

**3RP Livelihoods Sector Meeting on Gender Themed Focus Group Discussion
Thursday, 27 June 2019, 14:00hrs, Gaziantep Chamber of Industry, Gaziantep**

Chair(s): Ozlem Cavus (UNDP)

Participants as Institutions: UNDP, UN Women, UNHCR, ILO, FAO, WFP, AAR Japan, ACTED, Alresala Foundation, Alsham Humanitarian Foundation, ASAM, Bonyan, Organization, Bousla, CARE, Concern WW, DRC Turkey, IhsanRD, Kudra, Orange Organization, Qatar Charity, SPARK, TRC, WATAN Foundation

Agenda	Discussion	Action Points
<p>1: Livelihoods Sector Updates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary on Livelihoods Sector Gender Thematic Dashboard in Turkey is presented. (https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/69683) • Findings of UNDP mapping of Syrian-owned enterprises in Izmir, Mersin, Adana, Hatay, Gaziantep and Kilis is took place. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 300 companies/representatives and only 3,3% of the total is women. • Companies have 2.776 employees including Syrians and host community members, 12% are women and 83.1% are Turkish. • In the companies that were established before 2012, female employment rate is 33%. • Performance of female employees are mainly either good (39,9%) or above average (46,6%). • According to the employers’ responses, main challenges for women’s employment in Syrian owned enterprises are as in the following: cultural barriers (25%), work discipline (18%), performance (18%), language (15%), motivation (11%), women’s household responsibilities (1%). • Only 10% of enterprises stated that they offered birth and breastfeeding leave and 1% of enterprises stated that they offer maternity leave and flexible working hours. • Findings of UNDP private sector survey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is inequality with respect to salary scale in the textile sector that Turkish male workers are paid more than Turkish female workers and paid more than Syrian male and female workers. (Mutlu, et al. 2018). • In the food sector, women are generally assigned to administrative duties, while a few of them are employed in manufacturing units for the purposes of cleaning and sorting / packaging, etc. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An enterprise in Gaziantep stated that 35% of their employees are women where they are assigned as operators and shift supervisors and they are willing to increase the number of female employees. • Informality is a huge issue for both Syrians and host community employees. 40% of the participating companies obtained work permit for their Syrian employees and out of the 23 employees provided with work permit, only 4 of them are women. • Main motivations for private sector to employ female employees are: replacing the employment gap for the unskilled labor, their loyalty to the company and their dedication to the duties/tasks. • Women’s sustainable participation to the labour market results with gender responsive enterprises. 	
<p>2: Livelihoods and Gender-UN Women</p>	<p>UN Women works globally to make the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) a reality for women and girls and stands behind, focusing on four strategic priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems 2. Women have income security, decent work and economic autonomy 3. All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence 4. Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience, and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and humanitarian action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrating gender equality is essential in humanitarian action to: ensure that we reach all people affected by the crisis, enhance the impact of our strategies and interventions, ensure that our responses are efficient and effective, reinforce a human rights-based approach, contribute to and advance gender equality. <p>Five factors that may be experienced very differently by women, men, girls and boys are duties and responsibilities, decision-making authority and autonomy, access and control of resources, opportunities, privileges and prospects, barriers</p> <p>Different gender markers cover a range of diversity factors such as:</p> <p>Age, Disability, Ethnicity, Sexual orientation, Gender identity, Religion/belief, Caste diversity, HIV and AIDS.</p>	

[Needs Assessment of Syrian Women and Girls Under Temporary Protection Status in Turkey](#) is an assessment to identify and map the needs of Syrian women and girls in Turkey to inform policy and programming.

It attempts to, amplify the voice of the Syrian women and girls in Turkey, express their lived experiences and perceptions about the challenges, understand and appreciate how in many different way women are creating and living with changing gender roles and establishing themselves as active actors.

Methodology of the questionnaire: It is a comprehensive questionnaire to 1291 Syrian women and girls in 7 provinces which are İzmir, Konya, Istanbul, Şanlıurfa, Gaziantep, Adana, Hatay. Assessment includes in-depth interviews with Syrian and Turkish leaders and from local NGOs, international NGOs and governmental institutions along with focus group discussions mainly with Syrian women and men and Turkish nationals.

Below 9 points should be noted for further discussion:

1. Access to information & Awareness raising: Women are unaware of services and support mechanism. Information mostly targets the men, women don't have time and don't access to information
2. Language barrier: Over 70% women report that they cannot speak any Turkish. This affects access to information and services.
3. Security: Women not feeling safe outside, due to lack of enough lightening.
4. Mobility & transportation: Mobility of women is limited due to fear of social barriers and threats, unsafe and not accessible public transportation., Financial support is needed.
5. Violence, harassment and forced marriages: Adequate prevention and support is lacking.
6. Employment & livelihood opportunities for women: SMEs, cooperatives and work from home are the employment and livelihood opportunities for women. Women's employment is generally low, and they often face discrimination and ill-treatment in the workplace and earn the lowest wages. Barriers to work include language; lack of childcare facilities; lack of information and training opportunities; harassment; and traditional gender roles.
7. Frequent moving, depending on landlords or families.

