the provision of livelihoods and income-generation activities coupled with comprehensive essential services to refugee and host community women (as well as internally displaced women in Iraq) through 15 women empowerment hubs (or women-only centres) across the three countries.

The evaluation purpose and methodology

The purpose of the end-term evaluation was to assess programme performance and results, covering all aspects of implementation during the programme period from February 2018 to July 2020. The evaluation followed criteria set out by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC) in order to assess:

- the relevance of objectives, strategy and approach at national and regional level as well as UN Women's added value and comparative advantage
- the extent to which the programme was guided by a human rights approach and gender equality principles
- the effectiveness and potential measurable impact of interventions

- organisational efficiency and coordination
- the sustainability of the results

In addition, the evaluation team was tasked with identifying lessons learned, good practices and innovations, success stories and challenges, to inform UN Women’s future work.

The team applied a feminist theoretical lens: grounding the analysis in an understanding of systemic power imbalances between men and women within patriarchal societies with strongly gendered roles; building knowledge in an inclusive, participatory and culturally sensitive manner; and using gender disaggregated data (where possible). The evaluation applied a contribution analysis approach and used a suite of mixed methods to answer the questions in an evaluation matrix structured according to the OECD DAC criteria. These included a desk review of all relevant programme documents; a literature review; interviews and focus group discussions with partners, stakeholders, beneficiaries and participants; and analysis of the programme’s survey results, which were triangulated with the use of external data sources such as government statistics, UN reports and other quantitative and qualitative data on the refugee situation, gender relations and women’s economic empowerment in the three countries.

As the Covid-19 pandemic restricted travel and movement, a decision was made after the inception phase to conduct a fully virtual evaluation without site visits. The decision went through a validation exercise with the Evaluation Management Group, UN Women Regional and Country Offices and the Evaluation Reference Group. The evaluation was conducted by an evaluation team comprised of international joint team leaders from Agulhas Applied Knowledge and Q Perspective, three national consultants, two technical expert, and research support from Agulhas’ general analysts

Findings

Relevance

The UN Women Madad programme is highly relevant to international, regional and national response plans to the Syrian crisis and to beneficiary needs. The choice of interventions was based on robust needs assessments conducted in all three countries, and the interventions were appropriately designed to address the needs identified.

The theory of change (ToC) is relevant, coherent and evidence based. The ToC was pitched at a fairly high level of abstraction, which meant that causal propositions of how outputs were related to outcomes – and how outcomes such as social cohesion could be measured – were left vague. Causal pathways, and in particular, the significant barriers and challenges to women’s economic empowerment in the three countries, could have been better explored.

UN Women has filled a central and constructive guiding role in the coordination system for the response to the Syrian crisis on gender-responsive action and gender mainstreaming. The Madad programme added value and filled gaps in service delivery in all three countries by playing to UN Women's strengths, focusing on training and capacity building for other stakeholders involved in the Syria crisis response. A distinct objective of the programme was to strengthen the capacity of national and local government stakeholders, as well as NGOs and CSOs, to ensure gender-responsive refugee support. A particular objective was to strengthen the capacity of smaller, local women's CSOs. This took place through formal training, but also through less visible but equally important day-to-day guidance, support and capacity building taking place during the interactions with national and local partners as part of the ongoing implementation of the programme.

The programme's unique approach to service delivery was to provide 'one-stop-shop' comprehensive services covering livelihoods and protection under one roof at women-only centres. This innovative approach was responsive to beneficiary needs and filled a clear gap in the response to beneficiary needs and filled a clear gap in the response to the Syria crisis. There was a strong focus on at-risk and vulnerable women.

While the Madad programme is formally a regional programme, implementation took place under a regional umbrella through separate sets of country-level interventions. The light-touch regional organisation of the programme was appropriate considering the different contexts, challenges and needs in the three countries and the fact that the programme spanned two regional offices both for UN Women and the donor.

Effectiveness

Across the three countries, the interventions were generally effective for women beneficiaries, in view of the considerable barriers to employment and empowerment for women in the three countries. UN Women was able to achieve or exceed most of its output targets in the three countries. Target numbers for reaching beneficiaries with psychosocial and GBV support services were particularly exceeded, indicating the strong needs for such services.

The quality of the livelihoods training was high and relevant to women's interests and needs across the three countries. The training programmes were described as very effective by women trainees in focus groups, but effectiveness could be improved through more attention to the length and sequencing of training activities.

It was difficult to conclude on outcome-level effectiveness, due to lack of robust outcome indicators and data, particularly on longer-term economic empowerment, social cohesion and men's gender awareness. On economic empowerment and resilience, the programme was effective in improving the economic situation for women beneficiaries during the period in which they participated in the livelihoods-related activities. Some beneficiaries also reported improved longer-term income generation (mainly in Iraq), while many more described how they felt more resilient, self-reliant, self-confident and empowered. This was a result of, on the one hand, the counselling services and training – both vocational and in life-skills - provided by the women-only centres and, on the other, the friendships, openness, and social support networks that these centres fostered among the participants.

Only Turkey had a specific outcome target to strengthen the role of women and girls in social cohesion and co-existence across the refugee and host communities. Targets for these were output-level (number of women's CSOs supported). While these targets were all met, there were no indicators allowing the monitoring of how these outputs contributed to the desired outcome. While the transformational potential of mainly one-off events and life-skill trainings is limited, focus group participants, particularly among Syrian participants, described the activities as sometimes mind-opening.

The capacities of national authorities and CSOs were strengthened, with positive feedback from partners in all three countries on the training on GBV and gender-sensitive humanitarian response. Gender awareness activities for men were of good quality and beneficial to the participants, but their one-off and limited nature were not enough for longer-term or wider impact. Findings from Iraq, which had a more systematic approach to engaging men, suggest that additional investment in advocacy drives, and in enlisting men in supporting women's empowerment, could have strengthened the programme's contribution to breaking down cultural and policy barriers to women's economic empowerment.

by the Covid-19 pandemic, meant that the programme was implemented at a time when economic and mental health stresses were worsening for the beneficiary population. Covid-19 affected programming, but measures were taken to move some activities online, and the programme – both through the income-generating opportunities it provided and through remote support structures set up during lockdown – played a role in supporting beneficiaries and their households through a very challenging period.

Tables listing target achievement status are found in the three country summaries annexed to this report.

Efficiency

The model of providing livelihoods and protection services in women-only centres is an example of global best practice, offering comprehensive services to a highly vulnerable group of women with complex needs. In all three countries, these centres were central to the efficient implementation of the programme.

Such centres are relatively expensive and complicated to run. But the model showcases the results in resilience, confidence and coping that women-only comprehensive 'one-stop-shop' services can have. The Madad programme shows the importance of understanding value for money beyond attention to economy and cost effectiveness, to include equity and leaving no one behind. A clear strength of the programme was the ability of the women-only centres to reach and support the most vulnerable women with complex psychosocial support and counselling needs.

There was an appropriate distribution of resources between components and actors. Strong partnerships with highly capable partners contributed significantly to the efficiency of the centres in all three countries. Beneficiaries were regularly asked about the value of the training activity to ensure relevance to their needs and accountability towards them. However, the coupling between vocational training and cash-for-work activities on the one hand and longer-term livelihood and income-generation opportunities on the other could have been stronger in all three countries.

Programme activities and achievements were generally well monitored and evaluated and the programme has generated a range of useful data on beneficiary women's empowerment and resilience. However, at the regional level, available human resources dedicated to support the programme's considerable M&E tasks were not sufficient.

Evaluation of the programme's baseline, midline and endline survey led to some concerns about the robustness of data. Future surveys would benefit from technical measures related to sampling and data management, to strengthen the quality of the data.

Gender equality and human rights

Gender equality and human rights principles suffused interventions from design through implementation, focusing on addressing gender inequality at the level of individual empowerment, at the relational level of women's interaction with their environment, and at the structural level through contributing to addressing social and cultural barriers to women's empowerment. Of the three (also described as the micro, meso and macro level of empowerment), the programme had greatest success at the individual, and to some extent relational, levels. Macro level changes to societal, political and cultural barriers to women's economic empowerment among refugee and host communities is a long-term effort.

The women-only spaces at the women's empowerment hubs were appropriate considering the nature and severity of the structural barriers to women's empowerment in the contexts of both host and refugee communities: due to the programme's targeting of a vulnerable beneficiary population in a setting of deeply conservative and patriarchal community values, providing safe women-only spaces was central to the programme's ability to contribute to the social empowerment of women beneficiaries.

With such severe contextual restrictions in mind, a key to the achievements of the Madad programme is the model of women-only spaces. In focus groups in all three countries, beneficiaries described the women-only centres in terms of freedom, empowerment and finding their voice. Discussions with women beneficiaries highlighted changes in their gender roles – engaging more in their productive roles in society beyond their reproductive ones – building their confidence and self-worth.

The programme's efforts aimed at gender awareness for men were relatively limited both in scope and in effect, especially in Jordan and Turkey. Somewhat more ambitious programming in this area in Iraq shows the potential positive effect of working with men to promote gender equality in communities where patriarchal norms are strong.

Sustainability

The sustainability of resilience results at the personal and relational level for individual beneficiaries is likely to be high, despite the context of a deteriorating economic and political environment for refugees in the three host countries, with economic hardships accelerating due to Covid-19.

In the case of economic empowerment, some women beneficiaries, particularly in Iraq, reported longer-term improved economic circumstances. In all three countries the income generated through programme activities were important to get recipients through the hardships of the Covid-19 lockdown.

The most significant sustainable impact of the programme at individual level, across the three countries, is in resilience more broadly defined

(rather than economic empowerment), in the form of strengthening women beneficiaries' self-development, coping skills, confidence and support networks. Beneficiaries described how the skills training and emotional support they received from the programme led them to feel less isolated, and more confident, capable and empowered.

UN Women's ongoing work to support gender-sensitive and gender mainstreamed response to the Syria crisis at regional and national levels and its results and influence in these response mechanisms is likely to continue. The capacity building of local CSOs will likely have a lasting impact in the three countries.

The model of comprehensive services through women-only centres is an example of best practice, but it is a complex and relatively expensive type of intervention that remains highly reliant on donor support. Despite its achievements, the SADA centre in Turkey will not, as of now, be able to keep its doors open beyond February 2021, while the programme in Jordan looks set to continue with a phase two. The national ownership of the women-only centre model has been strengthened in Jordan through the partnership between UN Women and the Ministry of Social Development in implementing the out-of-camp centres. This partnership has contributed to the likelihood for sustainability having come the furthest in Jordan out of the three countries of implementation .

Communication and visibility (C&V)

The Madad programme was effective in incorporating a broad range of elements to ensure strong EU visibility, and its C&V activities reflected best practices, ensuring participation and inclusivity both from partners and beneficiaries. The communication products had a strong focus on placing beneficiaries and their voices at the centre.

There are various examples reflecting best practices to ensure EU visibility in the programme. For example, developing a C&V plan according to the EU MADAD guidelines was important to ensure that the C&V activities were well thought of, including aspects such as the targeting of the right audiences and delivery of appropriate messages and implementation of activities in an appropriate and timely manner. Moreover, having a C&V plan is important because it allowed UN Women to produce indicators of achievement for the different tools that were used in the programme.

Conclusion and recommendations

The value of the UN Women Madad programme is undisputed. It is innovative and highly relevant to regional and national priorities for supporting Syrian refugees and host communities. It responds in a context-sensitive manner to the basic needs of targeted beneficiary groups and has been successful at reaching hard-to-reach and vulnerable women with comprehensive, including GBV, services through careful selection of locations and national partners, working with women's grassroots CSOs and conducting community outreach activities.

The programme has contributed to improving beneficiaries' shorter-term coping mechanisms and economic situation, allowing spending on essential needs such as healthcare and children's schooling, and getting through the difficult months of Covid-19 lockdown and restrictions. The programme's combination of protection and psychosocial support services, livelihoods training and job opportunities, workshops on life skills and women's rights, and women's solidarity and social cohesion activities in a safe and supportive women-only environment has had a sustainable impact on beneficiaries' personal and relational empowerment.

The evaluation team makes 11 programme-wide recommendations to build on the strengths and learn from the lessons that the Madad programme offers (listed below). In addition, the evaluation provides 15 country specific recommendations, related to the three country summaries annexed to the report (Annexes 1, 2 and 3).

Recommendation 1: UN Women should continue to play a leading role in the advocacy work to gender mainstream the Syria crisis response at a regional and national level.

Recommendation 2: UN Women should continue to work strategically for longer-term international donor commitment to, and prioritisation of, comprehensive services in women-only safe spaces. This could be a central aspect of UN Women's contribution to the response to the Syria refugee situations.

Recommendation 3: The EUTF should support, through advocacy and funding, efforts to encourage national governments in the region to adopt comprehensive women-only service centres as appropriate and effective responses to women's equality and economic empowerment in a regional context of structural and cultural barriers to women's economic participation.

Recommendation 4: Part of UN Women's strategic drive could be an in-depth comparative investigation of the

pros and cons of the Oasis and SADA models of women-only centres, and work towards streamlining a model that balances quality and depth of service, and operational cost and availability to a larger number of beneficiaries.

Recommendation 5: For programmes with complex objectives, UN Women and EUTF (whether funding UN Women or other organisations) should design strong mechanisms for outcome-level monitoring and results reporting, in order to better track the results of programme interventions and understand their relationship with other factors influencing outcomes.

Recommendation 6: UN Women should continue to develop and refine the gender-sensitive RIMA and Resilience Capacity Index. This work can become a significant contribution of UN Women and FAO to filling gender-sensitive data and evidence gaps and further the understanding of drivers and barriers to resilience.

Recommendation 7: UN Women should develop a robust learning framework for such programmes and facilitate regular structured learning exchanges between the countries such as by undertaking country-specific thematic meetings for the purpose of conducting ‘deep dives’ on thematic issues (such as GBV, cash for work, and social cohesion), collecting best practices and challenges on specific thematic issues to share with other country offices.

Recommendation 8: UN Women should ensure that it has core staff at regional and country level (i.e. M&E staff) available from the outset of programmes.

Recommendation 9: Greater investment of efforts to create sustainable and decent income-generating opportunities across beneficiary groups – Syrian refugees, IDPs and vulnerable host communities.

Recommendation 10: Continue working on initiatives that support behaviour/attitudinal changes among men and boys and ensure these are carefully integrated into programme design, theories of change and the development of monitoring indicators. Consider developing long-term strategies for initiatives on changing gender norms.

Recommendation 11: EUTF could consider funding independent monitoring contracts for communication and visibility strategies, to better understand the impact and effectiveness of C&V activities and to enable iterative changes based on learning during programme lifespan.

1 Introduction: the UN Women Madad programme and its context

UN Women's EU-funded Strengthening the Resilience of Syrian Women and Girls and Host Communities is a three-year regional programme covering Iraq, Jordan and Turkey ("the Madad Programme"). The programme provided comprehensive services to refugee and host community women (as well as internally displaced women in Iraq) through a range of different interventions, mainly delivered through a model of women empowerment hubs (referred to as women-only centres).

The programme's multi-dimensional strategy aims to:

- **enable women's empowerment** through addressing issues of economic vulnerability and violence by increased access to recovery and livelihood opportunities, paired with comprehensive protection services and support to national justice structures to promote accountability for violence against women.
- **promote a culture of peace and co-existence** through supporting women to lead and engage in peace-building, reconciliation and conflict prevention. Bearing in mind the importance of involving men in work on gender equality and women's empowerment, the programme engaged men as partners, champions and advocates for women's increased empowerment, including their engagement in the labour market.

This report presents the approach, methodology and findings of the independent evaluation of the Madad programme with a set of overall conclusions and offers lessons and recommendations for future programming.

UNHCR, Syria Emergency (n.d.), [link](#).

UNHCR (2018) Global Trends – Forced Displacement in 2018, [link](#).

UNHCR, Syria Emergency (n.d.), [link](#).

3RP (n.d.). Regional Strategic Overview 2020-21: 3RP Regional refugee and resilience plan in response to the Syrian crisis, [link](#).

Yahya, M & Marwan, M (n.d.) Refugee Crises in the Arab World: [link](#).

1.1 The Context: Overview of the Syrian refugee crisis in Iraq, Jordan and Turkey

In recent years, conflict in the Middle East has left millions of people fleeing their homes, leaving many without access to basic services and rights. Over 5.6 million people have fled Syria since 2011, seeking safety in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and beyond. Syrians are the largest forcibly displaced population in the world. The majority of Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries live in urban areas, with only 8% in refugee camps. In both situations refugees are extremely vulnerable, with 70% of Syrian refugees in the region living in poverty and vulnerable to protection risks such as gender-based violence (GBV), early marriage, child labour and exploitation. These protection risks are particularly high for women and girls.

Countries hosting displaced people are also under considerable stress as the refugee situation adds to existing strains on the country's resources. Economic growth in some countries remains slow and unemployment high. Poverty rates are also high in many host countries and economic pressures have been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic in all. An additional 14.3 million people are predicted to fall below the poverty line in the Arab Countries, with an additional 1.9 million people predicted to become undernourished. Refugee households are expected to fare particularly badly as a result of Covid-19, and the pandemic is worsening existing vulnerabilities for refugee women and girls, including psychological distress, GBV, and disparities in accessing quality health care.

1.1.1 Overview of the refugee situation in Iraq

In November 2020, there were 1.3 million IDPs; 4.8 million returnees; 283,571 refugees (of whom 242,738 are from Syria); and 47,054 stateless persons in Iraq. Displacement figures have decreased by around 30% from 2017 to 2019. The prolonged nature of the Syrian refugee crisis has put pressure on Iraqi public services and exacerbated community tensions and the vulnerabilities of women and girls. Lack of access to socio-economic and livelihood opportunities, combined with diminishing resources and reduced humanitarian assistance, has resulted in an increased risk of gender-based violence for female refugees.

Impact of Covid-19 on IDP's and refugees in Iraq

According to UNHCR, there were 387,121 individual Covid-19 cases in Iraq as of 6 October 2020. Of these, 294 Covid-19 cases have been identified among UNHCR persons of concern (112 IDPs and 182 refugees), though this figure could be subject to underreporting. The impact of the pandemic has exacerbated existing vulnerabilities for IDP's, refugees and returnee communities. The pandemic has strained the capacity of Iraq's healthcare system. Curfews and lockdowns have reduced economic activity, with livelihoods adversely affected and many Iraqis finding it more difficult to meet basic needs. The worst affected are casual and low-income workers; many of whom will be women. UNHCR reports that outside of access to employment opportunities, other concerns include psychological trauma; stress and anxiety; halt of education activities and the rise of domestic violence.

1.1.2 Overview of the refugee situation in Jordan

In November 2020, Jordan hosted 661,997 refugees from Syria. 85% of Syrian refugees in Jordan live below the poverty line. The Jordan Compact of 2016 between the government of Jordan and key humanitarian actors and donors, committed the Government of Jordan to providing Syrian refugees access to the labour market and entrepreneurial opportunities, while donors committed to support programming on livelihood, skills matching and women's economic empowerment. Under the Jordan Compact, a total of 47,766 work permits were issued to Syrian refugees in 2019, only 5% of which were issued to women.

Impact of Covid-19 on refugees in Jordan

From January 2020, the Government of Jordan imposed strict measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Refugee camps were put under curfew restrictions from mid-March, limiting NGO/INGO/CSO staff access. Most restrictions were lifted by July, while precautionary measures were enhanced. From the start of the pandemic, the Government of Jordan included refugees in the National Health Response Plan. In July 2020, the Ministry of Health has provided Syrian and non-Syrian refugees and asylum seekers access to healthcare and services at the non-insured Jordanian rate (previously only permitted for registered Syrian refugees).

WFP (2020) Impact of COVID-19 in the Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia and Eastern Europe, [link](#).

UNHCR (2020), Iraq: Fact Sheet, November, [link](#).

People of Concern is defined by UNHCR as: Refugees; Returnees; Stateless people; IDPs; Asylum Seekers, [link](#).

3RP (2018) Annual Report 2018, [link](#).

REACH Initiative (2019), Assessment on employment and working conditions of conflict-affected women across key sectors, Final Report, November 2019, [link](#).

UNHCR Covid-19 Update Iraq (2020), [link](#).

Ground Truth Solution, COVID-19 Perceptions of People in Need in Iraq (2020), [link](#).

UNHCR Covid-19 Update Iraq (2020), [link](#).

UNHCR, Syria regional refugee response, operational portal: Jordan, [link](#).

UNHCR Jordan Factsheet, October 2018, [link](#).

Agulhas (7 May 2020) Independent Monitor's Assessment Report: Jordan Compact and Brussels meetings, [link](#).

A multi-sectoral rapid needs assessment conducted by UNICEF, UNHCR and WFP in May 2020, shows that the imposed travel measures and curfew times have had a substantial impact on refugees' access to employment, and has limited the employment opportunities available to them, reducing the expectation of job security for both refugees and Jordanians. The needs assessment further emphasised the implications of low-wage employment often held by refugees, for the limited savings households reported, with only 8% of refugee respondents submitting that they had more than 50 JOD left in savings.

A rapid assessment conducted by UN Women in 2020 indicated that the Covid-19 crisis and confinement measures imposed in Jordan resulted in an increased risk of violence within households, as well as food and economic insecurity, which have had varied impacts on camp and non-camp dwellers, with women in rural settings facing greater challenges to accessing services and information. The assessment highlights the need to provide cash assistance directly to vulnerable women so that they are able to meet their basic needs and in order to reduce tension within households. The repercussion of the Covid-19 pandemic has added even more pressure to the country's already struggling economy. This in turn has created an even more difficult environment for improving women's labour market participation from its low level of 10%.

