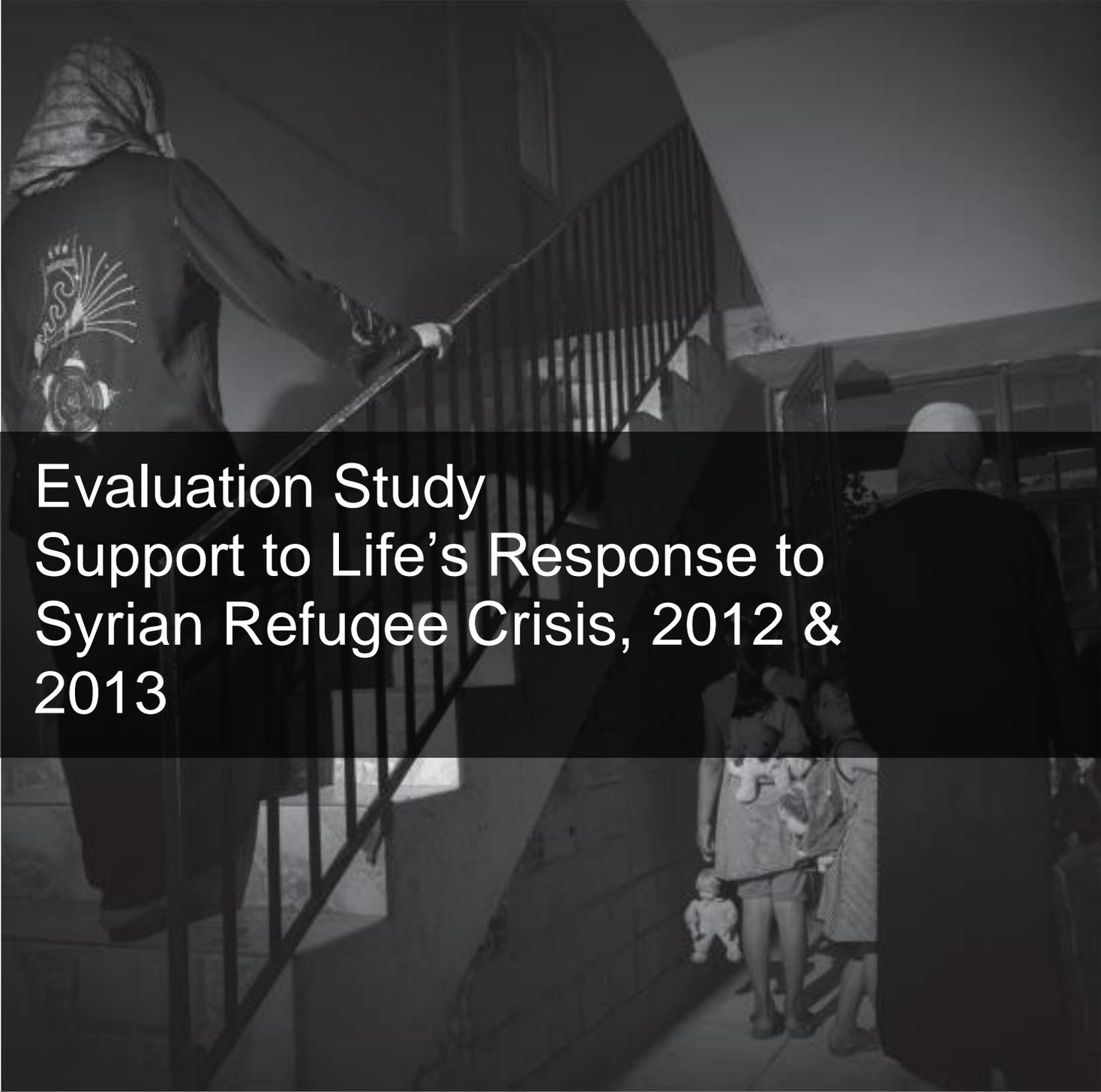




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Evaluation Study Support to Life's Response to Syrian Refugee Crisis, 2012 & 2013

Burcu Kuğu & Erhan Okşak, December 2013

This report was commissioned by Support to Life. The comments contained herein reflect the opinions of the evaluators only.

Evaluation of Support to Life's Response to Syrian Refugee Crisis, 2012 & 2013

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Burcu Kuđu & Erhan Okşak

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ACRONYMS

AAR	Association for Aid and Relief
ACF	Action Contre la Faim
AFAD	Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency
CC	Community Centre
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DDG	Danish Demining Group
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
DKH	Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GoT	Government of Turkey
HQ	Headquarters
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
LDC	Least Development Countries
NFI	Non Food Items
OCHA	United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PDM	Post Distribution Monitoring
STL	Support to Life
TRC	Turkish Red Crescent
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
WFP	United Nations World Food Programme

1. Introduction

This report is part of enhancing Support to Life's organisational learning on its Syrian Refugee Programme in Turkey. The specific objective of the evaluation is to present the findings on the achievements, quality and overall impact of Support to Life's humanitarian response of the Syrian refugee crisis in Turkey. Adding to that, this report intends to identify lessons learned and develop recommendations that will assist STL management to build capacities into future programming in order to help communities better cope with risk and to enable a more timely and appropriate response to the continuing humanitarian crisis. The evaluation exercise was undertaken in December 2013 in Hatay by two external consultants.

A context assessment is presented as background information, including the needs and capacities of the Syrian refugees and other actors involved. An introduction to the methodology, scope and limitations, the current report presents the main and relevant findings of the evaluation. The findings are presented in four sections, namely programme achievements, programme management, organisational culture and capacity, and partnerships. Going beyond that, the findings based on the OECD/DAC criteria, are discussed further in detail in a cross-sectorial manner, from which an overall analysis and recommendations are presented in the last section.

The study should be recognized as a real-time evaluation for STL's on-going projects. This evaluation report seeks to capture perceptions of refugee community members with respect to STL's programmes. Further investigate and analysis of STL activities on the ground resulted in an understanding of the effectiveness and efficiency of projects, and their relevance to the need of the affected populations. The intended audience for the report varies from STL management to partner organisations, including donors and other stakeholders, which might include policy makers.

2. Executive Summary

Support to Life (STL) had been closely following the situation of Syrian refugees in Turkey since April 2011. The aid agency started its Syrian refugee assistance programme in October 2012, basing its initial intervention on an assessment study carried out August 2012 in the border area from Hatay to Sanliurfa. STL decided to prioritize work with refugees living outside the camps. Assistance has been provided in Hatay, Kilis and Sanliurfa provinces with food and non-food deliveries, cash assistance based on a voucher programme, and protection services. Assistance has been mostly provided by STL, with some help from partners.

Although most of the stakeholders, including affected populations and public authorities, were sceptic during the initial phase of STL assistance, trust was built up gradually by the consistent efforts of STL management and field teams. The immediate effect of community centre activities reveals highly positive results, while continued assistance programmes such as the voucher programme have left a more intense impact compared to one-time distribution of consumable and non-consumable goods.

Support to Life established its base in Hatay very quickly considering the fact that STL had no prior presence in the region. In addition to its own intervention, STL also

facilitated coordination among INGOs that operate across the border in Northern Syria.

After carrying out a number of field assessments in southern Turkey, STL decided to provide humanitarian assistance in the border districts and villages of Hatay province given the fact that the highest concentration of non-camp Syrian refugees was in this area. Living under difficult conditions, the needs of the Syrian refugee families were outstanding. Thereupon STL established a field base in Antakya in Hatay, where a warehouse and accommodation was arranged for STL project and field teams.

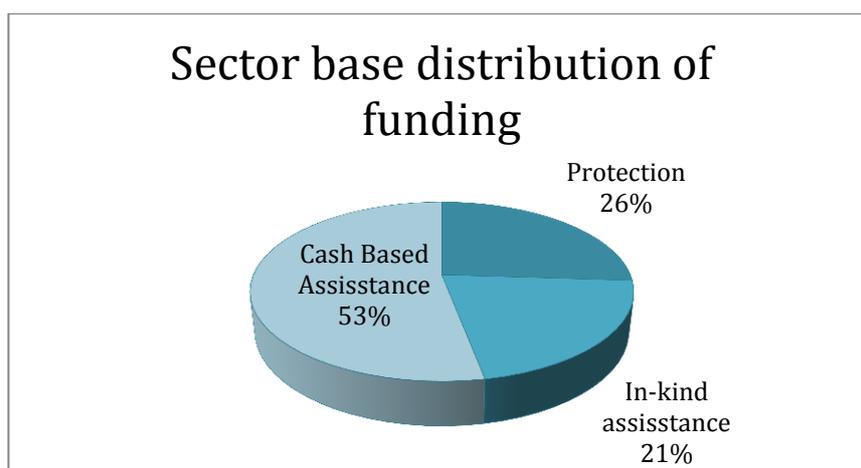
A pilot relief distribution was carried out in Hatay with funding provided by Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH). Food and hygiene packages, kitchen utensils and blankets were provided to 150 families (1,114 individuals) in a number of districts of Hatay province. After the initial response, STL concentrated its relief efforts to the distributions of food and hygiene packages, non-food items such as blankets, stoves and charcoal as well as winterized clothing up to February 2013 with funding from Association for Aid and Relief / AAR Japan, Action Contre La Faim / ACF Spain, Arche Nova, Malteser International, and DKH, with a geographic focus on Hatay province.

