The Government of Turkey and Syrian Refugees: A Gender Assessment of Humanitarian Assistance Programming

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Executive Summary

Since late 2011, the civil war in Syria and the resultant outpouring of more than 2 million Syrians has grown to threaten the stability, infrastructure, and security of its surrounding neighbors. In comparison to other humanitarian crises in recent history, “more people have fled their homes in Syria than fled the genocide and its aftermath in Rwanda or the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia.”¹ As in previous and similar scenarios, women and children make up the vast majority of Syrians seeking shelter in Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Egypt. Out of all the countries that are host to refugees, Turkey is the only country that has thus far rebuked UN offers to oversee and manage camp affairs, choosing instead to lead – and pay for – internal efforts to care for Syrians seeking safety.

Women and children represent 75% or more of Turkey’s current refugee population. How Turkish camps implement programming to address the varying needs of men and women will have major consequences on the well-being of Syrians and, in turn, chances of a lasting peace. This paper examines the degree to which the Turkish Government’s (GoT) -- in close partnership with the Turkish Red Crescent (TRC) -- organization, approach, and personnel have addressed the unique and conflict-affected needs of Syrian women and men, with a greater focus on women given their disproportionately high numbers in the camps, living within 20 camps in border regions near Syria. Through a gender lens, this study highlights how, why, and where Syrian refugees are either enabled or disempowered by current programming efforts in Turkish camps as they look to a future beyond war. The implications of this analysis are important for understanding and improving the conditions for women – and men -- refugees on the ground but also, more broadly, inseparable from the realization of the historic UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

Key findings:

• The Achilles’s heel of the Turkish Government’s response is its insistence on maintaining hard security and physical infrastructure over investing in soft security and necessary services such as the provision of psychosocial support and culturally sensitive maternal/neonatal healthcare.

• The Government of Turkey continues to view Syrian refugees as “temporary guests” and thus accords refugees with a status that does not allow for long-term integration into the Turkish state;

• The camps themselves are aesthetically built, generally safe and well-guarded, and boast amenities from centrally-located laundromats to flat screen TVs in residents’ homes; every stakeholder interviewed reported that, physically, these camps were “the best they had ever seen”;

• Food security and education are generally regarded as sectors supported by sound programming, robust resources, and innovative approaches enhancing the self-sufficiency of residents;

• The absence of psychosocial support for survivors of SGBV and the confusing and poorly structured approach to the provision of reproductive healthcare are the two biggest contributing factors to female disempowerment in the camps;

• Women are the most vulnerable to sexual violence among the Syrian refugee population in Turkish camps, as in other Syrian refugee populations in neighboring countries but the needs of sexual and gender-based violence survivors has not been met with commensurate programmatic and technical support and thus threatens to exacerbate suffering and marginalization for women in the near and long-term; and,

• Lastly, the systemic avoidance and near-zero knowledge of the urban refugee population, of which women and children are the likely majority based on assessments of urban spaces in Jordan and Lebanon, stands to further complicate the overall picture of Syrian women living in Turkey.

The implications of these findings are far-reaching for policymakers, humanitarian assistance providers, donors and international observers. Women and men have reported widespread suffering of sexual and gender-based violence before and while fleeing the conflict. Residents of Turkish camps are only slightly better off than their urban counterparts given that public health infrastructure is relatively weak across the board. While men have reported less sexual violence than their female counterparts, it is fair to assume that the barrier of shame around male-male sexual violence is high and thick enough to present even seasoned SGBV experts with significant challenges. For women, the sheer number of likely survivors in the camps requires immediate, nuanced, and careful attention. And because women are largely responsible for caring for and protecting their children in refugee scenarios, the welfare of children is directly shaped by the welfare of their mothers.

The degree to which residents’ needs are met is even further complicated by the Turkish Government’s lukewarm relationship with the UN, whose inventory of technical personnel and knowledge has not been fully tapped. Without addressing the most pressing, and, at the same time, most intimate and deeply guarded, health and well-being concerns of Syrian refugees, it can only be assumed that, when the fighting is over, those who return to their homes will return with far fewer capacities and far greater vulnerabilities than before the outbreak of war. As Tilman Brück and Marc Vothknecht note, “The health impacts of armed conflict thus last far beyond the end of war.”

Overall, many observers agree that the Turkish Government has responded quickly and responsibly, and at great financial cost, to the influx of Syrians seeking shelter from the ongoing civil war. However, the government is undercutting itself by insisting on providing short-term relief to Syrians within the camps, and, essentially, no relief to Syrians outside of them.

“Syria has become the great tragedy of this century – a disgraceful humanitarian calamity with suffering and displacement unparalleled in recent history.” – Antonio Guterres, UN High Commissioner for Refugees

Introduction

As of September 2013, the Syrian civil war has no end in sight. In fact, the regime’s use of chemical weapons against civilians in suburban Damascus and the splintering of the insurgency into rival – and, in some cases, extremist – factions have markedly escalated the conflict, forcing the international community to cobble together a plan that will both neutralize the Assad regime and provide relief to a population under fire. Regionally, concerned heads of Middle Eastern states continue to steel their administrations and electorate for the worst case scenario, which – for Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Turkey – has come to mean an outflow of Syrians seeking shelter and safety that, at the extreme, could lead to both the collapse of public services and increased military involvement in the Syrian theatre, two spillover effects that are extremely difficult to manage for any country in the long-term.

The degree to which each country has been exhausted by the influx of Syrian refugees differs from country to country, with Turkey fairing slightly better than its Middle Eastern counterparts, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Egypt. As of September 2013 the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) reports the following figures for registered Syrians in surrounding countries: 763,097 in Lebanon, 525,231 in Jordan, 494,361 in Turkey, 192,396 in Iraq, and 126,717 in Egypt; an accurate number of unregistered Syrians living within these countries is not currently known.3 At the current rate, UNHCR predicts that conditions on the ground will force over half of Syria’s population into dependence on foreign aid by the end of 20134, a grim reality that few could have predicted during the initial onset of tensions.

According to a report by the International Crisis Group (ICG), on April 29, 2011, the first group of 250 Syrians crossed into Hatay, seeking shelter from an upsurge in violence at home. By October 2012, over 100,000 refugees had made their way into urban and camp areas5, and current estimates by UNHCR suggest that 200,551 registered Syrians now live in Turkish camps and 243,985 registered Syrians have established residence either with family or on their own in urban locales.6 Based on current migration trends and no foreseeable end to the fighting in Syria, the UNHCR further predicts that Turkish camps and cities could host up to 300,000 and 700,000 people, respectively by the end of 2013.8

From the beginning, the Turkish Government has treated Syrians as if they were “guests” seeking temporary reprieve from a violent situation.9 Government officials predicted that the crisis would be short-lived and based early interventions for displaced Syrians on the notion that their stay would be an abbreviated one. This assumption also partially explains the government’s

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7 The vast majority of urban refugees are concentrated in the following provinces: Gaziantep, Sanliurfa, Hatay, Kilis, Mardin, and Kahramanmarash.
early resistance to overtures from the international community as well as the difficulty it faced in establishing a uniform registration system prior to June 2012\textsuperscript{10}, a mishap, in retrospect, that has contributed to the ongoing challenge of reporting accurate numbers of Syrians who are not living in camps.