1.1.3 Overview of the refugee situation in Turkey

Turkey hosts around 3.6 million Syrian refugees under its Temporary Protection Regulation (TPR). Syrians under Temporary Protection" (known as SuTPs) have access to national services, including health, education and social services. Turkey has a non-camp approach, with almost all SuTPs living in urban settings. The refugee response is led by the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM), working with other ministries and provincial and municipal authorities, and with the UN, other international organisations and NGOs in a supportive role. Turkey is an upper middle-income country, but its economy has struggled in recent years. Signs of recovery in late 2019 have been undermined by the Covid-19 pandemic.

UNHCR Jordan Factsheet, September 2020, [link](#).

UNICEF, UNHCR, and WFP (May 2020), Multi-Sectoral Rapid Needs Assessment: COVID-19 Jordan, pp.22-23, [link](#).

UN Women (2020) Rapid Assessment of the impact of Covid-19 on vulnerable women in Jordan, [link](#).

UN Women (2020) Covid-19 and women's economic empowerment: policy recommendations for strengthening Jordan's recovery, [link](#).

UNHCR, Operational Portal Syria Regional Refugee Response: Turkey, [link](#).

3RP (2020), Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan in Response to the Syria Crisis: Turkey, January, [link](#). See also World Bank, Turkey's response to the Syrian refugee crisis and the road ahead, December 2015, [link](#).

3RP (2018). Outcome monitoring report: 3RP Turkey chapter 2018, [link](#).

3RP, Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan in Response to the Syria Crisis: Turkey, January 2020, [link](#), p.6.

The majority of Syrian households in Turkey – 64% in 2018 – live below the poverty line, with hardships set to increase dramatically due to Covid-19 (see below). SuTPs can apply for work permits, but Syrians are mainly able to find jobs in the informal sector, with exploitative working conditions and poor pay. Relations between refugee and host community are challenged by increased competition for jobs and the change in political discourse during the 2019 elections.

Obstacles for women refugees include sex-based segregation of the labour market; low education levels and lack of employability skills; lack of childcare; and the risk of sexual exploitation and harassment in the informal job sector. Women's participation rate in Turkey's workforce is low and has reduced further during the Covid-19 pandemic – from 34.3% in July 2019 to 28.6% in July 2020 (men's labour force participation rate fell from 60.9% to 52.9% in the same period).

Impact of Covid-19 on refugees in Turkey

The pandemic is exacerbating existing inequalities. Economic conditions have worsened for the majority of refugees in Turkey. A rapid assessment of the impact of Covid-19 on refugee households in Turkey found:

- 69% of households reported that they had lost jobs due to Covid-19
- 82% of households have increased debt
- 31% of children enrolled in school cannot access the online curriculum
- 61% of households reported that Covid-19 has impacted their ability to access hospitals.

Gender-based inequality, discrimination and violence have increased in Turkey during the Covid-19 restrictions, according to a UN Women rapid gender assessment on the impacts of Covid-19. A Danish Refugee Council rapid assessment report provided some gender-sensitive data on the impact of Covid-19, noting that female-headed households were particularly likely to lose income activities (having already a low level of labour market participation) as well an increase in domestic tension and indications of increased GBV in refugee households.

Kirisci, K and Kolasin, G. U. (2019), "Syrian Refugees in Turkey need better access to jobs": Brookings Institution, [link](#).

WFP (2020), Social cohesion in Turkey: refugees and the host community, July, [link](#).

Asylum Information Database (N.D.), Access to the labour market: Turkey, AIDA and ECRE, [link](#).

TurkStat (2020), Labour Force Statistics, July 2020, Press Release no. 33791, 12 October, [link](#).

IFRC, Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN), Issue 1: April 2020, [link](#).

UN Women (2020), The economic and social impact of COVID-19 on women and men: rapid gender assessment of COVID-19 implications in Turkey, [link](#).

Danish Refugee Council (2020), COVID-19 Impact on Refugees in South East Turkey, Needs Assessment Report, May, [link](#).

1.2 Programme summary: key facts of the Madad programme

UN Women's Strengthening the Resilience of Syrian Women and Girls and Host Communities in Iraq, Jordan and Turkey is an integrated regional programme. The main funder is the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis (known as EUTF or the EU Madad Fund), established in December 2014 to support Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Turkey and other countries affected by the Syrian crisis. The EUTF's primary objective "is to provide a coherent and reinforced aid response to the Syrian and Iraqi crises and the massive displacement resulting from them on a multi-country scale. In pursuit of this objective, the Trust Fund shall address the needs of three groups: refugees, internally displaced persons, and returnees, and provide assistance to the communities and the administrations in which those groups find themselves, as regards resilience and early recovery". In the four years to September 2019, the Fund mobilised more than EUR 1.8 billion for projects focusing on education, livelihoods and health care provided for both refugees and local communities.

UN Women's Madad programme builds on the agency's previous work in the area of protection, economic empowerment and increased access to multi-sectoral services for refugee women and host communities. The programme's overall objective is to strengthen the resilience of Syrian and host community women. In Iraq, the programme also targets displaced Iraqi women affected by the crisis. The programme flows from the priorities of the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan in response to the Syria crisis (3RP) to enhance local and national capacities and support dignified lives of refugees and host community members.

European Commission (2019), Agreement establishing the European Union Regional trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis, 'The Madad Fund', and its internal rules, Ref. Ares(2019)1662639, Brussels: 13 March, p. 7, link. See also EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis website, link.

UN Women (2018), Project proposal: Strengthening the Resilience of Syrian Women and Girls and Host Communities in Iraq, Jordan and Turkey, January.

UN Women's Madad programme's specific objectives are to:

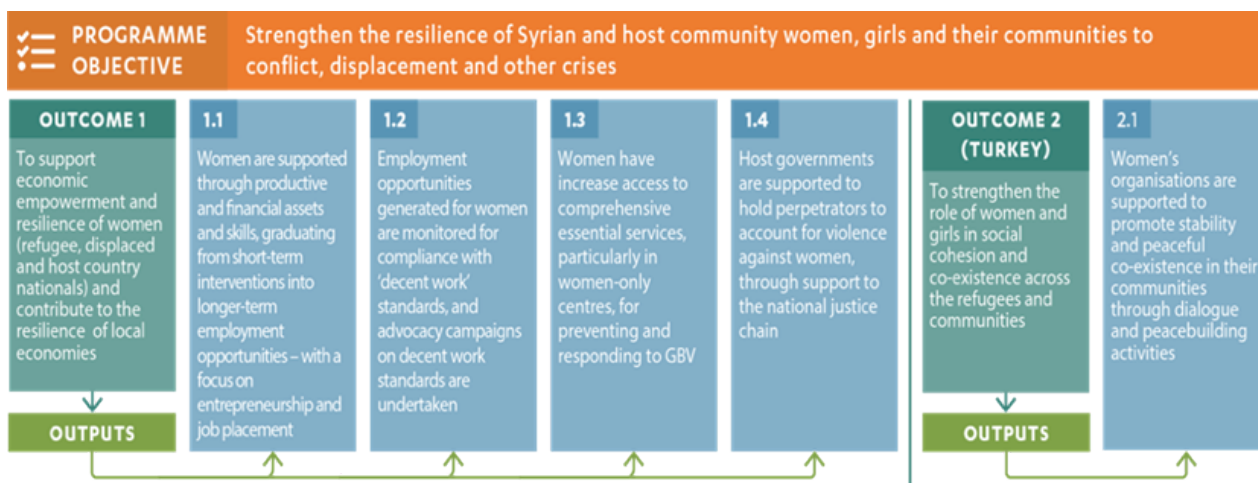
- i) Enable women's economic empowerment through increased access to recovery and livelihood opportunities, provide comprehensive protection services and to support women to live and engage in public space free from violence. Bearing in mind the importance of men in work on gender equality and women's empowerment, the programme seeks to engage men as champions and advocates around women's engagement in the labour market.
- ii) Promote a culture of peace and co-existence through supporting women to lead and engage in peacebuilding, reconciliation, conflict prevention and rights protection.

The intervention logic is based on a theory of change (ToC) statement that posits: If (1) relief and resilience efforts prioritize the participation, safety and economic well-being of women affected by, and displaced by, crisis; if (2) women are supported as leaders within their communities and nationally, then (i) women affected by crisis will be able to meet their needs, as well as those of their families and their communities; (ii) they will be more likely to live a life without violence; (iii) they will be better positioned to serve as leaders within their communities and challenge inequalities around them; and (iv) they will be more resilient to risk and shock because their rights and needs will be at the centre of national and international assistance.

The Madad programme's objectives, outcomes and outputs, reproduced from the programme logical framework in Figure 1 below, flow from this theory of change statement. (Please see Finding 1, in section 4, for further discussion of the ToC and logical framework.)

Figure 1:

The Madad programme’s objective, outcomes and outputs



The overall budget of the programme is EUR 16,372,883 of which EUR 13,029,078 was a contribution from the EUTF. The remaining was obtained through co-financing from UN Women, the Government of Japan, and other donors. The programme is implemented by UN Women and partners in Iraq, Jordan and Turkey. According to the original agreement with the EU, the project was expected to run between 1 February 2018 and 31 January 2020, and

Programme Budget:

- Total: EUR 16,372,883
- Regional: EUR 1,079,364
- Iraq: EUR 5,000,000
- Jordan: EUR 3,750,000
- Turkey: EUR 6,543,519

31 January 2020. Due to various contextual and country-specific changes, a six-month no-cost extension was granted by the main donor until 31 July 2020 for the Jordan and Turkey Country Offices. The Turkey programme then received a further costed extension until 31 January 2021.

There was a ten-month delay in the programme launch in Jordan. Delay in implementation of activities impacted on the efficiency of the programme delivery in Jordan. Corrective measures focused on reducing the problems caused by the delay, but it resulted in knock-on effects on some planned activities such as the business incubator platform, which was seriously delayed. Entrepreneurship activities also suffered from the distorted sequencing but managed to catch up.

A Programme Management Team (PMT) provides oversight and coordination of the programme and is tasked with fostering inter-country learning from the onset of the programme. A full-time Regional Programme Coordinator as well as part-time Financial Specialist, a Monitoring and Reporting Specialist and two Communication and Media Experts were recruited. The Madad programme was a complex, multi-site programme with a range of intervention locations. Figures 2, 3 and 4 provide an overview of key programme facts and geographical locations of the Madad programme in Iraq, Jordan and Turkey, respectively.

Figure 2:

The UN Women Madad programme in Iraq: key facts and locations



Figure 3:

The UN Women Madad programme in Jordan: key facts and locations

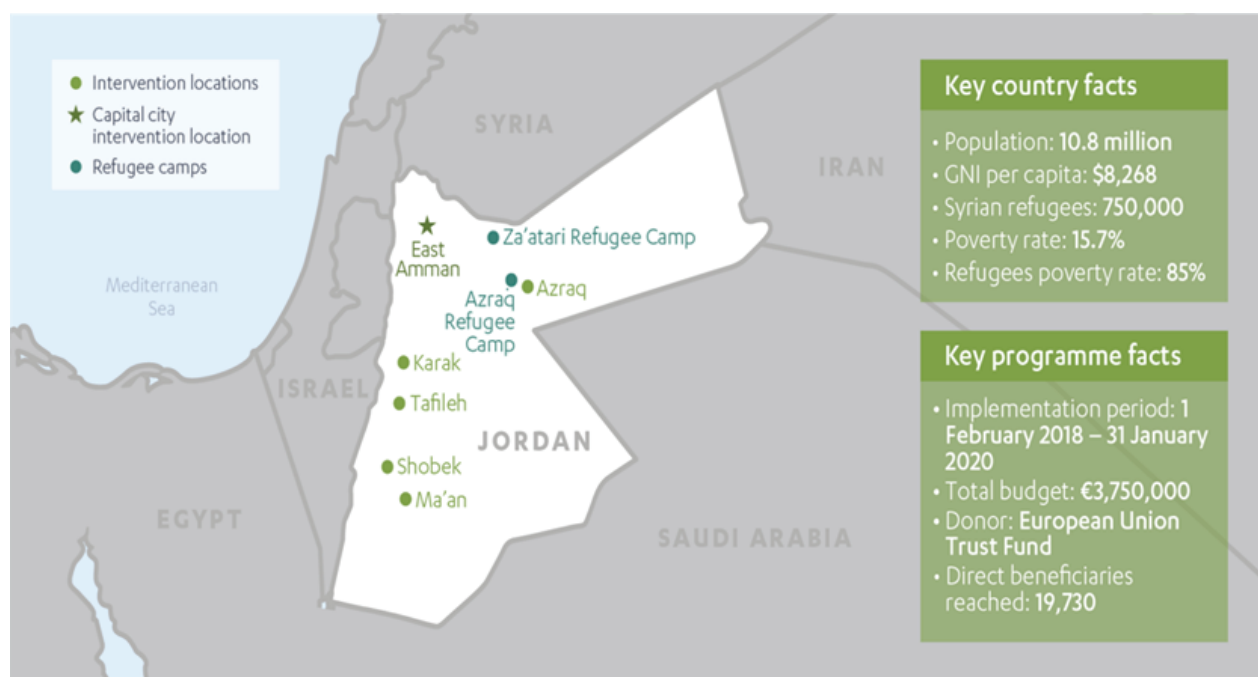
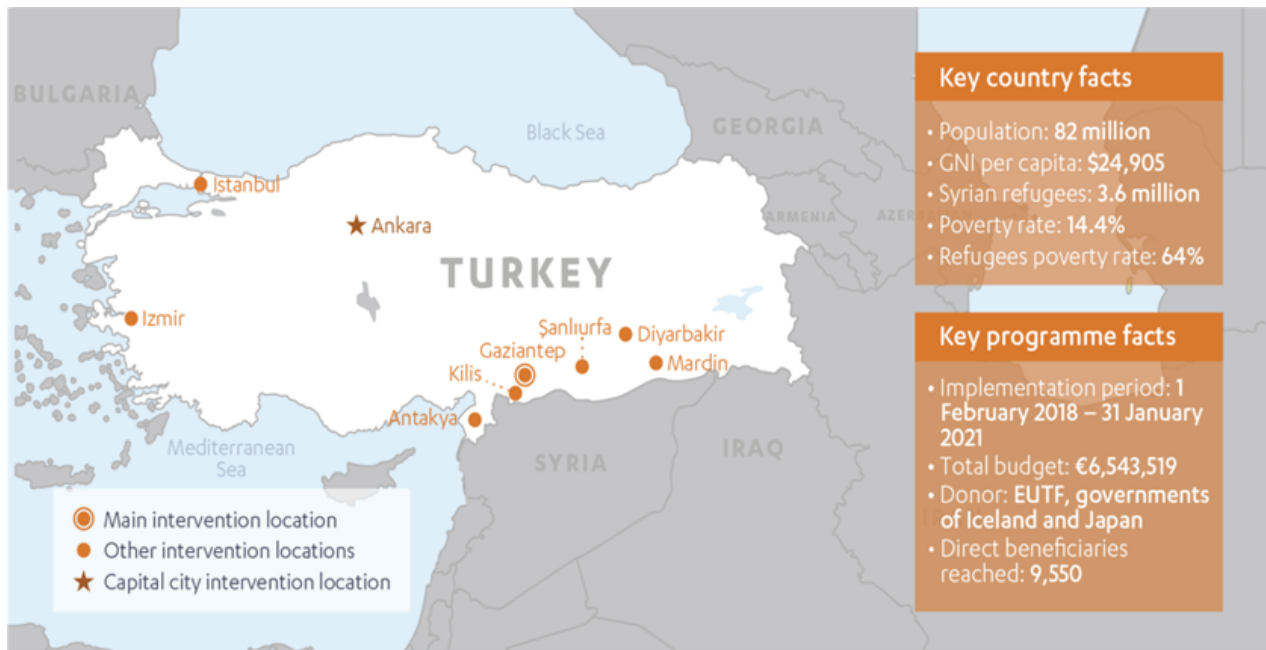


Figure 4:

The UN Women Madad programme in Turkey: key facts and locations



Box 1: Implementing partners in each of the three countries















Country	Government	NGOs	UN and INGOs
Jordan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) (Output 1.1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD) (Output 1.1) Education for Employment (EFE) Jordan, WWA and MOWGLI (Output 1.2) SADAQA (Output 1.3) Jordan Women's Union (JWU) (Output 1.4) Arab Women's Legal Network (AWLN) (Output 1.5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> REACH
Turkey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gaziantep Municipality ISKUR (Output 1.1 and 1.2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants (ASAM) (Output 1.1, 1.4 and 1.5), RET International (Output 1.1 and 1.5), Habitat and KEDV (Foundation for Supporting Women's Work) (Output 1.5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Labour Organisation (ILO) (Output 1.1 and 1.2)
Iraq	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Council of Women's Affairs (HCWA); Directorate of Women's Empowerment (DWE); Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA); and Directorate to Combat VAW (DCVAW) (Output 1.3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baghdad Women Association (BWA), Women Leadership Institute (WLI), Women Empowerment Organisation (WEO), Tajdid (Output 1.1 and 1.3) WLI (Output 1.1 and 1.3) 	

Tables 1, 2 and 3 below give more detail about the main responsibilities of, and activities conducted by, the core programme partners for each of the three countries. In addition to the partners listed in these tables, who were directly involved in programme development and delivery, other partners included other UN agencies, especially UNDP, UNHCR, ILO and WFP, with whom UN Women has worked closely through the humanitarian coordination mechanisms in Iraq, Jordan and Turkey as well as at regional level.

Table 1: UN Women’s Madad programme partners and their core activities in Iraq

<p>Baghdad Women’s Association (BWA)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cash for work opportunities in Dohuk - Job placement and apprenticeships for women with local businesses and private companies in Baghdad - Men-engagement activities on gender equality and GBV in Dohuk - Strengthening safe centers (Women’s Centres) in temporary setting with multi-sectoral, including psychosocial and legal, services in Baghdad and Dohuk - Support the engagement of displaced/refugee women in the design and delivery of humanitarian relief using UN Women safe spaces through forming committees in their respective communities in Baghdad and Dohuk
<p>Tajdid</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide cash for work opportunities to refugees; linked to local economic needs - Provided training and job placement in three private sector, in Ninawa and Salah al-Din - Supporting the engagement of displaced/refugee women in the design and delivery of humanitarian relief, using UN Women safe spaces through forming committees in their respective communities - Establish and strengthen women’s safe centres in temporary settings for women and girls affected by crisis, in Ninawa and Salah al-Din
<p>Women’s Empowerment Organization</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide cash for work opportunities to refugees, linked to economic needs - Provide training and job placement in private sector - Support the setting up committees to support vulnerable women in Erbil - Establish and strengthen safe centres for women and girls affected by crises - Conduct awareness rising to reduce the stigma for GBV survivors
<p>Women Leadership Institute</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engaging men and boys in awareness-raising programs on gender-equality and GBV issues via local partners in Fallujah and male-led community activities in Anbar - Support the engagement of displaced/refugee women in the design and delivery of humanitarian relief, using UN Women safe spaces. - Facilitate and support women’s committees in Anbar and Kirkuk - Provision of psychosocial support and legal assistance in each of the safe spaces, including training for safe space staff on case management and documentations.
<p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support Included psychosocial counselling, legal aid and referrals - Training shelter staff and local police/security forces on GBV and national/international law, and norms on women’s empowerment and gender equality - Shelters supported to build better management systems, to help improve case management of women, and administrative and legal assistance
<p>High Council of Women’s affairs</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct trainings for nine gender units in KRG Ministries Ministry of Interior, Health, Education, Labour and Social Affairs, Justice, Higher Education and Scientific Affairs, Agriculture, and Directorate of Foreign Affairs
<p>DCVAW</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify and support centers with host governments including shelters run by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

Table 3: UN Women’s Madad programme partners and their core activities in Jordan

<p>ARDD-Legal Aid</p> 	 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Civic engagement, participation, and leadership training for vulnerable women - Engage men and host communities on issues of gender equality through long term behavioural change programming-with a focus on dialogue and civic engagement and women’s access to employment - Together with the ministry of social Development, training of day care providers and social workers on child protection and chikd education
<p>Arab Womens` Legal Network</p> 	 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide training for 40 justice sector officials by justice sector professionals. Training focussed on legal framework; interpretation, tools for adjudicating, do no harm principles: scenario- based studies; peer-to-peer mentoring of justice officials to provide real-time and tailored support to adjudicating GBV cases
<p>Engagement of jordan Education for Employment</p> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Private sector partner identification; the signing of contracts with private sector partners, linked to WEP - placement of 500 women in education, health, ICT, tourism, and data entry/secretarial sector - Training for upskilling, focussing on employability, labour law and legal frameworks, and on-the-job training
<p>Jordanian Womens` Union (JWU)</p> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support services to those at risk of and surviving GBV across jordan: emergency shelter, legal aid, day care, life skills, psychosocial support, medicaland dental care - Community outreach undertaken to raise awareness issues of GBV and of the available JWU services
<p>Sadaqa</p> 	 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subsidies for transportation and day care are provided to working poor women to enable access to the labour market - Advocacy campaigns on the importance of the provision of gender-responsive transportation and child care services
<p>Ministry of Social Development</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ministry of Social Development worked with UN Women to provide cash for work opportunities, through eight communities centers in East Amman, Zarqa, Karak, Tafileh, and ma`an govrenorates

2 Evaluation purpose, objective, scope and management

2.1 Purpose, objectives and use of the evaluation

The evaluation is primarily summative in nature and the main purpose of this final evaluation is to assess the performance of the programme and achievement of results, recognising the different needs and priorities of crises-affected populations both in camps and non-camp settings. However, it also has a formative component as it studies, documents and consolidates lessons learned and best practices derived from the programme, for sustainability in the target countries, as well for replicability and application to other regions/countries. The evaluation employed OECD DAC evaluation criteria including those of relevance, effectiveness and impact, efficiency, human rights and gender equality and sustainability. It also evaluated the communication and visibility of the programme and its achievements. A full list of the evaluation questions can be found in Annex 4.