In the beginning of 2013, STL initiated a conditional voucher assistance programme for Syrian refugees as part of a new approach designed to respond more effectively to their food needs in a way that took into account the local context. Having started with 3,500 vouchers in Hatay and Kilis, STL has expanded its approach to Urfa to respond to a larger number of refugees with more diversified assistance. As might be expected, voucher modality is considered a more dignified method than in-kind assistance. Given the fact that cash assistance programme was one of the first of its kind in Turkey, important lessons learnt and good practices would be beneficial for the humanitarian community in Turkey.

As of the end of December 2013, STL continues to provide relief aid, winterization items, food packages, psychosocial support, skill trainings, and emergency education supplements to the Syrian refugee population in Hatay, Kilis and Sanliurfa in Southern Turkey. STL has been collecting its own needs assessment and programme monitoring data, which served as a basis for the design of specific projects. Since then a local network and good contacts have been established not only with the refugee community but also the host community.

Having started with Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe funding, STL diversified funding substantially to include Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Danish Demining Group (DDG) and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) with approximately 4.4 million Euro in total for its Syrian Refugee Assistance Programme. While a larger proportion of funding was allocated to cash based assistance with 53%, allocation for the protection programme was followed by 26% of overall funding.

Chart I – Sector base distribution of funding



Strategic approaches, meaningful interconnectedness and transitions between major programmes, have been ensured at the project level. Interventions implemented under the Syrian Refugee Assistance Programme were highly relevant and appropriate, since STL showed great adaptability to the changing and emerging needs of the refugee population. The decision to work in different sectors contributed to the complimentary nature of the interventions.

Emergency response interventions and access to communities were appropriate and relevant, when door-to-door assessment and distribution modality are considered.

2.1. Needs Assessment

- STL has made all-out efforts to assess needs on an on-going basis and to respond to them as they arise and change.

2.2. Programme management

- STL showed great sensitivity to the affected population's confidentiality, which was one of the critical points in terms of accountability.
- Maintenance of image regarding impartiality is much appreciated by affected population, STL staff members and other stakeholders.
- Being attentive enough to accommodate cultural sensitivity is respected by the affected populations.

2.3. Strategic approach

- Size and growth rate of STL was enormous, planning for such scale-up circumstances are much needed for future programmes.
- There is the need for more planning and a holistic approach for prospective programmes.

2.4. Organisational capacity

- Few aspects need to be improved regarding the support mechanism between the regional level, Hatay base, and HQ in Istanbul.

- Administration and logistic systems have performed well in most cases. Despite infrequent failures in the financial management procedures, generally the programmes have been well supported in terms of implementation.
- Funds were raised on time and resource availability was in general behind the capacity of implementation in terms of pace.
- Although the improvement of living conditions of national and local staff have been observed, their psychological welfare remained unaddressed, resulting in a high level of burnout, tense working relationships.
- The STL team was quick enough to respond the crisis.
- The establishment of a grievance mechanism is very much needed.
- Salary policies and orientation procedures needs to be broadly communicated with all staff members.
- STL Operations Manager substantially supported the overall program. However, HoM got confused on his roles and responsibilities.
- Initiatives focused on preparedness including emergency contingency planning still needed to be developed within STL.

2.5. Partnerships

- There is the need to improve communication and transparency between partner/donors and STL regarding donor/partner regulations, funding availability, and allocation. Financial reporting should be an institutional priority of STL for future partnerships.

2.6. Impact and Relevance

- The complementary nature of the interventions led to successful outcomes.
- The response of STL, among other agencies, has contributed to a reduced negative impact of the crisis on the affected Syrian population in Turkey.
- Solely relief distribution programmes might create dependency syndrome on beneficiaries. Community centers need to be considered as an exit strategy regarding relief aid distributions.
- STL has laid the foundations of a cash assistance modality, which is a new experience for STL and Turkey.

3. Methodology

After the first year of programme implementation, STL felt the need for an evaluation of the achievements and impacts of its project activities. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess overall achievement, quality and immediate impact of STL's humanitarian response in order to identify lesson learned, mainly for STL management and teams. Recommendations were formulated to provide insight to STL's operations in the border areas of Turkey. This evaluation study mainly focuses on the cash based assistance and protection programmes in the Hatay and Kilis districts. The evaluation exercise was carried out through a document review, literature analysis, visits to houses and community centres, and meetings with community members, relevant stakeholders and partners.

The evaluation team was made up of two external evaluators. Based on their availability, five STL staff members provided support to the evaluation team during the focus groups and interviews with the affected populations.

Appreciative inquiry, gender-sensitive and participatory approaches were used to seek the views of recipient communities and, where appropriate, non-beneficiaries. Inclusive techniques were another important approach of the evaluation in order to ensure active participation in the evaluation. On the final day of the evaluation study, a debrief session was held with the STL staff to present key findings and recommendations. In this session, STL staff was also requested to assess these preliminary findings and contribute their inputs. Moreover, STL and relevant stakeholders will be involved in reviewing this draft report to check if there are any relevant factual errors or omissions, and to highlight any interpretation of the findings that they consider incorrect.

Confidentiality of information, in that all documents and data collected from interviews and focus group meetings were treated as confidential and used solely to facilitate analysis, was insured by the evaluation team. The guiding document for developing the methodology was the terms of reference, attached as Annex A.

Methodological triangulation (qualitative and quantitative data collection) and data triangulation (using different sources of information) were utilized to increase the validity of the study. Desk review and cash assistance program monitoring results were used to provide quantitative data on the concentrated evaluation areas. Evaluation meetings, focus groups and semi-structured interviews were designed to collect qualitative data from the field.

Data collection instruments included:

- ∴ A desk review of all relevant documentation of the Syrian Refugee Relief Programme
- ∴ Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussion with programme beneficiaries
- ∴ Evaluation meetings with STL staff in Hatay and Kilis
- ∴ Interviews with key stakeholders such as partner INGOs, government representatives (where appropriate), other local authorities, market owners (see Annex B for the list of interviews, focus groups and evaluation meetings)
- ∴ Direct observation through site visits

A matrix was developed based on the OECD/DAC criteria and important cross cutting issues crosschecked with the intervention sectors to guide the information collection and analysis process (see Annex C for the information matrix). For each interview, focus group, and evaluation meeting, relevant sets of questions (9 sets) were developed prior to the field visit.

Those participating in the evaluation study included 26 STL staff members, 3 partner representatives and 2 external stakeholders, 9 muhktars, 8 market owners, 42 cash assistance beneficiaries (26 were both cash assistance and community centre beneficiaries), 33 Community Centre beneficiaries (6 were in-kind assistance beneficiaries), and beneficiaries of the 7 Mother & Nutrition Programme (in-kind assistance beneficiaries).

The study was held in four different regions, namely Hatay Center, Altınözü, Kırıkhan and Kilis, with the main focus on the cash assistance programme, community centres

and STL's operational capacity. Interviews were also conducted with STL Istanbul and Hatay staff.

3.1. Scope and Limitations

Although STL has been operating in Hatay, Kilis and Urfa, this evaluation exercise only focuses on mostly Hatay and Kilis as geographically. Whilst it is considered relatively easy to accumulate instant quantitative results from cash based assistance or protection programmes, impacts in a broader sense are less tangible and harder to measure. Although the majority of the projects were completed during the evaluation study, the main programmes are on-going. Thus measuring the mid-long term impact of the overall program is either not applicable or really challenging due to difficulties in accurately gauging the level of impact. Therefore this study needs to be accepted as a real-time evaluation.

The scope of the evaluation was determined by the terms of reference (see Annex A). This evaluation is not an audit but an appreciative inquiry into what worked and what could be improved in the future. The entire process has been a participative one to ensure that this exercise is a learning experience for all.

Although quantitative data was gathered from the Cash Assistance Programme monitoring reports and Community Centre reports, the evaluation was primarily designed on generating in-depth qualitative data resulting in relatively small numbers of participant beneficiaries due to the duration of the study.

On the other hand, the sample size for the Cash Assistance Programme beneficiaries met the theoretical saturation criteria for purposive sampling (the point when new data no longer brings additional insight to the evaluation questions). Moreover, an equal balance of male and female beneficiaries was sought during the sampling. For future studies, a quota sampling strategy including age, place of residence, duration of residence, beneficiary duration and gender can be developed to answer more detailed questions. More non-beneficiaries should have been included in the study in order to reflect their perspective of the STL program.

All of the evaluation meetings were open for all the STL staff. The majority of STL staff was included in the study. However, there was not sufficient time to meet and interview all members of the staff. Evaluators believe that personal interactions in the field, in briefings and in meetings led to learning among staff members.

Interviews with local authorities were limited with to the muhktars for various reasons such as official leaves of public officials in local government, unavailability of the Kilis governor due visits from the president of Republic of Turkey, having reservations to talk external bodies, etc.

STL's risk education program was not included in the study. Data collected from the Mother and Nutrition Programme was not adequate enough to provide in-depth understanding of its impact and to develop extensive recommendations due to time and resource constraints. Although seven beneficiaries of the mother and nutrition programme were interviewed, evaluation team could able to find the pattern and significant finding due time limitations and prioritization of STL HQ. Hence, mother and nutrition specific in-depth findings are not presented in this report.