The GoT currently extends a regime of Temporary Protection to Syrians who have fled the conflict and are now living within Turkey. In legal terms, this falls short of full refugee status and results in the absence of the ability to: apply for transfer to third countries as UN-recognized refugees; participate legally in the work force; and, formally enter educational institutions. The Temporary Protection regime stems from Turkey’s signing of the 1951 Geneva Convention and its 1967 Protocol on geographical limitation, which translates to zero recognition of refugees from outside European borders.\textsuperscript{11}

Currently, there are 20 fully functional camps in varying proximity to the Turkish-Syrian border.\textsuperscript{12} Five camps are container camps, two camps are comprised of pre-fabricated units, and the remaining camps are tent camps.\textsuperscript{13} According to WFP, the Turkish Government plans to cap the building of new camps to 21 in total.\textsuperscript{14} The cost of providing for displaced Syrians has been and continues to be enormous, with the Turkish Government footing a sizable portion of the bill. To date, ICG estimates that the GoT has spent $750 million on the construction, staffing and maintenance of camps. As of April 2013, GoT was spending $50 – 60 million a month on caring for refugees.\textsuperscript{15}

Scope of Inquiry

This study will focus entirely on Turkey’s response to the growing refugee\textsuperscript{16} crisis within its borders through a gender lens, from the beginning of the conflict in October 2011 until the present. More specifically, this research will squarely assess the degree to which the Turkish Government, in close partnership with the Turkish Red Crescent, has addressed the unique needs of Syrian women and men living within the 20 camps established in border regions near Syria. The humanitarian crisis unfolding within Turkey bears several close connections with similar

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\textsuperscript{10} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{11} International Crisis Group, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{12} The following is a list of provinces and associated camps that house and provide basic services and security to registered Syrians: Adana (Adana camp), Adiyaman (Adiyaman camp), Gaziantep (Islahiye, Nizip-1, Karkamis, Nizip-2 camps), Kilis (Kilis, Kilis Elbeyli camp), Hatay (Altinozu, Boynuoygun, Yayladagi-1, Yayladagi-2 camps), Karhmanmaras (Karhmanmaras camp), Osmaniye (Cevdetiyi camps), Sanliurfa (Ceylanpinar, Harran, Akcakale camps), Malatya (Malatya camp), and Mardin (Midyat camp). A 20\textsuperscript{th} camp, Viransehir, will open soon in the province of Sanliurfa. Please see Appendix A for a map of Syrian refugee camps in Turkey.
\textsuperscript{14} WFP Official. Interview. July 18, 2013.
\textsuperscript{15} International Crisis Group, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{16} The term “refugee” is not accurate in terms of the legal protections and status the GoT affords displaced Syrians seeking shelter within Turkey. Instead, the government has enacted a regime of “temporary protection” to describe the range of protections available to Syrians, which, in real terms, guarantees the right of asylum and freedom from forced returns but denies legal access to transfer to third countries as UN recognized refugees, legal employment, and education. However, for ease of readership, the term “refugee” will be used throughout to describe Syrians living in camps as well as urban areas.
crises facing Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and to a lesser extent, Israel, but a region-wide analysis of the conflict through a gender lens is beyond the scope of this project.

A gender perspective “highlights women’s [and men’s] capacities and can indicate where opportunities are missed by relief interventions for making aid more effective by supporting women’s [and men’s] skills and capacities.”\(^\text{17}\) This study examines the degree to which Syrian women, and to a lesser extent boys and girls, have been both empowered and disadvantaged by programs developed and implemented by the GoT/TRC. It should be noted that while a comprehensive gender analysis demands the inclusion of how a conflict has impacted the capacities and vulnerabilities of men, the main focus of this paper will be on Syrian women living within camps, not least because women and their children make up approximately 75% of camp resident populations, and it is much more difficult (though no less important) to assess how Syrian men have been affected due to their high degree of mobility from the camps back to the Syrian battlefield.\(^\text{18}\) Children’s needs will not be directly addressed by this study, but it stands to reason that where mother’s various needs go unmet, the results will have a cascading impact on the needs of their children in the sense that needs- and resource-based decisions will be made by a supportive mother that will directly affect her children.

This study references the starkly different realities of Syrians inside camps versus Syrians outside camps in order to better understand the GoT’s overall response to Syrians seeking refuge in Turkey. It also addresses some questions related to how ignoring the vast population of urban Syrians might impact more vulnerable groups – including but not limited to women – in ways that have been carefully documented in Lebanon and Jordan.

Although the primary focus of this study is on Syrians living within refugee camps, it is important to acknowledge the urgent need to better understand the realities of urban individuals, particularly because the level of coordinated assistance outside the camps is significantly lower than inside the camps. As quantitative data is difficult to come by and Turkish officials have only recently started tracking the numbers of Syrians living in border cities and towns, the working estimate of how many Syrians currently reside unofficially outside of the camps is anywhere from 50,000 to 150,000,\(^\text{19}\) a figure that is much larger than the number of registered Syrians living within refugee camps.

**Methodology**

This study was conducted using information collected from interviews with staff from policy fora, independent journalists, I/NGOs, United Nations’ World Food Programme (WFP), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the US State Department, as well as subject matter experts whose connection to the conflict is purposely unstated, mostly to avoid exposing political sensitivities

\(^\text{18}\) UNHCR. RRP 5, p. 212.
\(^\text{19}\) UNHCR. “Turkey Syrian Refugee Daily Sitrep.” August 26, 2013.
Each interview was 60-90 minutes long and consisted of 25-30 questions developed using a sectoral framework derived and adapted from the Canadian International Development Agency’s (CIDA) “Gender Equality and Humanitarian Assistance: A Guide to the Issues” (see Appendices B and C) that specifically targeted her/his observations, perceptions and experiences of how GoT/TRC programming currently addresses the unique and conflict-connected needs of women and men living within the camps. As it was not possible to visit the camps in person, measurement-focused and participatory gender assessment frameworks, such as the Capacities and Vulnerabilities Analysis,

Personnel from the Turkish Government, as well as the Turkish Red Crescent are not represented due to a number of challenges, including:

- A lack of political will on behalf of TRC upper management to facilitate the survey in the field; and,
- Some confusion around conflicting narratives of which half of the GoT/TRC contingent is responsible for camp management.

Additional challenges that were encountered include:

- Extreme difficulty in locating a large enough pool of stakeholders who could inform a balanced understanding of the situation in the camps;
- The fact that identification of stakeholders did not necessarily translate to improved access to information; and,
- Persistent themes of frustration and resignation on behalf of personnel who have an operational role in the camps.

The challenges noted above will be explored further with particular emphasis on how they have worked to impede gender progress within the camps.

