

Action Document for EU Trust Fund to be used for the decisions of the Operational Board

1. IDENTIFICATION

Title/Number	Strengthening Resilience and Empowerment of Women and Girls affected by the Syrian Crisis		
Total cost	Total estimated cost: EUR 25,000,000 Total amount drawn from the Trust Fund: EUR 25,000,000 Component 1: EUR 12,500,000 Component 2: EUR 12,500,000		
Aid method / Method of implementation	Project Approach Action 1: Indirect management - delegation agreement Action 2: Direct management/direct award - grant agreements		
DAC-code	15170	Sector	Women's equality organisations and institutions

2. RATIONALE AND CONTEXT

The primary objective of the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis, "The Madad Fund" (hereinafter referred to as the Madad Fund) is to *provide a coherent and reinforced aid response to the Syrian and Iraqi crises and the massive displacement resulting from them on a multi-country scale. In pursuit of this objective, the Trust Fund shall address the needs of three groups: refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees and provide assistance to the communities and the administrations in which those groups find themselves, as regards resilience and early recovery.*

Taking particular account of the EU framework for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment "Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations (2016-2020)"¹ and the EU Guidelines on "Violence against women and girls"², in addition, the adopted guidelines of the Madad Fund pay specific attention to gender equality and the empowerment of women by referring in particular to Resolution 1325 of the UN Security Council and its subsequent resolutions within the Women, Peace and Security agenda 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, 2122 and 2242.

The proposed action adheres to the priorities of the Regional Refugee and Resilience Response Plan (3RP) 2017-2018 and aligns itself to national priority policies and plans such as but not limited to the Lebanese National Plan to safeguard children and women.

¹ Adopted by the European Commission and the European External Action Service in September 2015, in order to support partner countries to achieve tangible results towards gender equality, which is at the core of European values, as well as the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). URL: https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/staff-working-document-gender-2016-2020-20150922_en.pdf

² URL: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM:dh0003>

While the response to the needs of Syrian refugees from governments and aid agencies is increasing in general, the situation for women and girls is gravely concerning and more needs to be done to ensure that Syrian refugee women and girls, especially those most at risk. women and girls, in vulnerable situations, within the host communities are to be identified and that special processes and services are put in place to ensure that their basic rights, safety and security are protected and their needs met.

Based on above and in addition to the fact that all programs financed under the Madad Fund aim to be gender mainstreamed and to integrate a gender perspective, a specific and devoted action for women's empowerment and gender equality with a focus on protection and strengthening the resilience of women and girls and host communities in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey is indicated.

2.1. Summary of the action and its objectives

The **overall objective** is to strengthen the resilience and empowerment of women and girls affected by the Syrian and Iraqi crisis in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey.

Special attention will be given to women and girls from marginalised groups, as well as women and girls with special needs and disabilities. The actions will also target men and boys, aiming at strengthening the gender equality goals, while reducing gender inequalities, and to address risks and challenges facing women and girls, intrinsically linked to the role and behaviour of men and boys.

The **specific objectives** of the action are:

- To increase access to basic services and to improve the prevention and protection of refugee women and girls and vulnerable women and girls in host communities from all forms of violence;
- To increase access to decent work and economic opportunities for refugee women and vulnerable women and in host communities;
- To enhance the role and participation of women in political processes and decision making processes.

This will be achieved by addressing both the specific needs of women and girls, to ensure and promote women's access to socio-economic resources, sustainable livelihoods and psycho-social support and in parallel contributing to the empowerment of women, promoting gender equality and women's rights and health, to build the capacities and conducive conditions of women to contribute to their own protection and that of their communities.

In line with the Madad Fund Overall Objective *"to provide a coherent and reinforced aid response to the Syrian crisis on a regional scale, responding primarily to the needs of refugees from Syria in neighbouring countries, as well as of the communities hosting the refugees and their administrations, in particular as regards resilience and early recovery"*, the Action will contribute to the Specific Objective 3 and 4 of the current Result Framework³.

³ https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/eutf_madad_results_framework.pdf

2.2. Context

Women constitute more than half of the Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon. As of February 2017, UNHCR had registered 656 170 Syrian refugees in Jordan and 1 011 366 refugees in Lebanon: 50.6% of the Syrian refugees in Jordan are women, with 23.6% in the ages 18-59, and 52.5% in Lebanon, with 24.1% in the ages 18-59. In Iraq and Turkey, the figure is almost as high: 46% of the 233 224 refugees in Iraq are women and 46.8% of the more than 2,9 million refugees in Turkey.⁴ The configuration of internal displaced persons in Iraq is expected to follow the same trend.