This evaluation was a cross-sectional study. Follow-up studies are recommended to enhance the findings and monitor the key factors that affect the implementation and impact of the programme.

4. Context overview

The task of responding to refugee emergencies in urban and other non-camp settings poses a range of profound challenges. One such challenge was dealing with the government of Turkey's (GoT) reluctant approach to Syrian refugees living outside of the camps during the initial stages of the refugee influx. Security risks remain another major concern for humanitarians and local and affected populations. For instance, a bombing in Reyhanlı occurred on 11 May 2013, killing 51 and injuring 140. After this dreadful incident, the host population's perception of the affected population significantly changed. Before Reyhanlı bombing, the affected population was much more welcomed by local communities.

In fact, rather than using the Turkish word for refugee, "mülteci", in official discourse, Syrians tend to be referred to somewhat euphemistically as "guests".¹ This situation limits the legal protection of refugees in Turkey. Access to education, social services and employment are all rights guaranteed to refugees in Geneva Convention, however Turkey's Temporary Protection Regime does not cover all the basic rights of refugees.

Additionally, STL staff members stated that in the initial stages of the interventions, refugees were reluctant to give or share information about their situation, which sometimes hindered the understanding of their situation and therefore assess their vulnerability.

It can be said that operating under such circumstances is not the most favourable context to work in. Thus, it is important to summarize some of the key facts that STL had to operate in to set the context of the evaluation.

4.1. Operational Context

*"...Conventional humanitarianism is besieged... The international humanitarian system brought its whole toolkit to Syria – in theory at least. From 'Level 3' special procedures designed to unlock the best people and the best decision-making to sophisticated assessment, mapping, international lobbying, advocacy and fund-raising, the international humanitarian community should have been in a position to respond in the best possible way to the crisis in Syria. Some of these systems did work, but many did not – a textbook approach was never going to be appropriate to the situation, which rather demands creativity, pragmatism and some cold, calculating realism."*²

Ben Parker

¹ This report will nevertheless use the term "refugee" in order to be consistent with international literature.

² Parker B., Humanitarianism besieged, Humanitarian Exchange number: 59, Humanitarian Practice Network, November 2013

Since the onset of the conflict in March 2011, the humanitarian situation in Syria and neighbouring countries significantly worsened. Over two million people have already fled Syria, making this one of the largest refugee exoduses in recent history, and there is no indication of it ending in the near future. Out of all of Syria's neighbouring countries that are hosting refugees, Turkey is the only country that has reproached the United Nations' offer to run and manage refugee camps, choosing instead to rule internal efforts to care for Syrians seeking refuge.

In Turkey, the Syrian refugee response for camp settlement is managed by GoT through Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD), in collaboration with UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF and TRC. The influx of Syrian refugees into Turkey has far surpassed initial projections. Based on the recent survey conducted by AFAD, the total number of Syrians registered and assisted in 21 camps in 10 provinces has reached 210,627 while the total number of refugees registered outside the camps was 346,715.³ The GoT estimates that a total of 700,000 unregistered Syrian refugees are living in Turkey. The UNHCR estimates that the refugee population in Turkey could reach 1.5 million while the region could receive over 4 million by the end of 2014.⁴

It can be said that the large number of Syrian refugees has overwhelmed national structures and affected their capacity to cope with the needs of the population. Additionally, the effects of the refugees' presence on the political, economic and social stability, as well as the labour market and infrastructure remain major concerns. The GoT has allowed Syrians to access the health systems, however, the majority of the Syrians face difficulties in receiving proper treatment in Turkish hospitals due various reasons such as the medical staff's lack of awareness, high cost of medicine, language limitations, etc. There has been little development in the education sector since mid-2013 with circular, released by GoT; nonetheless, it can be said that there has been progress achieved in the education sector. Although there may be progress, but a very low percentage of children are actually receiving any kind of education. The makeshift Syrian schools that have been set-up lack capacity with overcrowded classrooms.

Although the open border policy of the GoT is appreciated by both the international community and the Syrian community, international laws have been violated⁵ several times in 2013 by GoT.

Host communities in Hatay are worried about the economic impact of the refugee crisis now engulfing the country. Competition over jobs remains one of the biggest challenges for the host community. Numerous small businesses had to stop their economic activities. Food prices increased over the last 12 months. This situation can be explained by the increase in demand without any additional supply entering the market as one of the market procurement officer stated during the cash based assistance evaluation visit. However, some members of host communities are clearly benefitting economically from the refugee influx. The arrival of aid agencies resulted in hot money flowing into the local economy and creating job opportunities. Also child

³ TRT News, 16 December 2013 (<http://www.trthaber.com/haber/dunya/suriyeli-multeci-sayisi-41-milyonu-bulabilir-112473.html>)

⁴ 2014 Syria Regional Response Plan (<http://www.unhcr.org/syriarrp6/docs/syria-rp6-strategic-overview.pdf#A>)

⁵ "...From the second half of August 2013, Turkey partially closed its border with Syria in violation of international law. By the end of the year, thousands of displaced people were living in dire conditions in camps beside the border with Turkey..." <http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/turkey/report-2013>

labor is becoming an issue as they provide even cheaper labor for the market. Agriculture-based local businesses especially benefitted from the availability of cheap labour, whilst landlords and landowners are making significant profits on rented living spaces. It can be assumed that while asset owners are benefitting from the refugee influx, the poorest members of the host communities are bearing the burden.

4.2. Needs, Vulnerabilities and Capacities

STL is currently working in the Kilis and Hatay districts in Turkey, reaching out to more than 3,500 families. The majority of the interventions were concentrated in Hatay with cash based assistance to 403 families in Altınözü, 450 families in Reyhanlı, 1,444 families in Kırıkhan, and 900 families in Narlıca while 550 families receive cash based assistance support in the Kilis district. Since the average family size is six members, it can be said that STL reaches more than 21,000 individuals with the cash based assistance and protection programmes.

Most of the refugees interviewed stated that they or their family members are in need of psychosocial support. Early marriages and child-mothers among the refugee population have been observed by the evaluation team. Since half of the refugee population is children and an estimated 4.5% of children are married, protection needs are alarming.⁶ Protection priorities include addressing the psychosocial needs of refugees; addressing child protection issues including violence against children and early marriages; raising awareness about the legal status of refugees; and strengthening the referral schemes. Due to rapid population movement, documentation of the refugee population is often destroyed or lost, and, as a consequence, registration remains one of the crucial issues needing to be addressed.

Access to education is a major concern among the refugee population. Most of the refugees have stated that their children attend primary school classes in AFAD camps. It can be said that those are only families that live close enough to camps. However, access to higher education facilities remains out of the question for university students of Syrian refugees.

It can be said that STL's beneficiaries are highly mobile, moving from one location to another because of high rental prices and utility bills or moving to other bigger cities for employment opportunities. Most of them have difficulty with the durability of housing facilities and the majority of the refugee community lives in poor quality, hazardous and overcrowded shelter facilities. Most of the Syrians interviewed were involved in daily labour work especially in agriculture and expressed that they were exploited by their employers. Recorded daily wages ranged from 6 Turkish Liras to 15 Turkish Liras for agriculture work. Inadequate and often unstable income is characteristic of an affected population, thus cash is very much needed to meet basic needs.

Most refugees visited barely have minimum basic items and NFIs. It has been observed that emerging needs remain with winterization items such as blankets, stoves, rugs and beds.

⁶ 2014 Syria Regional Response Plan (<http://www.unhcr.org/syriarrp6/docs/syria-rrp6-strategic-overview.pdf#A>)

As the number of Syrians living outside camps also increases, resources, local economies, infrastructure and facilities of host communities will continue to be stretched. Albeit the host communities already faces economic pressure with competition for jobs, job losses, depressed wages, reduced opportunities for employment and increased cost of living due to the crisis. All these factors have stimulated the tensions between the refugees and host communities.

5. Findings

This section presents the key findings of the study in the four main areas of programme achievements, programme management, organisational culture and capacity, and partnerships. While the first part of this section presents findings in the programme areas, namely in-kind distribution, cash based assistance, and protection, the second part of the section summarises highlights related to STL management issues, including organisational culture and capacity, and partnerships.

5.1. Distribution of in-kind relief items

STL has been supporting the urban and rural Syrian refugee population mainly in the Hatay province since October 2012. The main in-kind relief focus remains on food, hygiene items, and non-consumable supplies such as winterization items. The current section seeks to present the main achievements of STL's in-kind relief item distribution and winterization interventions for the 3-month period from October to December 2012.

A rapid door-to-door needs assessment with the affected population identified the immediate relief needs and enabled STL to target the affected population and to build trust among stakeholders. A summary can be found in Table 1.

