

ANNEX 3

TURKEY COUNTRY SUMMARY



Funded by the European Union

This project was funded by the European Union (EU) through the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis “Madad”.



Annex 3: Turkey country summary

Evaluation of the UN Women Madad programme

January 2021

This country summary report presents the findings and recommendations of the independent evaluation of UN Women's [Strengthening the Resilience of Syrian Women and Girls and Host Communities \(Madad\)](#) programme in Turkey. The country summary is an annex to the main synthesis report covering the regional programme in three countries. For an account of the evaluation approach, methods and questions, please refer to the main report and relevant annexes.

Figure 1: The UN Women Madad programme in Turkey: key facts and locations



Introduction

Turkey hosts around 3.6 million Syrian refugees¹ under its Temporary Protection Regulation (TPR). Syrians under Temporary Protection” (known as SuTPs) have access to national services, including health, education and social services.² 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.

1-UNHCR, Operational Portal Syria Regional Refugee Response: Turkey, link.

2-3RP (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.

The majority of Syrian households in Turkey – 64% in 2018 – live below the poverty line,³ with hardships set to increase dramatically due to Covid-19. SuTPs can apply for work permits,⁴ but Syrians are mainly able to find jobs in the informal sector, with exploitative working conditions and poor pay.⁵ Obstacles for women refugees include sex-based segregation of the labour market; low education levels and lack of employability skills; lack of childcare and risk of sexual exploitation and harassment in the informal job sector.⁶ 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).⁷

Relations between refugee and host community are challenged by the increased competition for jobs and the change in political discourse during the 2019 elections.⁸

Box 1: Impact of Covid-19 on refugees in Turkey

Economic conditions have worsened for the vast majority of refugees in Turkey

A rapid assessment in April 2020 of the impact of Covid-19 on the refugee population found that:⁹

- 69% of households reported loss of employment due to Covid-19
- 82% of households have increased debt
- 31% of children enrolled in school could not access the online curriculum
- 61% of households reported that Covid-19 impacted their ability to access hospitals

Gender-based inequality, discrimination and violence have increased in Turkey during the Covid-19¹⁰ 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-generating activities (having already a low level of labour market participation) as well as an increase in domestic tension and indications of increased GBV in refugee households.¹¹

3-3RP (2018). Outcome monitoring report: 3RP Turkey chapter 2018, link.

4-3RP, Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan in Response to the Syria Crisis: Turkey, January 2020, link, p.6.

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

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

7-TurkStat (2020), Labour Force Statistics, July 2020, Press Release no. 33791, 12 October, link.

8-WFP, Social cohesion in Turkey: refugees and the host community, July 2020, link

9-IFRC, Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN), Issue 1: April 2020, link

10-UN Women, The economic and social impact of COVID-19 on women and men: rapid gender assessment of COVID-19 implication's in Turkey, link

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

UN Women's [Strengthening the Resilience of Syrian Women and Girls and Host communities](#) (Madad) programme in Turkey ran from February 2018 to July 2020, with a costed extension agreed with the EU Trust Fund (EUTF) until the end of January 2021. Further funding has then been found to take the programme to the end of February 2021. The total budget for Turkey is EUR 6,543,519. In addition to the main funder, EUTF, the programme is funded by the governments of Japan and Iceland.

The programme's overall objective is to ensure that women, girls and their communities are resilient to conflict, displacement and other crises. Its approach rests on three interlocking building blocks:

- Strengthening the capacity of national and local government and other key stakeholders to ensure gender-responsive refugee response
- Support Syrian and host community women to gain skills and knowledge and increase their access to livelihoods and protection services, offered through a comprehensive 'one-stop-shop' model
- Enhance the capacity of women's groups to promote cross-cultural dialogue and social cohesion.

The outcomes and outputs for the Turkey programme are:

Outcome 1: Women refugees and host country nationals are empowered through increased longer term social and economic recovery and livelihood opportunities (outcome shared with Iraq and Jordan)

• [Output 1.1:](#) Women - displaced, refugee and host country nationals – have increased access to short term productive and financial assets and skills, and men are engaged as partners in social equality and economic growth

• [Output 1.2:](#) Women are empowered and have access to long-term employment opportunities

• [Output 1.3:](#) Gender equality priorities are adequately costed to ensure that the resources needed are mobilised and budgets allocated

• [Output 1.4:](#) Women refugee and host country nationals have increased access to comprehensive essential services.

Outcome 2: Women and girls are engaged in promoting social cohesion and co-existence in their communities (outcome unique to the Turkey programme)

• **Output 2.1:** Women’s organisations are supported to promote stability and peaceful co-existence in their communities.