Poverty amongst targeted population is high and six years into the crises, savings and resources are depleted. Host communities are also negatively affected, as the influx of refugees has led to increased competition for jobs, services and resources. Such competition is a driver of tensions and leading to an increased risk of conflict between the refugees and host populations.

In addition to the displacement, many refugee and internally displaced women are confronted with a new role as head of household. This is far from the tradition role within their culture, where the man is the bread winner and women stay home to care about the family. Men have been equally affected, having fled their homes, lost their jobs, livelihoods and social support structures etc. Studies have found indications that these stressors tend to aggravate the feeling of loss of control and power, which risk exacerbating gender-based violence.

Syrian women refugees are also exposed to multiple forms of violence: sexual harassment, forced and early marriage, polygamy and trafficking for sexual exploitation.⁵

The fact that the composition of the Syrian refugee population is very young, with around 20% of the female population are girls under the age of 11 and only 1- 2% of women over the age of 60, poses specific challenges. Comparative analysis of welfare and poverty of Syrian refugees show a correlation between the age of the household head and welfare of the family and younger female refugees are more at risk in the short run of labour exploitation, early marriage, unwanted pregnancies and abuse.⁶ The risk of long-term detrimental consequences is high, if their needs are not met: education, health care and psycho-social support to deal with traumatic experiences.

Still, not sufficient attention has been given to specifically address the needs of women and girls, to provide them the protected spaces, skills and outreach tools needed to become more resilient. As a consequence, women and girls continue to face great barriers to meet their basic needs, recover from war traumas and participate in the social and economic life.

2.2.2 Sector context: policies and challenges

Employment and livelihood opportunities for women

⁴ <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php> , March 2017

⁵ FIDH, Violence against women in Syria: Breaking the silence, https://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/syria_sexual_violence-web.pdf; www.opendemocracy.net

⁶ The World Bank Group and UNHCR, *The Welfare of Syrian Refugees- evidence from Jordan and Lebanon*, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, 2016.

Already before the crises, labour force participation among women in Syria was low, in particular for young women, with an unemployment rate of 40.2 percent.⁷ Studies show that many refugee women lack formal education and occupational skills and state their occupation prior to the crisis as 'housewife'.⁸

Employment outside the household is also low for women in host communities.

In **Turkey**, for instance, a Regulation on Work Permit for Refugees under Temporary Protection was issued in 2016 provides opportunities for increased self-reliance of women and opens the way for scaling up resilience programming in 2017-2018. Still, only 31% of Turkish women are employed,⁹ and even lower in the southeast, where conservative social norms and gender roles prevail.

The profile of the Syrian refugees in **Lebanon and Jordan** differ also from their host communities, with a tendency of being younger, and with other skills and competencies than those sought after in the economies of the host communities; agriculture rather than services.¹⁰

Employment and livelihood opportunities for refugees are severely restricted, both for women and men; however, the situation for women is considerably worse. In **Jordan**, for instance, while it is estimated that 52% of Syrian men above 15 years are economically active, only 6% of women participate in the labour market.¹¹

In **Lebanon**, costly and cumbersome registration and civil documentation procedures is a growing obstacle for refugees, which has resulted in a growing number of refugees with illegal status, without work permit¹². A recent study conducted in **Jordan** on work and employment amongst Syrian refugee and Jordanian women has highlighted that the majority of unemployed women, both Syrian and Jordanian, would like to work if they had the opportunity to do so. Women primarily reported the main obstacles for unemployment being societal and structural obstacles, including cultural and religious pressures and the lack of suitable job opportunities that meet women's qualifications.¹³

These obstacles should be addressed to create new job opportunities in line with the Jordan Compact¹⁴, including the simplified Rules of Origin with the EU,¹⁵ and the more recent Output paper for Jordan agreed last April in Brussels which calls for '*identifying and removing existing barriers for Syrian refugees to access legal and decent work that can contribute to the Jordanian economy without competing with Jordanian jobs*'.¹⁶

The combination of these factors has left many women refugees and vulnerable women in host communities unemployed or pushed them towards informal, even illegal, low-paid and low-qualified work, increasing the risk of forced labour, child labour and early marriages.

⁷ *ibid*

⁸ For instance research conducted by Association for Solidarity with Asylum-seekers and Migrants 5ASAM) in Turkey 2016.

⁹ Turkish Statistical Institute, 2015.