Table 1 – Summary of in-kind relief distributions

Donor	Project	Summary of Activities	Targets achieved	Location	Province
DKH	Distribution of Relief Items to Syrian Refugees Outside the Camps	150 Food packages 150 Hygiene packs 150 Kitchen utensils packages 1.100 Blankets	150 Families / 1,114 Individuals	Reyhanlı, Yayladağı, Antakya	Hatay
ACF	Humanitarian assistance to the Syrian refugee population	500 Hygiene packages 2.500 Blankets 500 Carpets	500 Families / 2,701 Individuals	Kırıkhan, Yayladağı, Reyhanlı	Hatay
AAR	Support to Displaced Syrians in Turkey	300 Food packages 300 Hygiene packages 3.000 kgs. wheat flour	300 Families / 2,160 Individuals	Kırıkhan, Altınözü, Reyhanlı, Yayladağı	Hatay

Arche Nova	Distribution of Relief Items to Syrian Refugees Outside the Camps	750 Food packages 7.500 kgs. flour 750 Hygiene packs 750 Kitchen utensils packages 4.500 Blankets	750 Families	Hacıpaşa	Hatay
Malteser	Winterization Support to Urban Syrian Refugees in Turkey	1.523 winter clothes sets for children & 900 winter clothes sets for adults 403 Stove-Coal-Carpet sets	403 Families and 2,423 Individuals	Kırıkhan, Altınözü, Reyhanlı, Yayladağı	Hatay
AAR	Food & Hygiene Kit Distribution	Assistance to 6,000 individuals	6,000 individual	N/A	Hatay, Kilis, Şanlıurfa
AAR	Support to Displaced Syrians in Urfa	4.200 Blankets 700 Carpets 700 Winter clothes sets 280 Equipments for Persons with Disabilities 700 Textbook sets for Syrian School 750 Educational materials sets for Syrian School	On-going	Urfa City	Urfa

A total of 2,103 families and 12,898 individuals in six different locations in Hatay, namely Altınözü, Hacıpaşa, Yayladağı, Kırıkhan, Antakya and Reyhanlı, received a variety of relief items from five different completed projects. Affected populations were given aid packages depending on their family size. Predefined criteria for relief item beneficiary selection vary based on projects as presented in the following table.

Table 2 – Affected population selection criteria

DKH & Arche Nova funded projects	ACF funded project	AAR & Malteser funded project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial loss – loss of property and belongings back home, current source of income, savings, financial support from host family, etc. Social vulnerability – size of family, number of infants and children, number of pregnant or lactating women, disabled and elderly family members Lack of external support system – aid received from host family, local population, aid agencies or continuing links with relatives back home Psychological distress - dead or injured family members, mental problems, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family size Duration of stay in Turkey People with special needs in the family Number of children and ages of family members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of children Number of people with special needs and/or health assistance Number of pregnant or lactating women Financial status (current income, savings, financial support) Family size Number of elder persons Accommodation status Lack of external support system

The evaluation team was able to reach only a very limited number of beneficiary families that had actually received aid from STL over one year ago. One reason for this is the high mobility of recipient communities. In its in-kind assistance, priority was given to female-headed households, the elderly and disabled as mentioned in STL project reports. Relief item packages were based on community needs although there is no clear evidence on utilization of internationally accepted humanitarian aid delivery standards such as the Sphere Standards.

Either the interviewee could not recall whom they received the relief item package from or very few of the interviewees found who received the relief item packages from STL due to the high mobility of recipient communities. The ones who received the packages mentioned that STL supplied both food and non-food items during the initial days of their arrival.

Despite the limited recall of in-kind relief item packages, steadiness and persistence of STL distributions had been imprinted in stakeholders' minds. In general, all stakeholders, including recipient communities, were grateful for distributions. They have underlined that most of the items provided were much needed. One of the beneficiaries mentioned that quality of some of the food items distributed, such as chickpeas, was unverified. In order to improve the verification system, STL decided to establish cash based assistance system.

An important lesson learnt during the evaluation was that hygiene habits must be considered and the quality and quantity of products in in-kind relief packages should be monitored closely. As one STL staff member mentioned, most of the affected population were concerned about the soft soap distribution, as they either did not know how to use it or found it irrelevant. Regardless of the evidence of support to quantity of relief items, in final reports of Support to Life, some of the recipients highlighted issues with the quantity of kitchen utensils, wheat flour and oil. Compared with food and non-food items, non-consumable items were much more valued. However, due to limited income opportunities, aid recipients stated that they were in dire need of all types of support.

*"Nobody conducted neat and systematic distributions like STL."
Mukthar of Hacipaşa*

Although it was really difficult to measure the impact of STL's relief item distributions on the environment, it is vital to highlight the importance of addressing the environmental risks during relief operations. The idea of considering the environment might not seem logical in the midst of a crisis yet not considering the environment during a humanitarian crisis might risk a number of significant outcomes. Two ways to facilitate an environmentally-friendly approach to relief include promoting emergency saving measures and providing energy saving tools such as fuel-efficient stoves and cooking techniques, establishing recycling mechanisms, using disposed materials for up-cycling in community centres, using low emission vehicles, and introducing green procurement procedures.

The proportion of in-kind relief distribution cost shows that 21% of the total budget was spent to improve the living conditions of Syrian refugees living outside the camps. Out of 4.4 million Euro, 919,344 Euro has been spent on in-kind relief distribution. Five injections of funding went into the in-kind relief item distributions as summarised in the following table:

Table 3 – In-kind relief funding by donor

Donor	Project Name	Amount
Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe	Distribution of Relief Items to Syrian Refugees Outside the Camps	47,500 Euro
Action Contre le Faim	Humanitarian assistance to the Syrian refugee population in Hatay	73,900 Euro
AAR	Support to Displaced Syrians in Hatay, Turkey	43,845 Euro ⁷
Arche Nova	Distribution of Relief Items to Syrian Refugees Outside the Camps in Hatay	149,736 Euro
Malteser	Winterization Support to Urban Syrian Refugees in Hatay, Turkey	93,860 Euro
AAR	Support to Displaced Syrians in Urfa, Turkey	215,956 Euro ⁸
AAR	Food – Hygiene Kit distribution	294,547 ⁹
TOTAL		919,344 Euro

A calculation of per family expenditure shows that the cost of in-kind relief per family was approximately 195 Euro.

Table 4 - Cost calculation for in-kind relief distribution

In-kind relief distribution*	Cost
Expenditure (including support costs)	408,841 Euro
Total No. of Families	2,103
Total No. of Individuals	12,898
Expenditure per family	194.39 Euro
Expenditure per individual	31.69 Euro

* Only completed projects were calculated in the table

5.2. Cash Based Assistance

This section seeks to portray findings of the new cash based assistance approach in terms of impact, relevance, beneficiary perception of cash based assistance modality, quality of goods and coverage of the needs.

In the initial phase of the e-voucher programme (1 February - 31 August 2013), 2,675 Syrian households residing in urban and rural areas of Hatay (Kırıkhan, Reyhanlı, and Altınözü districts) and Kilis benefitted from the cash based assistance program. At the end of October 2013, the total number of beneficiaries in Kırıkhan, Reyhanlı, Altınözü, Narlıca and Kilis was 3,387. In the last week of October, a new assessment was started in Kırıkhan and Narlıca in order to reach 3,500 families, approximately 18,000 beneficiaries. Distribution of vouchers in the form of electronic cards were repeated in November. At time of the evaluation, cash based assistance had been delivered to 403 families in Altınözü; 450 families in Reyhanlı; 1,444 families in Kırıkhan; 900 families in Narlıca while 550 families received cash based assistance support in Kilis.

⁷ Amount converted from 59,581 US Dollars

⁸ Amount converted from 293,377 US Dollars

⁹ Amount converted from 400,103 US Dollars

The allocation of e-vouchers was based on vulnerability criteria with prioritization of financial loss, social vulnerability, lack of external support and psychological distress. The high number of eligible refugee cases remains as a challenge to the target. It has been observed that the beneficiary selection is time-intensive and targeting issues have been cross-checked with relevant authorities such as mukhtars. STL project team seeks to ensure the lists are truly representative of the most in need and those meeting the selection criteria. Moreover, there had been secondary movements among Syrian families from one place to another, causing gaps between the number of registered affected population and e-vouchers distributed. Thus, the field team has been doing continuous beneficiary identification and assessment throughout the project. It has been observed that well-established beneficiary identification and monitoring systems has increased the effectiveness of the program.

Working with Syrian volunteers and in coordination with the mukhtars has enabled the project team to reach vast areas in a short period of time during the identification process. The baseline/end-line survey conducted by the cash assistance department at the start and end of the first phase of the cash based assistance program indicated that the practice of skipping entire days without eating has been eradicated. Dietary diversity, guaranteeing a good nutritional balance has been improved. Shopping extracts from markets indicate that families reintroduced some important food groups in their diet such as meat, milk products and eggs. Hygiene products became accessible to all families.

All beneficiaries interviewed stated that the cash based assistance system had a genuine and crucial effect on their lives. They said that the e-vouchers have met their basic food and hygiene needs and they would not know what to do or would risk returning to Syria in the absence of cash assistance. These statements support the above findings.

100% of e-voucher beneficiaries interviewed confirmed that cash based assistance was the more preferred modality of assistance compared to food package distribution, given the fact that the e-vouchers enable them to buy what they need according to their specific needs, priorities, choice and taste. STL's post distribution monitoring (PDM) results showed that 71% of the beneficiaries were very satisfied and 28% were satisfied with the assistance provided through the voucher program.