Table 1: UN Women’s core Madad partners and activities

<p>ASAM</p> 		<p>Runs and manages the SADA Women’s Empowerment and Solidarity Centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender-responsive comprehensive services through vulnerability assessments, psychosocial support and counselling, and referrals - Engaging men in gender-awareness activities - Support to the SADA Women’s Cooperative - Community-level social cohesion projects and social-cultural events
<p>ILO</p> 		<p>Main responsibility for livelihoods and language training activities at the SADA centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vocational skills and language training, including computer operating, beauty care, packaging, food production, home textileproduction, shoe making - Language training and conversation workshops - Support to the SADA Women’s Cooperative - Engaging men in gender-awareness activities
<p>KEDV</p> 		<p>Social cohesion and peaceful co-existence between communities in Gaziantep</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community-based women leadership programme - Social and cultural events for Turkish and Syrian Women
<p>RET International</p> 		<p>Social cohesion, men-engaged activities and language clubs in Mardin and Kilis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language clubs to improve conversational proficiency - Awareness-raising sessions with men and boys - Social cohesion events around international and national days - Sexual and reproductive health workshops for Turkish and Syrian women together
<p>Habitat Association</p> 		<p>Social cohesion, men-engaged activities and language clubs in Gaziantep, Sanliurfa, Kilis and Istanbul</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social cohesion and cultural activities for Turkish and Syrian women - Computer and financial literacy skills training
<p>Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key local government partner - Support UN Women and ASAM in providing access to gender-responsive services and empowerment programmes at the SADA centre
<p>ISKUR (Turkish Employment Agency)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key government partner - Job counselling and work life information seminars at the SADA centre - Register SADA centre training participants as job seekers in ISKUR online job matching portal
<p>FAO</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technical support for micro-gardening project offered to beneficiaries from the SADA centre
<p>Tomorrow’s Women Committee</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Created by women beneficiaries at the SADA centre - 16 days of activism against GBV - networking and social engagement activities for Turkish and Syrian women to build awareness on gender equality and foster communal cohesion
<p>Tomorrow’s Women Committee</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some training activities at the SADA centre - Support for the SADA Women’s Cooperative, and will host the cooperative in the future

The programme was implemented mainly in the city of Gaziantep, through the SADA Women’s empowerment and solidarity centre, which provided psychosocial support and GBV specialised protection services with outreach teams, a psychologist, health educator, social worker and lawyer, together with livelihoods and language training and the hosting of an entrepreneurial Women’s Cooperative. Training and social cohesion activities also took place in Ankara, Istanbul, Sanliurfa, Kilis, Mardin, Izmir, Diyarbakir and Antakya. The programme’s main implementing partners were the Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants (ASAM) which ran the SADA centre, ILO, KEDV, RET International, and the Habitat Association. Other key partners and non-donor stakeholders included the Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality, ISKUR (the Turkish Employment Agency), Gaziantep Chamber of Industry, FAO, UNDP and UNHCR – the latter two as central actors in the humanitarian coordination mechanisms in Turkey. Finally, a key civil society partner was the Tomorrow’s Women Committee, established by Syrian and Turkish women beneficiaries of the SADA centre with the support of UN Women and ASAM. The committee was central in providing feedback and contributing to adjustments in training and livelihood activities at the centre, as well as in outreach and gender-awareness and women’s rights activities.

Relevance

The UN Women Madad programme was highly relevant to international and national humanitarian response plans and beneficiary needs. UN Women Turkey plays a central guiding role in the humanitarian coordination system on gender responsive action and gender mainstreaming. The women-only focus and the comprehensive approach to livelihoods and protection (including GBV) activities under one roof is both innovative and fills a clear gap in the humanitarian response. There is a strong focus on reaching at-risk and vulnerable refugee women.

A core objective of the UN Women Madad programme is to strengthen the capacity of national and local government and other key stakeholders to ensure gender-responsive refugee response. This was pursued through developing training material and providing training seminars for first-line responders on gender equality and gender-sensitive refugee response planning and service delivery. Training was offered to local and national government officials, staff at other UN agencies and Turkish and international NGOs, including the Madad programme's implementing partners. UN Women also provided technical advice and mentoring on gender-sensitive refugee response to local CSOs working for and with women refugees. Other UN stakeholders interviewed noted that UN Women, despite being relatively new in Turkey, have become a notable and highly appreciated actor in the humanitarian coordination system, promoting gender-responsiveness and gender-mainstreaming.