¹⁰ The World Bank Group and UNHCR, *The Welfare of Syrian Refugees- evidence from Jordan and Lebanon*, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank, 2016, pp. 34-38.

¹¹ Jordan response plan, p.16.

¹² European Commission, *The Syrian Refugee Crisis: Labour Market Implications in Jordan and Lebanon*. May 2016.

¹³ REACH, *Women working: Jordanian and Syrian refugee women's labour force participation and attitudes towards employment*, UNWOMEN 2017.

¹⁴ EU Partnership Priorities and annexed Compact, adopted 20.12.2016

¹⁵ Decision N1/2016 of the EU-Jordan Association committee of 19 July 2016 on the relaxation of Rules of Origin

¹⁶ Supporting the future of Syria, Annex: Supporting Resilience of Host Countries and Refugees in the context of the Syrian crisis: JORDAN, Brussels conference, 5.04.2017

Iraq is facing a challenge of epic proportion. Not only has it to fight a battle with extremist groups on its territory but also needs to reconcile the different part of its society to create a lasting political consensus for a common future of the country. This instability affect women disproportionate by being subject of war crimes, forced displacement in the country and culturally not used to seek gainful employment.

Psycho-social situation

The Syrian and Iraqi crisis has had a devastating impact on women and girls and as conflict intensified the use of violence aimed at civilians, including horrific sexual violence and trafficking, increased. Many, if not all, women and girls carry with them dreadful traumatic memories.

Domestic violence as well as sexual and gender based violence is widespread, augmented by the trauma many people are living with, where violence becomes an outlet.¹⁷ The conflict has left many women without a husband, putting them at dire risks of exploitation and pushing them towards pursuing negative coping mechanisms.

Feminist analyses developed for the last century demonstrate that women are subject to violence not because they are more vulnerable than men, but because they are subordinated.¹⁸ With violence against women and children taking many forms, there is a need to educate women and girls on their rights and to empower them to become more resilient.

Refugee status and residence issues can have far-reaching consequences concerning the protection, mobility, social wellbeing and economic engagement of Syrian refugees and Internal Displace Persons in hosting countries.

Renewing or regularising residency visas for refugees has become incredibly difficult, with women often dependent on their husbands or male relatives to maintain legal stay. Renewal or regularisation of residency visas is currently based on households with the male head of household's ability to renew or regularise affecting the rest of the family. Furthermore, female heads of household may face challenges renewing or regularising legal stay for their household, particularly if unable to prove they are the head of household. UNHCR estimates that since the beginning of the crisis, over 100,000 Syrian children have been born in Lebanon and over 70% of these are born without birth registration.

The deteriorating economic situation detrimentally affects children, with a disturbing impact on the future and wellbeing of girls in particular. There is increasing evidence that the poverty of refugee households is leading them to resort to negative coping mechanisms, such as taking their children out of school, either to cut expenses linked to education (transport, school material, and clothing) or sending the children to work or marrying off their (often under-aged) daughters.¹⁹

Yet, despite trauma, violence and poverty often disproportionately fall on women and girls, women are often at the forefront of caring for the wellbeing of the family in the short term as well as long-term efforts to rebuild the community, create sustainable change, and protect and care for the children's future. Often it is the women's

¹⁷ IFRC, *Unseen, unheard: Gender-based violence in disasters*, 2015, p.20.

¹⁸ Gustafsson M. and Jönsson B, EUREPORTER, *Engendering peace processes, a challenge for democracy*, <http://www.eureporter.co/>

¹⁹ See for instance Jordan INGO Forum, *Syrian Refugees in Jordan - shrinking access to services under limited legal status*, Dec. 2016.

organizations and networks who are the drivers of change, empowering women and girls and working with men and boys to contribute to the change of norms around violence and women's rights.

2.3. Lessons learnt

According to UN Women, there have been no sustained efforts to empower Syrian refugee women and host, except from stand-alone initiatives which have not managed to contribute to any systemic changes on a larger scale.²⁰ The needs are significant at all levels and addressing it through mainstreaming of programs is insufficient. Subsequently, a concerted approach to address the needs and risks of women and girls through targeted action must be taken.

It is imperative that the design of activities is done in close consultation with the stakeholders, in particular women and girls that will benefit from the support. Special attention must be paid to address the needs of marginalised women and girls as well as women and girls with special needs, disabilities and vulnerabilities.

In order to ensure and facilitate for measuring impact of the actions, the design of the actions must be results oriented, with well elaborated baselines and indicators.