While assessment of the performance and progress of the programme was the priority of the evaluation, it also assessed the relationship between the interventions and longer-term changes, to determine which elements worked well in which contexts, and which would be worth replicating or scaling up. In addition, the evaluation assessed synergies between the activities implemented under this programme, and the interventions and approaches of other UN Women and partner programmes along the humanitarian-development continuum.

Specifically, the objectives of this evaluation were to:

- Analyse the relevance of the programme objectives, strategy and approach at local, central and regional level and UN Women's comparative advantage/added value compared with key partners.
- Investigate how well the programme fits with other interventions at a regional and country level, as well as at a sectoral and institutional level.
- Analyse how a human rights approach and gender equality principles are integrated in the programme approach and implementation.
- Assess effectiveness and potential measurable impact of the programme interventions on the target countries.

- Assess organisational efficiency and coordination mechanisms in progressing towards the achievement of the programme results.
- Assess the connectedness and sustainability of the results and the interventions in advancing gender equality in the target countries.
- Identify and document lessons learned, good practices and innovations, success stories and challenges within the programme, to inform UN Women’s future work with refugees, displaced people and host communities.

Findings from this evaluation will be used to inform future programmatic decisions, organisational learning and accountability, as well as to identify good practice and effective interventions to strengthen the resilience of Syrian women and girls and host communities in the targeted countries and beyond. The findings, particularly around the model of comprehensive services in women’s empowerment hubs/women-only centres, may contribute to the planning and design of future UN Women actions globally (strategy development, partnership development etc.). This corresponds to the Corporate Thematic Evaluation of UN Women’s Contribution to Humanitarian Action, conducted in 2019, which recommended that: “lessons from UN Women’s country level work should serve to improve programming approaches globally and serve as a catalyst for longer-term transformative change”. The targeted users of the evaluation are UN Women Senior Management at regional and country level, programme staff, and key stakeholders (donors, government partners, humanitarian actors, other regional actors, UN system) working on the Syrian crisis response.

2.2 Evaluation scope

The evaluation covered all aspects of the programme’s implementation and the entire programme period from February 2018 to July 2020 (although not the complete costed extension period in Turkey). The evaluation covered Iraq, Jordan, and Turkey, as well as regional coordination mechanism. It was conducted between December 2019 and December 2020, with the evidence gathering completed in August 2020.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions and out of concern for the safety of beneficiaries and researchers during the pandemic, the evaluation became a fully virtual evaluation without site visits and with all interviews and focus groups taking place via audio or video calls.

As a result of this safety and ethics-based decision, some adjustments had to be made to the evidence gathering. Focus group discussions (FGDs) with non-beneficiaries were not carried out due to complexities of recruiting and conducting virtual FGDs with this target group. Beneficiary FGDs were conducted in smaller groups than originally planned, due to the logistical difficulties of recruiting, connecting and hosting large numbers on virtual platforms.

2.3 Evaluation Management

This evaluation has been commissioned by UN Women ROAS and ECARO regional offices. It has been managed by the Regional Evaluation Specialists from both the regions, who are members of UN Women Independent Evaluation Service, and supported by an Evaluation Reference Group comprised of key country, regional and donor representatives. This group was guided by a Terms of Reference (see Annex 5) and was constituted to ensure a participatory approach to the evaluation. The Regional Programme Coordinator and national programme stakeholders supported the conduct of the evaluation. The Evaluation Team was comprised of two team leaders, three national experts, and four team members. The Evaluation Team used a collaborative, respectful and transparent approach to its work, coordinating with UN Women regional and country offices.

3 Evaluation Methodology and Design

3.1 Methodology

The evaluation applied a feminist theoretical lens to shape its conceptual framework, by focusing on systemic power imbalances between men and women, within patriarchal societies with strongly gendered roles; building knowledge through women's experience, using gender disaggregated data (where possible and available); as well as adopting a human-rights, gender-responsive approach that is participatory, inclusive and culturally sensitive. The feminist lens will manifest in the application of a three-dimensional model of women's empowerment in the design and implementation of the evaluation. This model proposes that women's empowerment can take place on three distinct levels/dimensions.

- i) Micro-level, or personal level, where individual beliefs and actions can show confidence, personal autonomy and accessibility to different forms of capital (financial, social, cultural).
- ii) Meso-level, which refers to beliefs and actions in relations to others within the women's realm of interaction. In this dimension, relational empowerment can be observed.
- iii) Macro level, which refers to broader societal contexts and structures.

Each dimension has different and distinct pathways to impact, with different timelines for when the effect of interventions can be expected to be seen. Thus, it is important to take into consideration when evaluating the intervention's influence on women's empowerment across the three dimensions that some effects may be more immediate than others. Culture, and the normative understanding of women's position in society, must also be taken into consideration when using this model, as they may affect the choice of empowerment indicators. This will be especially relevant given that the project is implemented in different countries.

Contribution analysis was used to develop impact narratives. This was necessary due to the multiple and complex causal factors that contribute and interact with each other to affect/hinder the change that the Madad programme sought to achieve. The contribution analysis started with an assessment of the soundness of the programme's theory of change (ToC) and the extent to which the ToC had translated into country plans and the design and implementation of interventions. Programme-specific results evidence was triangulated and tested against a combination of other resources, including a review of relevant academic and grey literature; a strategic review of programme documents including monitoring reports; country reviews of the refugee situation; and challenges in each of the three partner countries, to ensure the role of contextual factors was incorporated and understood in the assessment of results and impact. The approach allowed the evaluation team to identify and assess the main external factors and other interventions that may have contributed to the desired change/particular outcome, in addition to the programme's own interventions. This allowed us to build a plausible, well-evidenced narrative of the relative contribution the programme has made as one among many factors that would have influenced the programme outcomes.

The evaluation applied a mixed methods approach by combining quantitative with qualitative data, to facilitate the triangulation and verification of results and increasing the internal reliability and consistency of findings. Using mixed methods brought to light diverging evidence that may have been overlooked with a single methodology. Furthermore, the evaluation approach was highly participatory, conducting a range of focus groups and interviews with beneficiaries as well as other stakeholders, in order to encourage the co-construction of knowledge and the inclusion of perspectives from diverse backgrounds. There was a relative lack of outcome-level results data for the programme, which meant listening to the experiences and feedback from the beneficiaries became even more important to gauge the programme's impact on women beneficiaries' empowerment and resilience.

3.2 Data collection, analysis and sampling

The section below provides an overview of the mix of evidence collection tools employed in this evaluation to feed into the contribution analysis. The evaluation team is deeply grateful for the timely and supportive assistance and facilitation provided by UN Women and its implementing partners in approaching and recruiting focus group and interview participants for this evaluation. The support was more crucial than ever considering that the evaluation team was unable to conduct site visits due to Covid-19 restrictions.

3.2.1 Literature review

The literature review provided the evaluation team with a light-touch overview of the academic and grey literature on research themes identified during the inception phase of the evaluation, both in order to understand the challenges and barriers to impact and to identify evidence of good/best practice (See Annex 6 for a full list of literature referred to both in this synthesis report and in the three country summary reports, in annexes 1, 2 and 3).

3.2.2 Strategic review

The strategic review involved a desk review of programme documents at regional and country level, including (but not exhaustive of) the programme's ToC, logical frameworks, Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL), results reports, visibility and communication reports, and outputs from the programme (including communication and publicity material) (See Annex 7 for a full list of programme documents consulted for this evaluation).

Huis, M., N. Hansen, S. Otten, and R. Lensink (2017). A Three-Dimensional Model of Women's Empowerment: Implications in the Field of Micro Finance and Future Directions. *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol 8. P. 1678.

3.2.3 Quantitative survey data

The evaluation made use of the baseline, midline and endline surveys designed by UN Women and conducted by its implementing partners in the three countries as part of the triangulation of evidence, noting that the survey results obtained by UN Women were broadly in line with the findings from the evaluation's qualitative interviews and focus groups, as well as with the external data sources such as government statistics, UN reports and other research which were also consulted. How the baseline, midline and endline surveys were designed and implemented were also part of the remit for the independent evaluation, and are discussed in the efficiency section of this report in response to the evaluation question "How well are project activities and achievements monitored and evaluated?"

3.2.4 Qualitative, semi-structured focus group discussions (FGDs)

Qualitative, semi-structured FGDs were carried out with direct programme beneficiaries in Jordan, Iraq and Turkey. The literature and strategic review, as well as initial findings of the stakeholder interviews, were used to inform the topics and questions guiding the focus groups. Random stratified sampling was used to select participants for the FGDs. The recruitment of participants was the responsibility of UN Women and its implementing partners. The evaluation team was responsible for providing UN Women with selection criteria. Based on these, UN Women provided anonymised lists of participants covering the full range of criteria for each of the focus groups. The evaluation team then randomly selected beneficiaries from this list in a manner covering all the sample criteria. The selection process was therefore random, but stratification was applied in order to be as inclusive as possible and obtain a sample that best reflects beneficiaries in the programme (See Annex 8 for a full list of FGD themes and (anonymised) participants carried out in each country).

Disability was originally a sampling criterion for focus groups, but due to the need to reduce the size of the FGDs when conducting these virtually, it was no longer possible to keep this as a formal criteria. The evaluation nevertheless ensured to include the voices of beneficiaries with disabilities in some of the focus groups and EILs.

3.2.5 Qualitative, semi-structured individual interviews with key informants

Qualitative, semi-structured individual interviews were carried out with UN Women programme staff and implementing partners in the three countries. The interviews with UN Women included staff at the national, regional and headquarter levels. Interviews were also conducted with higher-level focal points from the EU Delegation at country level, as well as in Brussels. The assessment of the programme's relevance, positioning and contributions was strengthened through qualitative, semi-structured individual interviews with key informants, beyond partners and donors, involved in, benefitting from, or coordinating with the UN Women Madad programme and/or working on women's economic empowerment in Jordan, Iraq, and Turkey. These included government entities (national and local), UN Agencies, (I)NGOs, and civil society and women's organisations (See Annex 8 for a full list of key informants interviewed). Purposive sampling was used to identify key informants, and a list of key stakeholder organisations and institutions was drawn up in collaboration with UN Women's regional and country offices, in order to ensure that the most suitable candidates were selected for the interviews.

3.2.6 Qualitative extended individual interviews (EIs)

Qualitative, extended individual interviews were carried out with two direct beneficiaries in each of the three countries. The purpose of the interviews was to gain an in-depth understanding of issues such as the causal links of the interventions and whether they are consistent with the causal contribution of the programme; possible alternative explanations for the impacts observed; and most significant change stories showcasing (intended and unintended) impacts on beneficiaries. Random, stratified sampling was used to identify beneficiaries of the EIs. The stratification was based on the type of activity beneficiaries were involved in, and their gender and refugee/HC/IDP status (See Annex 8 for a list of EIs. See also the anonymised case stories based on these interviews, in Annex 9. Information from these interviews have also been used to inform and illustrate the findings of this evaluation).

3.2.7 Data analysis

For the analysis and reporting phase, the evaluation followed the OECD DAC criteria of relevance; effectiveness and impact; efficiency; equity and human rights; and connectedness and sustainability, within an overall gender equality perspective. Evaluation questions from the evaluation team's Terms of Reference were adapted in the inception phase and developed into a detailed evaluation matrix covering all of the programme's output and outcome results. These questions were used to develop the interview, focus group and survey tools (See Annex 4 for the Evaluation Matrix). A gendered approach was applied throughout the evaluation, including its design, development, implementation and analysis phases. This involved using a gendered lens on macro, meso and micro level for a better understanding of the experiences of Syrian refugee women and men, as well as those from the host population in Iraq, Jordan and Turkey.

3.2.8 Stakeholder consultation

In total, qualitative interviews with 98 individuals were carried out in the three countries (of which 34 were in Jordan, 26 in Iraq, and 38 in Turkey). In addition, the evaluation team conducted a total of 13 FGDs (4 in Jordan, 6 in Iraq, and 4 in Turkey). Table 4 below provides an overview of the interviews and FGDs carried out in each country. Annex 8 also provides a detailed list of interviewees and FGD participants.

Table 4: Stakeholder engagement*

Data collection methods	Jordan		Iraq		Turkey		Regional	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Qualitative interviews with UN Women staff	5	1	3	0	3	1	2	0
Qualitative interviews with partners	9	5	5	5	17	1	1	0
Qualitative interviews with key stakeholders	5	2	4	3	5	3	1	0
In-depth Extended interviews with beneficiaries	2	0	2	0	2	0	0	0
Focus group discussions (FGDs)	3	1	5	1	3	1	0	0
TOTAL INTERVIEWS + FGDs	33		28		36		4	

* Some stakeholders were interviewed more than once on different aspects of the evaluation but are only counted once. For a more detailed list of stakeholder and beneficiary engagement, see Annex 8.

3.3 Limitations

- While the evaluation focused on being as inclusive as possible, there were limitations in inclusivity, particularly in relation to FGDs with beneficiaries in all three countries. For example, due to the logistical complications of recruiting and conducting FGDs virtually, the number of participants in each FGD in the three countries did not exceed six individuals. It was important to reduce the number of FGD participants per focus group in order to ensure that they were properly moderated, everybody had a chance to speak, and that rich data could be produced. Moreover, it was difficult to ensure that participants attending FGDs were representative of the various activities that needed to be evaluated.
- The evaluation team was unable to conduct FGDs with non-beneficiaries and conduct site visits due to restrictions in mobility resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic.
- A list of key stakeholders to interview was agreed with UN Women at the inception phase. The virtual nature of the evaluation precluded the possibility of identifying further stakeholders during the evidence gathering stage, particularly among smaller, community-based local organisations, as part of conducting site visits. In Turkey, conducting the interviews with government stakeholders was challenging, as focal points requested that they take place face to face. An interview with the Gaziantep Municipality was finally arranged via Zoom.
- The fully virtual nature of the evaluation meant it was more difficult to conduct interviews and focus groups on sensitive topics such as GBV. Following good practice on doing no harm, the evaluation team did not conduct telephone or online interviews with survivors of GBV. In Turkey, two vulnerable women receiving psychosocial support were interviewed, as they were able to do the interviews in the safe setting of the SADA centre, while the interviewer and interpreter connected to them via Zoom.
- Issues related to the sampling approach and representativeness of the survey meant that the evaluation relied less on the survey results than originally anticipated. However, the survey results were useful as part of a triangulation of a range of evidence sources, including other monitoring reports, satisfaction surveys conducted by UN Women and implementing partners, external research and data sources, and the evaluation team's interviews and FGDs.

In order to address information gaps arising from these limitations, the evaluation team carried out a large number of qualitative individual interviews in the three countries, as well as a thorough review of relevant literature.

For outcome-level results, the team relied on contribution analysis, due to the lack of outcome-level results data produced by the programme.

Box 2: Adjustments to the methodology due to Covid-19 restrictions

- Changing face-to-face FGDs to virtual FGDs with smaller groups in order to ensure that FGDs are properly moderated and rich data is generated
- Cancellation of site visits in the three countries due to travel restrictions
- Increasing the number of virtual qualitative interviews and desk and literature review to overcome data gaps
- Removing sensitive topics that may put participants at risk from interviews or FGDs, unless the evaluation team could be certain that the interviewee was in a safe place and able to speak freely

3.4 Ethics

The evaluation followed the UNEG ethical code of conduct and gender equality principles, as well as international humanitarian standards and principles such as Sphere and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Code of Conduct. “Do No Harm”, protection and safety of participants (especially children and vulnerable adults), staff and consultants were the evaluation’s guiding principles.

Agulhas’ safeguarding and whistleblowing policies were adhered to throughout the evaluation process. Agulhas’s Security Officer liaised with UN Women, its local partners, and with Q Perspectives to triangulate local and regional intel prior to and during deployments. The evaluation team employed an adaptive programme management approach, quickly adapting the approach in close discussions with UN Women once significant contextual changes occurred. Before the decision to conduct the evaluation virtually was made, Agulhas’ COO and Security Officer, in close collaboration with the Agulhas and Q Perspective evaluation team and UN Women, conducted a full assessment of risks to the team and beneficiaries created by the Covid-19 pandemic. It was first decided to postpone beneficiary consultations until August 2020, in case travel would be possible. In mid-July, after a risk assessment and consultations with UN Women, the decision was then taken to conduct the beneficiary consultations virtually.

An ethical protocol was developed for the data collection. The evaluation team produced information sheets and consent forms which were translated and shared with all interviewees.

Due to the interviews and FGDs taking place via online video or audioconferencing, consent forms were in most cases read out to the participants and informed consent was given orally. (See Annex 10 for the ethical protocol and information sheets and consent forms).

4 Evaluation findings

This section sets out the main findings of the evaluation. While it answers the questions set out in the evaluation matrix, some questions are grouped together and the report prioritises the most interesting and useful findings for learning purposes and future programming. This synthesis report draws together the findings from across the three countries covered by this regional programme, as well as the regional level. For a more detailed account of the achievements and challenges in Iraq, Jordan and Turkey, please refer to the country summaries accompanying this synthesis report (Annex 1: Iraq, Annex 2: Jordan, and Annex 3: Turkey).

4.1 Relevance

Summary of relevance findings: The UN Women Madad programme is highly relevant to regional and national response plans for the Syrian crisis and to beneficiary needs. UN Women has filled a central and constructive guiding role in the coordination system for the Syrian crisis on gender-responsive action and gender mainstreaming.

The theory of change (ToC) is relevant, coherent and evidence based. The ToC was pitched at a fairly high level of abstraction, which meant that causal propositions of how outputs were related to outcomes – and how outcomes such as social cohesion could be measured – were left vague. Causal pathways, and in particular, the significant barriers and challenges to women’s economic empowerment and resilience in the three countries, could have been better explored.

While the Madad programme is formally a regionally integrated programme, implementation has taken place under a regional umbrella through separate sets of country level interventions. The light-touch regional organisation of the programme was appropriate considering the different contexts, challenges and needs in the three countries and the fact that the programme spanned two regional offices both for UN Women and the donor.

The women-only focus and the comprehensive approach spanning livelihoods and protection (including GBV) activities in a 'one-stop-shop' centre is innovative, responsive to beneficiary needs and fills a clear gap in the Syrian crisis response. There was a strong focus on at-risk and vulnerable women.

FINDING 1: The Theory of Change (ToC) is relevant, coherent, evidence based and strongly aligned with UN Women and broader UN principles and objectives, as well as regional and national response plans. However, the lack of detail on causal pathways and the broadly framed outcome statements make the interventions' contribution to outcome-level results difficult to monitor and evaluate.

The Madad programme's ToC holds that:

If (1) relief and resilience efforts prioritize the participation, safety and economic well-being of women affected by, and displaced by, crisis; if (2) women are supported as leaders within their communities and nationally, then (i) women affected by crisis will be able to meet their needs, as well as those of their families and their communities; (ii) they will be more likely to live a life without violence; (iii) they will be better positioned to serve as leaders within their communities and challenge inequalities around them; and (iv) they will be more resilient to risk and shock because their rights and needs will be at the centre of national and international assistance.

This change statement is developed into the Madad programme's two themes of 1) supporting Syrian women's resilience through economic empowerment and 2) strengthening the role of women and girls in social cohesion and co-existence. Both the change statement and the two themes running from this are well supported by evidence and strongly aligned with UN Women and broader UN principles and priorities. The relevance and desirability of this focus was recognised and confirmed by a number of beneficiaries and partners consulted in all three countries. The alignment with the priorities of donors, regional and national response plans and national governments is also strong:

- **Focus on women's empowerment, self-reliance and resilience** through a combination of livelihoods and protection activities: This focus chimes, e.g., with the mission statement of the EUTF, which includes "to foster more self-reliance of refugees, helping them thrive, not just survive, while at the same time assisting the countries and communities hosting them".

The 3RP strategy notes that “a special emphasis will also be placed on skills enhancement, including digital skills, and re-profiling of vulnerable people, particularly women and disadvantaged youth, to facilitate job market (re-)entry.”

- **Providing services to both refugee and host community:** Both the EUTF (as seen in the mission statement quote above) and the 3RP regional and national plans emphasise the burden placed on host communities due to the Syria crisis and the need to support vulnerable members of the host community. The 3RP notes that engaging and benefitting both host and refugee populations can contribute to promoting peaceful relationships between communities.

The two figures below show the ToC developed by UN Women for the Madad programme, with [Figure 5](#) presenting the inter-relationships between the components of a responsive resilience-based approach and [Figure 6](#) suggesting how that broader approach translates into two outcomes and a set of suggestions for how the programme can contribute to achieving them. This was then developed into the programme’s logical framework, which sets out the objective, outcomes and outputs (see [Figure 1](#) in section 1.2 of this report) and includes results targets and the assumptions that need to hold for the targets to be reached.

See the Bibliography in Annex 6. UN Women has contributed to this body of evidence through a range of national, regional and global reports on how conflict, displacement and humanitarian crisis affects women and girls differently to men and boys, while humanitarian and development interventions are often ‘gender blind’. There is a large and growing body of literature on the role of women’s empowerment in achieving peacebuilding, most notably leading to the UN’s Women, Peace and Security agenda, which understands that women’s participation in conflict resolution and political settlement is both a matter of women’s human rights and a means of achieving durable peace. See e.g. the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) (2019), UN DPPA Women, Peace and Security Policy, June, [link](#) and the DPPA’s Women, Peace and Security website, [link](#).

3RP (n.d.). Regional Strategic Overview 2020-21: 3RP Regional refugee and resilience plan in response to the Syrian crisis, p. 12, [link](#).

See e.g. 3RP (n.d.). Regional Strategic Overview 2020-21: 3RP Regional refugee and resilience plan in response to the Syrian crisis, p.8 and p. 12, [link](#).