Interview results reveal that beneficiaries had proper and sufficient information about the cash based program, including how to use it and what items are included and excluded within the program. Furthermore, according to PDM results, 98% of the beneficiaries stated that they were informed about which items they could purchase from the markets. Also, the receipt analysis done monthly by STL project team revealed that 92% of the expenses were valid and beneficiaries were using their cards in line with the program. These results indicate that information about the cash based system was properly distributed through flyers and verbal communication.

In order to inform the beneficiaries of the date, time and place for the distribution and to reload the e-vouchers, an SMS system was set-up in addition to informing the beneficiaries through mukhtars. The mukhtars were informed before the distribution process and an SMS was sent to the beneficiaries that had mobile phone numbers. Interviewed beneficiaries reported that they had no problems in getting and reloading their e-vouchers. PDM results also showed that 89% of the beneficiaries learnt the dates from SMS and 98% of them prefer the SMS method for the announcements. Additionally, the majority of the affected population was aware of the hotline service provided by STL for technical problems experienced with the e-vouchers. Those who

were not aware of the hotline stated that they reached out to STL through the muhktars when they had problems.

77% of the beneficiaries monitored were satisfied with the quality of the items they purchased from the markets and 21% of them were very satisfied. Interviewed beneficiaries also reported that they could find the items they needed in the markets and they could choose the quality according to their needs and priorities.

The amount of the money loaded monthly to the cards depended on the family size. Thirty TL per person was given for food items and 40 TL per family was given for hygiene items. 31% of the beneficiaries who participated in the PDM said that they were able to buy household needs with the cash based assistance program whereas 69% of them say they could not. 97% of the beneficiaries who stated that they were not able to buy all their household needs said an insufficient amount of money was the main reason they could not do so. Interviewed beneficiaries found the amount of money insufficient as well, particularly for the families with more than four members.

Price analysis, a component of the monitoring system, done every two weeks by STL project team in order to monitor any price increases in food and hygiene items showed no significant difference in prices before and after the voucher distribution. Except two beneficiaries interviewed, the e-voucher owners stated no price increases in the markets. Beneficiaries stated no difficulty in accessing the markets. Moreover, some of them said that they could use the free buses provided by the markets for transportation. However, an important factor was observed regarding price fluctuations: the smaller markets increased the prices in the absence of STL field teams. They also tended to sell low quality items to the beneficiaries. Since they didn't have cash registers, these practices remained untraceable. Still, no such problems were observed in the bigger markets with cash registry systems and standards in place. This situation was the main cause for delays in the invoicing process and reimbursement as well.

The evaluation team observed that the voucher programme had made a significant contribution to the local markets' income. Market owners reported a sales turnover increase between 12% to 25%. This situation may have taken business away from the smaller markets, which needs to be further assess in order to deeply understand the impact of the voucher programme on local markets. The major common complaint of the owners was the amount of commission given to the voucher service provider (min. 7%) although all of them were informed before the agreements were signed. One of the owners stated that he had marked up the prices to cover 7.5% commission. In conclusion, despite the above issues, all of the interviewed markets stated their willingness to stay in the voucher program.

According to the PDM results, 95% of the beneficiaries reported that they did not face any problems at the markets. This result was verified through the vast majority of the interviewed beneficiaries. Some of them said that the shopkeepers did not discriminate between the local community members and them. Two incidents including cashiers' negative attitudes were reported which were intervened and solved by the shop owner. Market assessments by STL teams, a main part of the monitoring system, contributed to the above results. This was done every day in order to monitor the attitude of the shop owners towards the beneficiaries, to collect data on the most consumed food and non-food items, and to gauge and resolve any problems within the system.

STL team's facilitation, particularly in the reloading period, was highly appreciated by the shop owners. They reported that STL team was always helpful and solved any kind of problems that they had with beneficiaries or technical issues.

During the interviews, voucher programme beneficiaries stated no negative attitude or behaviour from non-beneficiaries. Some stated that they shared their e-voucher with non-beneficiary relatives as much as they could, thus contributing to easing the burden on host communities or their neighbours. Similarly, interviewed shop/market owners reported no negative attitude on the part of the beneficiaries.

But the non-beneficiaries who were angry with some beneficiaries claimed that they knew some e-voucher owners who were not district residents anymore and only showed up during the reloading period and went back to Syria or who sold their e-vouchers to others. They demanded STL find these people and replace them with real beneficiaries.

Market owners also reported a negative attitude from the local customers against the beneficiaries because of the e-vouchers they received in the initial phase of the program. But they added that they no longer observed such attitudes.

A black market in terms of selling the e-vouchers was observed as a risk factor for the programme. All of the beneficiaries interviewed reported that they had never attempted to sell their e-vouchers since they needed it and did not want to lose it. However, some beneficiaries sincerely stated that they would sell their e-vouchers to make money for rent or other needs (such as furniture and clothing items) if they had to.

An important emerging misperception of non-beneficiary Syrians was observed to be the belief that STL has limitless resources and that the e-voucher is their right and STL had deprived them of their rights. This is also linked with the misconception of STL being linked to the Turkish Government. Given the context of weak civil society in the Middle East where the government is the main and only actor, such sustained assistance is linked to governments. STL needs to put extra effort in making the distinction between itself and the Turkish government. While recipient communities were appreciative of the support being provided in the time of urgent need, helping them sustain themselves during periods that they could not earn their own income, there were worries that dependency might be created amongst some of the community members.

The majority of the beneficiaries appreciated the way the local community treated them. The beneficiaries and also the non-beneficiaries stated that the local community and their Turkish neighbours were very friendly and helpful. They provided in-kind help such as carpets, stoves and furniture and showed no negative behaviour against them.

According to mukhtars, while a large portion of the local community had been helping the Syrians as much as they could, lower income community members had hostile feelings towards Syrians due to the cheap labour force they had brought into the market and also because of fear of losing government help they previously had. Cheap labour and financial aid were two major conflict reasons according to the mukhtars. On the other hand, property owners and shop owners were generally content of the situation due to increased rents in the area and more customers in shops, especially those operating within STL's voucher programme.

Collaboration with muhktars had brought significant advantages to STL in accessing needy families, reaching out to Syrian refugees in identifying project beneficiaries for the voucher programme, distribution of e-cards, and problem solving processes. Establishment of this cooperation had been the result of STL's well established, impartial, accountable approach and consistency according to the muhktars interviewed. Muhktars stated that STL had responded quickly and effectively both during the in-kind distribution and cash assistance period. As stated by muhktars, e-vouchers provided by STL were very crucial in the beneficiaries' lives, and has met the basic food and hygiene needs of the refugees living outside of the camps. They also preferred e-vouchers to in-kind distribution. All of the muhktars were quite pleased with their relationship and cooperation with STL staff and truly appreciated their efforts. Even though muhktars are able to easily access STL project staff, when needed, they requested for a more formal system to refer newcomers, as they had begun to feel overwhelmed by rush of newly arrived refugees.

Additionally, STL's voucher programme was replicated by other NGOs in Kırıkhan, which attests to the positive results and impacts of the programme. Acknowledging STL efforts in sharing information with other stakeholders, the evaluation team did not observe effective field coordination and task-sharing among NGOs due to an absence of enthusiasm from the other organisations operating in the same area.

STL has streamlined a complaint mechanism for cash based assistance recipients. Although it was not possible to assess the robustness and appropriateness of the mechanism, there are indications that STL has been actively seeking the views of communities to improve practices in programming.

The proportion of voucher assistance costs show that 53% of the total budget was spent to contribute to the improvement of living conditions of Syrians who are unable or unwilling to settle in refugee camps. Out of 4.4 million Euro, 2,314,464 Euro funded only by DKH has been allocated to the voucher assistance program. Considering the number of individual beneficiaries in the voucher assistance, approximate cost per individual calculated as 128 Euro for the 12-month period.

Table 5 - Cost calculation for cash based assistance

Cash based Assistance	Cost
Expenditure (including support cost)	2.314.464 Euro
Total No. of Families	3,500
Total No. of Individuals	Approx. 18,000
Expenditure per family	661 Euro for 12 months
Expenditure per individual	128 Euro for 12 months

In conclusion, the voucher programme has made a crucial contribution to beneficiaries' lives by providing basic food and hygiene items. Beneficiaries were highly satisfied with the assistance and did not want to lose it. Using electronic cards for shopping and being able to choose items to purchase was a highly empowering experience for beneficiaries. They felt less of a victim, regarding this as a more dignified way of receiving support. When asked about how to improve the programme, beneficiaries emphasized two main needs. They demanded more money on vouchers or requested to be able to use vouchers to buy other items such as clothes, furniture, and kitchenware. There were some male beneficiaries who demanded jobs instead of vouchers, as they were looking for long term solutions and needed to feel in charge of their lives once again.

5.3. Protection

STL initiated psychosocial and protection related interventions right after the foundational work of in-kind relief item distribution. According to STL's field assessment, many refugees, especially children and youth, were suffering from distress. Almost none of the refugees assessed were aware of the legal framework in Turkey and which authorities to approach for legal issues. Additionally, mental and rehabilitative support was identified as one of the emerging needs. Within the protection sector, STL established two community centres, one in Altınözü in partnership with DRC and another one in Kırıkhan in partnership with YUVA Association, a Turkish NGO.

STL, DRC and YUVA Association endeavoured to focus on the establishment of a protective space providing services to help Syrian refugees regain their psychological and social well-being with protection and education integrated interventions in early 2013.