The intervention strategies and activities were highly responsive to the country context and to the specific needs and priorities of Syrian and host community beneficiaries. The interventions were designed and resourced to ensure that support reached the most vulnerable. The programme is closely aligned with donor and international humanitarian strategy and with the priorities of the Turkish government. The 2018-2019 3RP emphasises supporting the Government of Turkey on the following strategic priorities: protection of vulnerable individuals, enhanced basic service delivery (health, education, social services), immediate assistance to Syrians and vulnerable members of the host community, and expansion of livelihood and job opportunities for Syrians and their hosts. The programme sought to integrate protection, service delivery, language skills and livelihoods training into a comprehensive approach to empower and strengthen the resilience of vulnerable women.

The choice of interventions was based on a 2018 needs assessment, which found access to employment and income, poor housing, and language barriers to be the main challenges facing Syrian women. 70% of the women interviewed could not speak any Turkish, only 15% were in income-generating work and between a third and a half of widowed, divorced and single women lived far below Turkey's poverty threshold. Many did not know how to access services and were not aware of the rights and support structures for victims of GBV. 39.8% of the women left their house only once a week or less.¹² The combination of language classes, skills training and psychosocial support and referral services, with a strong outreach effort to reach the most at-risk, is strongly relevant to the needs expressed by refugee women in the 2018 report.

12-UN Women and ASAM (2018), *Needs Assessment of Syrian Women and Girls under Temporary Protection Status in Turkey*, Ankara, June, pp. 6-7, [link](#).

The programme's inclusion of host community women was important, considering the growing needs of both host communities and Syrian refugees, particularly after the Covid-19 pandemic. Increasing hardships are likely to further increase tension between host and refugee populations, signifying a need to focus on supporting vulnerable members of the Turkish host community, both based on increasing need and in order to avoid intercommunal tension.¹³

The provision of livelihoods and protection focused interventions as a 'package' of comprehensive services under one roof at a women-only centre, made the programme unique in the Turkey context. While there are many other community centres available for refugees and host communities across Turkey, these are not women-only spaces and they tend to be focused on specific services, either Turkish language or skills training or different kinds of protection, referral and psychosocial support services. UN Women has established one other women-only centre, in Izmir, which opened its doors in November 2019 with funding from the Government of Japan and some co-funding from EUTF. The Izmir centre is a scaled-down version of the SADA model, but the SADA centre is unique in its comprehensive approach and its level of ambition for the women it supports. This also made it somewhat famous: as a UN Women staff member noted in an interview, "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]".

“ Whenever we do lessons learnt or best practice sharing, it is always this kind of integrated approach that stands out ” (Interview with partner UN agency staff)

The programme was context-sensitive and applied a suitable level of flexibility. No major adaptations were made during the lifetime of the programme. The SADA centre adjusted its activities based on women's suggestions (e.g. providing a broader range of trainings and including men more in gender-awareness activities) and stepped up outreach and in-community activities in order to reach the most vulnerable refugee women. The Tomorrow's Women Committee played an important role in ensuring the centre's responsiveness to beneficiaries.

13-WFP, Social cohesion in Turkey: refugees and the host community, July 2020, link

One weakness throughout the programme cycle, was that livelihoods training was not sufficiently linked to job-seeking support. There were few relevant job opportunities once training was completed and no apprentice or job placement scheme or other services helping to give the trainees work experience and get a foot inside the labour market door.

Covid-19 affected programming, leading to temporary closure of the SADA centre. GBV support services became virtual, with SADA's case workers and protection officer checking up on existing beneficiaries and registering new cases over the phone. UN Women provided a tool kit to support this work. While far from ideal, this response was appropriate considering restrictions on in-person activities.

[Outcome 2, to foster social cohesion and peaceful coexistence, is unique to the Turkey part of this regional programme. The relevance of this goal is clear, with strong and growing tensions in the host population towards refugees.](#) The 2018 needs assessment found that refugee women have little interaction with host community members, suggesting the importance of social cohesion activities from the point of view of refugee integration into host society.

[Causal pathways from the programme's community cohesion activities/events to having an impact on community relations beyond the individuals attending was little explored.](#) The country plan has a high-level goal to "identify and support community-based solutions to build social cohesion and promote peaceful co-existence", while the activities under this goal mainly consisted of bringing Turkish and refugee women together for social and training events. Such stand-alone activities are unlikely to lead to community-based solutions, but considering the need for UN Women and its implementing partners to navigate a fast-changing and deteriorating political environment (in terms of attitudes to refugees), this grassroots, low-key approach was nevertheless a relevant contribution. 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".