Figure 5: Theory of change (i): a gender-responsive resilience-based approach

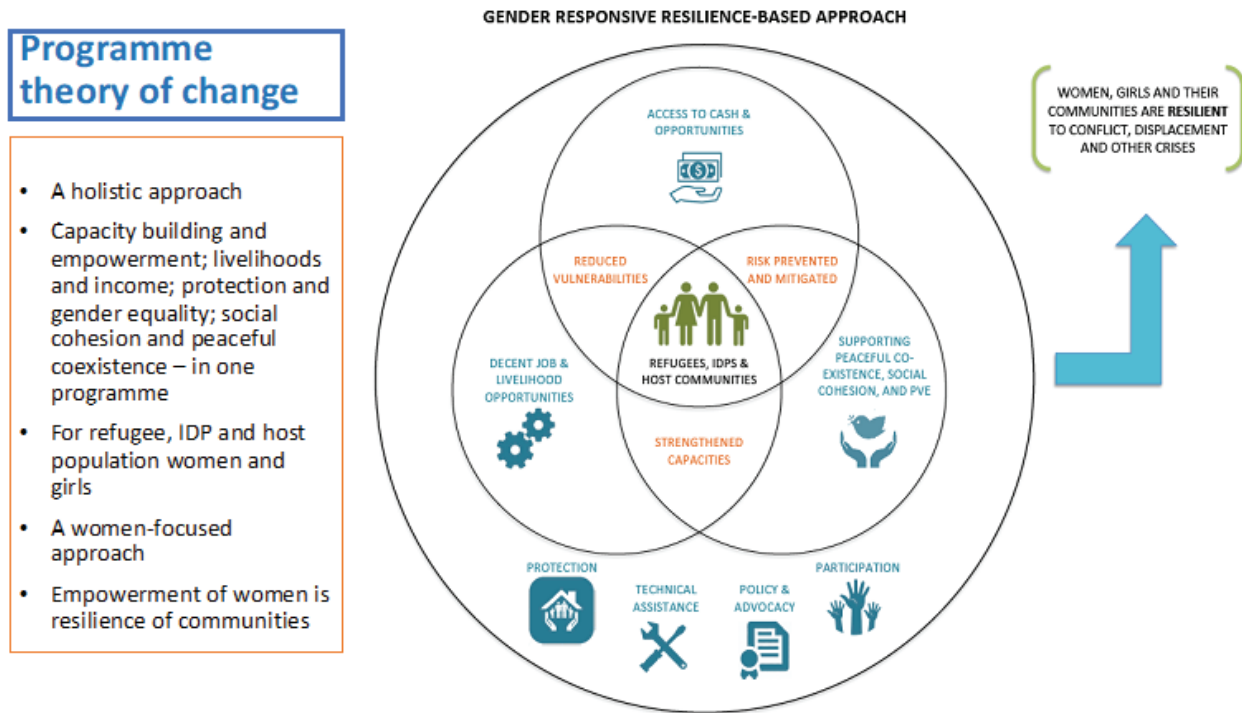


Figure 6: Theory of Change (ii): translating the gender-responsive resilience-based approach to programme outcomes and outputs



There is a clear logical development in the ToC from the approach through to objective, outcomes and outputs, and these are again generally consistent with the choice of interventions in Jordan, Iraq and Turkey. However, both the overall objective and the two main outcomes (of which Outcome 2 is only relevant to Turkey) are expressed at a high level of generality and with some overlap – “to strengthen resilience” is both the programme objective and Outcome 1.

While programme documents showed an engagement with the causal relationships within the ToC, a more systematic analysis would have been useful in the programme’s design phase. A range of other factors contribute to or are barriers against achieving the outcomes of resilience and economic empowerment (Outcome 1) and peaceful co-existence (Outcome 2) – whether socio-economic, political, security, cultural, or psychosocial/trauma. Since a programme like this could not be expected to singlehandedly overcome the barriers to vulnerable women’s empowerment in Iraq, Jordan and Turkey, a careful interrogation of causal drivers and how the programme could contribute towards the outcomes – or towards tackling barriers to their achievement – would have strengthened the programme. Specifically, the programme would have benefitted from a clearer articulation of:

- **How economic empowerment of refugees affects societal cohesion and peaceful co-existence with host communities, given high unemployment rates among host populations.** Figure 6 assumes a positive relationship between the economic empowerment of refugees and improved refugee-host relations. Evidence suggests that this is not a given and depends on a range of other factors including political environment and religious/ethnic/cultural affinity between refugee and host population. In reality, host populations often view refugees as competitors for scarce employment opportunities. The programme recognises this by providing services for both refugee and host community women, but the programme mainly targeted and reached Syrian refugees. UN Women noted that in their earlier versions of proposals and designs for the Madad programme, there was included a more robust peaceful co-existence and peacebuilding outcome for all three countries, but the donor requested the removal of this suggested outcome.

- The pathways from gender equality/supporting women’s organisations to peaceful co-existence and peacebuilding. This outcome, for Turkey only, was pursued through a series of individual cultural events, gender awareness workshops and life-skills seminars for Turkish and Syrian women spread among several implementing partners. Activities started late, as it took time for UN Women to find and establish partnerships with CSOs and national

NGOs. Causal pathways from the programme's community cohesion activities/events to having an impact on community relations beyond the individuals attending was little explored, beyond the high-level goal to "identify and support community-based solutions to build social cohesion and promote peaceful co-existence". UN Women described this activity as a long-term investment that is complementary to gender-responsive protection and livelihoods and emphasised that impact needs to be seen as the cumulative effect of the "usefulness for the individual women attending".

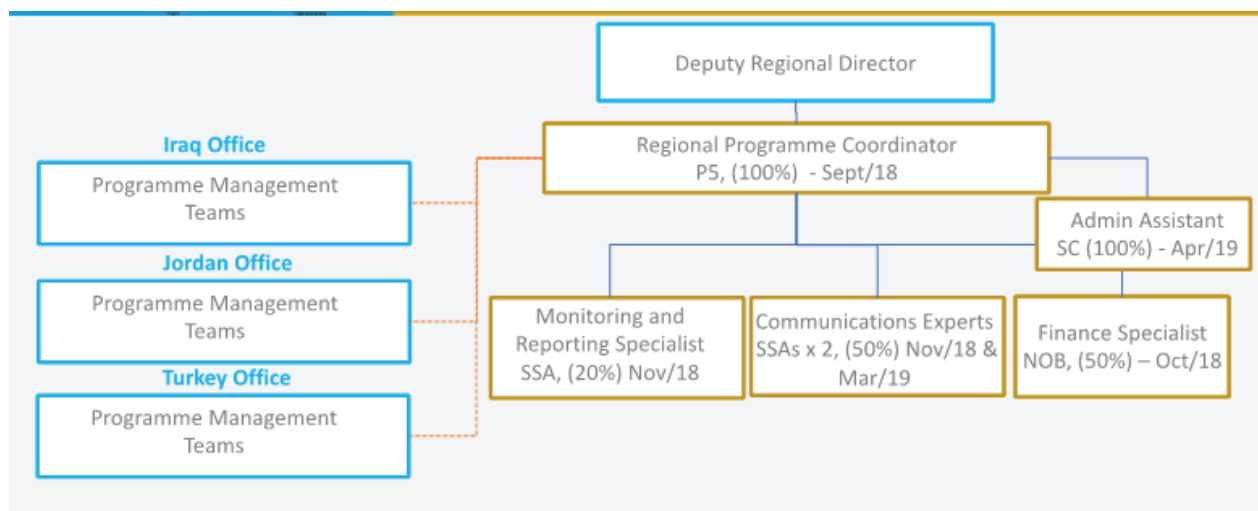
- **How beneficiaries of training & cash for work can move on to longer-term employment/income-generation.** This is not an easy task in any of the country contexts, but the gap hampers the sustainability of the programme's results.

- **How gender awareness and women's rights interventions targeted at men were not well integrated with the other activities at a theoretical or practical level.** While the relevance of such activities is obvious, since women's empowerment will not take place without changing the attitudes and behaviour of men, the low level of ambition for these activities expressed by implementers, donors and stakeholders in interviews suggest that the approach needs a rethink.

FINDING 2: The regional nature of the programme was light-touch. This was appropriate considering the very different conditions and challenges in the three countries of implementation. Monitoring and reporting across the programme was strong, but a stronger learning-sharing framework, bringing together national implementing partners from the three countries, would have been beneficial.

A high-level ToC was implemented in three countries with very different contexts and challenges, within a light-touch regional coordination and oversight structure. Original plans had been for a much more closely integrated programme, but this was not supported by the donor. The evaluation found that a flexible and decentralised approach was appropriate, not least since the programme spanned two different UN Women regional offices and two different EU funding mechanisms. In this arrangement, funding to Turkey is channelled through the €6 billion EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey, which only supports country-specific spending, not regional uses of the funds. Since coordination comes with transaction costs, there were no obvious reasons to demand tighter regional integration. The programme was relatively understaffed at the regional level, particularly since the programme coordinator and finance and M&E officers were recruited very late – well into the implementation phase of the programme. See Figure 7 below for an overview of the programme's management structure.

Figure 7: Madad regional programme management structure



Programme-wide features included a monitoring and reporting framework spanning the three countries. A baseline, midline and endline survey of programme beneficiaries was developed by UN Women and conducted by the programme’s implementing partners. The data generated by the surveys was used by UN Women together with the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) to develop gender-sensitive Resilience Measurement Analysis (RIMA) reports for Iraq and Turkey. Various other reporting mechanisms were also in place, from the implementing partners to UN Women and from UN Women to donors. In addition, EUTF conducted its own monitoring through Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) missions covering actions implemented in Iraq, Jordan and Turkey.

A stronger regional level learning-sharing framework would have been beneficial. Stakeholder interviews pointed unanimously to implementing partners, other UN agencies, government partners, donors and beneficiaries having little if any knowledge of, or benefit from, the programme’s regional nature. Even stakeholders more aware of the regional nature of the programme were unconvinced: “... It is wrong to call them regional, I think. They are just multi-country projects” (KII Stakeholder). However, once the topic was brought up, implementing partners expressed a desire for a stronger regional learning-sharing structure, especially to share experiences with national NGOs in the other countries. There were few regional learning-sharing events allowing this (UN Women had regular regional meetings, but these were only

E.g. ASAM’s own monthly reporting system monitoring the SADA centre’s activities in Turkey and research by REACH in Jordan to inform evidence based programming aimed at removing gendered barriers to Jordanian and Syrian women’s employment.

for UN Women staff). The move to online platforms for meeting activities caused by Covid-19 has opened minds to conducting more regional workshops, as bringing partners together on a Zoom platform takes considerably fewer logistical arrangements than physical regional meetings.

UN Women noted that they had proposed a stronger regional learning structure to the donor. On the arrival in position of the Programme Coordinator, the EU was approached without success about establishing a Steering Committee to set the programme's annual strategic approach and enhance cross-fertilisation. The Programme Coordinator then proposed that a regional programme event should be held. The date for this was repeatedly pushed back by the donor and was finally approved in September 2020 to occur in November 2020 as a closing event.

FINDING 3: UN Women's Madad programme added value and filled gaps in the service delivery in all three countries by playing to UN Women's strengths, focusing on training humanitarian and development actors on gender-sensitive response and providing a unique women-centred approach of 'one-stop-shop' comprehensive services, covering livelihoods and protection under one roof.

UN Women's approach to humanitarian action in each of the three countries complemented and added value to that of other humanitarian actors operating in the country. In Iraq, a representative from the EU delegation confirmed the value of UN Women's humanitarian work targeting vulnerable women refugees and GBV: "[t]he added value of UN women toward gender issues is not arguable" (Representative, EU Delegation). In Turkey, stakeholders in the UN coordination system noted that UN Women "really know how to leverage and make themselves recognised" (UN agency stakeholder).

UN Women has integrated well into regional and national humanitarian coordination mechanisms, as confirmed by stakeholders in Jordan and Turkey. The agency is an active member of forums such as the Humanitarian Partners Forum (HPF) in Jordan. It supports gender mainstreaming throughout the 3RP sectors and is a member of the results groups on international migration and protection. In Jordan, UN Women was perceived to play a pivotal role in advocating for gender-responsive humanitarian and development work and as a committed member of UN coordination mechanisms.

ROM missions were conducted in Iraq (ROM report dated 6 October 2019), Jordan (ROM report dated 8 November 2019), and Turkey (ROM report dated 30 April 2019).

The Jordanian National Commission for Women described UN Women’s “strategic role in Jordan to guarantee good coordination between the different stakeholders who work on women’s issues, and to guarantee that there is no duplication... and that all stakeholders work in synergy” (Interview, JNCW). In Turkey, stakeholders described UN Women as “active, engaged and constructive” and a central actor in humanitarian coordination mechanisms, promoting gender sensitivity and gender mainstreaming (interview, UN agency).

Some KII respondents from other UN agencies noted UN Women’s small service delivery portfolio, and some voiced concerns about having yet another operational actor on the ground. One stakeholder noted that UN Women in the country was “a very, very small operational organisation. And they don’t have staff, they have very few staff. It’s very hard to compete with those big agencies”. There is also a sense that the field of humanitarian actors in the three countries is crowded. In Turkey, a Gaziantep municipal stakeholder described the programme’s gender awareness activities in the city as “small but valuable” but went on to say she thought “Gaziantep is having a project intoxication, there are way too many projects around”.

Most of the UN stakeholders saw UN Women’s strengths as being in advocacy, training and mentoring on gender-sensitive response, rather than delivery. However, the Madad programme’s distinct women-only comprehensive services model was seen as useful, regardless of the programme’s moderate size, since it piloted and showcased new ways of working. In Jordan, government stakeholders appreciated how the services and referrals provided by the Oasis centres met the needs of both local vulnerable Jordanian women and Syrian refugees. “It’s a one stop shop that provides [beneficiaries] with everything. So it was very beneficial and this is one of the reasons that we have cascaded this model into host communities”. Since the start of the programme, 18,052 people accessed the Oasis centres, exceeding the planned target of 12,000 by 50.4%.

In Turkey, UN stakeholders were appreciative of the SADA women-only centre in Gaziantep as an example of best practice: “Whenever we do lessons learnt or best practice sharing, it is always this kind of integrated approach that stands out”. In terms of relevance, the women’s empowerment hubs/women-only centres stood out due to their pioneering role, while the training of responders fulfilled a role that UN Women is particularly well-placed to fill.

“Every week the SADA centre has been receiving visit requests to see the centre, to meet with the women, to speak to ASAM and us, how the centre operates. We have even been in the position where we have had to say no to some of the visitors [to protect the women]”
(Interview, UN Women Turkey)

Indeed, the provision of livelihoods and protection focused interventions in a ‘one-stop-shop package’ of comprehensive services under one roof at a women-only centre, made the programme unique, and highly relevant. While there are other community centres for refugees (and indeed for host populations), these are not women-only spaces and they tend to be focused on specific services, not a combination of psychosocial support, mental health and GBV protection services with employability and livelihoods support. There were 15 such centres across the three countries. In Jordan, the out-of-camp centres were run in partnership with the Ministry of Social Development, which supported the relevance to host national priorities and community needs. In Turkey, the comprehensive approach was taken to its most ambitious level with the SADA Women’s empowerment and solidarity centre in Gaziantep. The SADA centre has become somewhat famous and other humanitarian actors knew the centre well: “Everyone is well aware of them, the SADA Centre, the model it promotes” (UN agency interview).

FINDING 4: The intervention strategies and activities were highly responsive to the context in each country and to the specific needs and priorities of Syrian refugee and, although to a lesser extent, host community beneficiaries. The interventions were designed and resourced to ensure that support reached the most vulnerable, particularly in Turkey, and useful adaptations were made during the lifetime of the programme in response to beneficiary input and contextual changes, especially Covid-19.

The Madad programme sought to integrate protection, service delivery, language skills, livelihoods training, Cash for Work, and job placement, as well as gender awareness and social cohesion activities, into a comprehensive approach to empower and strengthen the resilience of vulnerable women.

The choice of interventions was based on robust needs assessments conducted in all three countries, and the interventions were appropriately designed to address the needs identified. For instance, the programme in Turkey had a strong language training component, after the needs assessment found language barriers to be one of the main challenges – with 70% of the women interviewed unable to speak any Turkish. Lack of safe and appropriate income-generating opportunities, getting access to services and rights, and dealing with GBV was flagged in the needs assessments for all three countries. The evaluation’s focus groups and interviews with women who benefitted from the Madad programme confirmed that the services they received were highly valued by and relevant to the needs of beneficiaries.

The programme’s inclusion of host community women was important considering the growing needs of both host communities and Syrian refugees, particularly after the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the programme was mainly focused on Syrian refugees, particularly in Iraq and Turkey. This generally flowed from the 3RP strategy in the three countries. It was sometimes made stronger due to the choice of locations – in Iraq most interventions took place in refugee camp settings. Other times it was the design of activities – in Turkey the emphasis on reaching the most at-risk and vulnerable women for comprehensive services at the SADA centre, combined with Turkish legislation that barred the SADA centre from providing protection services to Turkish citizens, and the prioritisation of the most vulnerable for places on training courses, meant that it was hard for Turkish women to secure training opportunities. Finally, there is an element of stigma, where host community women would be reluctant, especially initially, to access the same services and centres as refugee women. In Iraq and Turkey, the relevance of the programme for the objective of reducing tension between host and refugee populations would have been strengthened with a stronger design-element of bringing host community women in. In Jordan, both beneficiaries and programme partners, including government partners, noted that the Madad programme offered valuable opportunities for Syrian and host community women to come together, find out about their shared commonalities, learn from each other and build friendships. This objective is becoming increasingly important, as economic conditions have deteriorated in all three countries, and intercommunal tensions have been on the rise.

The relevance of programme interventions was strengthened by the context-sensitivity and flexibility of implementation. There were no major adaptations during the lifetime of the programme, but many smaller adaptations took place, often after input from beneficiaries. In Iraq, Jordan and Turkey, training activities were modified and changed based on consultation with beneficiaries. In Jordan, the 10-month delay in programme launch was used to prepare and adjust communication and visibility activities and provide capacity building services to implementing partners.

Covid-19 lockdowns and restrictions impacted on programming across the three countries, although less so in Iraq and Jordan where activities had already reached the stage of winding down when the pandemic led to temporary closures of women-only centres. Some cash grants were distributed and some training and awareness workshops moved online. GBV support services became virtual, with hotlines and – in the case of the SADA centre – staff calling up most at-risk women to check on them. UN Women provided a tool kit to support online/phone GBV support services. While far from ideal, this was an appropriate response considering the restrictions on in-person activities. In Jordan, the Oasis centres were spaces where vulnerable women (both Jordanian and Syrian) could build social capital as well. This was reflected during FGD discussions with Jordanian and Syrian refugee women. For example, a Syrian refugee woman said, “when I left my job in the (Oasis) centre, I felt that I lost my family again, the first one was when I left Syria, and now when I left the centre.” (Syrian out of camp beneficiary)

In Iraq, a weakness was the lack of childcare facilities at the centres, making it difficult for women to attend training or C4W – especially refugee women who often lack family support structures around them. One beneficiary noted: “To most of the participants, it was really not easy to leave our kids alone, I was feeling so bad about it, I wish a small nursery was provided by the programme so that we did not think about our kids and it would have made it perfect” (extended interview, beneficiary, Iraq).

Jordan and Turkey had childcare facilities included, which beneficiaries valued highly when asked in FGDs. In Jordan, beneficiaries in camps were more satisfied with the childcare provision than beneficiaries in the out-of-camp centres. In Turkey, the lack of a cash-for-work, apprenticeship or other training-to-sustainable-employment transition mechanism was a weakness throughout the programme cycle. Many beneficiaries and several stakeholders consulted noted the gap from training to job-seeking support.

A distinct objective of the programme was to strengthen the capacity of national and local government stakeholders, as well as NGOs and CSOs to ensure gender-responsive refugee support. A particular objective was to partner with and strengthen the capacity of smaller, local women’s CSOs. In Turkey, training material was developed and training workshops delivered for first-line humanitarian responders from UN, NGO, small community CSOs and government agencies. The training focused on gender equality and gender-sensitive refugee service delivery.

In Iraq, training on gender awareness and GBV was provided to gender units in government ministries; local police and security forces in intervention areas, and shelter staff in the women-only centres. In Jordan, a key component of the programme was the training of justice officials on adjudicating GBV cases. UN Women also provided capacity building services to national partners, both on gender-responsiveness and GBV. This consisted of formal training events, but also the less visible but equally important day-to-day guidance, support and capacity building that took place during the interactions with national partners as part of the ongoing implementation of the programme.

At grassroots level, the women-only centres were also spaces for women to hone their leadership skills and organise themselves to advocate for their interests and needs, as confirmed by many FGD participants and by implementing partner organisations interviewed. The importance of supporting women leadership and grassroots women's CSOs was illustrated by the central role played by the Tomorrow's Women Committee established by women at the SADA centre in Gaziantep. The Committee was formed by a group of women receiving counselling at the centre and now consists of 51 members meeting regularly twice a week, supported by the SADA centre's Social Cohesion Officer. The Committee members work with the centre leadership and contribute to decisions e.g. on what topics should be covered and who should be targeted in gender-awareness and women's rights activities. The committee has engaged strongly on child marriage, including accompanying outreach officers on house visits to explain the harms of child marriage. The committee has also been instrumental in community recruitment to social cohesion and men's gender awareness activities.

4.2 Effectiveness and potential measurable impact

Summary of effectiveness and impact findings: Across the three countries, the interventions were generally effective for women beneficiaries, in view of the considerable barriers to employment and empowerment for women in the three countries. Some women reported improved income generation (mainly in Iraq), while many more described how they feel more resilient, self-reliant, self-confident and empowered.

