

Good Practice: TR GP3

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"Vocational Course for Syrian Women"

Main features of the GP programme:

Type of programme	Type of organisation	Field of practice for organisation	Programme scope	Programme duration	Programme occurrence/frequency	Type of funding for GP
Basic skills, VET	Non-profit organisation	Education, Advocacy, Consultancy, Health	Local (several local branches of a national NGO)	4-5 months	Continuous	External (Project based)

Adult Education as a Means to Active Participatory Citizenship (EduMAP) is a Horizon 2020 research project focusing on adult education among young adults at risk of social exclusion. Particular attention is paid to educational policies and practices needed to foster active citizenship among vulnerable young people.

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1. What – Focus (theme, orientation)

As part of an integrated service-provision framework, the hairdressing courses provided for Syrian refugee women are a good example of flexible AE programmes that are designed according to the needs, demands, and conditions of refugees. Based on the strong rapport established between the organisation and the refugee community, GP3 has been able to identify AE contents, design programmes, effectively reach out to targeted groups, make sure the maximum number of learners continue up to completion, and remain in contact with former learners.

2. For whom – Target group(s)

The general target group is the Syrian refugee community in the Syrian-border city Gaziantep. However, thanks to its Multi-Service Support (MSC) Community Centre concept, which relies on external funding for various projects, GP3 has been able to target more specific groups within the Syrian refugee community such as women, disabled individuals or illiterate men.

3. Requirements and access

All Syrian refugees are eligible for the services, including AE programmes, provided by GP3. There is an initial process of registration of refugees, during which the NGO learns about the profile of the individuals as well as their needs, demands, and existing skill sets. Once new AE programmes are designed based on this information, relevant and targeted individuals and groups are informed individually. Attendance to a certain percentage of the classes is mandatory and there is usually no other financial or otherwise requirements for accessing the courses.

4. Elements of good practice

Trust-Based Continuous Relationship and Multiple Supporting Services: The holistic approach of GP3 in providing multiple supporting services by establishing a trust-based close relationship with the VYA groups. They have strong links with the field.

Turkish learning: As part of wider relationship established with the refugees and a result of the practice of moving from one AE programme to another, many VYA learners are exposed to Turkish. Some take Turkish language courses, while others attend events with Turks.

Cooperation with others: GP3 collaborates with a large number of local, national, and international partners. These include local NGOs, the city Municipality, various ministries, and important INGOS, most significantly including several UN bodies. Through such cooperation, GP3 was able to raise money for its projects as well as to advertise its various initiatives and programmes to a wider audience. Close cooperation with state institutions was another source of strength for its programmes, particularly in the context of State of Emergency that was in place in the country.

Vocational Courses and Practice-Based Education: For the learners vocational courses were a vital way to gain employment and earn money. Therefore, offering vocational courses was considered a strength of GP3. Moreover, many of the VYA respondents also emphasized the fact that the chosen course subjects were

particularly appealing for them as women.
Qualified and approachable teachers: An element that was mentioned almost unanimously by all learner respondents as a strength of the programme was the quality of the teachers. The teacher of the hairdressing course was praised to be a “good, patient, helpful, interested, warm, well-qualified” teacher. It was pointed out that it was her interpersonal skills and warm relationship she was able to establish with the learners that was the crucial factor in increasing the learning appetite of them.

5. Perceived challenges

The Length of the Programme:
A challenge for the AE programmes is to determine the length of programmes. Designing programmes to be too long would consume a lot of precious human and financial resources as well as contributing in an increased dropout rate.
The interviewed learners, while expressing pleasure about GP3’s responsiveness to their demands, however, are still not happy about the duration. Accordingly, 3 months is just too short to master the craft and the course needs to take significantly longer -most respondents suggested ‘at least 6 months’ while there were some who thought it needed to be even longer.

Certification:
Most respondents suggested that not providing any vocational certificate or diploma was a major problem of the programme. Accordingly, most learners were attending these courses to pursue a career in the field afterwards and therefore they would need to receive a document that can show for the significant time and effort they invested to this programme.
However, the legal framework regulating vocational training in Turkey prevents NGOs like GP3 to offer such certification.

Access Problems Stemming From Cultural Issues:
The issue of gender is a very important issue with Syrian refugees, which present several significant challenges for GP3’s programmes. One such challenge is the conservative family structure amongst the religious Muslim families where the husbands or the fathers do not give permission to their wives/daughters to attend AE programmes. To overcome this challenge, GP3 is trying to rely on the aforementioned trust-based relationships it establishes with the families in the field.
Another issue is the early marriages of young Syrian women. For mostly cultural reasons, a majority of Syrian families encourage, if not force, their daughters to get married as early as when they are 14-15 years old.

6. Testimonials

“I became stronger and I feel like I can do new things. My husband used to tell me

that I couldn't get out of home because I was a woman. But now, after coming here, I tell him that I can do it, I can earn my money and take care of my children... I can even leave you, I don't have to depend on you." (Learner)

"My favourite thing about the course was that I got to meet other Syrian individuals. We became like a family. Because we had to leave our families and our country behind when coming here. This centre brought us together" (Learner).

"Working as a hairdresser is appealing for us Syrian women because it's flexible, it can be done at home, it is acceptable by the men of the family because women can work at an all-female environment, it doesn't require much capital investment, it is not very strictly regulated by the state, etc." (Learner).

7. More Information

EduMAP project's publications:

[Books and articles](#)

Academic publications that address key themes of the EduMAP project

[Deliverables and reports](#)

EduMAP's official deliverables, related reports and publications

[Good practice cases](#)

Key features from 40 'good practice' cases from 20 countries

[Working papers](#)

A selection of findings from desk and field research in 20 European countries

[Other resources](#)

Other types of resources made for the project (illustrations, comics etc.)