**Global Security and Gender: Important Themes**

As the roots and trajectories of conflicts are better understood by policymakers and academics, a sharper focus is beginning to develop around what—and who—are needed to

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21 The Turkish Government and Turkish Red Crescent will be referenced jointly, as the government relies heavily on TRC for provision of non-food items as well as program implementation support and the TRC is so closely aligned to the political regime of the Turkish Government that many State Department officials, as well as subject matter experts familiar with the conflict, refer to it as a “quasi-governmental” organization.
responsibly end a conflict. In response to this, the United Nations adopted Security Council Resolution 1325 in October 2000, which calls for:

Greater representation of women in national decision making, especially in the prevention and resolution of conflict; incorporation of a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations; new financial and logistical support for gender dimensions of peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction; greater consideration of women and girls in resettlement, rehabilitation, and demobilization programs; respect for women’s human rights and an end to impunity for crimes against women; new efforts to combat sexual violence in armed conflict; and greater consultations with local and international women’s groups.22

This effort represents the first major multilateral recognition that the duality of women being made vulnerable first by the conflict they are so integral to resolving is critical to serious conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts worldwide.

Where the implications of conflict for women have historically been most pronounced is evident in humanitarian disasters, where families are uprooted and forced to relocate by conflict.23 In many cases, the simple biological distinction of being either male or female in an emergency situation yields real differences in access to resources, and resultant vulnerabilities and capacities. Historically, women who become refugees as a function of disaster, find their new realities plagued by a more burdensome division of labor, sharp differences in host community cultural sensitivities, circumscribed mobility within and outside the camps, and physical safety concerns.24

To address these persistent vulnerabilities, practitioners and policymakers are calling for the “[prioritization of] the prevention of rape and girls inside and outside refugee camps, the expansion of livelihood, health and education programs; the mainstreaming of psychosocial considerations in all protection and services; training for camp managers and protection forces alike; proper configuration of camps; and engagement of women refugees and IDPs in decision-making on these issues.”25 But despite resounding calls for a greater mobilization of political, technical and material capital in the service of leveling gender equity and capitalizing on opportunities for female empowerment, knowledge of UN guidelines is patchy and, in some places, totally non-existent. In the case of Turkey’s involvement with the Syrian refugee crisis, the government’s insistence on homegrown solutions to forced migration means that, in some ways, it is taking a shot in the dark at getting gender right.

One way to pinpoint where humanitarian efforts in Turkey are on the right track and where they fall short of producing the intended results is to assess camp management systems and program elements from a gender perspective, which means to examine the “needs, rights, vulnerabilities, coping strategies, equity, access to services, participation and capacities of

23 Ibid, p. 125.
25 Steinberg, p.125.
women and men, girls and boys.”

The beauty of looking at an intervention through a gender lens is that it helps to peel back and reveal hidden power structures rooted in and reproduced by political, economic, social and cultural institutions that help to mediate relations between differently-sexed members of a society; applying this lens to a conflict scenario generates the added benefit of evaluating net gains and losses of women and men throughout the cycle of the conflict.

In the case of Syrian refugees in Turkey, the pertinent sector-specific areas where a gender perspective can reveal differential access to resources (among other things) include: Protection and Physical Infrastructure, Food Security, Education, Income Generation, Political Agency and Organization, Cultural Continuity, and Health. In the event of an emergency or disaster, women’s and men’s lives will be negatively, neutrally or positively affected in each of the above categories, and the degree to which an intervention addresses that impact by minimizing harm and maximizing capabilities is the degree to which that program should be judged successful and just. Within these spaces, a gender perspective can help support a more accurate understanding of the current situation as well as enable the design and re-tweaking of appropriate responses by celebrating strengths and redoubling efforts to eliminate weaknesses.

Ultimately, where gender weaknesses persist in GoT/TRC programming, the impact will disproportionately and negatively impact female refugees because there are more women than men and because across the board, conflict and forced displacement more gravely complicates the lives of women and girls, which, in many ways, works to destabilize how women and girls are able to interact with men and boys, particularly when those interactions occur within societal structures that place higher value on men and boys.

In the long run – and when the time comes for a resolution to this conflict – large numbers of women and girls whose needs have gone unmet for years on end will be in no reasonable position to satisfy UNSC Resolution 1325’s plea for greater participation at leadership levels and in post-conflict peace processes. This will invariably hobble progress toward a just and inclusive peace process from step one.

**Key Findings**

*Caveats Underpinning Key Findings*

Before turning to a discussion on the key findings, it is first important to more completely address the various constraints on this research that were encountered along the way in order to better contextually situate the findings. To begin, the lack of political will at TRC generated the persistent message that conducting a gender assessment was “neither practical nor relevant” for field teams to be expected to complete. That the leadership at TRC was not interested in facilitating a serious audit of current camp operations and programs is hard to believe given that:

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(1) no assessment has been attempted since Syrians began fleeing their homes in 2011; and (2) gender impact evaluations are one of the first things potential donors look at before deciding when and how much to allocate to a humanitarian operation.28

In terms of looking to stakeholders involved in humanitarian operations, the small number of external actors complicated a holistic understanding of the Turkish response. Not every UN agency in Ankara is engaged in the Syrian operation (in fact, most UN agencies do not have a direct presence established near the camps at all), and the GoT has been careful to keep INGOs from establishing a presence in the camps as either monitoring bodies or direct implementers. International Crisis Group reports that “37 international NGOs are working in various guises along Turkey’s southern border and inside northern Syria, seventeen of them with an informal green light from local Turkish authorities”, but also that the UN and EU are completely absent from the camps themselves.29 Indeed, there is a significant NGO community comprised of Turkish and Syrian NGOs like Kimse Yok Mu Dernegi and İnsan Hak ve Hürriyetleri İnsani Yardım Vakfı (IHH), but they focus on Syrians living in urban areas and are not involved in camp management activities.

The political risk of speaking about life in the camps to observers remains high and, in some cases, resulted in decreased access to information. For example, GoT officials were entirely out of reach, but beyond the GoT/TRC contingent, it was most difficult to speak with some of the more involved parties, like UNHCR. An official at IOM indicated that UNHCR was unlikely to cooperate with this particular analysis in order to avoid the risk of overt politicization of their perceptions of and experience with camp operations and/or exposing refugees to vulnerability created by bad press coverage. A colleague investigating similar issues in Jordan confirms that the UN’s general position with regard to outsiders looking into hot-button issues like SGBV is to prevent press coverage based on isolated cases from reaping devastating consequences and further exposing Jordanian and Syrian women to “harassment and stigmatization in the local community.”30 Additionally, the status of UN agencies and INGOs operating within Turkey is delicate and sensitive to political shifts in the wind, and the fact that two representatives would only communicate on condition of complete anonymity, even forgoing association to their respective agencies, suggests that their position in the camps is a carefully guarded (and tenuous) one.

Additionally, even when stakeholders received clearance to discuss their role in monitoring camp operations, much of what was relayed was characterized by significant frustration and resignation on behalf of personnel who are essentially hamstrung by government

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29 International Crisis Group, p. 17.
30 Research Associate. Institute for the Study of International Migration (ISIM), Georgetown University. Personal Correspondence. June 24th, 2013.
interference or unwillingness to cooperate. The only information UN agencies have to work with comes directly from government offices because UN personnel themselves are unable to collect or monitor data, or even speak with refugees, within the camps. Based on interviews with an anonymous gender expert, the US State Department, IOM, International Crisis Group, and WFP, it is clear that official visits to camps are infrequent for most and highly structured, meaning that ease of access and communication with Syrians themselves are circumscribed, making it difficult for outside observers to grasp a complete picture of camp life.