The capacities of national authorities and CSOs were strengthened, with good feedback from partners in all three countries on GBV training and gender-sensitive humanitarian response. Social cohesion and gender awareness activities for men were of good quality and beneficial to the participants, but their one-off and limited nature are not enough for longer-term or wider impact. Findings from Iraq, which had a more systematic approach to engaging men, suggest that additional investment in advocacy drives, and in enlisting men in supporting women's empowerment, could have strengthened the programme's contribution to breaking down cultural and policy barriers to women's economic empowerment.

It is difficult to conclude on outcome-level effectiveness, due to lack of robust outcome data, particularly on longer-term economic empowerment, social cohesion and men's gender awareness targets. Deteriorating economic conditions, compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic, mean that the programme was implemented at a time when economic and mental health stresses were worsening for the beneficiary population. Covid-19 affected programming, but measures were taken to move some activities online, and cash grants were provided to support those who struggled to get through the lockdown.

While economic empowerment was a difficult objective to achieve in this context, the model of comprehensive services in safe and friendly women-only centres had a significant effect on beneficiaries' self-reported feeling of resilience, confidence and ability to cope with adversity.

FINDING 5: UN women was able to achieve or exceed most of its output targets in the three countries. Target numbers for reaching beneficiaries with psychosocial and GBV support services were particularly exceeded, indicating the strong needs for such services. It was difficult to conclude on outcome-level effectiveness, due to lack of robust outcome indicators and data, particularly on longer-term economic empowerment, social cohesion and men's gender awareness.

Detailed overviews of all the reported results for all outcome and output targets in each country can be found in the three country summaries annexed to this report (Annexes 1, 2 and 3). In general, all output targets were met or exceeded in all three countries, in terms of how many women beneficiaries were reached for vocational and income-generating activities, job placement, language training, counselling, etc.

The programme found it harder to reach host community women than Syrian refugees. In Turkey there were also problems with reaching out to men participants in gender-awareness activities – although output target numbers were achieved after a series of outreach activities in the community, with the help of women beneficiaries at the SADA centre and, in particular, the efforts of the Tomorrow's Women Committee – a grassroots CSO created by SADA centre beneficiaries.

Effectiveness and impact of access to comprehensive essential

services The number of beneficiaries reached with psychosocial and GBV support services at the 15 women-only centres in the three countries far exceeded the original targets, which were adjusted upwards after the first year. In all countries, the pressure on these services underlines the significant gap in services that these centres help reduce. In the case of Turkey, the target for reaching most at-risk women with psychosocial support at the SADA centre was increased by 500% (from 1,000 to 5,000 women) in the 2020 annual progress report. This highlights both the great need for the comprehensive services provided in the women-only centres and the effectiveness of the centres in reaching at-risk women. It also contributed to great pressure on the centre's staff and services (see Box 3).

Box 3: The SADA centre's dilemma: Depth versus breadth of psychosocial services and counselling

In Turkey, the heavy demand on psychosocial support services at the SADA centre created a dilemma between reaching as many as possible and providing the depth of service necessary for the most at-risk women.

The SADA centre is proof of the dire need for psychosocial support among women in the Syrian refugee community, many of whom have experienced loss and trauma. The centre was very effective in reaching at-risk women, through a strong outreach service including a dedicated outreach officer. Turkish migration authorities would also refer newly registered Syrian refugee women with need of psycho-social support to the centre, with centre outreach staff sometimes being asked to come and meet a new arrival in need of support.

Psychological and legal counselling services were of high quality and respectful and in interviews some beneficiaries described counselling as life changing. But for the most traumatised and vulnerable of women it was difficult to provide a level of counselling commensurate with their needs, due to the heavy

demand on the centre's services. In two in-depth interviews, at-risk women beneficiaries described that after a few sessions with the psychologist, they were given priority places on training and beginners-level Turkish courses –Both noted that they had benefitted greatly from the sessions with the psychologist as well as from health-related referrals, including being accompanied to medical appointments by SADA staff, but that they were not yet ready and strong enough to take part in formal learning courses and would fall behind and sometimes leave.

Highlighting this dilemma showcases the successes of the SADA centre and the extreme needs it caters to. The centre did an outstanding job in providing a safe, friendly, informal space for psychosocial support and healing, combined with vocational learning, and helped women access the services they needed through a strong system of referrals and by accompanying vulnerable women to appointments. While it was not SADA centre policy to replace protection or counselling services with vocational/language training, interviews conducted for this evaluation underline the importance of continuing psychosocial follow-up of the most vulnerable women in parallel when they start on training courses. It is not an easy balance to strike between the breadth and depth of psychosocial services and counselling.

Effectiveness and impact of livelihoods training

The quality of the livelihoods training was high and relevant to women's interests and needs across the three countries. The training programmes were described as very effective by women trainees in FGDs, but effectiveness could perhaps be improved through more attention to the length and sequencing of training activities. The near-uniform feedback received by the evaluation team from beneficiaries in the three countries confirmed the programme's satisfaction surveys and EUTF ROM reports: the trainings were highly valued, and the trainers seen as competent as well as friendly – which was important in a setting where many trainees were vulnerable women. Due to the great demand for training – and C4W – courses were often short.

Many beneficiaries told us they felt the training was too short, but the trade-off between how many beneficiaries to cover and how in-depth to pitch the training activity is not an easy one to make, and the balance found in the Madad programme was not unreasonable. Nevertheless, long waiting lists created a problem with momentum, particularly in the language training in Turkey, as noted by one focus group participant:

” The biggest concern I have, and I think everybody has the same concern, is that the Turkish language courses do not proceed continuously. [...] I used to know how to write in Turkish but now I have lost my skills already and I don’t get enough practice because of this problem “ (from focus group with participants in SADA training courses)

Effectiveness and impact of social cohesion activities

Only Turkey had an Outcome 2: To strengthen the role of women and girls in social cohesion and co-existence across the refugee and host communities. Targets for these were output-level (number of women attending events, number of women’s CSOs supported). While these targets were all met, there were no indicators allowing the monitoring of how these outputs contributed to the desired outcome. Social cohesion activities started later than the protection and livelihoods activities. Social cohesion activities began to gain momentum from September 2019, but many activities had to be cancelled due to Covid-19 from March 2020 onwards. Some activities were moved online, for those who had internet access, including group counselling online, which beneficiaries told us was highly appreciated:

- After the COVID-19 broke out we had to stay at home and after staying home this domestic violence against women and children increased rapidly, which is why the psychological sessions that were taking place online by the psychological counsellor were very helpful for us personally. Because they allowed us to understand how to deal with this domestic violence better, how to treat the children better, how to manage the stress we were going through in a more coping way ” (FGD with participants in social cohesion activities)

While the transformational potential of mainly one-off events and life-skill trainings is limited – and this was acknowledged in stakeholder interviews – focus group participants described the activities as sometimes mind-opening. An interesting finding from the focus-group discussion with Turkish and Syrian women who had participated in social cohesion events is that they appeared more impactful for Syrian than Turkish women. The Turkish participants drawn to these activities tended to already be comfortable with socialising with Syrian women. Meanwhile both CSO stakeholders and focus group participants noted that isolation from the host community often meant that refugee women were not aware of differences in norms and legal principles between Syria and Turkey and had little opportunity to learn about their host country. One Syrian focus group participant said that “being present in the same place doing the same activity and communicating face to face, it helped us become more informed about the Turkish society, especially Turkish women and how they think, what their perspective is towards us”.

Another participant elaborated on this point: “it would be very useful if we can have better training and raising awareness sessions on what our rights are and what our responsibilities towards this society, this country, are as well, so that we know how to act and what we are prevented or prohibited from doing”.

Effectiveness and impact of capacity building activities

UN Women contributed to building the capacities of national authorities and CSOs who were involved in the various activities of the programme. In most cases, the main implementing partners for the Madad programme were already capable and well-functioning NGOs. UN Women’s capacity building contribution lay particularly in its expertise, which it used to develop and roll out a training programme for humanitarian staff (UN, NGO and government) on gender-sensitive refugee response in Turkey, and which it employed within the humanitarian coordination structures in all three countries to mentor and support other agencies on gender awareness and mainstreaming, at a regional as well as national level.

UN partners spoke highly of UN Women’s constructive and supportive approach to gender mainstreaming in Jordan and Turkey. In Jordan, several partners discussed how UN Women had helped them mainstream gender into their programming, employing participatory processes where women contribute to the design of the programmes and becoming better at advocating for women’s rights and inclusion. Both in Jordan and Iraq, efforts to train justice officials were reported as effective in making adjudicators aware of national and international standards for dealing with GBV cases. In Turkey, the support to Tomorrow’s Women Committee was mutually beneficial for committee members and the SADA centre: while the members received mentoring, training and skills development, the Committee contributed to the effectiveness of the centre by providing feedback on community views and needs and supporting community outreach activities.

FINDING 6: The programme was effective in improving the economic situation for women beneficiaries during the period in which they participated in the livelihoods-related activities. But the lack of robust longitudinal outcome data makes it difficult to evaluate the extent to which this translated into women beneficiaries improving their access to employment and income generation and reducing the use of negative coping mechanisms in the longer term. Economic empowerment outcomes seemed strongest in Iraq.

Achieving longer-term access to employment, income-generating opportunities and the reduction of negative coping strategies, depended not only on the effectiveness of the programme, but on contextual factors and gendered structural barriers to employment. The deteriorating economic conditions in the host countries during the programme period, amplified by the Covid-19 pandemic, meant that impact in terms of long-term employment or improved economic situations for the women beneficiaries was hard to achieve, but information from beneficiary interviews and FGDs confirmed that the Madad programme helped many women beneficiaries and their households get through the hardships of the Covid-19 restrictions.

The extent to which the interventions addressed structural barriers to women's labour market participation was variable. The Iraq programme stood out in this regard. In Iraq, training and support to help beneficiaries develop productive and financial assets and skills, were combined with a focus on entrepreneurship and job placement, to help women graduate from short-term interventions into longer-term employment opportunities. Positive results included:

- 513 women received cash for work.
- 340 women placed in decent employment through job matching.
- 283 women supported to establish or expand businesses.
- 283 women accessed EU-supported community level, micro-financial services.
- 1,199 Syrian refugees and host community members participated in the employability, vocational and entrepreneurial skills training programme.

A combination of survey results, interviews and focus groups confirm that the Iraq programme was successful in enabling women beneficiaries from refugee and host communities to achieve a notable positive change in income. A total of 1,156 women reported they had gained increased access to income-generating opportunities, exceeding the target of 910 (which had been adjusted up from 800). Interviews and focus groups also confirmed the programme's survey result – although exact percentages cannot be verified – that there was a positive change in beneficiary coping capacity, with a reduction in crisis and emergency coping mechanisms. Considering the major contextual constraints facing women, these results from Iraq suggest that the project had some success in addressing structural barriers to employment. An important reason for this was the programme's links between training, apprenticeships and entrepreneur support.

“The project was very inclusive, in the sense that it was not only about training the people, it provided cash and also opened up job opportunities; thus, it had a sense of sustainability to the beneficiaries. The projects had liaison and links with factories, private sectors and investors as well. Some of the beneficiaries were sent to tailoring factories and others to private sectors” (Cash for Work trainer)

The evaluation was not able to verify the pre-intervention education levels and work experience of the survey respondents in Iraq beyond the baseline study. Another reason for the good results could therefore be that the beneficiary group in Iraq was better placed to join the workforce or take on the start-up of a home business, than in the two other countries. In Turkey, for instance, the SADA centre prioritised the most at-risk women for places on training programmes. The centre was very successful – through outreach, referrals from government partners and word-of-mouth – in reaching at-risk and vulnerable women. This was an important achievement, but it is likely to have affected the trainee graduates’ ability to benefit from the training and subsequently seeking employment or income-generating opportunities. In Jordan, UN Women was able to continue providing essential protection services for Oasis beneficiaries through daily remote provision of counselling and psychosocial services. The continued support of the Oasis centres was greatly valued by beneficiaries in focus group discussions. One FGD beneficiary reported that she was able to continue her work remotely during the Covid-19 period. The perceived value of her work extended beyond material income to a sense of self-worth and confidence.

Longer-term impact on income and coping strategies was less visible in Jordan and Turkey. In Turkey, the training activities were not strongly linked to support for finding employment, although ISKUR, the government employment agency, held information meetings on workers’ rights and job seekers databases. The impressive achievements and future potential of the Women’s Cooperative, created by around 50 SADA beneficiaries with strong support from ASAM, ILO and UN Women, is both an example of what can be achieved and how much effort it takes to get there.

In both countries, many of the women consulted described how the income from C4W or from attending training courses (participants received a stipend while they were enrolled on a course) improved their family’s situation and helped them get through the Covid-19 lockdown. Participants from Jordan reported how the C4W project helped them be financially independent and stopped them from practicing negative coping strategies such as borrowing money. One woman explained, “I paid part of my son’s education from the money I got from my work with UN Women”

(FGD, Jordanian and Syrian refugee women, Out of Camp, Jordanian, Female). Others felt that the C4W and job placement opportunities provided by UN Women facilitated their access to other job opportunities as “other organisations will take into consideration that we have experience through working with UN Women” (FGD, C4W, in-camp, Syrian women).

This said, the courses and C4W opportunities were for set, limited periods (3-6 months for C4W, with most contracts 6 months), and the vast structural barriers to women’s participation in the workforce in Jordan are even harder to overcome for refugee women. In both Jordan and Turkey, the participation rate of women in the workforce is very low, and Syrian refugee women are particularly hampered by the lack of childcare (not being able to rely on family networks the way host communities can). In focus groups, participants noted that one reason they appreciated the training courses were that they were part-time and that the SADA centre had good quality childcare facilities:

“[M]y son used to stay at home the whole time before I participated in the SADA centre. But after I started going there, he comes with me every time and there is a kindergarten for kids, so he goes there. By the age of five he was able to speak Turkish very nicely and his teacher is amazing” (FGD, member of SADA Women’s Cooperative, Turkey)

Lack of approval from husbands and family to work outside the house was also mentioned by many of the women who were consulted/interviewed for the evaluation. In Turkey, many participants said they were allowed to attend the SADA centre by their husbands because the centre was a women-only environment. One member of the SADA Women’s Cooperative noted that “our culture might prevent us from working in public places where there are men in the same working area. Also, some of us have husbands who do not allow this or would prevent us from doing this”. Several other FGD participants in Jordan and Turkey made similar points.

Course participants received pay, which took pressure off difficult financial conditions (which worsened notably for the Syrian refugee population in Turkey during the lifespan of the Madad programme). Some focus group participants noted that they would be unlikely to be able or allowed to work, at least full time, outside of the house regardless of the quality of the training they received.

FINDING 7: Regardless of the extent to which the Madad programme managed to affect women's economic empowerment during times of economic downturn, the interventions were nevertheless effective contributions to the personal and relational resilience of beneficiaries across the three countries. The women-only nature of the centres was central to this impact.

An important finding of this evaluation is that an improvement in women's sense of being resilient, empowered and capable is not dependent on strong effects on incomes and livelihoods. Most of the Syrian beneficiaries consulted who had benefitted from the women's empowerment hubs/women-only centres mentioned how the experience had made them feel empowered, more independent, more able to cope with the challenges of everyday life.

“The training was very good and it benefitted me in many ways. For example, it increased my confidence. I was shy before the training. After taking part in the training, I felt that I should be leader and engaged in the community regardless of the nature of my job” (In-depth interview, Jordan)

Many talked about finding their voice, understanding their rights, feeling freer and more respected in their families: “now our families, they treat us differently, they respect us more, they appreciate our efforts” (FGD, Syrian job placement beneficiary, Jordan).

Also, beneficiaries who were among the most at-risk women struggling with trauma and loss described a sense of increased resilience and ability to cope:

“Suddenly I found someone to take my hand and give me hope to live for my other children, to stand strong in front of them in order for them to develop and grow better, and so of course I am very grateful and the sessions helped me very much to overcome my fears and my difficulties” (In-depth interview SADA beneficiary, Turkey,)

This impact on social resilience and personal coping capacity was a result of, on the one hand, the counselling services and training – both vocational and in life-skills - provided by the centres and, on the other, the friendships, openness, and social support networks that these women-only centres fostered among the women beneficiaries. This may have been a less directly intended, but highly valuable, result at the beneficiary level of this programme. There were no output targets aiming to measure this form of resilience.

The women-only nature of the centres was an important contribution to their effectiveness in strengthening the social and personal resilience of vulnerable women in a patriarchal cultural context. In Jordan and Turkey, many of the women beneficiaries came from deeply patriarchal cultures. For many, leaving the house was an infrequent event. In Jordan, FGDs with beneficiaries highlighted that a key factor enabling women's participation in the programme, and specifically their access to the Oasis Centres, was that they were women-only spaces, which made "men feel more comfortable to allow their wives to work there" (FGD, C4W, in-camp, Syrian women). Syrian refugees in Turkey mentioned the same, and some added that they had so little confidence when they first arrived at the SADA centre, that they would not have felt able to contribute to a class if there were male participants present.

FINDING 8: The Madad programme's men-engagement activities were, in general, too limited and ad hoc to have an effective impact on men's gender perceptions and, especially, gender behaviour. However, the experience from the more ambitious interventions in Iraq where men were engaged to lead dialogues on women's rights and empowerment, suggests that men-engagement activities, if better integrated and sustained, can improve the effectiveness of women's empowerment programming.

In Turkey, the men-engagement activities were relatively ad-hoc, and the level of ambition for what they would achieve did not go beyond a hope of slight changes in individual awareness. In Jordan, the FGD with 'men engaged in gender equality initiatives' made clear that awareness-raising activities at a limited scale will on their own have little influence on changing the patriarchal perceptions of men on women's role in society. As one participant noted: "We also knew that house responsibilities are big and it needs big efforts, but, I don't agree with all information we got from the session" (FGD participant, male, Jordan). This was confirmed in Turkey by a survey conducted by RET International with women household members of men who had participated in gender awareness activities, which found a very slight positive impact on men's awareness after participating in the activity, but no changes in behaviour.

Meanwhile, in Iraq both the level of ambition and the number of activities were higher, with 1,254 men engaged in dialogues promoting women's rights and empowerment and 21 initiatives started by men supported to promote women's rights and empowerment. Interventions in Anbar and Fallujah that engaged men in dialogues promoting women's rights and empowerment received particularly strong

feedback. Interviews with beneficiaries of the “Men engaged in dialogue and women empowerment initiative” suggest some successes in challenging men’s views about women’s rights. The aim of the initiative was to support male participants to respect women and show them that women have the right to work. It was reported by the beneficiaries that the project improved their confidence level and changed the way they dealt with female colleagues to show them more respect.

4.3 Efficiency

Summary of findings on efficiency: The model of providing livelihoods and protection services in women-only centres is an example of global best practice, offering comprehensive services to a highly vulnerable group of women with complex needs. In all three countries, these centres were central to the efficient implementation of the programme. Such centres are not cheap, and are complicated to run, particularly when offered at the level of ambition shown at the SADA centre in Turkey. But the model showcases in all three countries the results in resilience, confidence and coping that women-only comprehensive ‘one-stop-shop’ services can have. Strong partnerships with highly capable partners contributed significantly to the efficiency of the centres in all three countries.

There was an appropriate distribution of resources between components and actors. Beneficiaries were regularly asked about the value of the training activity to ensure relevance to their needs. Original outputs for both Iraq and Jordan included plans for a business incubator. The reallocation of funds in response to the ten-month delay in the programme launch in Jordan, led this plan to be scrapped in Iraq and delayed in Jordan. The reason for also abandoning the business incubator in Iraq is not clear, but it was never budgeted for. In both countries, this affected the coupling between training and cash-for-work activities on the one hand and longer-term livelihood opportunities on the other.

Regarding the generation of programme monitoring and results data, the beneficiary survey shows great potential as a mechanism for including partners in the monitoring effort and a way to engage them in discussion of results and the programme ToC, but several technical measures can be taken to improve the reliability of data in future surveys.

FINDING 9: The model of providing protection and economic empowerment services together in women-only centres is an example of global best practice in offering comprehensive services to highly vulnerable women with complex needs. In all three countries, these centres were central to the efficient implementation of the programme.

In Jordan, the Oasis centres were implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Social Development across the different governorates of the country, while the Oasis centres inside the Azraq and Za'atari camps were directly implemented by UN Women. It took a great deal of advocacy for UN Women to convince the Ministry of Social Development of the benefits of this model for achieving longer-term results:

“It took a lot of discussion and trust building and advocacy and strengthening their capacity to understand the [Oasis model] approach. Because their approach is: ‘Let’s do cash for work and livelihood training; they don’t need all these other things, they don’t need GBV protection and prevention’... [but] you have to address these issues of social norms and violence and childcare and transportation if you want to have long term results. So for us, the budget has always been about a holistic [approach]... that’s critical” (Interview, UN Women)

In Turkey, the SADA centre was not implemented in partnership with government, but had the backing and cooperation from the Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality. The SADA centre is costly to run, but the quality of services provided were commensurate with the cost, considering the vulnerability and complex needs of the target beneficiaries. The annual operational cost for the SADA centre is around EUR 500,000 – with EUR 1,004,505 million budgeted for the first two years. This includes outreach and referrals, but not the training provided by ILO or activities by other implementing partners. In comparison, the support for seven GBV centres in Iraq had a budget of EUR 700,000 over two years, while the five Oasis centres in Jordan were budgeted at EUR 450,000 over the two-year programme period.

This said, the level of services provided at the SADA centre was comprehensive and high-quality, unique in Turkey and also stood out in comparison with the Iraq and Jordan counterparts. Its immense popularity and oversubscription, particularly for psychosocial support services, are testaments to the important function the centre played. Comprehensive services provided at this level are not cheap, but it is appropriate in a context of difficult conditions and a range of complex needs among a vulnerable population. There is nevertheless good reason to conduct a closer comparison of the work and results of the Oasis centres in Jordan and the SADA centre, results of the Oasis centres in Jordan and the SADA centre, in order to assess how the SADA model can be made more affordable and hence make it easier to replicate. UN Women Turkey is currently also running a scaled down women-only centre in Izmir, opened with the support of the Government of Japan in November 2019.