The evaluation did, however, find that the activities under this heading, including the topics for workshops and training activities (such as mental health, mother-child relations, women's rights, etc), were useful to the beneficiaries. A strength of the programme design was its combination of outcomes 1 and 2: a range of activities fell under the social cohesion label, but also contributed to beneficiaries' empowerment and resilience. For instance, workshops on art therapy brought

refugee and Turkish women together but also dealt with trauma and mental health. Conflict management, financial awareness and women’s solidarity courses aimed both to improve coping skills and strengthen awareness of women’s shared problems across community divides.

Effectiveness

Economic conditions deteriorated dramatically for Syrian refugees in Turkey during the implementation of the Madad programme. While economic empowerment was a difficult objective to achieve in this context, the programme had a significant effect on beneficiaries’ resilience, confidence and ability to cope with adversity. Social cohesion and 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.

Table 2: Overview of objectives, outcome and output targets, their indicators and reported results

Results chain	Indicators	Targets	Results (Sept. 2020)
<p>Overall objective impact:</p> <p>To strengthen the resilience of Syrian and host community women, girls and their communities to conflict, displacement and other crises</p>	Number of vulnerable community members, including women, reporting increased access to income generating opportunities and social services	1,900 women (Adjusted from 1,600)	1,969 ¹⁴
	% of beneficiaries adopting a stress, emergency or crisis livelihoods coping strategy	63% (Adjusted from 20%)	89% stress; 41% crisis and 25% emergency coping strategy ¹⁵

14-This figure is an estimate based on responses to the endline survey, conducted in June 2020, where 77% of 258 respondents answered “yes” to the question: “Do you think that that as a result of you participation in the programme/project, you have increased access to income generating opportunities?”. It should be noted that in the same survey, 229 out of 258 respondents answered that their economic situation had decreased in the past six months, with 27 answering ‘stayed the same’ and only one reporting an increase. This result should be understood in light of the severe economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on refugee households in Turkey.

15-These are the results of the endline survey, conducted in June 2020.

<p><u>Specific Objective Outcome 1:</u> To support economic empowerment and resilience of women (refugee, displaced and host country nationals) and contribute to the resilience of local economies</p>	Number of women and girls directly accessing UN-Women supported humanitarian services (UN Women SP indicator)	8,600 (Adjusted from 5,000)	9,889 (8,763 refugee/1,126 host community)
	Number of women refugees and host country national receiving support from this project, seeking livelihood opportunities	1,000 (Adjusted from 800)	1,069 (839 Syrian, 179 Turkish citizens, 51 refugees from other countries)
	Number of women refugee and host country national receiving support from this project, actively engaging in solidarity groups	490 (Adjusted from 360)	513 (446 Syrian, 50 refugees from other countries, 18 Turkish citizen)
<p><u>Output 1.1:</u> Women (displaced, refugee and host country nationals) have increased access to short term productive and financial assets and skills, and men are engaged as partners in social equality and economic growth</p>	Number of men engaged in dialogues promoting women’s rights and empowerment	1,500 (Adjusted from 500)	1,659 (846 refugees, 765 Turkish citizens)
	Number of initiatives and dialogues initiated by men promoting women’s rights and empowerment	31	128
<p><u>Output 1.2.</u> Women are empowered and have access to long-term employment opportunities (Corresponds to overall logical framework 1.1)</p>	Number of Syrian refugees and host communities participating in active market programmes (vocational, technical and employability skills trainings)	2,500 (including Turkish language) (Adjusted from 1,600)	2,638 (1947 Syrian, 520 Turkish citizen, 171 refugees from other countries)
	Number of Syrian refugees and vulnerable host communities supported through awareness raising/mentoring seminars	1,300 (Adjusted from 800)	1,311 (949 Syrian, 295 Turkish citizen, 76 refugees from other countries)
	Number of MSME’s benefitting from the training	1	1 (SADA Women’s Cooperative)
<p><u>Output 1.3.</u> Gender equality priorities are adequately costed to ensure that the resources needed are mobilised and budgets allocated</p>	Number of local and national state and institution actors trained on gender equality and gender-sensitive refugee response planning and service provision	500 (Adjusted from 400)	489 (348 women and 141 men; 66 Syrian, 1 Iraqi, 422 Turkish citizens)