The narrative around who, between the GoT and TRC, is primarily responsible for camp operations is largely inconsistent and dependent on the party asked. Conversations with TRC personnel suggest that TRC is merely supporting government-programming efforts with the provision of non-food items (NFIs) and co-implementation (along with the World Food Programme) of the electronic food voucher program. Conversations with external stakeholders suggest differently, namely that TRC is responsible for day-to-day camp management and the GoT itself is coordinating the assistance and activities of the international community. One International Federation for Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) representative mentioned that this divergence in narrative points to the GoT’s persistent need to project absolute control over operations.

Lastly, the camp administration structure favored by GoT/TRC has resulted in mixed and different results from camp to camp. Within the camps, AFAD, which is the division of the Turkish Government that handles emergencies and disasters, and TRC personnel are solely responsible for camp management and program implementation. AFAD also closely coordinates with various line ministries (e.g. the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Family and Social Services, etc.) to provide essential services to camp residents. As one UN representative put it, this approach differs significantly from the refugee camp structure preferred by the UN when it is the apparatus in charge. Each agency within the UN typically designs and operates programs within its mandate, which, in effect, creates a kind of siloed and sector-specific approach to refugees’ needs. The Turkish Government, on the other hand, has opted for a top-down, camp management structure wherein the full range of refugee-related needs are addressed by government officials with respective expertise. To complicate this, managers are rotated every 3 months or so, which effectively leads to the uprooting of institutional knowledge and best practices for a given camp.\(^{31}\) Essentially, this means that it is impossible to generalize program impact from camp to camp because each camp is run according to the whims of its respective camp manager and administration.

With those caveats, the following discussion will look at several areas where camp management practices have both directly and indirectly impacted the needs and desires of camp residents by focusing on a demographic most often overlooked by humanitarian interventions, time-sensitive and urgently needed as they are. As mentioned in the discussion of the scope of

this inquiry, the key findings are organized around perceived and probable impact of camp programming and management on women and children, primarily because they comprise the vast majority of camp residents in Turkey and because these groups are often the hardest hit and least advantaged in emergency situations.

Physical Security and Infrastructure

The overall impression of the camps from a material perspective is overwhelmingly positive. State Department officials who had visited the Kilis camp reported that it was “five star” in quality and boasted homes with running water and flat-screen TVs as well as access to laundry facilities. In most camps, children have designated areas to play, and vocational training in sewing and rug making for women are available. Children also have access to Turkish language classes and are, for the most part, able to continue primary school studies in Arabic, although the government was initially slow to procure Arabic-speaking individuals to help run camp operations.32 The International Crisis Group has documented similar reports of Syrians enjoying a “five-star experience”, with some outside observers commenting that these camps are the best they had ever seen.33

Despite positive feedback from visits to camps by external actors, it seems clear that material conditions and levels of comfort enjoyed by Syrians vary from camp to camp. Generally, container camps are better equipped and more comfortable than tent camps, which make up the majority of available facilities.

The overall security of camps seems to be quite good, with differences in threats to physical safety largely dependent on each camp’s proximity to the border. Law enforcement is comprised of both gendarmerie and privately contracted officers, female security guards form part of the camp security detail, and the relationship between camp residents and security guards was reported as friendly. In addition to well-developed security around the perimeter of camps, one interviewee noted that within one camp, certain areas had been cordoned off for single male inhabitants to occupy on their own. This was apparently done after some female residents raised the concern that they felt uncomfortable with single males roaming campgrounds freely.34 The UN Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women note that the physical organization and location of camps as well as the provision of adequate numbers of female staff are critical first

steps that help to ensure that refugee women feel and are safe.\textsuperscript{35} Indeed, the Turkish camps appear to have more than satisfied these criteria.

Most interviewees reported that they had observed friendly interactions between camp staff and camp residents, but a more thorough interview process conducted with Syrian women in two camps in Gaziantep province suggests that camp staff would greatly benefit from cultural sensitivity training as residents reported feeling resentment and tension between themselves and staff.\textsuperscript{36}

\textit{Food Security}

The primary program in support of food security within the camps is one of the bright spots of the ongoing effort to care for displaced Syrians. In partnership with WFP, TRC kicked off a program that enables Syrian families to purchase pre-approved food items from participating vendors both within camps and in nearby towns and cities. Each person within a family unit receives two installments of 40TL (approximately 40USD total) on an electronic card each month.\textsuperscript{37} Using these cards, families can choose from a variety of foodstuffs (with the exception of alcohol and junk food) and can prepare meals using kitchen equipment provided by camp management. Particularly when “unequal bargaining power between men and women may have particularly dramatic consequences for child and female nutrition and morbidity,”\textsuperscript{38} it is heartening that this program links monthly food stipends to each, individually registered adult in the camps, thereby affording women the same fixed and dedicated resources as their male counterparts.

This program is currently active in 14 camps and TRC/WFP have plans to roll out the e-voucher program to the remaining camps in the coming months. The program itself not only enables Syrians to resume the kind of activities that underpin some semblance of normalcy (like shop for groceries, interact with shopkeepers, cook a variety of meals), but it has resulted in huge cost-savings for the Turkish government. When WFP first arrived in country, the Turkish government was spending between 140 and 170USD per person per day on hot meals that were prepared by camp management staff.\textsuperscript{39} The e-voucher program has essentially halved food and nutrition costs and, at the same time, attempts to renew in survivors a sense of self-reliance and ownership over day-to-day activities.

\textit{Education}

\textsuperscript{36} SGBV Consultant. Interview. June 9, 2013.
\textsuperscript{37} “WFP-Kizilay Food E-Voucher Programme.” Progress Report #7 (Gaziantep). May 31, 2013
\textsuperscript{38} Brück and Voithknecht, p. 104.
\textsuperscript{39} WFP Official. Interview. July 18, 2013.
Access to education has been more complicated for both adult and child learners living with the camps. Early on, low numbers of Arabic speakers made it difficult to enable young children to continue their studies in Arabic, but now all schools in the camps have Syrian teachers on staff (the provision of appropriate compensation and incentives to teach continues to pose a challenge to camp officials, however). One interviewee reported that the classrooms she observed were not sex-segregated and that the children seemed relaxed and well-adjusted to their surroundings, although she did come across one girl who did not attend classes because her family would not allow it. The likelihood that this is not an isolated case is high given that in most countries, “families place a higher premium on educating boys than on educating girls.” Another observer remarked that a fairly equal number of boys and girls appeared to be in attendance in the classrooms.

An early draft of a needs assessment report completed by a SGBV consultant and her colleagues during visits to two camps in Gaziantep province, however, indicates that many women are unable to take advantage of adult-learning courses because their husbands will not allow them to participate. Overall, her team fielded requests for greater access to educational outlets and Turkish language courses at all levels.

In addition, “certification of learning attainment [and] translating education into livelihoods” are two such issues that have been largely ignored by the government as it continues to focus on short-term solutions to the problem of child and adult education within the camps.

