« To Foster Social Cohesion between Refugees and Local Populations in Host Communities in Turkey »

within

« Strengthening Resilience of Countries Welcoming Refugees in Response to the Syrian and Iraqi Crisis »

- Period of implementation: 36 months
- Budget: 74 millions of euros, among which 21.2 millions of euros granted to Expertise France – 7 million for Turkey’s program
- Donors: European Commission, « Madad » funds (70.6 M) and BMZ (3.4 M)
- Contract: delegation of EC to GIZ, and subvention to GIZ and EF
- Starting date: tentatively June 2016

1. General Frame of the Program

In line with the creation of the EU Regional Trust Fund, “Madad”, implemented by the European Commission in order to answer to needs of neighboring countries affected by the Syrian and Iraqi crisis, Expertise France, GIZ and AECID submitted a common proposal named “Strengthening Resilience of Countries Welcoming Refugees in Response to the Syrian and Iraqi Crisis” to the fund’s operational committee for a total funding of 74 million of euros (70.6 from the Madad fund and 3.4 by BMZ). This French-German initiative, is a capitalization of the work undertaken since the setting in 2014 of a common working space in Gaziantep under EEAS umbrella. This regional scale collaboration allows to implement a common response to Syrian refugees’ and host communities’ needs, in terms of service provision, and to give a better visibility to the European Union’s action, first aid donor for Syrians’ needs.

2. Role of Expertise France

Acknowledging that refugees’ return is a long-term process, lasting longer than the crisis termination, obstacles faced by the wide-majority of refugees in terms of status, protection and access to public services, education and labor market in their host communities need to be enhanced. Technical and vocational training of refugees is central to their participation within the host communities and a useful investment in terms of refugees’ reintegration within a post-conflict environment.

The general objective of the program is to develop a coherent European response to the major consequences of the Syrian and Iraqi crisis in terms of populations’ displacement within neighboring countries. This program will answer to the essential needs of refugees, population displaced inside Iraq and “repatriated”, in terms of formal and informal education, of vocational training, psycho-social support, protection and increase of economic opportunities. This program also aims at providing technical assistance to communities and local authorities within which are
included final beneficiaries to contribute to the early recovery and to the decrease of communities’
tensions.

More specifically, the program will contribute to:

1. Increase capacities and receiving conditions of national and refugees’ students within schools in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan.
2. Reinforce vocational training in order to increase educational and economic opportunities, more specifically of young adults and women, in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan.
3. Decrease tension between refugees and local populations and favor social cohesion in Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan.
4. Contribute to strengthening capacities of local administrations in charge of service provision to refugees and residents affected by the crisis in Jordan and Iraq.
5. To provide an exchange platform between Iraqis, Lebanese, Turkish and Jordanian governments and other involved actors on relevant policies and future perspectives for refugees’ and host communities.

Expertise France activities will be implemented within the frame of components 3/ Social Cohesion and 5/Facilitate Dialogue between Communities in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey. GIZ will be the program leader and will delegate part of its action to Expertise France and to AECID.

3. « To foster social cohesion between refugees and local populations in host communities in Turkey » Expertise France Program within « Strengthening Resilience of Countries Welcoming Refugees in Response to the Syrian and Iraqi Crisis »

a. Needs of Syrian Refugees and Location of Projects in Turkey

While Syrians entering Turkey initially chose to settle in the border provinces, with the conflict into its fifth year, refugees are moving inland in search of better jobs and opportunities. According to the Directorate General of Migration Management of the Ministry of Interior (MoI), as many as 357,225 Syrians are living in Istanbul as of January 2016.¹ As in other parts of Turkey, refugees are living with the support of relatives, neighbours and members of the host communities. While national and international organisations are (to varying degrees) implementing projects and activities in the South East of Turkey, support for Syrians living in Istanbul has been limited. There are currently six community centres in Istanbul for all refugees located in the European and Asian sides but very little support has been provided so far for Syrians living in the most populated areas of the city, which is continuously receiving growing numbers of Syrian refugees.