	<p>8. Living condition in the neighborhoods should be analyzed to increase the livelihood opportunities. Increasing security, access to clean water, sociability of the city (Mukthar), housing conditions (quality) working through municipalities</p> <p>9. Lack of safe entry point for services: Places to access information. Women- and/or girl-only spaces may help reducing their fear about being in public space.</p>	
<p>3: Gaziantep Chamber of Industry (GCoI)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on Gaziantep Chamber of Industry (GCoI) is presented. • Vocational Training center is highlighted as an important hub for the vocational education and trainings that are given by GCoI. A new center will be established in Adana. • Women entrepreneurship support center will be operational in Gaziantep which will enable women entrepreneurs to get involve in the business life. 	
<p>4: Focus Group Discussions</p>	<p>Group 1: UNPAID CARE WORK</p> <p>The following systems to decrease care responsibilities for women should be developed. Supporting childcare facilities for employees in state and private sector and childcare for children from families in highly vulnerable situation from the state NGOs, improving access to social care for elderly and disabled through community support groups, awareness raising with men on care responsibilities of women, and improving access to family planning services.</p> <p>Policies to be developed related to childcare will be useful in reducing unpaid care work such as: flexible working hours, community centers, access to programmes, public education centers and summer schools for children by the state and NGOs for additional childcare. Family friendly policies such as: paternity and maternity leave and time off for sick children.</p> <p>There are some actions should be taken by the Livelihoods sector to target advocating women in employment and childcare in the projects. Turkish language training for Syrians if necessary is the first step that is followed by raising awareness for men and women on benefits of formal employment. Then vocational training should be given to women with incentives and appropriate working hours through showing role models and success stories. Lastly, Turkish and Syrian women should be encouraged to work together.</p>	

Group 2: SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND COOPERATIVES

Positive contribution:

- Economic gains (profits) for women will be as in the following:
 - Access to income generation activities
 - Access to capital
 - Enhance the value chain (selling the goods/services directly without mediator)
- The social impact of entrepreneurship and cooperatives can be found below:
 - Free space to express their voices
 - A place for childcare
 - Sharing experience
 - Agency building
 - Social cohesion
 - Awareness raising of the women cooperatives among the community

Negative influence:

- Social entrepreneurship and cooperatives most likely will be aligning with traditional gender roles.
- Lack of management roles.

Working sector:

- Women should be encouraged in male dominant fields such as computer skills, IT and information management to reduce gender stereotypes in employment.

Legal arrangements:

- Pushing government to give ear voices of members of cooperatives with respect to necessary legal arrangements.
- No clearance about which governmental institution should be responsible from cooperatives.
- There is lack of information about legal process and responsibilities of the cooperatives. Therefore, an advocate is needed on the state level.

Next Steps:

- Preparing a guideline presenting legal steps for establishing and sustainability of cooperatives and dissemination of this guide widely.
- Advocate for women’s cooperatives to have funds from different donors.
- Informing women about whole process and liabilities of cooperatives before letting them establish a cooperative.
- Establishing a model as the best example of cooperatives.
- Providing opportunity for information and experience sharing among members of cooperatives

Group 3: ACTIVE LABOR FORCE POLICIES

Measures and policies to decrease women’s informal working:

- One of the reasons of the high number of women in the informal labour market is that women were mostly provided with trainings in in traditional areas enforcing gender inequalities s (Handicraft, child care,etc.).
- Some organization are providing the same vocational trainings to both women and men; however, women are mostly unaware that they can attend all type of trainings even though it is mentioned in the announcements and prefer trainings reproducing traditional gender roles.
- **Opening non-traditional Vocational Trainings for both men and women**, providing them with awareness raising sessions, and giving special focus on women participation for all courses are some measures that may decrease informal labor rates for women and contribute transforming traditional gender roles.
- NGOs should not focus on home-based working for women. Home is the place that women are subjected to gender based violence and home-based work increase informal labor.

Effective policies should be developed;

- As part of 2019 plans, İŞKUR encourages vocational training providers to give participants, especially for women, a child-care opportunity

To be ensure women to equally benefit from job opportunities:

- Coming to Turkey already opened a door for women to have a relatively better access in the labour market compared to Syria
- Even though there are some barriers such as language and cultural barriers, limited employability skills and different work discipline preventing especially Syrian women to participate into labor market there are some steps to be taken:

1. Collaboration and coordination with local women organizations. They should be included in the cluster meetings.

- Local women organizations should have meetings with the Syrian women to understand their situation and barriers in the society.
- Assessments and discussions show that women do not want to work outside because they don't feel safe. Therefore, there is a need to conduct a research on what makes women feel safe outside.