**Income Generation**

The ability to generate income as a Syrian refugee living in Turkey remains a major challenge. Within the camps, though, management offers training in traditional vocations for residents. For example, women are able to learn carpet weaving and beautician trades but there is no opportunity to expand skill sets outside of traditional niches. And where women can only access livelihood programs that reinforce traditional expectations of what they can and cannot produce for income, their reality is more of a reflection of “the tendency to conceptualize and establish projects within the confines of traditional sex-specific roles...” At the same time,

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40 State Department Official #1. Interview. June 7, 2013.
43 Elizabeth Ferris and Rebecca Winthrop, p. 22.
where women are eager to regain a sense of self, the availability of activities that both generate income and serve as a site for rebuilding social connectivity is a plus.

As part of their status as Temporarily Protected Persons, Syrian camp residents are unable to procure temporary work permits for any part of their stay in Turkey. In speaking with a SGBV consultant familiar with camp operations, it was noted that the current high demand for Arabic-speaking teachers could be addressed by making provisions for camp residents who were teachers in Syria to work for pay, but because the government refuses to issue temporary work permits to Syrians, any work that a Syrian teacher would perform within the camps would go unpaid. 46

This phenomenon of working for free or working for far less than their Turkish counterparts has been reported widely throughout the country, with one commentator arguing that Syrians have become the new working class in Turkey. 47 Instances of survival sex and prostitution were reported 48, but because a UN-sponsored needs assessment of this phenomenon is still underway, accurate figures for the degree to which this impacts women’s lives in the camps is unknown. The same report noted that the significant burden of finding paid work in the informal sector falls heavily on women, who are often heads-of-household as a result of either the death or ongoing involvement of their husbands in the anti-Assad insurgency. 49

Political Agency and Organization

There is some level of political organization within the camps, for both women and men, although only 40% of the camps have official camp committees in place and two camps have no female representatives at all. 50 Almost all camps, however, feature a mukhtar (“chosen”, or headman) system, which has formed out of democratic elections of representatives within camp communities. In some camps, there are both male and female mukhtar committees, although it is not clear what level of decision-making power each committee has and whether or not constituents feel that the mukhtar committees function as strong liaisons between constituents themselves and camp administration. At minimum, it is clear that female mukhtars are not consulted directly by camp management on how to improve operations within the camp, something that should be reversed in order to ensure that women’s feedback is included in evaluations of current programming and recommendations for the development of additional camps.

50 UNHCR RRP 5, p. 223.
One State Department official recalled a time when the embassy actively pressured TRC camp management to require the formation of a female mukhtar committee in a camp with only male representation. She recalled that TRC’s response reflected a “live and let live” ethos, one in which the Turkish government would only intervene in camp affairs when absolutely necessary.\(^{51}\)

**Cultural Continuity in Host Community**

Interestingly, instances where interpersonal and intercultural conflict has erupted within the camps are around the issue of child and polygamous marriage. Having ratified both the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in addition to drafting the Child Protection Law, Turkish law identifies children as individuals less than 18 years of age. A recently revised Civil Code stipulates that the statutory age limit for marriage is 17 for both women and men, whereas prior to 2002, the limit was 15 and 17 for women and men, respectively. In practice, however, UNFPA reports that child marriage is practiced throughout Turkey, with a heavier concentration of cases in Central East Anatolia, an area that shares ethnic and cultural ties to the many Syrians now living in Turkey.\(^{52}\)

It was reported by several sources that GoT/TRC is not consistent with its response to child marriage in Syrian camps, opting in some cases to turn a blind eye and in others to unequivocally forbid the practice, a development one official finds ironic given how rampant it is in nearby Turkish towns.\(^{53}\) This challenge is not one faced by the Turkish government alone; in fact, it is also a reality many officials are forced to confront in camps throughout Jordan.

On the subject of forced [child] marriage, unofficial religious marriages in Zaatari Camp, numbers of which are unknown and difficult to ascertain, are a serious concern, but on the other side, they are seen by some (women, girls and/or their families) as a protection mechanism. This is proving an incredibly difficult issue to tackle, particularly without sounding alarm bells that may ultimately cause more harm.\(^{54}\)

Even more alarming is evidence that Syrian girls are being sold into marriages in order to generate income for desperate families. “In Jordan, hundreds of Syrian females have been affected by an informal trade that has sprung up since the start of the war in Syria, where men use ‘agents’ to source Syrian refugees to use for sex. Often this is done under the guise of


\(^{53}\) Ibid.

\(^{54}\) Research Associate. ISIM, Georgetown University. Personal Correspondence. June 24th, 2013.
It is increasingly evident that the uptick in child marriages is not a reflection of antiquated or conflicting cultural priorities, but that it is more a function of how far families must go to support themselves financially. A limited understanding and indiscriminate policing of this phenomenon on the part of camp officials run the risk of further exacerbating the vulnerability that is driving it.

Even in Turkish camps, which are comparatively better equipped and more tightly secured than Lebanese or Jordanian counter-examples, early and forced marriages have sprung up in alarming numbers as a way to ensure that young girls are both protected and leveraged to secure a bride price for families with little to no income.

**Domestic Violence and Psychosocial Support**

Where Syrian women seem to suffer the most from gaps in expertise and capacity is in the realm of both psychological/psychosocial and reproductive healthcare. Conversations with TRC leadership about addressing the unique needs of both men and women suggest the camps more than adequately cover everything anyone could need. Feedback from outside observers, however, suggests a very different reality for women, particularly if they are survivors of sexual assault; 80% of interviewed respondents report having suffered some form of SGBV.

The damage inflicted on women by sexual assault extends far beyond the physicality of the crime. Quoting a Syrian psychologist who has interviewed dozens of female refugees, Lauren Wolfe writes, “Syrian families are very conservative and I always tell them [that] rape is the best way to break a family. The easiest way... I tell them [not to] let this break you—this is what they are trying to do. When I tell that to the women, however, they [ask me to] tell it to their husbands.”

Government forces – as well as their Free Syrian Army counterparts – have been raping with intention, and with the full knowledge that a sexually compromised girl destroys cultural and material benefits for both herself and her family through the loss of access to the institution of marriage. And in terms of what a sexually assaulted or raped boy does to a family, the conversation goes noticeably silent, ostensibly because the shame of male-male sexual violence is so deeply rooted that practitioners likely do not have a clear understanding of the picture. Indeed, “marginalizing the phenomenon of wartime rape as a women’s problem, a

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59 The writer of that article points out that this figure cannot represent those women who died as a result of attacks or who refuse to acknowledge sexual assault for fear of family or community retribution.

60 Lauren Wolfe, 2013.
private problem, or a problem that is too shameful to address has kept victims and their stories and experiences at arm’s length from policy as well as academic research," which is largely a force that keeps outside observers in the dark over just how deeply Syrian refugees have been impacted by sexual violence.

As of August 2013, AFAD reports that there are 200,551 Syrians living in camps. Out of this number, UNHCR estimates a nearly 50-50 split of young and adult men and young and adult women living within the camps (that 75% of camp residents are women and children obscures the fact that many children are young boys, which, in the absence of adult males, results in a fairly even number of males and females in the camps).