Output 1.4: Women refugee and host country nationals have increased access to comprehensive essential services (corresponds to overall log frame output 1.3)	Number of women accessing services through the community centres and are satisfied with the services provided under the programme	8,600 (80% satisfied), (Adjusted from 5,000)	9,550 (8,424 refugee, 1,126 host community). Satisfaction level not reported.
	Number of women provided with psychological, basic legal counselling and referrals, disaggregated by age	7,500 (Adjusted from 5,000)	9,885 (9,662 Syrian, 263 other countries). Disaggregated figure not reported
	Number of most-at-risk women benefiting from the centre, disaggregated by age	5,000 (Adjusted from 1,000)	5,973 (5,855 Syrian, 118 refugees from other countries)
Specific Objective Outcome 2: To strengthen the role of women and girls in social cohesion and co-existence across the refugees and host communities	Number of facilities and organisations capacitated to provide social cohesion activities	17 CSOs (Adjusted from 10)	17
Output 2.1: Women's organisations are supported to promote stability and peaceful co-existence in their communities through dialogue and peacebuilding activities	Number of women and children that have participated in cultural events and physical activities	3,000 (Adjusted from 2,000)	3,066 (2,026 refugees, 1,040 Turkish citizens)
	Number of women's organisations or institutions supported by UN Women to play a role in humanitarian response and recovery	17 (Adjusted from 10)	17

UN women was, as Table 1 shows, able to achieve almost all of its output targets and far exceeded some. The provision of comprehensive support services at the SADA centre quickly, and vastly, overshoot the original target number of beneficiaries reached. The targets were increased for the 2020 progress report, in the case of most-at risk women by 500%. The targets are mainly output related, counting the number of women benefitting from services and attending events.

The heavy demand on psychosocial support services 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. The centre was very effective in reaching at-risk women, through a strong outreach service including dedicated outreach officers. Psychological and legal counselling services were of high quality and respectful, and evaluators were told by some women beneficiaries that they were life changing. But for the most traumatised and vulnerable of women it was often not commensurate with their needs. In the two stories of “Maya” and “Amena”,¹⁶ provided in individual interviews, both women mentioned 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 vocational learning, and helped women access the services they need through referrals and accompanying them 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 attend training courses.

Livelihoods training was high quality, but the approach did not address structural barriers to labour market participation. The uniform feedback received from beneficiaries confirmed the programme’s own satisfaction surveys and the EUTF’s ROM report. The trainings were highly valued, and the trainers seen as competent and efficient as well as informal and friendly – which was important in a setting where many trainees were vulnerable women. However, the training activities were not strongly linked to support for finding employment, although ISKUR held information meetings on workers’ rights and job seekers databases. The impressive achievements and future potential of the Women’s Cooperative, created by women beneficiaries with 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.

¹⁶Names are pseudonyms.

The structural barriers to employment and income for Syrian refugee women – and indeed for Turkish women – are vast. In addition to the high unemployment and low workforce participation rate for women in Turkey, Syrian women were hampered by the lack of childcare and lack of approval from husbands and family to work outside the house. In one focus group, 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. They were also allowed to attend the SADA centre by their husbands because the centre was a women-only environment. 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). 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.

Short courses and long waits between levels impacted on the effectiveness of the training. The long waiting lists were in particular a problem for language courses. Training participants told us that although the contents of their training was very good, each course was short, and there were long waits before they could start the next level. This hampered momentum:

“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 ”

(In-depth interview, Jordanian, Female)

The SADA centre's activities were effective contributions to women's resilience, despite not having a strong effect on incomes and livelihoods. More or less all the Syrian beneficiaries interviewed noted how being at the SADA centre had made them feel empowered, more independent, more able to cope with the challenges of everyday life. Many talked about finding their voice, understanding their rights, feeling freer. For women who spoke no Turkish and hardly went out of the house before joining the centre, they talked about now being able to do things such as communicating with their children's school, taking the bus, going to the doctor, etc. Thus, while the goal of economic empowerment was hard to achieve in the deteriorating economic conditions in Turkey, the improvements in women's confidence and resilience, and the social support networks they created, are less directly intended, but highly valuable, results at the beneficiary level of this programme.

Women's economic empowerment and psychosocial support activities implementation started quickly, while social cohesion and men-engaged activities were slower to start. UN Women expressed that this was due to the need to establish new partnerships, which took time. Agreements were signed with CSOs in July-August 2019, with social cohesion activities picking up speed from September that year. In the case of the SADA centre, social cohesion activities were initially not budgeted for and had no indicators attached to them, although the Tomorrow's Women Committee arranged relevant activities throughout the funding period. A social cohesion officer was hired at the centre and activities began towards the end of 2019. While this could not have been foreseen, the late start was then compounded by the end to in-person activities due to Covid-19 in March 2020. Both ASAM and KEDV managed to move some of their activities online, for those who had internet access. KEDV included group counselling online, which beneficiaries confirmed 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)

Social cohesion activities focused on events and one-off trainings, reducing their potential for transformative impact. Reaching output targets is one thing, but effectiveness in terms of impacting on social cohesion beyond the positive experience of the participating women is limited. Effectiveness is also difficult to measure: there was no social cohesion measurement tool among the monitoring tools for this programme. A focus group discussion with Turkish and Syrian women who had participated in a range of different social cohesion events organised by KEDV found that the women participants spoke at least as enthusiastically about the contents of the sessions they attended (women leadership training, how to deal with earthquakes, mother-child relations) as about the Turkish-Syrian exchange aspect.