Lessons from the Madad programme should be fed into the fine-tuning of the efficiency calculations for women-only comprehensive essential services centres. While cost effectiveness is one consideration, equity and leaving no one behind are also central to value for money calculations, and there is a risk that attempts at bringing costs down will make the centres less able to reach and support the most vulnerable women with complex psychosocial support and counselling needs.

A major factor in the women-only centre's efficiency in all three countries has been the selection of implementing partners with relevant and proven expertise and implementation experience, thus assuring the efficient and well-placed use of funds. Human and financial resources were efficiently deployed to achieve programme results. In Turkey, ASAM, a national NGO with a large network and longstanding experience of running community centres, ensured the smooth running of the SADA centre in Gaziantep.

FINDING 10: Delays in the launch of programme implementation in Jordan and Covid-19 restrictions in all three countries had an effect on the efficiency of programme delivery, but UN Women and its partners were able to make adjustments and changes that ensured the programme was delivered on time and on budget.

The 10-month delay in implementation of activities impacted on the efficiency of the programme delivery in Jordan. Corrective measures focused on reducing the problems caused by the delay, but it nevertheless led to a knock-on effect on some planned activities such as the business incubator platform, which was seriously delayed. Entrepreneurship activities also suffered from the distorted sequencing but managed to catch up. The value of entrepreneurship opportunities, including home based businesses, was reflected during FGDs with Syrian refugee and Jordanian beneficiaries. Many women who had received capacity building opportunities reported that they would have liked to have received additional support to establish their own businesses. It is not clear why the business incubator also never materialised in Iraq and was never budgeted for. As in Jordan, this was detrimental to the programme's ability to link its training and cash-for-work activities on the one hand with longer-term livelihood opportunities on the other, although the generally strong emphasis on entrepreneurship in the Iraq programming to some extent made up for the lack of the business incubator.

The Izmir centre started receiving some EU Madad co-funding from August 2020.

Covid-19 affected implementation of some activities. However, UN Women was able to use innovative measures to continue some essential services. In Jordan, GBV support was offered through a hotline. In Jordan and Iraq, cash assistance was provided instead of C4W (although this was after the Madad component of C4W was completed, so it was not with Madad funding). Having changed the C4W delivery to the WFP's blockchain model earlier in the programme period, this model's remote functioning made it possible for UN Women to continue the delivery of cash assistance to women in the camps even when its staff were not allowed into the camps during the mandatory Covid-19 quarantine. In Turkey, SADA centre protection officers, lawyers and psychologists made phone calls to check up on at-risk women. Some social cohesion events were also switched to online, and introduced topics that were particularly salient to the mental health and GBV-related challenges of pandemic-related confinement at home.

FINDING 11: Project activities and achievements were generally well monitored and evaluated and the programme has generated a range of useful data on beneficiary women's empowerment and resilience. However, future beneficiary surveys could benefit from technical measures to improve the robustness and reliability of the data they generate.

The Madad programme has generated a lot of data, ranging from implementing partners' satisfaction surveys distributed to trainees and workshop participants, to EUTF ROM reports, quarterly information notes and annual progress reports, with detailed financial reporting and logframe results. At the regional level, available human resources dedicated to support the programme's considerable M&E tasks were not sufficient (at regional level, M&E was covered by one individual 20% staff position), and UN Women would benefit by increasing resources to better distribute the high workload related to M&E required for this programme across countries. UN Women's regional office noted that there is a need for resilience programme monitoring to be better embedded and standardised in UN Women programming in general.

Part of the monitoring of programme outputs and outcomes was a survey designed by UN Women and conducted by its implementing partners in the three countries, following a random stratified sampling approach. UN Women worked with and supported the implementing partners' effort. There was a baseline, midline and endline survey, covering only beneficiaries, in each of the three countries. Demographic data was captured for the baseline survey, but not subsequent surveys. The surveys took place in a staggered manner in the three countries, with the Turkey endline survey the last to complete in the summer of 2020. In Jordan, UN Women also partnered with REACH to conduct an independent monitoring and evaluation report, which included an impact assessment of UN Women and partner activities. The impact assessment report is currently being finalised.

The data from two of the country surveys has been used to develop, in collaboration with FAO, a gender-sensitive Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis (RIMA) report for Iraq (completed in May 2020) and Turkey (September 2020). This was not a programme deliverable, and was done above and beyond the monitoring requirements, budgeted using UN Women's own resources. The evaluation has therefore not included a review of the two RIMA reports, but it is noted that the gender-sensitive Resilience Capacity Index created for these reports offers the potential to generate a more holistic understanding of what resilience means for participants and explore how it might be measured – which could then provide a stronger evidence base on which to design or adjust programme interventions in specific contexts.

The quality of quantitative analyses rests on the quality of the data surveyed. Documentation and discussion with UN Women indicates that a good effort was made to establish an ambitious quantitative monitoring programme. Having the implementing partners conduct the baseline, midline and endline surveys, rather than employing specialist enumerators, can be a useful mechanism for including partners in the monitoring effort and a way to engage them in discussion of results and the programme ToC. However, it is also a labour intensive, painstaking and a specialist task. The evaluation of the survey led to some concerns about the robustness and reliability of data. Future surveys would benefit from a range of technical measures related to sampling, data management and protocols, and creation of composite indicators to improve the reliability of the data. A list of suggested measures is included in Annex 11. Some of these would increase the cost of the survey (such as introducing a counterfactual if possible or adding a post-programme survey to trace sustainability of impact) and would depend on donors making funding available. Alternatively, if such funding is not forthcoming, it is important that the design of the survey dictates how its results are used, so that the analysis of the data does not go beyond what the survey design is able to sustain. It is furthermore crucial that staff resources allocated to M&E activities are commensurate with the tasks demanded by the programme design.

4.4 Gender equality and human rights

Summary of findings on gender equality and human rights: Gender equality and human rights principles suffused interventions from design through implementation, focusing on addressing gender inequality at the level of individual empowerment, at the relational level of women's interaction with their environment, and at the structural level through contributing to addressing social and cultural barriers to women's empowerment. Of the three (also described as the micro, meso and macro level of empowerment), the programme had greatest success at the individual, and to some extent, relational levels.

The women-only focus of activities at the women's empowerment hubs was appropriate considering the nature and severity of the structural barriers to women's empowerment in the contexts of both host and refugee communities: due to the programme's targeting of a vulnerable beneficiary population in a setting of deeply conservative and patriarchal community values, providing safe women-only spaces was central to the programme's ability to contribute to the social empowerment of women beneficiaries.

Discussions with women beneficiaries highlighted changes in their gender roles – engaging more in their productive roles in society rather than simply their reproductive ones – building their confidence and self-worth. Based on positive findings from activities engaging men on women's empowerment issues in Iraq, a lesson would be to include more initiatives targeted at men in future programming.

FINDING 12: The UN Women Madad programme was successful in contributing to the empowerment of women at the personal, and to some extent relational, level for beneficiaries. Changes to societal, political and cultural barriers to women's economic empowerment among refugee and host communities is a long-term effort.

At regional level, the only budgeting for monitoring efforts was the SSA Monitoring and Reporting Consultant, which was part-time 20%.

The principle of gender equality is the fundamental human right of women and girls to enjoy equal rights and reach their full economic potential. Economic empowerment, a core objective of the Madad programme, is central to the achievement of gender equality. Women's economic empowerment can take place on three distinct levels:

- i) Micro-level, or personal level, where individual beliefs and actions can show confidence, personal autonomy and accessibility to different forms of capital (financial, social, cultural).
- ii) Meso-level, which refers to beliefs and actions in relations to others within the women's realm of interaction. In this dimension, relational empowerment can be observed.
- iii) Macro level, which refers to broader societal contexts and structures.

The Madad programme has deeply embedded the principle of gender equality in all aspects of programme design and implementation. The programme was designed in a context-sensitive manner, taking into account the considerable structural obstacles to gender equality in host community and refugee communities in Iraq, Jordan and Turkey. These have already been discussed in section 1 of this report, and include some of the world's lowest labour market participation rates for women in the world, conservative gender roles, lack of childcare, lack of support from male family members to enter the workforce, and risk of sexual exploitation and harassment in the informal job sector. In Iraq, Jordan and Turkey, beneficiaries described in interviews and FGDs severe limitations on their decision making power and economic empowerment.

“I believe spaces have a gender, and the gender of SADA is woman. The childcare room, breastfeeding room, and other features reveal the gender of the Centre the moment you step in. Women who come here feel that they can freely talk about their problems. If the gender of this place was male, they would have had trouble telling us everything.” (social worker, SADA)

“We are much more comfortable with the fact that it's only for women, of course it makes a big difference for us. Because at least we can communicate in a very comfortable way, we can be very comfortable talking to our teachers, laughing, making jokes. But if there were men, it would cause a lot of barriers and we wouldn't be perceiving the education so well.” (FGD with SADA centre training participants)

UN Women (2020): “Zeynep Denli: Women support women. We understand and empower each other”, 18 August, link.

“The best thing is the fact that women are around each other supporting each other and helping each other: it is the reason why I said that is very successful and why we benefit from it.” (FGD with SADA centre training participants)

“I think the programme was one of its kind in that perspective, I think it is not easy to attend a course where it is man heavy and you cannot have the freedom, I would not have been allowed by my husband to attend the course if it was not a women-only programme” (extended interview, beneficiary, Iraq)

“It affected my life a lot, my confidence increases, my ability to take decisions at home in particular in financial issues, after that, this encouraged me to apply for a job in a governmental entity. I didn’t get it, but at least this encouraged me to apply because my confidence increased” (FGD, Jordanian & Syrian women, Out of Camp, Syrian Refugee, Female)

In Turkey, a strength of the programme was how it combined empowerment (Outcome 1) and social cohesion (Outcome 2) objectives by suffusing cultural and social cohesion events with awareness-raising and training on women’s rights and solidarity, and on women’s leadership skills. Leadership skills were both taught and applied in practice at the centres, creating a positive reinforcement loop between what the participants learnt in theory and how they were encouraged and facilitated in practice to contribute to how the centres operated. The evaluation team was provided with numerous examples, often unprompted, by FGD and interview participants on how women participants were not just heard at the centre, but that their opinions mattered and could lead to changes and adjustments in training course topics, length and delivery methods so as to better cater to their needs and interests. At the SADA centre in Gaziantep, the Tomorrow’s Women Committee also contributed to planning and conducting outreach and community engagement activities.

“The training and work made me more confident and helped me become a leader. It also enabled me to communicate confidently with men. This affected my personality more than my skills, and I am really happy about that” (Extended interview, C4W beneficiary, Jordan)

As described in Finding 7, this women-only centre model had a significant effect on empowerment at an individual, personal level: of women feeling more confident and autonomous. It also affected women’s relational empowerment, with beneficiaries describing how they interacted better with their family and children, felt more respected and heard.

FINDING 13: Increasing men’s awareness and recognition of the role that women play in the private sphere is essential when working on women’s empowerment but requires long-term commitment and needs to be integrated into programme design.

In contrast to the empowerment effect of the interventions through the women-only centres, the programme’s efforts aimed at gender awareness for men were relatively limited both in scope and in effect, especially in Jordan and Turkey. Somewhat more ambitious programming in this area in Iraq shows the potential positive effect of working with men to promote gender equality in communities where patriarchal norms are strong.

Increasing men’s awareness and recognition of the role that women play in the private sphere is essential when working on women’s empowerment programmes. Programmes that work solely on supporting women’s economic participation in the public sphere without addressing inequalities that take place in the private sphere cannot properly contribute to gender equality. For instance, FGDs with Jordanian and Syrian C4W beneficiaries highlighted that a lack of job opportunities in areas outside of Jordan’s capital was compounded for women by the patriarchal restrictions on women working. Hence, addressing the ‘natural’ gender order in the private and public sphere is necessary to achieving sustainable impact. This conclusion confirms similar findings in the EUTF Results Oriented Monitoring report on the Jordan Madad programme of November 2019.

4.5 Sustainability

Summary of sustainability findings: Results at individual beneficiary level are significant and likely sustainable. In Iraq, some women beneficiaries reported longer-term improved economic circumstances, while in Jordan and Turkey C4W and cash transfers were important to get recipients through the hardships of the Covid-19 lockdown. In all three countries, women described how the skills training and emotional support they received from the programme led them to feel less isolated, and more confident, capable and empowered.

UN Women’s ongoing work to support gender-sensitive and gender mainstreamed humanitarian action has become well integrated into coordination mechanisms at regional and national levels and its results and influence in these mechanisms is likely to continue. The capacity building of local CSOs will likely have a lasting impact in the three countries.

United Nations General Assembly (19 April 2018) Review of promising practices and lessons learned, existing strategies and United Nations and other initiatives to engage men and boys in promoting and achieving gender equality, in the context of eliminating violence against women, link
Nasser-Eddin, N. (2014) Negotiated Masculinities: The Case of Iraqi Refugees in Jordan, link

The model of comprehensive services through women-only centres is an example of best practice, but it is a complex and relatively expensive type of intervention that remains highly reliant on donor support. Despite its achievements, the SADA centre in Turkey will not, as of now, be able to keep its doors open beyond February 2021, while the programme in Jordan looks set to continue with a phase two.

FINDING 14: The sustainability of resilience results at the personal and relational level for individual beneficiaries is likely to be high, although in a context where economic empowerment goals at a structural level face a steep uphill battle.

The Madad programme was implemented in the context of a deteriorating economic and political environment for refugees in the three host countries, with economic hardships accelerating due to Covid-19. In Turkey, the programme's endline survey, which took place during the Covid-19 lockdown, found that the vast majority of respondents reported that their economic situation had deteriorated in the past six months. The rest reported that it had stayed the same. Only one respondent reported an improvement. This cannot be understood as reflecting the quality or impact of the Madad programme in Turkey. The deteriorating conditions for beneficiaries are in line with UN Women's Covid-19 rapid gender assessment for Turkey and with World Bank economic forecasting for the country, which expects the economy to contract by 3.8% and poverty to rise significantly in 2020.

The evaluation did not have a counterfactual allowing the comparison of results for the beneficiary group with a comparative sample of non-beneficiaries, but qualitative evidence from interviews and focus groups suggest that the income from training bursaries and other support from the programme helped some beneficiaries through the lockdown, but that the programme has not been able to get many beneficiaries into sustainable income-generating activities. In Turkey, a notable exception is the Women's Cooperative, created by around 50 trainees at the SADA centre, which has received the backing of the Gaziantep Chamber of Industry and GIZ and looks set to continue its progress after Madad programme funding ends. A micro-gardening initiative was also started in Gaziantep with 100 beneficiaries (male and female) during the lockdown, which contributed to households' basic needs.

UN Women, The economic and social impact of COVID-19 on women and men; rapid gender assessment of COVID-19 implications in Turkey, link.

World Bank (2020), "Turkey economic monitor: adjusting the sails", 11 August, link.

World Bank (2020), "Iraq economic monitor, Fall 2020: Protecting vulnerable Iraqis in the time of a pandemic, the case for urgent stimulus and economic reforms" 11 November, link.

Achieving the programme's economic empowerment objectives in Turkey was complicated by the large number of at-risk women among the beneficiary population, for whom comprehensive service provision was particularly beneficial, but for whom results in the form of economic empowerment and more secure livelihoods are harder to achieve.

The reported economic situation for beneficiaries was better in Iraq, where more survey respondents reported resorting less to negative coping mechanisms and having access to income-generating opportunities. However, the World Bank's economic forecast for the country is highly concerning. It estimates around 5.5 million Iraqis falling into poverty due to the double hit of collapsing oil prices and the effect of Covid-19. This will also affect the employment and income opportunities of refugees and IDPs. However, the Madad programme's emphasis on employability and entrepreneurship skills will have helped equip beneficiaries to generate their own income. Based on interviews, focus groups and the survey data, the evaluation concludes that, despite the economic downturn in Iraq, the programme has contributed to the overall resilience of households, something that is predicted to continue once the funding is withdrawn. The programme made good use of the 'snowball effect' through encouraging beneficiaries to teach others about what they had learned throughout their training. This contributed to both programme efficiency, in spreading the capacity building beyond direct beneficiaries, and sustainability of results by consolidating the skills and learning of the 'beneficiary trainers'.

One suggestion to enhance future sustainability of the results from this kind of programming, would be to pay closer attention to entry level and progression criteria, tailoring training better to the skillsets of the individual beneficiaries. Some beneficiaries in Iraq and Turkey mentioned losing momentum due to how programmes were phased, while others – especially among the most at-risk women at the SADA centre – struggled to keep up with beginner-level activities. However, since the scale of the Madad programme's training activities, compared with other programmes, is relatively small, having enough levels of activities going at the same time to achieve such an individualised approach would be challenging.

In Jordan, prospects for long-term employment for women in Jordan continue to be poor, but beneficiaries greatly valued the financial gain from their participation in C4W activities. Some Syrian women were able to cover costs of their children's education in Syria through the income they received:

“ I paid part of my son's education from the money I got from my work with UN Women ”(FGD, Jordanian and Syrian refugee women, Out of Camp, Jordanian).

Others believed that the C4W and job placement opportunities would facilitate their access to future job opportunities. The income-generating activities helped beneficiaries through the Covid-19 lockdown:

“we lost our income, but my work with UN Women helped us to cover all our needs at that time” (FGD, Syrian and Jordanian women, C4W beneficiaries, Out of Camp).

A business incubator, if the plans for this had not been dropped/delayed in Iraq and Jordan, could have improved prospects for women beneficiaries moving into self-employed income-generating activities.

FINDING 15: The most significant sustainable impact of the programme at individual level, across the three countries, is in resilience more broadly defined (rather than economic empowerment), in the form of strengthening women beneficiaries’ self-development, coping skills, confidence and support networks.

Interviews and FGDs in all three countries brought up numerous examples from beneficiaries of how the programme’s activities gave them the opportunity to gain knowledge and communicate with people, having previously been isolated. For most beneficiaries the lasting impact of the programme is not directly related to income, but can be counted in the broader resilience category of ability to cope with adversity, feeling empowered and resilient. FGD participants noted how the Women-only centres created spaces where women could build friendships and have their voice heard. This was greatly valued, particularly among the most vulnerable. One Syrian woman living in a refugee camp in Jordan shared her situation:

“I am widow and my son was only 10 years, so, there was fear to deal with the new community, but this was changed after joining the Oasis centre. I communicate with diverse people, I have become more positive, and more organised in terms of time management. Financially, the situation has become better, I feel stronger, and all these things reflect on my ability to communicate with people, on treatment of my kids, I have become more engaged in the community.” (FGD, C4W, in-camp, Syrian women)

Participants in all three countries mentioned how their increased confidence and coping skills helped change their family lives and how they interacted with their children. In Iraq, one beneficiary said she had been “feeling sad and depressed due to joblessness” (Group interview participant) but after spending time at the training, her mood changed and she became happy, which had a positive impact on her and her family. In Turkey, one Syrian FGD participant who had taken part in social cohesion activities told us that the sessions “were very helpful for us personally because they allowed us to understand how to deal with this domestic violence better, how to treat the children better, how to manage the stress we were going through in a more coping way”.

In Jordan, an FGD participant noted how the C4W activities made her aware of the importance of her daughters being financially independent. Being productive, the women also gained social status within their households, as they were contributing to family expenses. During an FGD with job placement beneficiaries, a Syrian woman explained that “now our families, they treat us differently, they respect us more, they appreciate our efforts” (FGD, job placement, Syrian).

Jordanian and Syrian refugee C4W beneficiaries in Jordan told us that the activities brought them closer. A Jordanian participant mentioned that they were able to share customs with their Syrian counterparts and develop friendships with them, “which we still have”. Highlighting the networks developed between Jordanian and Syrian women through interacting in the programme, a beneficiary said; “when I left my job in the [Oasis] centre, I felt that I lost my family again, the first one was when I left Syria, and now when I left the centre” (FGD, Jordanian and Syrian refugee women, Out of Camp, Syrian, Female).

Summing up sustainability achievements at the individual level, the Madad programme contributed to building women beneficiaries’ economic, social and cultural capital so that they could be resilient to crises and stresses. The transition from training and short-term, income-generating opportunities to longer-term integration into the economic sector remains, however, very challenging for refugees, IDPs and host community women across the region.

FINDING 16: Across the three countries and at regional level, UN Women has played a strong role in humanitarian coordination mechanisms, promoting gender-responsive action. The impact of this is likely to be sustained, due to the programme’s capacity building and training elements.

In Iraq, capacity building activity with community-based organisations was “of quality and effective” (Group interview participant from CSO) and has placed smaller local organisations in a better position to continue to provide support for vulnerable women. The evaluation did, however, find that national and local organisations could have been given more opportunity to be involved from the start in designing the programme’s interventions, including its associated outputs and activities. Such early engagement with the local UN Women project team might have fostered an even greater sense of ownership which could potentially lead to a higher level of commitment to the long-term sustainability of programmes.

In Turkey, support for grassroots women's organisations is likely to have sustained impact. The Women's Cooperative at the SADA centre stands out as a strong achievement with good potential for standing on its own feet. The Tomorrow's Women Committee, set up by SADA centre beneficiaries with support from the centre is another good example. Through mentorships and training and the women's own initiative, the committee built up its ability to input into the SADA centre's work, arrange outreach and social cohesion events, and to mentor and support other women at the centre.