2.4. Complementary actions

Iraq:

The European Union (EU) provides funding to a number of programmes in Iraq such as: The Local Area Development Programme (LADP) which aims at boosting local governments to develop local development strategies at the local level including emphasis on gender mainstreaming in the local development strategies. UN Women partnered with UNDP on this program to build capacity and to provide technical assistance to selected Governorates of Iraq to adopt a gender-sensitive budgeting and planning process. The LADP is a comparative advantage, as it will provide a platform for creating synergies with the proposed UN Women project.

The EU funds stabilization programme under the Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization. The programme targets infrastructure and livelihood which finances fast-track initiatives in areas re-taken from ISI to quickly repair public infrastructure. The programme also provides grants to small businesses, promotes civil engagement and community reconciliation and provides short-term employment through public works schemes. UN Women complements UNDP through its ongoing work to address women's vulnerability in similar initiatives.

IOM is working on strengthening social cohesion through the establishment of community centres that target conflict affected communities, this programme is funded by the EU. It has special focus on youth radicalization through provision of conflict resolution training. The project also works on peacebuilding initiative. IOM works in close collaboration with MOLSA, Ministry of Youth and Local Organisations.

The EU is also working with UNICEF on child protection programme to meet emergency needs of conflict-affected children, particularly children fleeing Mosul due to military

²⁰ UNWOMEN, Project Document *Strengthening the Resilience of Syrian Women and Girls and Host Communities in Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey*, p.19.

Operations. In addition, the EU provides funding to UNFPA for GBV initiatives in Iraq. UN Women complements UNFPA work through referral mechanisms for GBV victims.

Jordan:

In Jordan, several projects are focussing on gender and women, including:

- Strengthening the capacity of rural women and female municipal members to defend women's rights and participation in Jordan.
- 'Tadmeen' - Informed inclusion of women towards improved participation in local, social, economic and civic life.
- Hemaya II - with Care International: For girls and young women in Jordan.
- Combatting violence and discrimination against women in East Amman through direct empowerment in the community.
- Eliminating the administrative detention of women at risk by establishing just alternatives for their protection.

In addition, there are two programmes with a strong gender mainstreaming element, targeting mostly Jordanian nationals and partially refugees: i) *Promoting Local Economic Development in Jordan* (PLEDJ) for an amount of EUR 5 million. The project aims at reducing unemployment and regional disparities in selected locations (Tafleh and Ajloun) and more than 50% of the awarded grants are targeting women or CBOs headed by women; II) *budget support programme* of EUR 35 million on promoting financial inclusion and microfinance for all to which the ultimate goal is to empower all people in Jordan - women and men, young and old, Jordanians and refugees – to have better perspectives to manage their household finances or to grow their businesses and be treated fairly. Finally, several projects focusing on access to justice and political participation of women have been financed under EIDHR, but the last are closing this year.

Lebanon:

The EU Delegation together with EU member states in Lebanon have developed a Gender Action Plan (GAP) 2016 -2020 which emphasises that future EU support should focus on:

- a) Enhancing the role and participation of women in political and decision making processes.
- b) Promoting legal, economic and social aspects, ensuring decent work for women of all ages.
- c) Prevention and protection of women and girls from all forms of violence.

Women's economic empowerment is currently addressed through the package of MADAD livelihoods interventions with a focus on vocational training, skills development, MSME development, social entrepreneurship, value chain development, etc. No further support is expected to women and livelihoods as part of this action concerning Lebanon.

Through both its emergency humanitarian assistance and its medium terms interventions, since 2012, the EU has been financing activities to protect refugees and host communities against SGBV and to assist victims, including through establishment and refurbishments of shelters and through livelihood activities for SGBV survivors. UNICEF is among the implementers of EU MADAD protection support, and future programme support is expected to be mobilised on social care and prevention activities related to violence, abuse

and exploitation of women and girls in vulnerable populations, within a wider package of support on education and child protection.

EU bilateral programmes include support to local and international NGOs focusing on translating the EU commitments regarding gender mainstreaming and socio-economic empowerment of women in the country. In addition, the "Promotion of Social Justice" project supports the National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW) and other relevant stakeholders, to enhance their internal governance processes and promote women's human rights and gender equality in line with the adopted 10 Years National women strategy (2011-2021) by the Council of Ministers.

The project selected as part of this Action Document will coordinate with the above initiatives and partners, in order to ensure complementarity and identify a specific niche for foreseen activities, with an underlying emphasis on reaching the most vulnerable women and girls, both refugees and host communities.