Getting Turkish women involved in social cohesion activities was difficult and the effectiveness of the activities was clearer in the case of Syrian participants. ASAM staff highlighted that they found that there is still stigma attached to engaging with Syrian refugees for Turkish women. This is a barrier that is initially hard to overcome but could break down quickly once Turkish women came to an event. Recruitment of Turkish women for events organised by ASAM often happened through the SADA centre. This had two downsides: first, there were relatively few Turkish women attending vocational training courses at the centre. This was partly a result of the target of 30% host community and 70% refugees attending courses but also due to the centre prioritising the most vulnerable and at-risk women, who tended to be refugees, for places on courses.¹⁷ But, as an ASAM staff member interviewee suggested, “They [Turkish women] should have been provided with more services at the centre. Because, when we do not provide any other service for them, they say ‘do you only invite us for your [social cohesion] activities?’”

Second, it recruited Turkish women who already were happy with, and accustomed to, socialising with refugee women, reducing the potential impact of events on attitudes and behaviour. A focus group with women in Gaziantep who had taken part in social cohesion activities through KEDV confirmed this: the Turkish women in the focus group noted that while many people reacted negatively to the arrival of Syrian refugees in their neighbourhood, they had never felt that way and were glad to take part in activities supporting Syrian women. In fact, the greatest impact on social cohesion may have been the insights Syrian women gained from these activities. It was mentioned both by CSO stakeholders and focus group participants, that isolation from the host community often meant that refugees were not aware of differences in norms and legal principles between Syria and Turkey. As one Syrian focus group participant said:

“we were able to finally get exposed to Turkish traditions and Turkish culture as first person.[...] We might have had our differences at times but after 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 ”

¹⁷-It should be noted that according to Turkish law, the SADA centre and similar structures are not allowed to serve Turkish citizens in the field of protection. Since Turkish women did not seek or receive counseling or other protection services at the SADA centre they were also not prioritised for spaces on livelihoods training courses.

Another Syrian 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”.

The gender-awareness activities for men were relatively limited in scope. Finding it difficult to recruit men for activities, innovative outreach approaches were devised, where men were engaged in informal events in the community and at corner cafes. Father-child cooking workshops were popular, but are unlikely to contribute to significant shifts in gender awareness. One focus group participant noted that the cooking workshop had led his daughter to become more keen on helping her mother in the kitchen. However, others said they had spent time sensitising their sons to become more helpful around the house after this course.

UN Women contributed to building the capacities of national authorities and CSOs who were involved in the various activities of the programme. The main implementing partners were already capable and well-functioning NGOs. UN Women’s capacity building contribution lay instead in its development and roll-out of a training programme for humanitarian staff (UN, NGO and government) on gender-sensitive refugee response. UN partners in the humanitarian coordination system spoke highly of UN Women’s constructive and supportive approach to gender mainstreaming, and interviewees noted their satisfaction with the training programme.

Efficiency

The SADA centre is an example of global best practice, providing comprehensive services to a highly vulnerable group of women with complex needs. This is not cheap, but it showcased 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 efficiency.

UN Women has found and worked well with strong partners, and this is a major factor in the programme's effectiveness and efficiency. The evaluation revealed an efficient partnership with ILO for training components, and ILO in turn brought in the Gaziantep Chamber of Industry, ISKUR and other government resources in its network. ASAM, KEDV, RET International, and the Habitat Association are all national NGOs with the right skills, experience and networks for successfully implementing the parts of the programme they were responsible for in an efficient and transparent manner.

ASAM ran the SADA centre effectively and catered for a much larger number of beneficiaries than first expected, listening to the women participants to make improvements and not being afraid of changing practices that were working less well (e.g. ending a training course in packaging after realising they did not have the right equipment for the task). The creation of two of the SADA centre's biggest successes, the Tomorrow's Women Committee and the Women's Cooperative, both came about after suggestions from beneficiaries and were developed in close collaboration between the women and the centre staff.

Communication between UN Women and each partner was good, but more could have been done to improve collaboration and mutual learning between implementing partners. This was particularly the case for partners whose activities were not based at the SADA centre.