The main component of the protection intervention focused on the establishment of two community centres, both in Hatay, to provide refugees adequate information and counselling for legal issues, as well as developing social networks as a coping mechanism, which meant promoting wellness and safeguarding a protection environment.

Main activities proposed for the Altinozu community centre were clustered around the four pillars of legal support, psychosocial support, referrals, and awareness raising, built on increased capacity of local human resources including Syrian refugees themselves. Based on field realities, STL was not able to launch the legal support component, rather launched life skills and intercultural activities building on demand coming from Syrian and local communities. Interventions in Kırıkhan Community Centre were also based on the capacity of the community, which resulted in the planning and implementation of adult education activities, child well-being programmes and psychosocial support actions such as a life skills programme. All interventions go hand-in-hand with staff trainings, which reinforce the skills of relevant staff to be employed in the centres. The following table presents the Altınözü community centre activities.

Table 6 - Summary of Altınözü Community Center Activities

Output 1	
5,000 refugees and host community members benefited from community center services in Hatay by direct services as well as refugee household profiled, their needs assessed, and referred to other agencies based on needs and availability of services (30% duplication rate is taken into account, providing 5,000 beneficiaries as net).	
Target	Actual by Dec 2013
(1) At least 200 HH (20% of all beneficiaries) opening files in community centre	328 HH
(2) 1,500 beneficiaries benefited from psychosocial activities (approximately 8 activities/week)	1,438 Syrian 717 Turkish 2,155 beneficiaries in total
(3) 1,500 beneficiaries benefited from awareness raising activities (approximately 8 interventions/week)	365 beneficiaries
(4) 500 beneficiaries benefited from intercultural activities (approximately 2 interventions/week)	916 (including events)

(5) 500 beneficiaries benefited from life skills training	675
(6) 500 beneficiaries benefited from informative referral services (regular family visits and CC meetings)	236 HHs referred to hygiene support, 22 to nutrition programme, 258 HH in total
(7) 500 beneficiaries participate into outdoor events/meetings (approximately 10 events throughout the project)	903
(8) 10 Community Committee (CC) meetings are held for participatory activity design of the community centre	12 meetings held in total
Output 2	
Capacity building and community service support is provided to 50 community members among refugees and host community for sustainability.	
Target	Actual by Dec 2013
(1) 15 volunteers in the CC are mobilized for community support.	27
(2) 15 community members from education centers are supported with ToT for educators for sustainable community support action.	3 ToTs implemented in 2 Turkish 1 Syrian school. Amounting up to 37 educators, 22 Turkish, 15 Syrian educators

Even though adult men have been excluded from community centre activities, services provided in both Altinozu and Kirikhan have been designed more with the needs of children and women in mind.

Due to limitation of women's mobility outside of the home, community centres of STL provided a safe, relaxed and comfortable space. Provision of routine and recreational services for children contributed to the well-being of children.

*"...now we are out of our prisons..."
A Syrian female refugee*

According to statements of focus group participants, providing opportunities for children and women groups to interact socially with their peers and for adults to develop their education and skills were critical. It can be said that psychosocial support activities in a safe environment provided a sense of normalcy; enhanced the abilities to cope with the situation and contributed to fostering long-term emotional and social well-being.

During household visits, caregivers stated that they were not always able to provide attention to their children's needs. The main source of stress for caregivers was limited access to basic needs such as food, health care, water, electricity, livelihood opportunities. Participants of the evaluation indicated that children were much more prone to screaming, disruption in sleep patterns, sadness, and reluctance to go to school prior to attending community centre programmes. A number of community centre beneficiaries claimed symptoms of distress to have decreased as a result of active participation in STL's psychosocial programme. Language courses were particularly valued and found useful by affected communities.

Most of the focus group participants who have been interviewed in community centres stated that the recruitment and use of children by armed forces is prevailing amongst teenage boys. Similarly, there was statement of an increase in children working outside of the household. Many children working outside of the home are believed to be doing so to contribute to family income. Altinozu team was found to hold regular meetings with shop owners for working children to attend activities at the community centre at least once a week.

The open door policy of the Community Centres is much appreciated by both the affected population and host community.

The breakdown of protection intervention costs shows that 26% of the total budget was spent on providing protection to the most vulnerable at-risk Syrians living outside the camps. Out of 4.4 million Euro, 1,113,425 Euro has been allocated to protection interventions. Five injections of funding went into the protection sector in 2013 summarised in following table:

Table 7 – Table of funding for protection programmes

Donor	Project Name	Amount (in Euro)
DKH, BMZ, YUVA – DVV	Kırıkhan-Hatay Community Center	357,858
DDG, DRC	Humanitarian Risk Education	35,647
DRC, ECHO, DDG, ECHO & DANIDA	Altınözü Hatay Community Center	469,920
ACF	Mother and Nutrition Program	250,000
TOTAL		1,113,425

5.4. Programme Management

With great responsiveness to the situation and needs of the Syrian refugee population outside the camps, STL was able to bridge the needs strategically, starting with emergency response/in-kind relief item distribution and shifting to a much more efficient and effective cash assistance program using a detailed beneficiary identification system and including complementary protection interventions through community centers. However, for the next phase of the program, a need for a structural and strategic framework for programme development. One example would be developing a long term, specific strategy for community centers based on regional beneficiary needs with contextual updates and academic assistance for the measurement of psychological and social impacts.

The well-structured monitoring system developed for the voucher program including the method of distribution, beneficiary satisfaction, quality of items, household needs, attitude of shopkeepers, market assessments, price analysis and receipt analysis has been highly effective. High beneficiary satisfaction levels in post-distribution monitoring results increased the motivation of the voucher team as stated by the staff. Additionally, it indicated evidence for the appropriateness of the distribution method and validity of beneficiary expenses. Market assessments enabled the team to monitor the attitude of the shop owners towards the beneficiaries, to collect data

on the most consumed food and non-food items, and to gauge and resolve any problems within the system. Monthly receipt analysis provided data on the validity of food and hygiene expenses of the beneficiaries. Price analysis allowed the team to monitor the monthly and regional price fluctuations in food and hygiene items. Monitoring results provided relevant data for the impact evaluation as well.

Horizontally functioning support mechanisms were observed in STL programme management. Project managers provided a supporting environment for their staff. Together with this supportive management and sincere nature of communication within the team, keeping up the team spirit made it possible to overcome programmatic and technical challenges. However, insufficient time due to time constraints and a heavy workload hampered getting to the roots of problems. A need for structured support and vertical feedback, including identification of capacity building trainings was reported by the staff.

A desire for programme development independent of time pressure from donors was also reported by STL team in the field. Programme staff demanded an environment in which new project ideas are elaborately discussed and created including all team members in project planning in order to maintain efficiency. Such approach needs to be improved in terms of genuine participation within the organisation.

In conclusion, it was observed that a 'learning by doing' approach was encouraged and successfully managed by STL management through high responsiveness and the attitude to innovate. The horizontally functioning support mechanism in programme management, however, needs to be improved through structured mechanisms of internal communication, support and feedback systems and inclusive project planning processes.

5.5. Organisational Culture and Capacity

The STL project team quickly deployed to the intervention area and the immediate relief item distribution commenced in a short period of time. Policies and procedures were adapted according to STL internal and donor regulations. STL's refugee crisis intervention started small, but grew quickly. STL institutionally developed and improved enormously.

Most of the operational staff members stated that the operations manager and finance coordinator of STL are trustworthy and substantially supportive in their work.

STL team members criticised the lack of a genuine orientation culture for newcomers within STL. Given the rapid expansion of STL's refugee program, getting to know each other took long periods of time for staff members who work together.

Some of the staff members stated that STL's impartial and neutral stance towards the conflict was a reason for organisational loyalty and convinced them to stay with STL in the long run.

One of the most important lessons learnt is the need to find ways of enabling office staff, especially finance staff, to meet with the affected population and to visit field activities in order to boost their motivation and give sense of ownership. Additionally, there is a need to allocate budget for team-building activities followed by sound human resource policies.

Some STL staff members highlighted the need for improvement of financial procedures to challenge donors in future projects, while some mentioned the need to improve complaint/grievance mechanism in order to better comply with accountability standards, which needs to be taken seriously into account.

Considering the ethnic and religious diversity within STL team and the sensitivity of the context in which programmes are run, more care needs to be placed on anti-discriminatory procedures in human resource management practices, especially for Alevi staff members.

5.6. Communications and Visibility

Initially, STL maintained low visibility in the area of intervention, as the government was still apprehensive in allowing NGOs to work with the non-camp Syrian refugees. After one year of work in the region and the establishment of relations with local authorities and other relevant agencies, STL had started feeling more comfortable with visibility of its activities in the area of work. However, since the deportations of expat NGO staff, stop-work orders given to several INGOs and the official registration application of some INGOs being rejected, STL management maintains its low visibility in terms of its work with non-camp populations.

In the initial phase of the project, STL had worn t-shirts bearing the names of STL, AAR, DKH and AA during the e-voucher distributions. All three names were also visible on brochures introducing the project. However, as the situation and the Turkish Government's reaction to support for the non-camp population remains unpredictable, STL continues to exercise caution.