Turkey:

The Women Center in Gaziantep will also be funded from the Japanese government, to renovate the building which will be hosting the Center.

Sida is funding a UN Women capacity building program with the Turkish Parliament's Equal Opportunity Committee, which continues to review fundamental legislation from a gender perspective, and aims at increasing women's political participation and leadership in decision making.

A private Turkish foundation called Sabanci has funded a UN Women project on gender responsive budgeting (GRB) with local authorities, a women's empowerment project in partnership with the private sector and is developing programmes for refugee women and girls.

The EU is financing a UN Women regional project to end violence against women in Western Balkans and Turkey.

2.5. Donor co-ordination

All donors operate within the regulatory boundaries of the countries and in agreement with relevant authorities. Thus, there is coordination with the national authorities usually through specific working groups.²¹ The lead in this coordination is entrusted to the EU Delegation/EUTF field staff.

In country, the relevant EU Delegation is leading coordination with EU Member States through regular meetings of the Development Counsellors, and participates to the coordination platforms established for the various National Response Plans to the Syrian refugee crisis. In **Turkey**, the EUD co-chairs with ECHO monthly meetings of the EU Refugees and Migration Coordination contact group.

²¹ For example, the Jordan Response Platform to the Syrian Crisis is a partnership mechanism between the Government of Jordan, donors and UN agencies, operating through several thematic working groups (e.g. on health, education etc.). In Turkey, AFAD (Prime Ministry Disaster and Emergency Authority) is the lead coordinator of all actions falling under the EUTF Madad/Facility for Refugees in Turkey. It refers to relevant line ministries and ensures that a consistent approach by the implementing partners

As well as engaging in the formal structures of the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017 – 20 (including Sexual and Gender Based Violence Task Force), the EUD in **Lebanon** co-chairs an informal donor coordination group and, together with EUTF field staff and ECHO colleagues, are active in other fora concerning the protection of Syrian refugees and the enabling environment for local and international implementing partners.

In Jordan, the EUD has launched back in 2016 donor coordination meetings with UN Women as well as a roundtable discussion on the "EU support to the Gender Equality in Jordan". For both **Jordan** and **Lebanon**, EU Gender Action (2016-2020) plan has also been presented and shared to partners to outline the general thematic areas of focus for the EU external actions.

At a broader level, the EU is also actively contributing to the overall donor coordination under the auspices of the United Nations in the framework of the 3RP that integrates humanitarian, development and macro-fiscal interventions.

The Madad Trust Fund Management team is coordinating and liaising with the donors contributing to the Trust Fund, currently consisting of 22 MS and Turkey. Moreover, the EUTF Management also coordinates with its contracted implementing partners and other relevant stakeholders on regional level and cross border issues.

UN Women ensures coordination with other UN agencies in terms of actions targeting women, such as safe spaces for girls implemented by UNICEF, but also broader projects addressing for instance job creation and strengthening capacities of municipalities under UNDP.

3. DETAILED DESCRIPTION

3.1. Objectives

The **overall objective** is to strengthen the resilience and empowerment of women and girls affected by the Syrian and Iraqi crisis in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey.

Special attention will be given to women and girls from marginalised groups, as well as women and girls with special needs and disabilities. The actions will also target men and boys, aiming at strengthening the gender equality goals and to address risks and challenges facing women and girls, intrinsically linked to the role and behaviour of men and boys.

The **specific objectives** of the action are:

- To increase access to basic services and to improve the prevention and protection of refugee women and girls and vulnerable women and girls in host communities from all forms of violence;
- To increase access to decent work and economic opportunities for refugee women and vulnerable women and in host communities;
- To enhance the role and participation of women in political processes and decision making processes.

3.2. Expected results and main activities

For **Iraq**, the activities suggested under the specific objectives above are, *inter alia*:

Activities under specific objective 1: Ensure that gender concerns and specific needs of women and girls are integrated and well reflected in response plans, programmes and budgeting. Set up safe centers in temporary settings for women and girls affected by crisis, to provide multi-sectorial services including psycho-social and legal services. Build the capacities of local organisations on the delivery of services, protection and support to women and girls.

Activities under specific objective 2: Identify and respond to skill building needs (vocational and entrepreneurship skills) of refugee women and women in host communities.

Activities under specific objective 3: Support to strengthening national women's organisations and networks in their work for women's empowerment and voice, including the implementation of the Iraq National Plan on UNSCR 1325.