The partnership with Gaziantep Municipality was good. The municipality was involved in facilitating the programme, communicating with government organisations and making referrals to the SADA centre. The SADA centre provided monthly reports to the municipality. However, the original hope that it would be possible to work through Gaziantep Municipality in setting up and running the SADA centre did not materialise. The municipality can be described as informed and supportive, but not an active partner.

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, and the hosting of some social cohesion activities, but not the training¹⁸ provided by ILO or activities by other implementing partners. In Iraq, the Madad programme budgeted support for seven GBV centres for EUR 700,000 over two years, while the Jordan component budgeted its support for five GBV centres at EUR 450,000 over the two-year programme period.

¹⁸Although it does cover the offices, workshops and training facilities used by ILO.

These figures are not directly comparable. The level of services provided at the SADA centre was comprehensive and high-quality, unique in Turkey and also standing out in comparison with the Iraq and Jordan counterparts. Its immense popularity and oversubscription, including particularly for psychosocial support services, are testaments to the important function the centre played. Comprehensive services provided at this level are not cheap, but are appropriate in a context of difficult conditions and with a range of unmet complex needs among a vulnerable population.

Monitoring and reporting mechanisms were strong with arguably an element of over-reporting, although measurements of the impact of men-focused and social cohesion activities were lacking. It was also not clear how output indicators on training related to the desired outcome of economic empowerment, with the intervening variable of support for job-seeking mainly lacking.

Gender Equality and human rights

Gender equality and human rights principles suffused the programme from design through implementation. The women-only focus is appropriate and a driver of results considering the programme's targeting of a highly vulnerable beneficiary population in a setting of deeply conservative and patriarchal community values.

The Madad programme is deeply embedded in the principles of gender equality and equity and this was incorporated in all aspects of programme design and implementation. Safe, women-only spaces for vulnerable and traumatised women, childcare facilities (although there could have been more), consideration of safe transport, GBV hotlines during Covid-19, are all examples of the gender equality and women's rights considerations running through the activities.

Structural obstacles to gender equality are considerable, in host community and more so in refugee communities, which were often described – both by refugee women and Turkish women – as more traditional. A strength of the programme was how it combined its empowerment and social cohesion objectives by suffusing its cultural and social cohesion events with awareness-raising and training on women's rights and solidarity and on women's leadership skills.

Efforts aimed at gender awareness for men were relatively limited in scope and effect and could have been better integrated into the programme design. However, the main focus and achievement of the Madad programme lies in the women-only spaces:

“ 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.”

(Zeynep Denli, social worker, SADA)¹⁹

The women interviewed confirmed this. Considering the conservative, patriarchal nature of the community many Syrian women come from, the fact that the SADA centre was women-only was crucial to allowing them to learn and prosper.

“ 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 as well. ”

(FGD with SADA centre training participants)

“ 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 it is very successful and why we benefit from it. ”

(FGD with SADA centre training participants)

Sustainability

Results at individual beneficiary level are significant and sustainable and UN Women's ongoing work to support gender-sensitive and gender-mainstreamed humanitarian action has become well integrated into coordination mechanisms. At the programme and institutional levels, the SADA model of comprehensive services through women-only centres has not had the uptake hoped for.

¹⁹-Quote is taken from the UN Women website: “Zeynep Denli: Women support women. We understand and empower each other”, 18 August 2020, link.

Sustainability at programme level relates to a general sustainability problem in Turkey, where refugee-focused services are heavily dependent on international donors. The Madad programme was aligned with the 3RP national plan, but due to its focus on the most vulnerable, it catered mainly to the needs of refugees. A priority of the Turkish government is to provide services for all, not those targeted at refugees. There is also a trend towards the centralisation of services, with less funding going through municipalities. The EUTF will no longer be operational in Turkey, while 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. These centres do not provide comprehensive one-stop-shop services for protection and economic empowerment in the way the SADA centre model does.

This is not a reflection of the quality of the Madad programme or the services and results delivered by the SADA centre. Priorities have changed regardless of this, but the result is that continued funding for the SADA centre has become more difficult to achieve, and will be reliant on finding international donors, as there is currently no option of transferring the centre to national government actors. For now, there is funding for keeping the SADA centre open through to the end of February 2021.

UN Women Turkey has played a strong role in humanitarian coordination mechanisms, promoting gender responsive action. This is likely to continue and is strongly supported by UN Women's UN partners.

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. Efforts to keep the SADA centre running beyond the programme's six-month extension have not succeeded. The Women's Cooperative will continue with support from GIZ and Gaziantep Chamber of Industry, which is an important achievement. Between July and October 2020, under a project title "United we are stronger to fight against Covid-19", supported by GIZ, the Cooperative produced and packaged over 200,000 face masks, which were delivered to Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality and the Ministry of Health's Gaziantep Provincial Directorate.