For instance, there are today 25,000 Syrian children in Istanbul receiving education, knowing that the target of schooling for Syrian children is 75,000 in Istanbul by the end of 2016 according to the MoNE. Yet there is an estimated 95,000 Syrian children in age to attend school. Bağcılar and Küçükçekmece are the most crowded municipalities in Istanbul in terms of non-camp population: with respectively 25,406 and 27,419 Syrian refugees settled in each district².

² UNHCR office in Istanbul
Still, needs in Southeast Turkey are high. With an estimated 1 million Syrians living in a corridor of a 100 km wide, along the Turkish-Syrian border, this comparatively poorer area of Turkey faces the difficult challenge of integrating Syrians socially and economically. In Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa or Istanbul, similar challenges prevent a harmonious integration of Syrians.

The language barrier certainly is one of them, but the complexity of the bureaucratic procedures play a greater part in Syrians being out casted. A significant hurdle is to have the right services reaching out to the refugee communities spread throughout Turkey. Local regulations fluctuate from one municipality to another; NGO community based projects are different from one city to another. This plethora of services or rules makes it difficult for refugees to navigate the communities they live in.

Syrian increasingly live in cities\(^3\), but this urbanisation is mirrored by a trend of poorer Syrians returning or going to camps where life is rough but allegedly cheaper. “Non-camp refugees” are particularly vulnerable and pose protection challenges for the humanitarian community. Setting-up and supporting multi-services centres create an adequate tool to:

- identify the most vulnerable,
- target them through a range of interventions based on their particular needs,
- ensure that the right information on community services reaches them,
- Provide a multi-faceted service approach.

b. General Objectives of the Program

Expertise France proposes to facilitate increased access to services for Syrian refugees in Gaziantep, Istanbul and Şanlıurfa concurrently contributing to their self-reliance and social inclusion in Turkey through the provision of education, life skills training, psychosocial, health and other assistance as required as well as social cohesion.

“To foster social cohesion between refugees and local populations in host communities in Turkey” of the joint regional project “Strengthening resilience of refugee hosting countries in response to the Syrian crisis” is in line with the 3RP pillars and aims at the following general objectives:

(i) Support efforts to increase the resilience of the refugee community, as well as to promote social cohesion with the host community by easing the burden on national and local authorities (line ministries, municipalities) through the support of existing facilities such as multi-service community centres offering protection and social stabilization for the refugees;

(ii) In line with this strategy, Expertise France will prioritise access to educational opportunities for children and youth by increasing the number of higher education scholarships, Turkish language, non-formal education and skills training opportunities;

(iii) Expertise France will contribute through the support of established and/or establishing temporary community centres (multi-services and health) through an integrated approach.

\(^3\) Figures put a ratio around 80 to 85 % of Syrians living in towns.
c. **Beneficiaries of the Program**

**Direct beneficiaries:**

The direct beneficiaries of the action will be the **partner organisations implementing the programme**: Basmeh & Zeitooneh, Women Now for Development, UOSSM, Kesh Malek, Kirkayak Kültür, International Blue Crescent, Canal France International.

**Indirect beneficiaries:**

The indirect beneficiaries are the **refugee and host communities of Gaziantep, Istanbul, Şanlıurfa and their immediate surroundings**.

4. **Approach and Activities for Inclusion of Municipalities in Education and Health Projects**

a. **Strategy of Coordination with National and Local Authorities, INGOs and Local Implementing Partners**

Expertise France intends to undertake the latter, in coordination and partnership with the Government of Turkey and relevant line-ministries and other relevant local authorities, including municipalities, as outlined in the 3RP. The overall approach will remain flexible and will be based on **needs identified, services already available and the capacity of the local partners to implement**. During the implementation phase of the programme, partners may undertake assessments to target services more appropriately and fine-tune the proposed actions.

Activities related to education and skills development will be coordinated with MoNE, UNDP, UNICEF and UNHCR. Given the size of the overall population (nationals and refugees) who live in the targeted areas, a particular attention will be paid to urban and peri-urban settings.