For **Jordan**, the activities suggested under the specific objectives above are, *inter alia*:

Activities under specific objective 1: Increase access to comprehensive essential services for preventing and responding to gender based violence or other protection issues for both women refugees and host communities.

Activities under specific objective 2: Increase access to livelihood as well as short and long-term decent innovative employment opportunities for women refugees and host communities. This will include working towards removing existing barriers to women employment (e.g. lack of transportation or child care) as well as facilitating and increasing access to work permits. Support the revision of policy frameworks to ensure legislation is gender sensitive to promote equal opportunities for employment and services. Contribute to the provision of vocational training as far as targeted to employability, skills development and mentoring to women entrepreneurship.

For **Lebanon**, the activities suggested under the specific objectives above are, *inter alia*:

Activities under specific objective 1: Improve the security, protection and resilience of Syrian women and girls refugees and women and girls in host communities through support to, and effective coordination of, essential services and referral mechanisms.

Activities under specific objective 2: National policy frameworks, institutional capacities and coordination mechanisms across relevant different sectors are strengthened to ensure an enhanced emphasis on gender equality, gender sensitivity and the protection of women and girls, both within the Syria crisis response and for the empowerment of women and girls more broadly.

For **Turkey**, activities suggested under the specific objectives above are, *inter alia*:

Activities under specific objective 1: Developing training materials on gender-sensitive service delivery in refugee response; providing institutional capacity building for first-line responders on gender-equality and gender sensitive refugee response planning and service provision; supporting capacity building for displaced women and women's organizations through the development of women's committees and community mobilization activities; supporting women to engage in common community level projects.

Activities under specific objective 2: Set up of community center in Gaziantep providing services on basic life and market skills; vocational and technical training; opportunities

and resources for small scale income generation activities; childcare; legal advice on work permits and job security; job-counselling; supporting women's cooperatives; psychological support services and men-engage seminars also targeting violence against women. Partial renovation could be included in addition to rental of a building, to match funds provided by Japanese government.

Activities under specific objective 3: Establishing a joint platform of women initiatives and activists from Turkey and Syria; implementing capacity building programmes on peace-building and reconciliation for identified women and youth CSOs to play catalyst role in promoting co-existence in their communities; supporting women from refugee and host communities to participate in dialogue meetings, social and cultural events; producing communications and advocacy materials on positive messaging and fighting against stereotypes and prejudices against the refugee population; conducting an advocacy campaign on co-existence.

The proposed activities mentioned above are expected to bring the following results:

- Improved institutional and operational capacities among concerned state and non-state actors to protect the rights of women and girls and to better respond to the needs of women and girls affected by the Syrian crisis, according to international standards in force in hosting countries;
- National policy frameworks and coordination mechanisms related to gender equality and the protection of women and girls strengthened;
- Awareness and sensitivity of the rights and needs of women and girls increased, including on gender based violence, protection needs legal status (registration of births and marriages), disabilities, out-of-school girls and enhance the early detection of cases and the referral system;
- Provision and access to other essential services by Syrian women refugees and vulnerable women in host communities improved, including facilitation of late registration of births, family planning, legal registration of marriages,
- Protection efforts for traumatized women and children increased, including vulnerable women and girls among the refugee and the host communities, including the provision of specialized psycho-social services for primary and secondary victims of war-related trauma,
- More legal advice and assistance as well as strategic litigation and access to justice for women and girls, including those ones living in the informal settlements, with focus on interpretation and application of international law,
- Improved capacities and livelihood opportunities for vulnerable women and increased access to labour market,
- Increased capacities of women groups and women CSOs to document and address abuses and to promote cross-cultural dialogue, fight against stereotypes, mutual understanding and peaceful co-existence between host communities and Syrian refugees.

3.3. Risks and assumptions

Risks:

- Low level of involvement and commitment of host government, agencies and host communities
- Lack of financial and human inputs for the provision of specialized services
- Difficult coordination for the establishment of a referral system tailored to the needs
- Obstacles to access labour market and generate income for Syrian women refugees
- Identification and access to the most vulnerable women and girls has proven to be challenging, since many refugees and Iraqi IDPs do not live in camps, but live in the cities and scattered across the countries, many not officially registered.
- Operational space for INGOs in the host countries is shrinking.

The implementing partners will be requested to address the identified risks to ensure their mitigation.

