Education for All in Times of Crisis – Turkey

Access to education for Syrian refugee children

Fleeing from the civil war in their home country, about 3.6 million Syrians have found refuge in Turkey, among them many school-aged children. This makes Turkey host of the largest refugee population worldwide. KfW supports Turkey by constructing new schools in order to improve access to education for Syrian refugee children.

Context

Turkey currently hosts 3.6 million registered Syrian refugees, among them approx. one million school-aged children. Due to the high number of Syrian refugees, the provision of public services has become a challenge for Turkey and its host communities. The existing infrastructure often fails to accommodate the increased demand. This also applies to the education sector which faces a lack of school capacities. The Turkish government has set itself the target to give every child in Turkey access to high-quality and inclusive education. Since it became clear that the crisis in Syria doesn’t allow for a soon-to-be return of Syrian refugees to their home country, the Turkish government emphasizes the integration of Syrian refugee children in the regular public education system.

Despite the enormous efforts by the Turkish government as well as the European Union, the German federal government and other donors, many refugee children still lack the access to education. One main obstacle to adequate access to education is the shortage of school infrastructure. This brings with it the risk of a so-called “lost generation” – a generation of children without the opportunity of gaining knowledge and skills for a self-determined and successful professional future.

The shortage of school infrastructure is also noticeable for Syrian and Turkish school children in schools, where the integration of Syrian children in Turkish schools has already succeeded. Class sizes in these schools are often overstretched and many facilities need to operate in double shifts. This has significant negative effects on the quality of education for Turkish and Syrian children.

Within the scope of the EU-Turkey-Agreement, the European Union has pledged to provide support for the task to host and provide for Syrian refugees. In this context, KfW implements in cooperation with the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE) the project “Education for All in Times of Crisis” in three phases.

Project approach

The project “Education for All in Times of Crisis” aims at supporting the Turkish government in its objective to provide access to education for all Turkish and Syrian

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<td>Commissioned by</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>Country</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
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<td>Lead executing agency</td>
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Project locations of “Education for All in Times of Crisis”

As at: 08/2019
children. To this end, the European Union has allocated funds from the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis ("MADAD Fund") and the Facility for Refugees in Turkey ("FRIT") for the project. The project volume amounts to a total of EUR 425 million. This amount enables the construction and furnishing of approximately 340 schools which are implemented in close cooperation with the MoNE.

As the majority of Syrian refugees meanwhile resides in host communities (approx. 96%), almost all the schools are constructed in municipalities and only a small proportion in refugee camps. The project involves the nineteen provinces which host the highest number of Syrian refugees. These are primarily located in the southeast of Turkey but also in bigger cities such as Istanbul or Ankara.

The schools are constructed as solid structured schools as well as prefabricated schools. This approach addresses the urgent need for additional student capacities but also achieves a sustainable strengthening of the education infrastructure. The needs of the children are considered in the measures implemented in the course of the project. To this end, the construction of special purpose rooms such as libraries, cafeterias and social rooms are foreseen besides the standard class and subject rooms. Additionally, all buildings are handicapped accessible and emphasize the equal usability by boys and girls.

Impact
The construction of approximately 340 schools represents a valuable contribution to closing the capacity gap in the Turkish educational infrastructure. The project creates about 143,000 additional school places and thus helps to reduce the high number of Syrian children in Turkey without access to school education. Therefore, the project improves the living conditions of Syrian refugee children in Turkey and opens up their chances for the future.

Furthermore, the institutional capacities of MoNE are strengthened within the scope of the project. By end 2019, the project enters its third phase, benefitting from the long-term and trustful cooperation with MoNE.

Cooperation with MoNE
The Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and KfW are engaged in a close cooperation. Besides the described project "Education for All in Times of Crisis", MoNE and KfW also jointly implement two other EU-funded projects in the context of the Syrian refugee crisis. In these projects KfW supports MoNE with regard to the promotion of technical and vocational education as well as the improvement of energy efficiency in schools through their comprehensive rehabilitation and the production of solar electricity.

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