In Jordan and Turkey, sustainability can also be seen in the knowledge materials produced through the programme, such as the manuals produced by AWLN and used to train justice professionals in Jordan; the research produced by REACH on gender and livelihoods in Jordan; and the training material developed by UN Women Turkey for gender-sensitive humanitarian response workshops for humanitarian first responders. In Jordan, UN Women implemented the out-of-camp Oasis centres together with the Ministry of Social Development, supporting a strong degree of national ownership and hence sustainability for these centres.

FINDING 17: There is a general sustainability problem for refugee-focused services, which remain heavily dependent on international donors across the region. The cost and complexity of running comprehensive services through women-only centres is a problem for sustainability, despite the strong results of this model.

In Jordan, while the evaluation found that commitment to, and ownership of, the programme activities was strong among the government and NGO partners, the model of providing comprehensive services through women-only centres remains dependent on international donors continuing funding. The provision of services to both refugee and host community women helps sustain support from Jordanian government stakeholders, but not yet readiness to take over the funding. The national ownership of this model has however been strengthened in Jordan through the partnership between UN Women and the Ministry of Social Development in implementing the out-of-camp centres. This partnership has contributed to the likelihood for sustainability having come the furthest in Jordan out of the three countries of implementation.

The manual applied a gender analysis on Jordanian laws highlighting gaps that needed to be addressed to protect women from discrimination.

In Iraq, the future sustainability of the programme might have benefitted from placing a stronger focus on aiming services and decent income-generating opportunities equally at women from Syrian refugee and from host communities, including IDPs. This would likely create a stronger sense of ownership and support for this kind of programming among host communities, and thus potentially help elicit funding for future programming.

In Turkey, the high cost of the SADA centre, although largely warranted considering the level of services provided and the complex needs of the vulnerable women it supports, is an obstacle to sustainability. However, a potential longer-term impact of the SADA centre is through its signal effect of showcasing what can be done. This may have a longer-term impact on humanitarian programming, although not necessarily in the Turkey context.

An added complication in the case of Turkey, is that the SADA centre was by law not allowed to provide psychosocial or counselling services to Turkish citizens. The priority of the Turkish government is to provide services for all, not targeted at specific groups of refugees. There is also a trend towards centralising services, with less funding going through municipalities. The EUTF will no longer be operational in Turkey and the EU Facility will focus on direct grants to the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, to fund social service centres run by the government. Under the direct grant, EU will also support Women's Shelters and Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centres, child protection units and elderly/disabled centres in order to increase the government's capacity for the provision of preventive and protective services.

The social service centres are not women-only and do not provide comprehensive one-stop-shop services. This is not a reflection of the quality of the SADA centre. Priorities have changed, with the result that continued funding for the SADA centre has become more difficult to achieve than anticipated at the outset of the programme, and will be reliant on finding international donors, as there is currently no option of transferring the centre to national or municipal government actors. The Women's Cooperative will continue with support from GIZ and the Gaziantep Chamber of Industry, which is an important achievement.

The challenges of sustainability for the SADA centre were obvious and known from the design stage of this programme. More planning could have gone into the design stage to build in options beyond the dichotomy of the centre staying open and the centre closing. This could include retaining important elements of the SADA centre's strengths within a gradual downscaling of the centre's activities and costs.

4.6 Communication and visibility

The evaluation team was also asked to review the Madad programme's communication and visibility (C&V) plan. A more detailed account of the programme's extensive C&V activities can be found in Annex 12.

FINDING 18: The programme was effective in incorporating a broad range of elements to ensure strong EU visibility, and its C&V activities reflected best practice in ensuring participation and inclusivity both from partners and beneficiaries.

The Madad programme had an active C&V plan and used a diverse range of mediums to ensure strong visibility for the programme and donor. This included photography, videos, fact sheets, press releases and reports targeting a diverse audience. The programme banner, combining the programme's visual identity with the EU and UN Women branding, was displayed at events, visits and activities. Programme visibility events were also organised jointly with the EU Delegations and programme stakeholders in Iraq, Jordan and Turkey. They brought together CSOs, government officials, development partners and beneficiaries to engage in programme activities. Field visits by the donor and other partners were documented and disseminated widely through the programme webpage and social media channels.

A Madad-branded photo exhibition comprising portraits of programme beneficiaries was developed and displayed during events such as the "High-level discussion on the impact of Syria crisis on women and girls in Syria and countries hosting Syrian refugees" – pre-Brussels III meeting in Amman on 26 February 2019, and at the EU-UN Women Dinner in Brussels on 13 March 2019. A 3-minute animation video introducing the programme was also produced and disseminated through the website, social media and at programme-related events. UN Women also made use of its existing social media outlets (at national, regional and HQ levels) to disseminate information on the programme through for example, the ROAS YouTube channel, UN Women websites, Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, and YouTube channels. The EU Madad Webpage is hosted as a sub-page on the UN Women Regional Office for the Arab States (ROAS) website. The Europe and Central Asia Regional Office (ECARO) and Jordan Country Office websites also hosted a sub-page for the programme. UN Women disseminates all C&V content through its various social media channels, including ROAS, ECARO, Jordan, Iraq, Turkey, and Brussels Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Flickr.

Note that UN Women's C&V activities are documented in: Annex E. Programme: Strengthening the Resilience of Syrian Women and Girls and Host Communities in Iraq, Jordan and Turkey. Communication Work Plan January – December 2019.

UN Women developed a C&V plan according to the EU MADAD guidelines to ensure that the C&V activities were aligned with EUTF requirements, were well thought of, and included aspects such as the targeting of the right audiences, delivery of appropriate messages and implementation of activities in an appropriate and timely manner. UN Women has a broad range of guidance on social media and advocacy policy as well as “how to” tools (such as for instance “How to tweet for UN Women” and “How to post on Facebook for UN Women Regional or Country Pages”).

UN Women coordinated closely with EUTF and EU Delegations in target countries as well as with the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) in the implementation of the C&V component of the programme. The training of partners on the C&V plan of the programme and EU guidelines and requirements ensured that activities were delivered according to EU standards and requirements. Stakeholder interviews confirmed that partners had received the training and were well aware of EUTF C&V standards and guidelines and that UN Women ensured the visibility of donors at all events.

Using a broad range of tools to target different audiences was also important because it ensured that the most difficult people to reach were reached and shows UN Women’s efforts to ‘leave no one behind’ in its C&V activities. In general, stakeholders interviewed noted a strong visibility for the programme, including for donors. One interviewee from an international organisation involved with the programme said: “I think UN women have done quite a good job in having effective social media and online presence and they have managed to have a high reach to the people because a lot of people in Iraq rely on social media as an information resource” (Delegate, international organisation). UN Women’s use of existing communication outlets was also important to magnify outreach and EU visibility. The SADA centre was well-known among stakeholders, due to vigorous advocacy activity, on social media, in traditional media and at events. The centre had a steady stream of delegation and media visits. Promotion activities focused on the women participants and presented the programme from their perspective, for instance in the article series “In the words of...”, which set out challenges and achievements of women in the programme in their own words.

5 Conclusions

This section distils a set of conclusions drawn from the evaluation's 18 findings. Rather than repeat the findings, it draws together evidence and analysis across the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness & impact, efficiency, gender equality and human rights, and sustainability.

5.1 Conclusion 1: The training and activities offered in the safe and supportive environment of the women-only centres had a sustained impact on personal and relational empowerment and resilience (micro and meso level).

The value of the UN Women Madad programme is undisputed. It is innovative and highly relevant to regional and national priorities for supporting Syrian refugees and host communities. It responds in a context-sensitive manner to the basic needs of targeted beneficiary groups and has been successful at reaching hard-to-reach and vulnerable women with comprehensive, including GBV, services through careful selection of locations and national partners, working with women's grassroots CSOs and conducting community outreach activities. The programme has been highly valuable to beneficiaries. It has contributed to improving beneficiaries' shorter-term coping mechanisms and economic situation, allowing spending on essential needs such as healthcare and their children's schooling, and helping them through the difficult months of Covid-19 lockdown and restrictions.

Longer term, the programme's combination of livelihoods training and job opportunities, language training (Turkey), workshops on life skills and women's rights, and women's solidarity and social cohesion activities in a safe and supportive women-only environment has had a sustainable impact on beneficiaries' personal and relational empowerment, as described by numerous respondents in interviews and focus groups. In terms of personal empowerment, beneficiaries reported improvements in their mental state, sense of coping with problems and adversity, self-confidence and belief in their ability to work and provide for their families. Signs of relational empowerment were also visible, with many beneficiaries noting that their relationship with their families had strengthened, that they had found their voice, that they were better able to support their children, and that they received more respect due to their ability to generate income for the household. These micro and meso-level improvements in women's empowerment is a significant achievement for the programme.

[Findings 3, 4, 6, 7, 12, 14 and 15]

5.2 Conclusion 2: The programme also aimed to address macro-level barriers to women's empowerment in the region but lacked robust data to measure outcomes on longer-term economic empowerment, social cohesion and men's gender awareness.

Addressing macro-level barriers to women's economic empowerment was also part of the programme's objectives and theory of change, but achievements in this area are not only difficult to attain through one discrete three-year programme but also difficult to measure. Arriving at conclusions on outcome-level effectiveness was challenging, due to the broadly framed objectives and outcome statements in the theory of change, the relative lack of detail in interrogations of causal pathways, and the lack of robust data to measure outcome indicators, particularly on longer-term economic empowerment, social cohesion and men's gender awareness.

Deteriorating economic conditions during the programme's lifespan, compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic, mean that implementation took place at a time when economic and mental health stresses were worsening for the beneficiary population. Without a counterfactual to measure results against, the extent to which the programme helped mitigate the shocks and stresses of a deteriorating economy and the restrictions due to the pandemic, is difficult to measure. However, evidence from FGDs and interviews corresponded broadly to the programme's own survey data to suggest that at least in the shorter term, the programme had made some improvements in helping women overcome barriers to accessing the job market and livelihood opportunities.

The barriers facing Syrian refugee women's opportunity to increase their economic empowerment, resilience and self-reliance are enormous in all three programme countries. Especially Jordan, but also Iraq and Turkey, have very low labour market participation rates for women, which is even lower for refugee women and has worsened due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Conservative gender roles (often stronger among refugee communities than host communities), lack of childcare, lack of support from male family members to enter the workforce, and risk of sexual exploitation and harassment in the informal job sector were to some extent addressed by the programme's intervention but at a moderate scale. The programme's main efforts, and main achievements, were focused at the level of personal and inter-relational empowerment of women (through psychosocial support, language training, life-skills

and employability and livelihoods courses) not at cultural, economic and structural barriers. While the programme could not be expected to singlehandedly address these, more could have been done for instance to link livelihoods training and job-placement to opportunities for longer-term income-generation.

[Findings 1, 5, 6, 7, 12, 14]

5.3 Conclusion 3: The programme has helped UN Women establish its role in coordination mechanisms for the Syrian refugee response, providing advocacy, support and training in gender responsive refugee action.

The Madad programme has helped UN Women become a more central actor in the coordination mechanisms for the Syria response and has highlighted the benefits of programming steeped in principles of gender equality and women's rights. Other stakeholders noted the active and constructive role UN Women played at both regional and national levels in supporting and advocating for gender-responsive humanitarian action and in strengthening the capacity of other humanitarian and development actors – ranging from other UN agencies to grassroots level CSOs – through training and mentoring on how to mainstream gender sensitivity into their programming and approach. Less visible, but important, was the guidance and support to national stakeholders during the day-to-day implementation of the programme.

The Madad programme was also an opportunity for UN Women to showcase the model of women-only comprehensive service centres, or women's empowerment hubs, which was widely described during KIIs with other stakeholders as best practice. The programme has thus enabled the agency to illustrate to other stakeholders what gender-sensitive refugee response can look like, while also raising the agency's own profile.

5.4 Conclusion 4: The programme’s interventions to engage men in support of women’s empowerment were of good quality but were mostly too ad-hoc and limited in nature to sufficiently enlist the support of men – in the community and among family members – for the programme’s objectives.

Gender awareness activities for men were of good quality and beneficial to the participants, but their generally one-off and limited nature are not enough for longer-term or wider impact, as was confirmed both in this evaluation’s FGDs and in reporting from UN Women’s implementing partners. Findings from Iraq, which had a more systematic approach to engaging men, and showed some promising results, suggest that additional investment in advocacy drives, and in enlisting men in supporting women’s empowerment, could have strengthened the Madad programme’s contribution to breaking down cultural and policy barriers to women’s economic empowerment.

It is widely recognised that the success of women’s empowerment programmes also relies on enlisting the support of men, and on promoting men’s awareness and recognition of gender equality principles and respect for women’s rights and roles. FGDs and extended interviews with men and women participants highlighted the limitations of an approach that focuses mainly on women: many women, for instance, noted that even if there were better job opportunities at the end of their training, their husbands would not allow them to work outside the house. Several men participating in the FGDs described their scepticism towards, or displayed a lack of understanding of, the aim of gender awareness.

[Findings 8, 13]

5.5 Conclusion 5: Monitoring and reporting was plentiful and has generated useful evidence, but measures should be taken to increase the robustness of survey data.

The Madad programme has generated a lot of data, ranging from implementing partners' satisfaction surveys distributed to trainees and workshop participants, to EUTF ROM reports, quarterly information notes and annual progress reports, with detailed financial reporting and logframe results. The baseline, endline and midline survey designed by UN Women and delivered by the implementing partners was ambitious and the development of the gender-sensitive RIMA, as it becomes further tested, could become central to better understanding the many and complex dimensions of resilience.

The quality of quantitative analysis rests on the quality of the data it is based on. The independent evaluation's assessment of the delivery of the survey concluded with some concerns about the robustness and reliability of data. For future surveys, a range of technical measures on sampling, data management and oversight, indicators and analysis would be beneficial, to further strengthen UN Women's important role in promoting the production of gender-sensitive and gender-disaggregated data on resilience and economic empowerment. These are provided in Annex 11 of this report.

[Findings 5, 11]

5.6 Conclusion 6: Partnerships were key to the results and successes of the programme. UN Women selected national partners that were highly capable and well-connected, and its capacity building activities were useful, particularly in the area of gender-sensitive response and GBV. UN Women's support for grassroots women's organisations contributed to the programme's results and could be taken even further.

The programme was efficiently run, with almost all output targets achieved or exceeded and budgets kept to. The programme was highly successful in extending services to the most at-risk women, highlighting the unmet needs for the programme's services among the refugee population.

Strong partnerships with highly capable partners contributed significantly to the efficiency of the women's empowerment hubs/women-only centres in all three countries. The programme had a suitably light-touch regional governance level, combined with implementation at country level by UN Women country offices working in close and generally well-working partnerships with national partners. The programme contributed to strengthening capacities of national authorities, NGOs and women's CSOs, with good feedback from partners in all three countries on the value and usefulness of GBV training and gender-sensitive humanitarian response. This contributed to the sustainability of the programme's results. Leadership programmes for women beneficiaries at the women-only centres, and support for creating grassroots CSOs such as the Tomorrow's Women Committee at the SADA centre, were good contributions to longer-term sustainability of empowerment results and also helped ensure the responsiveness and connectedness of the programme to beneficiaries needs and interests.

[Findings 2, 10, 16]

5 6 Lessons learned

6.1 On comprehensive services in women-only centres

Lesson 1: The model of women-only centres providing comprehensive services under one roof – including GBV counseling, psychosocial support and referrals, as well as livelihoods and life-skills training and income-generating activities – is an example of best practice in supporting the resilience and empowerment of women.

- The Madad programme has successfully showcased the model. In particular, the buzz around the SADA centre in Gaziantep has provided opportunities for advocating the model's benefits and results. UN Women has promoted the model through a range of actions:

- o Working closely with local and national government and NGO partners to increase the understanding and chances for uptake of the model,
- o Advocacy, training and capacity building towards other UN agencies and INGOs as an active member of the 3RP humanitarian coordination mechanisms,
- o Advocacy efforts in the public sphere, through producing and placing energetic and upbeat stories on social and traditional media platforms, focusing on the resilience and solidarity of women helping themselves and helping each other.

- This multipronged approach to piloting, training and advocacy is a strength that UN Women should continue to build on, in the region and beyond.

Lesson 2: A model of comprehensive service provision can produce a more holistic and sustainable impact on resilience. The model is effective at reaching and supporting vulnerable women, and the women-only nature is particularly appropriate in conservative, patriarchal contexts.

- This lesson highlights the importance of context-sensitive programming that carefully adapts the design of interventions to the characteristics and needs of the target population. Considering the contextual framework of the Madad programme, with substantial barriers to women’s economic empowerment in general, and refugee women’s in particular, the model’s focus on personal and relational empowerment through a combination of essential services and workshops and training in livelihoods and life skills in a safe, friendly and supportive women-only environment was essential to the programme’s results. This finding was clearly evidenced from beneficiary interviews and FGDs in all three intervention countries.

- This responsiveness to context is an important lesson from the Madad programme. It should be noted that different contexts may not need a women-only approach, but might benefit from targeting activities at both men and women, as part of enlisting men’s support for women’s empowerment.

Lesson 3: The inclusion of both displaced and host populations at the women-only centres furthers integration and social cohesion, at least at the level of individual beneficiaries.

- The Madad programme had some effect at individual level on integration and social cohesion.
- Social cohesion activities bringing host and refugee women together, such as in Turkey, had a stronger impact on refugee women, who often were isolated and had few opportunities to interact with host community women. The Turkish women attending events were more likely to already be comfortable with engaging socially with refugee women.
- Developing further initiatives to bring in host community women, including from among community members who are concerned or worried about refugees living in their neighbourhood, will be important for future programming.

6.2 On working in difficult and fast-changing humanitarian settings

Lesson 4: A flexible, localised approach is imperative in order to respond to changing needs of the most vulnerable people in the three countries, particularly in conflict contexts such as Iraq, and in light of the current Covid-19 pandemic.

- Localising interventions according to contextual opportunities and the needs and interests of beneficiaries is central to effectiveness.
- The evaluation found that relevance and effectiveness of programme interventions was strengthened by the context-sensitivity and flexibility of implementation. There were no major adaptations during the lifetime of the programme, but many smaller adaptations took place, often after input from beneficiaries.

- The programme shows the importance of having strong feedback mechanisms for women beneficiaries. The importance of supporting women leadership and grassroots women's CSOs was illustrated by the central role played by the Tomorrow's Women Committee at the SADA centre, as well as by the many examples the evaluation team was provided by beneficiaries in Iraq and Jordan of how their ideas and suggestions led to changes in service provision to better cater to their needs.

Lesson 5: Using innovative technological methods is important both for effective implementation of interventions and for building capacities of partners, particularly in remote settings and under the current Covid-19 pandemic.

- The use of blockchain for cash distributions in refugee camps in Jordan made it possible to continue the distribution during the quarantine period when programme staff could not enter the camps.
- In Jordan, C4W beneficiaries working in childcare were able to continue work during the pandemic, creating lessons for children and delivering them via WhatsApp or other social network platforms.
- In Turkey, when planned social cohesion activities could not be continued due to Covid-19, the implementing partner did not simply move the activity online. Instead, thought was put into what kind of workshops would be particularly helpful during lockdown. This was first brought to attention not by the implementing partner (KEDV), but by beneficiaries who were grateful for opportunities to talk about and seek advice on issues such as mental health and coping strategies during lockdown.

6.3 On programme organisation and partnerships

Lesson 6: Engaging national and local authorities from the design stage through to implementation of the programme is imperative to facilitate effective implementation of activities, as well as foster a sense of ownership, which will improve the likelihood of sustainability.

- The evaluation findings highlighted that strong partnerships with local and national authorities are central to programme success. This is not always easy, as the priorities of national and local authorities can shift, and capacity is not always available to take a hands-on role in projects even when political will exists.
- In Turkey, UN Women unsuccessfully attempted to bring the Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality closer into the operation of the SADA Centre. However, the municipality was kept closely informed through monthly reports and frequent communication and remained a supportive partner.

- In Jordan, UN Women spent time and effort to convince its government counterpart of the value of the Oasis centres. This kind of direct, targeted advocacy is central to ensuring the sustainability of interventions – in this case the future operation of the Oasis centres.

Lesson 7: Maintaining regular communication with implementing partners, and including them from the design stage of the interventions they will run, is important both for capacity building and to promote ownership and sustainability.

- In Iraq, interviews with key stakeholders underlined that although partnerships were generally strong, national and local organisations might have further benefitted from capacity building, and could have contributed further to sustainability, if they had more opportunity to be involved from the start in designing the programme's interventions, including its associated outputs and activities. Such early engagement with the local UN Women project team might have fostered an even greater sense of ownership. This, potentially, could lead to a higher level of commitment to the long-term sustainability of programmes to support vulnerable women.

Lesson 8: Regionally organised multi-country programmes can become unnecessarily complicated if they attempt to pull together countries that otherwise fall under different regional structures.

- For the Madad programme, Turkey fell under two different EU funding structures, since EUTF funding had to be disbursed through the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey. The programme also incorporated two UN Women regional offices in addition to the three country offices. As a result, it was a sound decision to move away from plans of a closely integrated regional programme.
- However, a stronger regional learning structure could have offered more opportunities, particularly for national NGO implementing partners to share and discuss lessons and innovations. The turn to virtual ways of working and meeting due to the Covid-19 pandemic has also opened eyes to the possibility of holding more frequent regional meeting without the financial and logistical burdens of bringing people physically together from different countries.

6.4 On communication

Lesson 8: A strong and extensive range of communication and visibility products and activities can lead to improvements in programming and advocacy.

- The Madad programme's active and strategic use of a range of platforms and tools to spread positive, reinforcing stories of women's empowerment in the face of adversity was one of many factors contributing to the spirit of confidence and solidarity fostered at the women-only centres.

- This strong C&V activity raised the profile of UN Women and the EUTF on gender-sensitive humanitarian response and reinforced the best-practice reputation of the women-only centres.
- The use of tools and guides for how to present different media products ensured that quality standards were adhered to. The frequent placing of beneficiaries at the centre of the C&V products contributed to the programme's participatory approach.