![WMC's Women Under Siege](image)

From Lauren Wolfe’s “Syria Has a Massive Rape Crisis”, *The Atlantic*, April 3, 2013

Because accurate figures of SGBV survivors living in Turkish camps are unknown, the best that can be done is look to surveys completed elsewhere, if only to provide an illustrative look at what figures might be in the Turkish context. For example, if the Women Under Siege report of men and women attacked by multiple parties, raped, assaulted, and groped is accurate – and if it is reasonable to apply this percentage to refugee communities in order to establish a working, if not perfect, understanding of the degree to which Syrians have been traumatized by SGBV – then the picture of Syrian women/girls and men/boys living in Turkish camps is quite grim: roughly 40,110 women/girls and 15,041 men/boys were attacked by multiple parties,

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85,234 women/girls and 45,123 men/boys were raped, 5,013 women/girls and 3,008 men/boys were groped, and 10,027 women/girls and 25,068 men/boys were sexually assaulted without penetration. Additionally, 10,027 women/girls were detained for sexualized violence. It is also reasonable to believe that a sizable percentage reported having experienced more than one of the types of sexual assault listed above.

The potential for significant numbers of survivors of SGBV living in Turkish camps is high. And where many – if not most – refugees have been traumatized by SGBV, the need for culturally sensitive psychosocial support is extensive. Psychosocial support demands the use of a multi-sectoral model of prevention and response that mainstems sensitivity throughout. In addition, a strong support system does not focus exclusively on the traumatic event itself but appropriately addresses areas of the greatest distress to survivors, which include: isolation and stigmatization, continuing and day-to-day exposure to threats of GBV, lack of money to meet basic needs, and an inability to be effective mothers as a result of poverty.

Based on several interviews with SGBV professionals and UN staff, it is clear enough that psychosocial support is virtually non-existent in the camps, with the one exception of Kilis camp where it appears that International Medical Corps (IMC) has established inroads for trauma counselors in the region (a representative from IMC did not return a request for comment). Most camps do not have social workers in residence and the presence of a camp psychologist is an altogether rare occurrence. Camp officials do not have the appropriate skills or cultural training to interface with survivors who may, for example, be experiencing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder but might not know how to articulate or identify the symptoms. In cases where traditional trauma symptoms are absent, survivors may be overlooked entirely by practitioners who view the situation through a Western medical discourse. One report does indicate, however, that officials from two camps in Gaziantep province have requested that increased capacity for psychosocial support be made a top priority.

In essence, this means that survivors of SGBV have no one to talk to. Women cannot speak to their husbands and men may feel totally unable to discuss a sexually violent episode in light of strict, and, at times, unforgiving notions of masculinity; many, if not most, do not feel comfortable speaking to Turkish staff. UN officials whose role has been to advise and support a referral system for camp residents in search of support typically learn of incidents of SGBV

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62 There is some debate over whether or not a trauma-focused approach to psychosocial support is actually culturally sensitive. See “Education and Displacement: Assessing Conditions for Refugees and Displaced Persons Affected by Conflict”, by Elizabeth Ferris and Rebecca Winthrop. Whether a trauma-focused approach or, for example, an education-focused approach is best for healing in the Syrian context needs to be explored, and explored quickly, as the need for intervention at this level is great.

while observing voluntary repatriation interviews, which is one of only a few responsibilities entrusted to UNHCR staff.

The UN has responded by encouraging the capacitation of local psychological and mental health practices, but it is not clear if there is agreement between the UN and the line ministries, like the Ministry of Family and Social Services, the Ministry of Health, etc., on how to achieve this with gender sensitivity in mind. The presence of both male and female counselors, the openness of counselors to GBV cases, and the promise that complaints will be quickly, efficiently, and confidentially addressed are gender factors that must be considered if there is any hope of encouraging Syrian women and men to confront trauma. The road ahead is steep, though, as one interviewee remarked that capacity is so low that even Turkish citizens do not have reliable access to these kinds of services.

In cases where domestic violence has either been reported or observed, Turkish camps respond inconsistently and without the benefit of systematic guidance. This is a direct result of the camp management system, which is one comprised of decentralized camp leadership where each camp is run differently from the next. Because Turkish camps do not follow systematic or institutionalized “best practices”, success with using a referral system also differs in addressing camp residents’ needs. Where domestic violence manifests, camp managers may decide to deal one-on-one with the offender, involve the police or gendarmerie, or ignore the situation entirely. Whether a survivor of domestic violence is connected with support structures outside of the camp falls under the discretion of camp officials.

Reproductive Healthcare

In addition to not having access to a strong psychosocial support network or consistent and reliable mechanisms for reporting domestic violence, Syrian women reported difficulty in utilizing health services provided by camp officials. The largest obstacle women face in receiving the healthcare they need is a complete and total absence of privacy, an unfortunate reality that likely plagues even the most responsive of refugee camps. Even if women are permitted by their husbands to seek assistance from the mostly Turkish doctors stationed in the camps (and many of them are not), healthcare centers are often overcrowded and unable to offer patients confidentiality of either their health narratives or records, especially as interviewing women waiting in line for medical attention about their health concerns is a common practice.

According to one source, because of this many women are opting to give birth to children in their tents or containers with the help of Syrian midwives, the sanitary conditions of which put

both the mother and the child at risk. Neo-natal care is virtually non-existent because there is no systematic way of tracking pregnant women. Many women have reported that access to family planning mechanisms are not available as they were prior to the outbreak of violence in Syria and the extent to which camp management officials are able or willing to address this issue is not known. Because women are not able to access birth control – and some even think that it is being deliberately withheld from them – women are having babies despite constraints that make an expanding family difficult to provide for.

In summary, where women may be able to use state-of-the-art laundry facilities and take part in skills-based training to perfect the art of carpet-weaving, they are not able to locate the kind of psychosocial and healthcare support that is so critical in the wake of the kind of individual and family trauma springing up from the civil war.

Perhaps the most complicating factor here is Turkey’s dogged insistence on overseeing the intervention, despite the cautious pleas of UNHCR for the government to better utilize technical advisors in the camps. For its part, the UN has not done a good job of working with the Turkish Government as an equal partner, mostly because the UN has never been sidelined by a middle-income country capable of financing a complex refugee intervention. Where the UN has decades of field-based knowledge, best practices and the ability to foresee predictable outcomes over time, the Turkish government is, through no fault of its own, simply not yet equipped to manage the complex dynamics at play, both within the camps and outside of them. And where the UN has never been challenged in a human emergency situation by a government efficient or wealthy enough to support operations on its own, the various agencies involved have had to learn to participate only when asked. As fault lines begin to develop and deepen, intransigence at the state- and multilateral-level will produce human consequences, many of which might have been avoided with a little less pride and a little more humility.