The assumptions for the success of the project and its implementation include:

- No further deterioration of the legal environment for refugees.
- Stable security conditions and political stability.
- Continuous acceptance of refugees by host communities and host government.
- Willingness of host communities to engage in the project.
- Governmental authorities remain supportive.
- Continuous access to local labour market and support from employment agencies and local businesses.
- Intense participatory dialogue with all stakeholders and commitment to the objectives of this support shall enable a common advocacy strategy.
- Partnerships with local dedicated counterparts.
- Mitigating measures will be further defined in the actual projects.

Cross-cutting issues

A number of cross cutting issues have been identified:

The action is focusing on **gender** equality and empowerment of women and to achieve this aim, the activities will include both men and women to be sufficiently address also structural challenges hampering women's possibilities to fully enjoy their rights and see their needs fulfilled.

As far as **environment** is concerned, environmental issues will be taken seriously by women's organisations. However, the environmental issues are unlikely to impact directly on the action.

4. Stakeholders

The primary stakeholders of this proposed action are:

- EU Member States and other donors contributing to the Trust Fund;
- Ministries and authorities at various levels concerned and responsible for the wellbeing of Syrian women and girl refugees;
- Final beneficiaries: Syrians women and girl refugees residing in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey and vulnerable women in the host communities, whom will be empowered by the action;
- Specialised civil society organisations and individual professionals;
- Local NGOs working on and with women, both from Syrian and host communities;
- Indirect beneficiaries include the families of the women and men directly targeted by the Action, as well as the local communities at large.

4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

4.1 Financing agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not foreseen to conclude a financing agreement with the Government of the partner countries, as referred to in Article 184(2)(b) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012.

4.2 Indicative operational implementation period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3.2 will be carried out is 36 months,²² from adoption of this Action Document by the Operational Board.

A possible extension of the implementation period may be granted by the Manager, and immediately communicated to the Operational Board.

4.3 Implementation components and modules

The proposed action will address both the specific needs of women and girls, to ensure and promote women's access to socio-economic resources, sustainable livelihoods and psycho-social support and in parallel contributing to the empowerment of women, promoting gender equality and women's rights and health, to build the capacities and conducive conditions of women to contribute to their own protection and that of their communities. The needs are immense and there is ample space for engagement of actors, but in order to achieve tangible results with reasonable impact, the focus will be on a limited number of activities per action and per country.

This will be achieved through a two-pronged approach: both in partnership with an international partner, which has the status, mandate and role to bring sufficient attention to the needs of women and girls that is still needed in this crises; and in partnership with a consortia of non-governmental, no-profit or civil society organisations, to reach grassroots organisations, networks and women activists. The two strands will be complementary to each other and, applying their specific competences and entry points to the discourse,

²² The implementation period of the contract must remain within the duration of the Trust Fund (currently December 2019).

together they will better address the needs of women and girls. The identification and design of the activities that will be implemented under the specific contract will be done in consultation with women and girls that will benefit from the project.

4.3.1 Component 1- Delegation Agreement (Indirect management)

Eligible institutions will be selected on the basis of their expertise in the field, their established presence in these countries and experience from collaboration with and access to relevant national authorities. The possibility to scale up existing operations and/or introduce new activities within existing portfolios will be important. As such, the selection of these entities may be justified by their unique position as lead agencies in the sector, coupled with their ability to absorb considerable funds in a short period whilst maintaining the required accountability standards. In addition, the potential and capacities of the organisation to leverage the attention to the needs of women and girls affected by the Syrian and Iraq crises on the international arena will also be an asset.

A negotiation team will be appointed by the Trust Fund Manager to identify suitable organisation and to launch negotiation in the following sequence:

- 1) Continuing processing already positively assessed Concept Notes submitted to the Madad Fund;
- 2) In case the above negotiation is not conclusive and/or budgetary availability allows, further identification of suitable implementing partners.

The selected organisation will be expected to partner with non-governmental international and national women's organisations and implement with an inclusive approach. Sub-granting to these organisations will be considered where possible, to increase the capacities and autonomy of these organisations, create ownership and ensure sustainability of the action. This will also allow the Madad Fund to support organisations that do not have the capacity for a direct partnership with the Madad Fund.

4.3.2 Component 2 - Direct management/award – grants to NGOs

a) Grant: direct award (direct management)

The Madad Fund was established under Article 187 of the Financial Regulations as 'emergency' trust fund, and is therefore covered with flexible procedures applicable to crisis situations.

Concept Notes submitted by interested partners are regularly reviewed and evaluated by the Madad Management team. A specific Call for Proposal might be considered in case no proposals are received that meet the specific objectives and requirements specified in the Action Document.