2. Providing women with child friendly spaces

3. Incentive programs to target women's employment

- One member shared her opinion that women cooperatives should not be supported because the government imposes high taxes on the cooperatives, women mostly open a cooperative to sell handcraft products which does not make a lot of money in return and it does not support social cohesion contrary to popular belief.
- However, if activities are organized for the children, for example, then their mothers/parents will engage with each other.
- It is important to work with local organization as they know the cultural structure of the area.

To be able to better inform employers and women about active labor policies and increase access of refugee women to active labor market measures:

- **Facebook** is widely used by women and the Syrian community in general. Therefore, the information can be shared through Facebook.
- **The policies, measures and opportunities** can be shared with the clusters and be referred to the different NGOs.

- There is a **need to create a crosscheck mechanism** to monitor double benefits two different trainings/projects. However, due to data privacy policy, it is not easy.
- **A beneficiary data base tool** can be created under the control and supervision of Livelihood Technical Working Group for reference. (Only using id number)
- **More accessible application process**

Halting points vocational trainings targeting refugee women and steps to be taken for linking vocational trainings and job placements:

- Halting points of vocational trainings;
 - Lack of information on open positions and application procedures
 - Lack of transportation
 - Lack of childcare opportunities at the vocational training center.
 - Providing trainings reproduces traditional gender roles
- Steps to be taken for increasing participation into vocational trainings and job placements
 - Flexible course hours and blended learning (mixing online and face to face training)
 - Close coordination with ISKUR and NGOs, referrals from other organizations (local level coordination)
 - Thinking on also alternative ways of childcare opportunities (such as previous participant of the vocational trainings (on childcare) can be hired as childcare officer, which also contributes to job replacement.
 - Post monitoring and follow ups

Group 4: Women's Entrepreneurship

There are several challenges regarding women's entrepreneurship in the context of refugees.

Obstacles in relation to women's entrepreneurship and policies to be developed: The main challenges faced by women entrepreneurs can be classified as;

- Challenges regarding accessing to and lack of awareness on legal procedures about how to start a business, how to register, market opportunities and legal requirements of running a business in Turkey.

- Lack of awareness on relevant opportunities, support mechanisms, incentives, grants and trainings provided for Syrians on women's entrepreneurship.
- Language barrier (especially conversational skills) preventing to follow up legal procedures, reach potential customers and marketing opportunities, to be able to request and find raw materials for production.
- Duty of Care- Women are generally responsible from care of children, sick and disabled people in the family which prevents them working outside of the house.
- Access to financial capital is a challenge to start business, Syrians face difficulties even to open a bank account, taking credit or accessing relevant incentives-grants provided by governmental authorities.
- Lack of support from family numbers due to traditional gender norms can pose challenge for women entrepreneurs.
- Challenges in marketing services and products and accessing market opportunities (including online platforms).

Policies to be developed:

- Donor policies shall encourage partners to be more gender responsive in their proposal designs.
- UNDP can lead on improving relations between stakeholders and government authorities relevant to business registration and development, such as Municipalities, Chambers etc.
- Arabic brochures shall be prepared on legal rights and procedures regarding businesses and entrepreneurship.
- Close collaboration and advocacy with authorities for Syrian's access to financial capital and incentive mechanisms more tailored to their needs.
- Technical language courses might be provided on specific sectors/ businesses by relevant stakeholders.
- Social support networks (online platforms, peer to peer support) can be maintained for women entrepreneurs for experience sharing.
- Joint entrepreneurship schemes between host community and refugees can be improved to tackle with issues of legal and language barriers as well as access to capital.

Data on enterprises and business established by Refugee women:

TEPAV releases monthly data on enterprises and businesses established by Syrians but it lacks sex disaggregated data and informal employment.

Lack of assessments and data sharing among relevant actors is significant barrier for ensuring coordinated and needs based approach. Establishing joint platforms to share data/assessments can help to ensure coordinated approach.

Next steps would be:

- Provision of child-care facilities
- Awareness raising on access to financial capital, trainings, incentive and grant mechanisms.
- Establishing common platforms and social support networks
- Advocacy with relevant stakeholders on business registration and access to capital
- Advocacy with donors regarding gender responsive projects
- Establishing joint platforms for data sharing and collecting sex and age disaggregated data.
- Awareness raising on business registration and obligations of running a business
- Supporting on marketing opportunities and improvement of business skills.