The SADA centre performed a much wanted and needed service, and received much publicity and praise, but the model has so far not been taken up by Turkish authorities or other donors. UN Women opened another women-only centre in Izmir in November 2019, with funding from the government of Japan. It is to some extent modelled on the SADA centre, but significantly smaller and does not offer a ‘one-stop-shop’ of comprehensive services. The centre offers protection and referral services to refugees, but not livelihoods training. Beneficiaries are referred to other centres for language training.

There is nevertheless a potential longer-term impact of SADA centre through its signal effect. It has showcased what can be done. This may have a longer-term impact on humanitarian programming, although not necessarily in the Turkey context.

The challenges of sustainability for the SADA centre model were obvious 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. UN Women has expressed that this solution is at the basis of the agency’s current fund-raising efforts.

The sustainability of results at the level of individual beneficiaries is high. As already described in the effectiveness section of this report, the programme was implemented in the context of deteriorating economic and political environment for refugees 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.

Achieving the programme’s economic empowerment objectives 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 forms of economic empowerment and more secure livelihoods are harder to achieve.

The Women’s Cooperative stands out as a strong achievement with good potential for standing on its own feet, but 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. The value of this long-term effect cannot be underestimated:

“ 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 ”

(SADA beneficiary, in-depth interview)

“ We wish SADA to continue, and to continue supporting us. It is very useful, and it gives us hope ”

(SADA beneficiary, focus group)

Communications and visibility

The communications and visibility (C&V) component of the Madad programme has played an important role in highlighting the programme’s activities and achievements, as well as the EU’s role as a donor. The C&V workplan was in line with the EU Communication and Visibility guidelines and carried out in close cooperation with EU stakeholders.

The high visibility of the SADA centre has helped cause attention around the Madad programme as a whole. In addition to its own considerable production of a large variety of communication products around gender equality and social cohesion, UN Women also managed to create interest for the Madad programme in Turkish media.

The communications and visibility (C&V) component of the Madad programme has played an important role in highlighting the programme’s activities and achievements and presenting a positive and empowering message about the resilience and resourcefulness of refugee women. The communications material has given strong visibility to the EU and its role as a humanitarian donor promoting a development-focused response to the Syrian crisis, helping bridge the humanitarian-development gap.

The C&V workplan activities are in line with the EU Communication and Visibility guidelines and were carried out in close coordination with the donor. A programme brief, which also included the EU and UN Women branding, was published in Arabic, English and Turkish, and a digital version was produced for public access. UN Women and its partners have used a wide range of tools, such as photographs, videos, fact sheets, press releases and reports reaching out to a diverse audience. The programme banner, which displays the programme visual identity as well as the EU and UN Women branding, was always displayed at events, visits and activities, and the EUTF was always tagged in social media posts about the Madad programme.

The UN Women Turkey office has been active on social media and has posted frequently about the programme's activities on its social media outlets, including Facebook and Twitter. It has produced a range of human interest stories, mainly around women from the SADA centre, including a series of articles starting with "In the words of...", covering hopeful and upbeat stories of women beating back difficulties.²⁰ UN Women in Turkey has been able to reach mainstream national Turkish and English newspapers to disseminate information on the project.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Madad programme in Turkey was successful in contributing to strengthening the resilience and empowerment of women and girls affected by the Syria crisis, particularly in light of the difficult economic situation facing both refugee and host populations. Its resilience and empowerment model is aligned with international human rights standards and has contributed to gender-responsive and comprehensive approaches to humanitarian work.

Table 3 below lists the evaluation's Turkey-specific recommendations. These should be viewed in conjunction with the programme-wide recommendations listed in the main evaluation report.

²⁰-See e.g. "In the words of Ayşegül Özdi: When you build communication among children of different cultures, the day after you see the effect on their mothers", UN Women, 18 April 2019, link; and "In the words of Safiye Mustafa: 'UN Women's SADA resilience centre transformed my dreams into real plans'", UN Women, 2 May 2019, link.

Table 3: Turkey-specific recommendations

Recommendations Turkey programme		Section	Directed	Ranking	How Action Can be Supported
T1	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 Office	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 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.
T2	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 Office / 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.

Recommendations Turkey programme		Section	Directed	Ranking	How Action Can be Supported
T3	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 Office	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. - 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.
T4	Continue to advocate the SADA centre model as best practice.	Turkey country summary.	UN Women (Turkey office 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.
T4	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, Office, 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.