STL has been perceived as a highly respected and effective organisation by the beneficiaries, muhktars, and market owners. Positive image and high acceptance was observed in the region. The local community has been supporting STL's work as well. Other NGOs willing to give assistance to the Syrian refugees sought guidance from STL on the voucher program since it has been seen as a highly effective set-up.

At the same time there seemed to be a misperception by non-beneficiary Syrians that STL has limitless resources, is a job creation agency, that the vouchers were their right; linked with the misconception of STL being associated with the Turkish Government.

A need for systematic communication and coordination between projects was observed. Therefore, a communication strategy including external communication, networking and lobbying, particularly with relevant government agencies and authorities was observed as one of the primary needs of STL. Similarly, internal communication has basically depended on the nature of personal relationships.

5.7. Partnerships

Looking at the different partnerships established within the Syrian Refugee Assistance programme, STL's strategic partnership with DKH has proven its benefit to both sides. While STL started its pilot project with DKH support, through this strategic partnership DKH has been able to expand and maintain a large scale voucher assistance programme for non-camp Syrian refugees in Southern Turkey.

STL had established its partnership with AAR Japan after the Van earthquake. DRC and STL started to work together from the beginning of 2013 in jointly meeting the protection needs of the Syrian refugee population. Both partnership models were based on co-implementation. When AAR was working in Turkey after the Van earthquake, the Syrian refugee crisis arose in southern Turkey. AAR was considering different options for intervention in terms of neighbouring countries. Given the ongoing operation with STL in Turkey, AAR Japan chose Turkey. Both AAR and DRC are implementing NGOs as per their own statements. Wherever they go they hire local staff and implement their own projects. Since registration in Turkey as a foreign NGO is challenging due to the bureaucratic process, AAR and DRC decided to partner with STL. It can be said that Turkey is an exception in terms of AAR's overall operations.

According to AAR and DRC staff members, having a partnership with STL has had both advantages and disadvantages. Implementing through local partners lessens burdens related to legal status, hiring employees and issues related with social security. STL's knowledge on Turkish laws and local regulations enabled AAR and DRC to focus on more strategic issues, which made programme management easier in many ways. It would not be wrong to state that their partnership with STL speeded up both agency's interventions in Turkey. When the partnership began, STL had a smaller structure to get things done, which made the whole implementing process uncomplicated due to the quick discussions and fast decision making mechanisms.

Its partnership with ACF resulted in technical expertise being brought into STL's nutrition and infant feeding programme. The collaboration with ACF was different from the partnership modalities established with DKH, DRC or AAR. STL management and field teams voiced content and ease regarding the way this partnership was set up and managed.

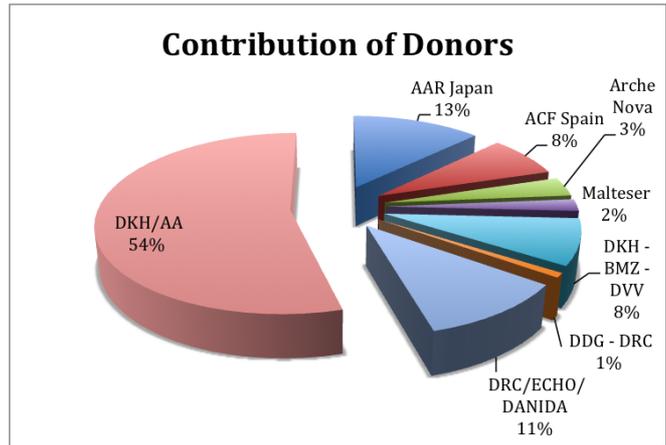
Overall, establishment of a variety of modes of partnerships caused a few challenges, especially when the partner organisation also acted as co-implementer. For the future, STL needs to define its partnership modality so that it will not need to change its internal policies with each new partner. Points of partnership need to be clarified and agreed upon before the start of projects.

6. Evaluation

This section of the report presents the cross-sectional review of the overall efficiency, effectiveness, impact, relevance and appropriateness and finally sustainability of the interventions undertaken by STL in response to Syrian refugee crisis in 2012 and 2013 in Turkey.

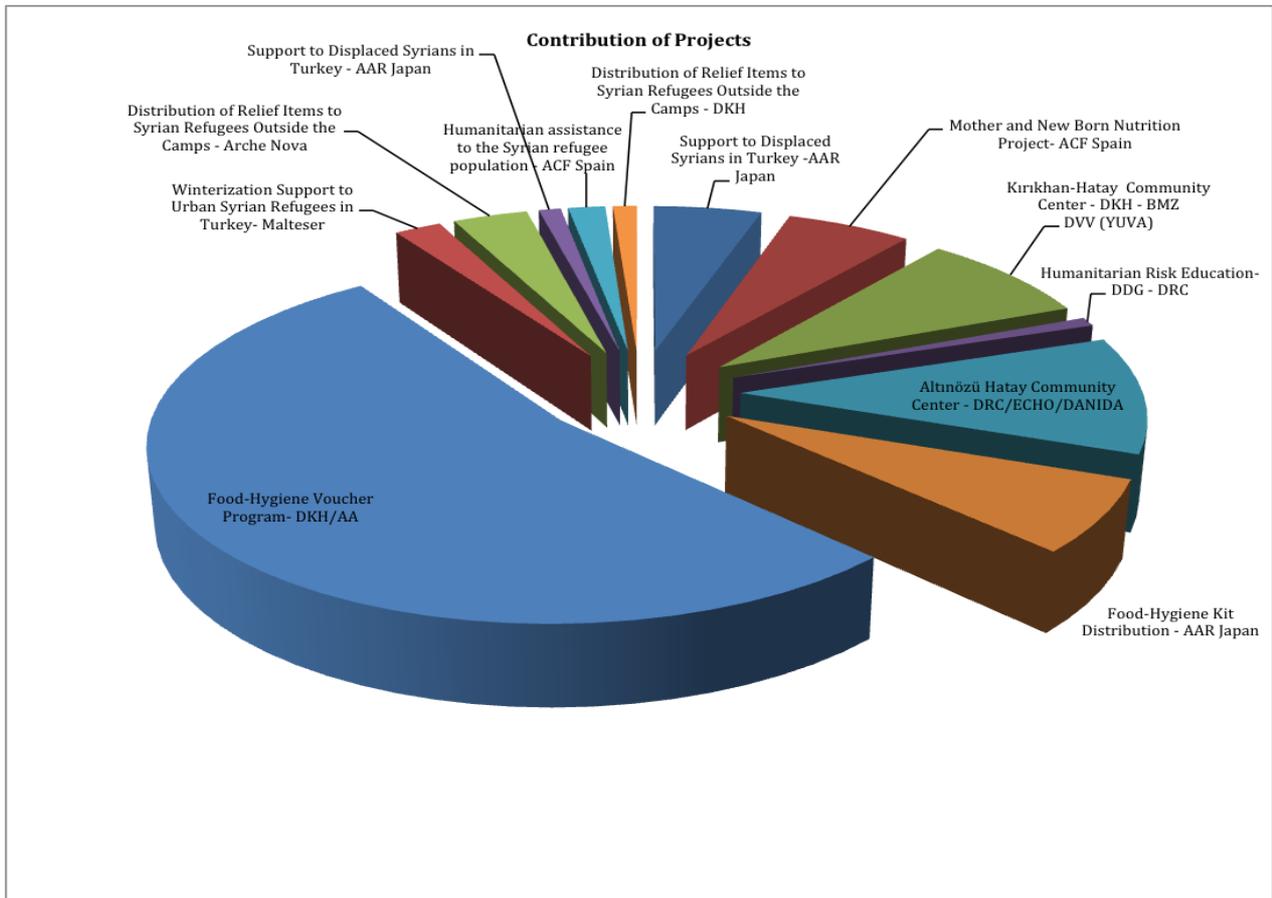
6.1. Efficiency

The most important findings in terms of efficiency were adaptability to changing environment and building on strengths contributed to coherence of the interventions. However, programme implementation had serious difficulties in terms of timeliness due to financial issues. One of the most important indicators of efficiency is the budget. This section looks at an overall budgetary analysis.



Given its strategic partnership relation, STL relies on DKH funding in emergencies. This was the case linked to the Syrian refugee crisis, in which a pilot project was implemented with DKH funds, after which STL raised funds from a number of other donors, some of them first-time partners. With funding from backdonor AA, DKH became the single largest donor partner to STL. As per contribution to projects shown in the chart below, 54% of the total budget for the overall programme came from DKH funding. The second tranche of funding came from AAR Japan for in-kind relief distribution.

The response of STL to the Syrian refugee crisis from October 2012 to December 2013 was comprised of twelve (12) projects, with the total budget available being 4,347,202 Euro.



Another important factor contributing to the efficiency of the program is the geographic focus of the interventions. Interventions were focused in selected areas in Hatay, with a few programmes in Kilis. Though the target area was large, the intervention areas were in close proximity to one another, thus reducing personnel and transportation costs and, most importantly, saving time. Looking at it from this point of view, one of the STL staff members stated that having a voucher program in Kilis was a strategic challenge due to the absence of a base office in the intervention area. Another aspect of efficiency was found to be the complementarity of programmes, namely the voucher assistance and community based psychosocial support targeting the same affected population.