The **Directorate General for Migration Management** (DGMM) is a focal point to ensure that targeted populations of the programme are relevant, given the rapid mobility of the Syrian refugee, moving inland in bigger cities.

The **Ministry of Family and Social Policies** (MoFSP) is an essential partner in the general design of the project, as Expertise France action on social cohesion will respect the framework set by the ministry.

Expertise France and its local partners will provide inputs to the **local government coordination structures** established at the local level, including **provincial governors** and the field presence of DGMM. **Municipalities** will also be involved regarding all the operational aspects of the projects such as the best location to establish a community centre, health and school facilities. In principle, a joint team involving municipalities will carry out an assessment during the initial stages of the programme in Istanbul.

At local level, Expertise France will be closely cooperating and coordinating with the “**muhtars**” (ie. community leaders) of the neighbourhoods and municipalities where the projects will be implemented for information sharing with regard to the range of activities carried out. Hence, a **coordination committee** composed of implementing partners, both Turkish and Syrian community leaders, “**muhtars**” and municipalities representatives will be established in order to inform the municipalities of the on-going activities, its progress and eventually difficulties faced so as an alternative can be found.
**Education**

Coordinating with municipalities (metropolitans and subdistrict ones) and the Education provincial directorates is essential to the project as it is planned that municipalities will allocate buildings for the action and will help monitor the impact of the project and the movements of Syrian refugees in and out of their community. For activities related to non-formal Education, EF partners will coordinate with the Ministry of Family and Social Protection and Ministry of Education.

**Social Cohesion**

Coordinating with municipalities (metropolitan and subdistrict ones) is again essential, as they will help identifying Syrian vulnerable communities in their catchment area and in isolated settings. Municipalities will play a key role in the intercultural dialogue, which will underline all the actions in this component. For activities related to social cohesion Expertise France will coordinate with the Ministry of Family and Social Protection.

**Primary health care & psychosocial support and activities**

This project being created upon request of the local authorities, the municipality and the local health authorities (Provincial Health Directorates and Public Health Centres) will be essential throughout the implementation of this action. For activities related to primary health care and psychosocial support, Expertise France will coordinate with the Ministry of Health.

b. **Activities in Health and Education in Coordination with Municipalities**

- **Set-up of three community centres and purchase of equipment**

Provision of buildings by the municipality and purchase of all equipment required including organisation of daily transportation assistance for the attendees in Gaziantep, Istanbul and Şanlıurfa.

Two existing community centres run by Basme & Zeitoon (Expertise France local partner) will be refurbished, expanded and supported through the programme and others will be supported by the municipalities in Istanbul. All community centres will offer developmental services to both the refugee population and the local host community. In Şanlıurfa and Gaziantep all other activities, trainings, psychosocial activities, skills development trainings will be delivered directly in the community centres.

- **A Partnership with local authorities and local health structures will be signed with relevant local actors in order to avoid any duplication of activities and ensure referral system**

A MoU/partnership agreement will be signed with the related Turkish authorities, more precisely with the municipalities in Istanbul, Gaziantep and Şanlıurfa to frame their actions. In Istanbul municipalities will provide the implementing partners and their team with a building in a chosen area easy to reach for the Syrian refugees. All implementing partners will initiate new partnerships with related UN Agencies (UNHCR, UNFPA, and UNICEF), to comply with standards and work in accordance with 3RP, and will provide them with periodically reports about beneficiaries’ statistics, and get benefits from their services and facilities. Implementing partners will also coordinate with the Turkish Government and local NGOs in order to enhance service provision.
c. Sustainability of the Action in Line with Local Authorities Strengthening

Through structured trainings to the implementing partners and their staff as well as local authorities such as municipalities, Expertise France will increase the capacity of the partners to continue with activities beyond Expertise France and EU funds. The aim is also to strengthen the capacities of both Syrian and Turkish partners including the local authorities more particularly the municipalities that once trained can play a relevant role in sustaining the centres and activities in the various location and will be able to prepare and submit proposals and budgets and narrative and financial reports adhering to international donor standards. Hence, the partners will have strengthened project, administration and financial management.