7 Recommendations

The table below sets out the evaluation team's recommendations. The recommendations are based on the findings and conclusion of this final evaluation, and were developed through a consultative approach with the key stakeholders both from UN Women, the programme's implementing partners, and external stakeholders, represented through the Evaluation Management Group and Evaluation Reference Group. The recommendations are subject to validation from the evaluation reference group.

The recommendations are presented in four tables. The first table of 12 recommendations relate to the Madad programme as a whole, including both country and regional levels. This is followed by three tables with country-specific recommendations for Iraq, Jordan and Turkey.

Some recommendations are linked to each other. The importance attached to each recommendation is denoted by a low/medium/high significance ranking. The tables includes reference to relevant parts of the findings section that back up and validate each recommendation. Detailed evidence can also be found in the country summaries accompanying this report in annexes 1, 2 and 3. Suggestions are included on how each recommendation can be supported.

7.1 Programme-wide recommendations

Recommendation	Section/page number	Directed	Ranking	How Action Can be Supported
<p>1 UN Women should continue to play a leading role in the advocacy work to gender mainstream the Syria crisis response at a regional and national level in the MENA region</p>	<p>Throughout the report.</p>	<p>UN Women / All country offices.</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>- UN Women has established itself as a central actor in coordination of the Syria response through its work on gender mainstreaming and gender-sensitive response. The agency can continue to further this by continuing to prioritise active engagement in coordination bodies and offering constructive mentoring and capacity building support in these areas.</p>
<p>2 UN Women should continue to work strategically for longer-term international donor commitment to, and prioritisation of, comprehensive services in women-only safe spaces. This could be a central aspect of UN Women’s contribution to the response to the Syria refugee situation.</p>	<p>Throughout the report.</p>	<p>UN Women / All country offices.</p>	<p>High</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expand the safe space models, where possible, using government owned centres to ensure sustainability of the service. - Ensure that childcare and transportation facilities are provided to women, allowing them to balance their reproductive and productive roles as well as engage in the public sphere, while taking into account context and socio-cultural restraints so as not to place women at risk. - Provide women with training on resilience building and soft skills (particularly leadership, communication and problem-solving skills) so that they are more confident engaging in the public sphere and are able to recognise and ask for their rights. Encourage and support grassroots women’s organisations locally. - Results from the Madad programme can be used to help enlist long-term donor commitment to women-only safe spaces. - Build on UN Women’s considerable skills and experience in advocacy drives. - Make use of and build on experience from the large body of C&V material produced for the Madad programme.

	Recommendation	Section/page number	Directed	Ranking	How Action Can be Supported
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enlist the support of host governments. This will sometimes have to be as close partners and contributors rather than main funders, considering the reluctance noted in this evaluation of government actors to take on the cost of running women-only centres.
3	<p>The EUTF should support, through advocacy and funding, efforts to encourage national governments in the region to adopt comprehensive women-only service centres as appropriate and effective responses to women’s equality and economic empowerment in a regional context of structural and cultural barriers to women’s economic participation.</p>	<p>Throughout the report.</p> <p>Section 4.5 Sustainability, Finding 17</p> <p>Section 5.7, Conclusion 7</p>	EUTF	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Oasis and SADA models constitute best practice for addressing the comprehensive needs of vulnerable and at-risk women, among refugee, IDP and host community populations. - While economic empowerment for women is difficult to achieve considering the structural and cultural barriers in the region, the strengthening of women’s personal resilience and relational empowerment, together with employability skills and livelihoods training, is an important step in that direction. - The women-only nature is central to the centres’ effectiveness in the region and should be preserved. The same effect cannot be expected if centres were open for men and women.

Recommendation		Section/page number	Directed	Ranking	How Action Can be Supported
4	Part of UN Women’s strategic drive could be an in-depth comparative investigation of the pros and cons of the Oasis and SADA models of women-only centres, and work towards streamlining a model that finds the right balance between quality and depth of service, and operational cost and availability to a larger number of beneficiaries	Section 4.3 Efficiency, Finding 9 Section 4.5 Sustainability, Finding 17	UN Women/all countries	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enlist the views and expertise of implementing partners running the centres on efficiencies and priorities: e.g. conduct virtual evidence-focused workshops for managers and specialist staff at women-only centres in the three countries. - Bring together experiences from the Madad programme with other women-only spaces, such as the centre in Izmir funded by the Government of Japan, with some co-funding from EUTF. - Potentially commission specialist research.
5	For programmes with complex objectives such as the Madad programme, UN Women and EUTF (whether funding UN Women or other organisations) should design strong mechanisms for outcome-level monitoring and results reporting, in order to better track the results of programme interventions and understand their relationship with other factors influencing outcomes. This could include budgeting for post-programme monitoring to measure longer-term/sustainability of outcomes.	Section 4.3 Efficiency, Finding 11 Annex 11: Technical measures to improve survey design, data management and analysis	UN Women (regional and all countries) / EUTF	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The evaluation provides a list of suggestions and technical recommendations in Annex 11 on strengthening survey design and analysis to capture outcomes over time and assess relative contributions of interventions. - To measure how programming contributes to longer-term resilience, such as increased employability, greater empowerment within households and reduced negative coping strategies, post-programme monitoring plans would be particularly useful, following up with beneficiaries after they have graduated from programme support, to track how sustainable improvements in well-being are. This is not an easy task and would include the need to allocate resources for post-programme surveys taking place after the programme has completed, which donors often do not do. - Robust evidence can contribute to the advocacy drive for women-only comprehensive service centres.

Recommendation		Section/page number	Directed	Ranking	How Action Can be Supported
6	UN Women should continue the work to develop and refine the gender-sensitive RIMA with its gender-sensitive Resilience Capacity Index. This work can become a significant contribution of UN Women and FAO to filling gender-sensitive data and evidence gaps and further the understanding of the drivers and barriers to resilience.	Section 4.3 Efficiency, Finding 11	UN Women (regional, international)	Medium	- This work goes hand in hand with recommendation 5 above.
7	UN Women should develop a robust learning framework for such programmes and facilitate regular structured learning exchanges between the countries such as by undertaking country-specific, thematic meetings for the purpose of conducting 'deep dives' on thematic issues (such as GBV, cash for work, and social cohesion). These thematic meetings would be beneficial for collecting best practices and challenges on specific thematic issues (for example gender), which could be shared with other countries	Section 4.1 Relevance, Finding 2	UN Women / Jordan, Iraq, Turkey	Medium	- UN Women could organise regular remote meetings at a thematic level on various thematic issues and produce online and offline materials, documenting outcomes of these meetings, which can be accessible to UN Women country teams and partners and ensure that that they are produced in English, Turkish and Arabic. - This would enhance communication mechanisms at country/regional level to ensure that relevant stakeholders are aware of programme activities and lessons learned, and that best practices are shared.

Recommendation		Section/page number	Directed	Ranking	How Action Can be Supported
8	UN Women should ensure that it has core staff at regional and country level (i.e. M&E, staff) available from the outset of programmes.	Section 4.1 Relevance, Finding 2 Section 4.3 Efficiency, Finding 11	UN Women / Jordan, Iraq	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that dedicated reporting and M&E staff for the programme at country level are recruited in good time, to be available from the inception phase of programmes. - Dedicate a budget for the recruitment of a coordination officer who can take charge of the coordination within and across country, under the supervision of the UN Women regional programme coordinator.
9	Greater investment of efforts to create sustainable and decent income-generating opportunities across beneficiary groups – Syrian refugees, IDPs and vulnerable host communities.	Country summary Iraq	UN Women / All countries, but in particular Iraq	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equity of programming efforts between host and refugee population is central in a setting where hostility towards ‘job-stealing’ refugees is high and easily triggered. - Needs analyses, focused on host community women as well as refugee women, may help draw host community women to the integrated services. - Coordinate with the private sector to create employment opportunities for Syrian refugees, IDPs and vulnerable host communities (through their CSR programmes for example). - Further examine models such as cooperative associations, whereby women can collectively work together to generate income. - Further examine income-generating models through home-based businesses. Possible linkages to larger scale companies can ensure that women receive regular work. - Advocate for opening more professions for Syrian refugees in Jordan.

Recommendation		Section/page number	Directed	Ranking	How Action Can be Supported
9	Continue working on initiatives that support behaviour/attitudinal changes among men and boys and ensure these are carefully integrated into programme design, theories of change and the development of monitoring indicators. Consider developing long-term strategies for initiatives on changing gender norms that take into account that changes in attitude and behaviour require long-term efforts. This should not be at the expense of women-only centres, which are valuable, in particular for the most vulnerable women.	Section 4.2 Effectiveness, Finding 8 Section 4.4 Gender and human rights, Finding 13	UN Women (All countries) / EUTF	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gaining support from men, whether in the broader community or family members, is central to achieving women’s economic empowerment in deeply gender-unequal societies. Programmes aimed at promoting women’s rights and empowerment are strengthened when components aimed at men’s behaviour and attitudes are integral to the programme. - Work with civil society organisations on programmes that address behaviour change and which target youth and adolescents (refugees, IDPs and host communities). - Use innovative media initiatives to reinforce messages and enlist men as creators and participants in initiatives rather than just audiences. - Possible integration of these initiatives within school systems can ensure long-term efforts are made on such behaviour change initiatives.
11	EUTF could consider funding independent monitoring contracts for communication and visibility strategies, to better understand the impact and effectiveness of C&V activities and to enable iterative changes to the strategy based on learning during the lifetime of the programme.		EUTF	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EUTF could fund specialised monitoring contracts to support the design and implementation of C&V activities for EU MADAD-funded programmes. - Baselines, indicators and results targets (beyond output level indicators such as number of tweets, number of social media followers, etc) should be developed at the inception stage in order to enable monitoring of effectiveness and an iterative approach. - Indicators and monitoring strategies could be put in place from design stage, in order to iterate and adapt the approach to maximise the effectiveness of C&V strategies during the lifetime of a programme.

Recommendation	Section/page number	Directed	Ranking	How Action Can be Supported
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operational analysis reports can be commissioned on an ad hoc basis, when EU Madad needs more information “on the ground”, on thematic areas, what works, and mapping opportunities and gaps.

7.2 Iraq: country-specific recommendations

Recommendations Iraq programme	Section/page number	Directed	Ranking	How Action Can be Supported
1	<p>Programming aimed at addressing the barriers women face in reaching economic empowerment should include consideration of the provision of childcare support, since lack of childcare is a key barrier for women to access the labour market in Iraq</p>	UN Women Iraq / All countries	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All livelihoods training and cash for work programme should include support for childcare as a matter of best practice for allowing more women to access training and engage in economic activity. - Childcare support is particularly important for refugee and IDP women, who are less likely to have wider family support networks to draw on, as well as for women heads of households. - By providing good quality childcare, the programme would also contribute to the well-being and development of children (a benefit noted by beneficiaries both in Jordan and Turkey).

Recommendations Iraq programme		Section/page number	Directed	Ranking	How Action Can be Supported
2	Consider conducting needs assessments at two stages for livelihoods training programmes: First, at design stage, a community-level needs assessment to identify target groups and geographical areas. Then, during implementation, at individual level in order to better align and adapt training opportunities to existing skill levels.	Iraq country summary.	UN Women Iraq	Medium	- Needs assessments at community level are important when designing programmes, but during the implementation stage of interventions aimed at enhancing livelihood and employability skills, a more nuanced approach should be adopted that takes into account the individual backgrounds and starting points of vulnerable women and girls, including a comprehensive vulnerability assessment, in order to 1) support eligibility for entry into the programme and 2) support alignment of the programme activities with the skills of women.
3	In order to ensure equitable programming and reaching vulnerable women and girls from all backgrounds, intervention sites and beneficiary populations should be selected on the basis of a review of programmatic data about the population in need, offering opportunities based on vulnerability rather than displacement status. This will support equitable programming and reach of vulnerable women and girls from all backgrounds.	Iraq country summary.	UN Women / EUTF	Medium	- Needs analysis should focus on host community women as well as refugees, both from an equity perspective of focusing on vulnerability regardless of displacement status, and in support of social cohesion in a setting where refugees can often be viewed with hostility and depicted as 'job stealers'. - Since Iraq's refugee camps are sites of great need at population level, Madad programme activities were focused there. However, if future programming takes a more granular approach to assessments, UN Women would be better placed to reach vulnerable women in host and IDP communities in greater number.

Recommendations Iraq programme		Section/page number	Directed	Ranking	How Action Can be Supported
4	In any further iteration of the programme, UN Women should prioritise the quality improvement of pragmatic, income-generating activities for women and girls, as these were identified as the most impactful interventions, but also those which would benefit from enhanced alignment with beneficiary needs and expectations.	Iraq country summary.	UN Women Iraq	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programming could include working with local and national businesses and business organisations to develop training activities that are relevant to preparing women to take advantage of Iraq's emerging 21st century business sector.
5	UN Women should strengthen efforts at country level to ensure that the programme design and implementation are owned by the government in order to support sustainability purposes.	Iraq country Summary	UN Women Iraq	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This could be achieved through the establishment of reference groups and/or steering groups during the design phase of the programme, who are actively involved throughout the programme timeframe. - UN Women country managers can play an important role in ensuring that information on the programme at a regional and country level is shared with relevant government counterparts.

7.3 Jordan: country-specific recommendations

Recommendations Jordan programme	Section/page number	Directed	Ranking	How Action Can be Supported
1	Focus on capacity development and job placement opportunities that are based on local market needs as well as on the situation and needs of Syrian refugee and vulnerable Jordanian women.	Jordan country summary.	UN Women Jordan	<p>High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct a localised labour market needs assessment to identify market needs at a localised and national level. - Conduct a stakeholder mapping/engagement plan to identify stakeholders and possible mechanisms of engagement (at both localised and national level). - In the case of Syrian refugees, this could include an incentive-based analysis to identify ways in which they can be incentivised to enter the formal labour market. - Conduct a capacity assessment to identify existing capacities of beneficiaries and areas where capacity development is needed based on their interests and localised labour market needs assessment. - Create partnerships with local/national service providers in order to link women to job opportunities. Conduct a gender analysis to assess suitability of available employment opportunities for women and gaps that need to be addressed so that women can engage in suitable job environments. - Create internship opportunities that provide women with on-the-job training and provide them with mentorship/coaching throughout the internship period. - In trainings, ensure that women are provided trainings on their labour market rights and are aware of feedback and complaint mechanisms (if available) in the jobs that they are placed in. - Conduct regular monitoring checks to obtain feedback from women on their satisfaction.

Recommendations Jordan programme		Section/page number	Directed	Ranking	How Action Can be Supported
2	Provide women with opportunities to start their own businesses and encourage innovative ideas such as mushroom growing and productive kitchens. Provide continued mentoring and follow-up to support women in sustaining their businesses	Jordan country summary.	UN Women Jordan	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct a gender analysis in the areas of intervention to examine the differences in roles and norms for Jordanian and Syrian women and men, the different levels of power dimensions that they hold, constraints and opportunities; and the impact of these differences in their lives. - Conduct a value chain analysis that describes the full range of iterative activities needed to produce the income generating projects (for home-based businesses). - Conduct feasibility studies for entrepreneurial start-ups and those that have been identified for further development. - Conduct capacity assessments to identify existing capacities of beneficiaries and areas where enhancements are needed based on their projects. Ensure that trainings include value chain, feasibility studies development, as well as soft skills, such as communication and marketing. - Develop strong marketing strategies for entrepreneurial ventures. Utilise UN Women's and other partners CSR programmes as a marketing outlet for ventures. - Develop cooperative associations with women who are interested in such ventures and utilise the experience of partners in the development of such models (such as ILO, GIZ, CIDA, etc.). Creating a brand for cooperatives to use as a marketing strategy may facilitate in marketing products/services. - Ensure that long term mentorship/coaching is provided to women entrepreneurs.

Recommendations Jordan programme		Section/page number	Directed	Ranking	How Action Can be Supported
3	Continue to apply and advocate for comprehensive and holistic support through the Oasis model, in collaboration with government.	Jordan country summary.	UN Women / EUTF	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with the ministry of social development to enhance/roll out Oasis model. - Build capacities of MoSD staff to ensure that they are able to provide comprehensive and holistic services within the safe spaces. - Ensure robust feedback and complaint mechanisms enable Oasis centres to adapt to the needs of beneficiaries. - In the case of psychosocial support, partnerships could be developed with universities to enlist university students.
4	Look into options where virtual support and services can be provided, such as online trainings, psychosocial support, and income-generating opportunities.	UN Women Jordan / all countries	UN Women / EUTF	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaborate with government and private sector organisations (international, national) on trainings/internships/ job placement opportunities related to information technology and communication (ICTs) (such as the MoITC, Int@j, Cisco Systems, Microsoft, Zain, etc.) - Lessons learned from flag ship projects such as UN Women’s “Achieving Equality in the ICT sector” can be used and enhanced. - Develop partnerships with universities to support in remote specialised services such as psychosocial support to Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanian women.

Recommendations Jordan programme		Section/page number	Directed	Ranking	How Action Can be Supported
5	UN Women should consider extending partnerships with NGOs that go beyond existing ones that are Amman-focused and well-established. Provide support to local NGOs and CSOs in the areas of intervention.	Jordan country summary.	UN Women Jordan	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct stakeholder mapping/engagement in local areas of intervention to identify local NGOs/CSOs. - Conduct capacity development assessments for local NGOs/CSOs and build their capacities accordingly (in various areas including gender, governance, ICT, ethical practices, etc.). - Create networking opportunities that allow networking opportunities between NGOs at local / national and international level to share experiences, best practices and open opportunities for collaboration.

7.4 Turkey: country-specific recommendations

Recommendations Turkey programme		Section	Directed	Ranking	How Action Can be Supported
1	UN Women should focus on the ‘missing link’ between training and longer-term employment or income-generation in its economic empowerment programming.	Turkey country summary / Synthesis report, Relevance, Finding 1	UN Women Turkey	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The theory of change of future programming should not just acknowledge barriers to employment for refugee women in Turkey but build an understanding of these barriers and how they can be addressed into the design of training programmes. - Close cooperation with government agencies is crucial and could be expanded. Expanding training activities to more host community women may make such cooperation easier to achieve. - The SADA Women’s Cooperative shows what can be achieved, but also the considerable time, resources, training and mentorship it takes to get there. Taking the Cooperative as a pilot, future programming should take advantage of the

Recommendations Turkey programme		Section	Directed	Ranking	How Action Can be Supported
					momentum and publicity it has created in order to look for ways not just to replicate, but streamline this model, so that it can benefit a larger number of aspiring women entrepreneurs.
2	Going forward, it would be highly valuable for UN Women to conduct a careful, forensic examination of the SADA centre model and its results in Turkey, with the aim of taking what is best from this pilot and developing a less costly, or at least a gradually down-scalable, model that has better prospects for long-term sustainability	Turkey country summary / Synthesis report, Efficiency, Finding 9	UN Women Turkey / UN Women Regional	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The SADA centre is an example of best practice, but its cost may be too high for many donors. The cost and complexity of the centre also means that most host governments will be reluctant to contemplate taking over responsibility for such centres. - See also recommendation 4 at the regional level on conducting an in-depth comparative investigation of the pros and cons of the SADA and Oasis (Jordan) models of women-only centres, and work towards streamlining a model that finds the right balance between quality and depth of service, and operational cost and availability to a larger number of beneficiaries. Lessons from the Izmir women-only centre can also be included here.
3	Carefully examine the balance between prioritising the most at-risk, and broader availability of training and livelihoods skills opportunities.	Turkey country summary.	UN Women Turkey	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The knock-on effect of the SADA centre's laudable focus on the most traumatised and vulnerable refugee women can mean fewer spaces available for host community women and a reduction in the effectiveness of the training programme in terms of increased livelihoods. - Ensure that counselling and follow-up continues for at-risk women during training periods, to ensure they can cope and benefit from the training.

Recommendations Turkey programme		Section	Directed	Ranking	How Action Can be Supported
					- Consider having more training levels and approaches, for instance building on the success of the less formal Turkish conversation clubs for more vulnerable women who may not be ready for a standard classroom environment.
4	Continue to advocate the SADA centre model as best practice.	Turkey country summary.	UN Women Turkey and beyond / EUTF	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The SADA centre has shown what a women-only centre offering comprehensive services can look like, if prioritised and resourced adequately. Although UN Women has not been successful so far in receiving funding beyond February 2021 for this model in Turkey, it is nevertheless a model well-worth UN Women's continuing sustained advocacy efforts, whether in Turkey or elsewhere. - It is also a worthwhile model for donors to aspire to.
5	Future programming on social cohesion or men's gender awareness activities should include efforts to develop outcome indicators so that results beyond output level (how many activities were organised or women included) can be monitored. This would help develop evidence on best practice.	Turkey country summary.	UN Women Turkey, regional	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A stronger exploration of causal links should underpin programme design, but there is currently little evidence available in this area. - Best practice is likely to be highly context specific, thus evidence also needs to be context sensitive. E.g. in Turkey, the evaluation findings point towards the pertinence of a basic focus on a combination of language skills and women's rights and empowerment in a setting where many Syrian women refugees reported that they seldom would leave their house before they joined the SADA centre.

Annexes

There are 12 annexes to this report:

Annex 1: Iraq country summary

Annex 2: Jordan country summary

Annex 3: Turkey country summary

Annex 4: Evaluation question matrix

Annex 5: Evaluation terms of reference

Annex 6: Bibliography

Annex 7: Evaluation document list

Annex 8: Overview of beneficiary and stakeholder participants

Annex 9: Six case stories based on extended interviews with beneficiaries

Annex 10: Ethical protocol, information sheets and consent forms

Annex 11: Suggested technical measures to improve survey design, data management and analysis

Annex 12: The Madad programme's communications and visibility activities