Based on available, albeit limited, data and interview narratives, women are left with more vulnerabilities than capacities, more disempowerment than empowerment. How, or if, women’s roles have changed from pre-war mothers and wives to wartime refugees is not yet known; if there have been gains for women vis-à-vis shifting roles, it is certainly not evident from the observations, experiences, and perceptions of external stakeholders. The “live and let live” philosophy of camp officials that has echoed throughout the narratives featured in this analysis suggests that Turkish officials understand their role as facilitative and hands-off, rather than potentially transformative. Where it is a good practice to avoid mandating radical and progressive changes from a refugee population that could result in an increase in gender violence, it is irresponsible to neglect or ignore locating actors who may wish to think and act differently toward a more equitable future. The degree to which empowerment for women has ebbed or flowed is not completely clear at this juncture, but it is a worthwhile endeavor to

67 Ibid.
68 Ibid.
allocate future resources and research in this particular area as it will help shed light on how ready and able women will be to contribute to a peaceful Syria.

**Urban Refugees – Why They Matter**

As the conflict continues to rage unabated, many are starting to question just how long the Turkish Government can continue to provide for Syrians admitted to camps stationed throughout the border region. With over $1 billion dollars already spent by Turkish government agencies on building, maintaining, and servicing refugee camps, one official predicts that the government will cap the total number of camps at 21, which would, in effect, put a finite limit on how many camp-based refugees will be allowed on Turkish soil. Looking down the road, this will likely contribute to what is already a huge number of Syrians living in urban areas.

For Syrians already taking shelter in cities and towns, survival is a precarious subject. As of December 2012, there was no clear strategy for registering urban Syrians, and it is only recently that UNHCR has developed a plan to deploy mobile registration stations to high-volume urban areas. According to UNHCR and AFAD, out of 500,000 to 600,000 Syrians estimated to be living in Turkey, 458,837 of those persons have been registered. On the conservative end, this leaves 41,163 unaccounted for persons; at the other end of the spectrum, 141,163 persons may be living unofficially in Turkey. An unclear protection status for unregistered Syrians means constant anxiety around expired visas and the cost of obtaining residency permits, the inability to find competitive and paid work, and increases in rent in increasingly crowded urban spaces.

As the government has consistently rebuffed UN appeals to spearhead an intervention in urban spaces, there is no way to know how the manifold vulnerabilities of living unofficially and informally in Turkish cities is impacting Syrian women. Again, the best that can be done is to look to observations made by assessment teams in other areas affected by the conflict, like Jordan. Syrian women living in Jordanian cities interviewed by a CARE assessment team reported the following gender-specific concerns:

- Being approached for marriage and for early marriage for daughters or simply marriage with a very low dowry; harassment and offers of transactional sexual relations; feeling oppressed; Jordanian community ‘talking’ about Syrian brides and cheap dowries – this included the knock-on effects of being talked about with a small number of women being shunned by the Jordanian community; CBOs wanting to take pictures of people receiving NFIs (made to feel cheap and shamed); CBOs prioritizing young, attractive women and

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72 International Crisis Group, p. 12.
as a result many males are no refusing/not wanting to let females go to CBOs unaccompanied; and, staff reported as providing NFI assistance on the basis of sexual favors.

The list goes on to document additional – and gender-based – episodes of violence committed by the host and relief communities against Syrian females. Again, these narratives do not come from the Turkish context but it is likely that there are some points of intersection between the experiences of Syrian women living in Turkey and those living in Jordan.

As the few remaining spaces in refugee camps are occupied by some of the several hundred thousand refugees still waiting for registration near the Turkish-Syrian border, and as the conflict continues to force Syrians out of their homes, more Syrians will have to look to urban spaces than ever before. And unless the government makes a serious effort to welcome outside assistance and re-direct its own priorities toward the urban theater, the consequences of over-emphasizing camps as the solution to Syrian refugees are likely to be major, with one huge effect being that of increased vulnerability of larger numbers of Syrians looking to urban outlets. Where these refugees are overwhelmingly women and children and when women experience vulnerability as having to make a decision between engaging in survival sex to feed themselves and their children or starving to death, an ever greater percentage of female urban refugees in Turkish cities spells out a devastating future for fresh waves of refugees.

The Connection Between Vulnerabilities in Programming and Security Concerns

The Turkish Government has responded quickly, and at great financial cost, to the influx of Syrians seeking shelter from the ongoing civil war. Materially, most Syrians have more than what they need to survive and most of what they need to live comfortably. The GoT continues to shoulder a significant percentage of the financial burden because of a deep-seeded commitment to caring for their neighbors and procuring solutions to intra-camp problems as quickly as possible.

However, the government is undercutting itself by insisting on providing short-term relief to Syrians within the camps (and, essentially, no relief to Syrians outside of them). Based on conversations with various UN personnel, it is apparent that the scenario that significantly troubles UN officials is two-pronged: on one hand, the Turkish Government will continue to ignore the socially, economically, and ethnically dislocating effect on Turkish citizens that an influx of Syrians in urban spaces will eventually have, and on the other, the overwhelming financial cost of materially top-notch camp administration will become so burdensome that services and facilities will begin to suffer and camp residents will become resentful. Where these two phenomena meet is an environment rife with inter-communal tension driven by competition for scarce resources, such as living spaces, jobs, healthcare, etc., already observed in Lebanon and Jordan.
In this kind of scenario, the families that will be hit the hardest are female-headed. Women who are responsible for both family care and income generation may be unable to fulfill this double-role for fear of “discrimination or exploitation based on community perceptions of unaccompanied women” or more general concerns for safety and security. Women who cannot find paid work in either the formal or informal sectors will be increasingly vulnerable to selling sex or essential goods in order to survive. Even in cases where a family has both a mother and father intact, mounting stress, anxiety, and difficulties in adjusting to a new environment may lead to domestic violence that would disproportionately impact women and children.

Many of us who are interested in further exploring the connections between women, peace, and security accept that where peace processes are inclusive of the needs, expectations, and realities of women and men on equal grounds, security will be longer-lasting, more durable to internal and external shocks, and better able to afford access to resources to those who need it most. In the wake of the kind of trauma caused by a political disaster, it is absolutely imperative that humanitarian assistance interventions mainstream attention to gender throughout, as a way to invite all participants to continue to move forward despite great loss and tragedy. While the Turkish Government should be commended for its quick response and insistence on extending protection to Syrians fleeing the fighting, there is still much to be done to ensure that programming has the maximum positive impact possible.

Because of this, one area where the Turkish Government can best support a future peace in Syria vis-à-vis the hundreds of thousands of refugees now living in either camps or urban spaces is by unabashedly and effectively targeting the needs of the most vulnerable. As in most other humanitarian disasters, the most vulnerable include women and children, who, together, comprise 75% of camp residents and an unknown number of urban individuals. The needs of this overwhelming percentage of women and children should be driving implementation rather than dwell in the periphery. The Turkish Government can only begin the long overdue process of consulting the vulnerable with the help of the external actors it currently holds at arms-length and by beginning to think seriously about a long-term approach to providing for Syrian refugees.