Presence and experience in the region, established networks and partnership with local actors and authorities, immediate intervention capacity and readiness and the ability to work in multi-actor approaches will be part of the evaluation criteria.

The Trust Fund Manager will appoint a negotiation team to engage with potential partners with the aim to create a consortium for the implementation of a regional and/or multi country action. European, International non-profit organisations and civil society organisations, specialised on gender equality and empowerment of women and girls are envisaged partners for this action.

Sub-granting to non-governmental organisations and grassroots organisations will be considered where possible, to increase the capacities and autonomy of these organisations, create ownership and ensure sustainability of the action. This will also allow the Madad Fund to support organisations that do not have the capacity for a direct partnership with the Madad Fund.

Component 2 is primarily foreseen to target Jordan and Lebanon.

b) Eligibility conditions

The lead applicant shall be a legal entity and a non-profit making and non-governmental organisation. Specialised European and International non-profit operators and civil society organisation are envisaged partners. Partnerships with local CSOs will be strongly recommended.

c) Essential selection and award criteria

Essential selection criteria are the financial and operational capacity of the applicant; the essential award criteria are relevance of the proposed action to the objectives of the Action Document; design, effectiveness, sustainability and cost-efficiency of the action.

d) Maximum rate of co-financing

The maximum possible rate of co-financing for the grants is 80 percent of the total eligible costs of the action.

If full financing is essential for the action to be carried out, the maximum possible rate of co-financing may be increased up to 100 percent. If full funding is essential, the applicant has to provide adequate justification accepted by the Manager, in respect of the principles of equal treatment and sound financial management.

4.4 Indicative budget

Component	Amount in EUR
Component 1: Indirect management	12,500,000
Component 2: Direct Management/grants	12,500,000
TOTAL	25,000,000

- *Costs for monitoring, evaluation, communication and visibility shall be included in the projects' budgets an included in each contract.*

4.5 Performance monitoring

Monitoring shall be ensured primarily through EU Delegations in-country and in particular with the assistance of specific Trust Fund field & liaison officers posted within the EU Delegations. In addition, the EU Trust Fund is planning to launch an independent M&E exercise to accompany all Fund programmes and ensure that targets are met and lessons learnt can be incorporated into other EUTF actions.

The purpose of the Madad EUTF Monitoring and Evaluation Framework would be to assess, across various levels, the degree to which the Overall Objective of the Trust Fund has been achieved.

Partners implementing this Action will comply with the ad hoc Monitoring and Evaluation Framework developed for the Madad Fund as well as with the reporting requirements and tools being developed by the EU Trust Fund.

The monitoring and evaluation exercises mentioned above will represent milestones in the implementation of the activities. These regular assessments will constitute a basis for a possible decision of suspension or revision of activities, should the conditions on the ground not allow for their proper implementation.

4.6 Evaluation and audit

Projects shall carry out an obligatory final evaluation, and one external audit per year. Whenever possible, evaluations will be jointly carried out by partners. This will also contribute to harmonise further and higher education support to Syrian refugees and to the host countries in the region, in order to make technical co-operation more effective in line with current EU guidelines.²³

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audits or expenditure verification assignments for one or several contracts.

4.7 Communication and visibility

While communication and visibility of the EU is a legal obligation for all external actions funded by the EU, to date the visibility of the EU's support to the Syrian crisis, in particular in neighbouring countries affected by the crisis, has been insufficient. The public perception is that the EU is not addressing the Syrian crisis, when in fact it is the largest donor. The lack of visibility to the EU's actions weakens the EU's political traction in the region and its standing in Europe.

Therefore, communication and visibility is an important part of all Madad Fund programmes factored into the implementation in order to underline its importance at all stages of the planning and implementation of the Programme.

All visibility actions by Madad Fund implementing partners outside areas of conflict should be stepped up. Each implementer will have to draw up a comprehensive visibility and communication plan for their respective target country/community and submit a copy for approval to the Madad Fund and relevant EU Delegation. The related costs will be covered by the budgets of the contract as part of the project.

The measures shall be implemented by the implementing consortium/ia, its contractors, and/or its grant beneficiaries. Appropriate contractual obligations shall be included in, respectively, procurement and grant contracts.

The Communication and Visibility Manual for European Union External Action together with specific requirements to highlight the Madad Trust Fund shall be used to establish the Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action and the appropriate contractual obligations.

²³

EC Guidelines No. 3, *Making Technical Co-operation More Effective*, March 2009.