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References

Appendix A
The Government of Turkey and Syrian Refugees: A Gender Assessment of Humanitarian Assistance Programming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What are the needs of Syrian refugees overall?</td>
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<td>2. What does the typical family structure look like? How many people on average form one family unit?</td>
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<td>3. How are the needs of Syrian refugee men different from the needs of Syrian refugee women?</td>
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<td>4. What difficulties do Syrian refugee men face? What difficulties do women face?</td>
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<td>5. What mechanisms are in place for Syrian refugee women to communicate their needs to Turkish Red Crescent staff?</td>
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<td>6. What program components are in place to address the needs of Syrian refugee women? What about Syrian men?</td>
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<td>7. How has the Turkish Red Crescent addressed the impacts of social dislocation on women?</td>
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<td>8. How is the safety of Syrian refugee women addressed within the camps? How does this extend to protection</td>
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<td>Question</td>
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<td>9. What are common female reproductive health concerns? How are they addressed within the camps?</td>
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<td>10. How do women participate in relief programs?</td>
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<td>11. What is the system of distributing cash vouchers for food?</td>
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<td>12. How does Turkish Red Crescent ensure that women receive enough money to sustain proper nutrition, especially in cases where they may be pregnant or lactating?</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Have Syrian women been consulted prior to the development of new camps? Are facilities in locations that are safe for women to access? Are hours of operation of services at times when women are free to utilize them?</td>
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<td>14. Did the Turkish Red Crescent send female field officers to engage with Syrian female refugees?</td>
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<td>15. Are there separate women’s committees within the camps that hold decision-making power?</td>
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<td>16. How are women and men who have experienced trauma provided professional counseling and advice?</td>
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<td>17. How many female staff</td>
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members of the Turkish Red Crescent are on-site at each of the camps?

18. How does the Turkish Red Crescent ensure that resources are distributed equitably within the household unit?

19. What sorts of income generation activities are available to women? What about men?

20. How are educational opportunities provided to both men and women? Boys and girls?

21. How is skills-based training provided to women? For men?

22. Is there gender-sensitive training available for men within the camps? For male Turkish Red Crescent staff members?

23. What is your perception of how Turkish Red Crescent has addressed the unique needs of Syrian refugee women and men?

24. How would you change programs to better address the needs of Syrian refugee women and men?

25. What are the challenges you have faced in terms of implementation of programming for Syrian refugee women and men?

26. What are the challenges of evaluating programmatic impact on Syrian refugee women and men?
### Appendix C

CIDA’s “Gender Equality and Humanitarian Assistance: A Guide to the Issues”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programming Sector</th>
<th>Examples of Question to Ask</th>
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| Protection and Human Rights | • Is there access to all people – especially women and girls? In situations of limited access, is there an awareness of potential barriers to reaching certain groups?  
• Is there explicit recognition that women have human rights? Do human rights programs explicitly target women’s rights?  
• Do human rights workers/protection workers have experience in dealing abused of women’s rights?  
• Does staff have the capacity to deal appropriately with gender-based violence?  
• Has the crisis produced a shifting in gender roles that has exacerbated women’s vulnerability to sexual exploitation, domestic violence, and rape?  
• Is there capacity building for both women’s organizations and human rights organizations on women’s rights?  
• In addition to addressing past violations, is there an analysis of possible strategies to minimize new violations?  
• Are initiatives consistent with the UNHCR’s 2003 Guidelines Against Sexual Violence?  
• Is there recognition of the different situations, needs, and resources of girls and boys? |
| Food and Agriculture | • Have there been separate consultations with women and men on priorities and issues?  
• Have men and women been consulted in the design and distribution of food aid?  
• Has there been recognition of the roles of women, in caring for families and dependents, in decisions regarding size of rations, appropriateness of rations, distribution channels, and monitoring of distribution?  
• How are households registered? Is there consideration of the types of households and household structures (including women-headed households)?  
• Is there an assumption that all households will have fuel, as well as cooking and food-preparation utensils?  
• Have women’s roles in agriculture been identified and supported?  
• Is there a consideration of whether or not women’s lack of access to agricultural land endangers food security for specific groups?  
• Do food security programs draw attention to laws or customs that deny or restrict women’s access to land? |
| Water and Sanitation | • Are boys and girls equally nourished?  
• What indicators of food security are being used and are they disaggregated on the basis of sex?  
• Have food distribution programs been reviewed with the goal of minimizing the potential for sexual abuse and exploitation?  
• Are water and sanitation programs based on an understanding of the roles, responsibilities and needs of women and girls in ensuring domestic water supplies (these vary from place to place)?  
• Women often hold the primary responsibility for water collection and use. Have they been involved in setting priorities and making decisions about water supply programs?  
• Are water supplies accessible and safe for women as well as men? Is there access to containers for storage and collection of water, and is water accessible to women with limited mobility?  
• One prerequisite for successful sanitation programs in ‘ordinary circumstances’ is women’s involvement. Has this ‘lesson learned’ been applied?  
• Do bathing, washing, and laundry facilities ensure the privacy and security of women and girls? |
| Health | • Is there recognition of women’s and men’s roles and needs relating to reproductive health care? Have international standards relating to reproductive health been met (such as the Minimum Initial Services Package)?  
• Are the resources allocated to meet agency guidelines on reproductive health (e.g., as outlined in the inter-agency field manual)? Have staff received training in use of the manual?  
• Are the health priorities of women who are not mothers taken into consideration?  
• Have the menstrual needs of women been taken care of?  
• Has there been attention to the psychosocial well being of women and men?  
• Have health care workers been trained to deal with the sensitivities of HIV/AIDS and sexual and gender-based violence?  
• Do HIV/AIDS programs recognize and respond to women’s and men’s needs and situations?  
• Is it appropriate to involve women’s organizations in health monitoring and surveillance activities?  
• Has there been consultation with (and involvement of) traditional medical practitioners (women and men) as appropriate to promote helpful (and to eliminate harmful) health practices?  
• Has there been consideration of health implications of gender-based crimes of violence?  
• Have women been consulted on the hours of opening of health facilities?  
• Are health education messages directed at both women and men? |
| Education | • Does the male/female profile of health staff reflect the composition of the client population?  
• Do education programs reach girls as well as boys (issues include social attitudes, hours classes are offered, child-care provision for younger siblings, safety, gender of teachers, and location of ‘schools’)?  
• Has attention been paid to obstacles faced by girls and boys in attending schools? There may be a need to target children of minorities, children with disabilities, and children formerly recruited by the military, with attention to gender differences in all these groups.  
• Are both women and men mobilized as teachers?  
• What actions are in place to accommodate the education needs of disabled, orphaned, separated or otherwise-unaccompanied girls and boys?  
• Do adult educational/vocational training programs target both women and men? 
Do education programs recognize and build on existing skills of displaced women and women refugees? |
| Economic Recovery and Reconstruction | • Has there been consideration of changes in family roles and responsibilities? Is there an increase in women-headed households?  
• Do economic resources (seeds, tools, relief commodities, etc.) reach women as well as men? Are the packages provided relevant to the type of skills and work women do (as well as those of men)?  
• Will inequalities relating to land access and ownership have an impact on who benefits from a specific initiative? Do mainstream economic-reconstruction programs provide opportunities for women as well as men? Are there strategies to minimize obstacles to their participation?  
• Are there opportunities for women to learn skills in non-traditional fields? |
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