6.2. Effectiveness

It can be said that as a result of interventions STL has been able to improve the living conditions of Syrian refugees living outside the camps. Looking at the time frame of interventions, STL's Syrian refugee programme is effective on several counts. The effectiveness of both cash assistance and community centre activities were evident. Although the scattered nature and potential invisibility of the urban refugee population makes the interventions considerably more complex, it can be said that STL's voucher assistance and protection programmes were all very well linked and achieved most of the targeted objectives. Hence, complementary interventions contributed to better and effective results.

An important strategic decision to change the modality of the operation from in-kind distribution to cash based assistance was found to be very successful. However, identifying beneficiaries might require more strict structures and criteria in order to ensure that limited resources are channelled only to the most vulnerable.

Some of the objectives of community centre activities have not been met in terms of effectiveness, such as legal assistance and intercultural learning. There is a debate on the merits of enabling both host and refugee communities to interact with one another. It can be argued that the programmes, which aim attitudinal and behavioural change such as "facilitating peaceful coexistence in local community" requires longer commitment and effort. It can be said that STL laid the foundation for long-term interventions and eventual integration. Due to emerged psychosocial isolation of Syrian community members, STL scaled up protection with a variety of psychological and social activities. However, it took time for STL to build up the psychosocial expertise at the institutional and community level.

STL as organisation has been striving to maintain neutrality and impartiality and has shown great care to not be affiliated with any party or side, which requires appreciation given the challenging context. This has enabled STL to reach out to the ethnically and religiously diverse groups within the Syrian refugee population.

6.3. Relevance and Appropriateness

The decision to start a voucher program instead of distributing in-kind food and non-food items increased the relevance and appropriateness of STL's response. All voucher beneficiaries interviewed confirmed that the electronic card was the most preferred modality of assistance compared to food package distribution since voucher enables them to buy what they need according to their own needs, priorities, choice and taste. The assistance is thus customised.

STL has made all efforts to assess needs on an on-going basis and to respond to them as they arise. A well-established monitoring system for the voucher program has increased the appropriateness of the program; that is, it enabled to find out evidence for appropriateness of distribution method and validity of beneficiary expenses, monitor the attitude of the shop owners towards the beneficiaries, collect data on the most consumed food and non-food items, and gauge and resolve any problems within the system, and monitor the monthly and regional price fluctuations in food and hygiene items.

Similarly, STL held community meetings where beneficiaries were encouraged to present their needs and participate in the programme development of the community centers. However, enabling volunteers and recruits from the affected population to play an active role in decision-making processes should be done in more genuine ways by establishing clear guidelines and practices to engage them appropriately. More structure and planning needs to go into mobilisation of the target groups. Even though STL seems to have the in-house technical expertise and experience to do so, rapid expansion of the team and programme have resulted in diluted focus on community mobilisation and participation in the planning and implementation of community centre activities.

STL has been working with local bilingual staff members both for the voucher program and community centres, which can be considered as one of the main strengths of the organisation in terms of local knowledge and experience. Likewise, collaborating with muhktars brought significant advantages in beneficiary identification, voucher distribution and problem solving processes.

Initially, both the refugee community and public authorities were sceptical about STL's activities on the ground, however, within a short period of time, STL gained enormous acceptance in the field.

Looking at STL's interventions, the evaluation team has observed STL to have struck a balance between being strict and unrestricted, what works and is 'good enough'. Programmes, cash assistance and protection services have adapted innovative practices, not by staying rigid. For instance, STL community centre staff was attentive enough to adjust their programmes based on cultural and gender sensitivities.

6.4. Impact

The voucher assistance has been observed to have a genuine and crucial contribution to beneficiaries' lives. It is seen to have increased food diversity and the impact was felt beyond the immediate objectives of the programme. Despite STL's previous assessments of families skipping entire meals throughout the day, the evaluation team did not come across any beneficiary families reporting to skip meals. On the contrary, families were able to reintroduce some important food groups into their diet such as meat, milk products and eggs. Hygiene products became accessible to all families. In addition, according to the beneficiaries, the absence of cash assistance would cause huge problems and possibly result in them returning to Syria. The voucher program has been the one consistent support beneficiary families have been relying on.

While consistency and well-organized distributions have resulted in building trust for STL in the region, the risk of dependency on assistance and STL being perceived as a source for cash should be taken into consideration for the long term.

The voucher programme helped the affected population invest their finances in covering some other basic needs and eased the burden on the host community, while building STL's network in the operation areas and facilitating the collection of further information on the priority needs of the unregistered Syrian refugee population.

The voucher programme has also made a significant contribution to the local markets' income. Market owners reported a sales turnover increase as high as 25%.

It needs to be considered that achieving a high level impact can be obstructed by external factors – specific factors such as local markets, public services, etc. It is also important to monitor and compare the fluctuations of impact at seasonal base, especially considering agricultural work, in order to understand the livelihood patterns of refugees.

The most important impact of community centres is creating a safe environment for women and children. In other words, particularly women and children had the opportunity to break the isolation they experienced and socialise again. Equally important, community centres provided practical assistance and psychological first aid sessions for the beneficiaries. Psychosocial support activities in a safe environment provided a sense of normalcy, enhanced the abilities to cope with the situation and contributed to fostering long-term emotional and social well-being. In particular, Turkish, English and Arabic language courses were much valued and found useful by affected communities.

Children interviewed were highly satisfied with activities including awareness raising and first aid workshops, recreational activities, and language and computer software courses. In addition, a small but important impact on intercultural dialogue was observed.

Men tended to have less interest in community centre activities since their main priority was finding a job. The men were found to experience community pressure and have been stigmatised for not fighting. However, for those men attending language courses, it has enabled them to better communicate and feel optimistic about employment opportunities. They were also quite satisfied with the positive effect that community centres created on their children and wives.

The STL intervention also empowered its own staff members with a sense of fulfilment of their jobs and creation of self/career-development opportunities.

6.5. Sustainability

Sustainability of the interventions implemented by STL varies from one intervention to another. Projects that were coupled with psychosocial support activities point towards higher sustainability. Vocational training programmes have resulted in capacity building and skills development. These trainings are greatly appreciated by the target communities.

Depending on how long STL is able to finance these activities, it is important to link these capacity building initiatives to relevant departments that can continue to

provide institutional support. Hence, working towards the identification and implementation of durable solutions is very critical. The community development approach and further enhanced self-reliance should be proceeded towards in the next steps. The use of committees to represent all groups within the community might enable everyone to have a voice and act as an effective and sustainable targeting mechanism leading to self-resilience.

7. Recommendations

Though recommendations are sprinkled into the entire report, this section summarizes and lays down some of the overarching suggestions made by the evaluators.

7.1. A long view

Any deliberations over future interventions require a long-term strategic approach. The Syrian crisis demands a ten-year view at least. This requires STL to think about where it can be most appropriate to build relationships and capacity and what will make for an effective and pertinent humanitarian player for communities who will continue to suffer the effects of this conflict for over a decade.¹⁰ Based on the given context, self-reliance and life-skills activities are needed for adults and youth to ensure dignified living conditions and reduce negative coping mechanisms in continuous protection assistance framework.

7.2. Areas for advocacy

“Creating economic opportunities for refugees in urban areas is a challenging and complex undertaking. Advocating for and influencing host government policy for recognition of refugee rights in policy and practice is a requisite first step; identifying market opportunities and constraints and refugees’ economic coping strategies in response to those opportunities and constraints is the vital subsequent step.”¹¹

Dale Buscher

Due to high pressure on host community, which threatens the positive protection environment, it is therefore essential to continue to advocate for equitable support with respect to host communities to ensure continued community-based protection¹². Otherwise it would be complicated to work in the area without considering the host population. Although it has been seen as solely a refugee crisis, due to the prolonged

¹⁰ Parker B., Humanitarianism besieged, Humanitarian Exchange number: 59, Humanitarian Practice Network, November 2013

¹¹ Buscher, D., New Approaches to Urban Refugee Livelihoods, Refuge Volume 28, (2011)

¹² More detailed guidelines can be found in following link: Actionaid – Safety with Dignity http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/protection_manual.pdf

nature of the conflict it should be contemplated as a course of development. Hence, development agencies need to be in the area for long-term programmes.

Discussing gender-based violence in a one-on-one survey with Syrians can be extremely challenging, particularly if STL does not provide related services. In case of working in the protection sector, especially GBV issues, STL needs to provide comprehensive training to assessment, field and service delivery staff, those with existing relationships with beneficiaries.

Although there isn't any coordination mechanism established at the national level in terms of responding to the Syrian refugee crisis, STL can encourage efficient coordination and data sharing through national or regional forums and local mechanisms. It can be said that time is approaching for a local coordination mechanism, at least in an informal way if not in form of a project as more and more INGOs start to function inside Turkey as security situation deteriorates in Syria, local coordination surely will enhance referral and training opportunities. National or local mechanisms can be established and maintained by public authorities.

7.3. Working in complex urban context

Urban areas will absorb all the population growth expected over the next four decades, while at the same time drawing in some of the rural population. Between 2010 and 2050, the urban population will increase from 100% to 200% in the world. By 2050, half of people in LDCs will be living in urban areas.¹³ Since the context of humanitarian aid is shifting from rural areas to urban areas, STL should integrate state-of-the-art strategies, frameworks, assessment tools and operational modalities for the current Syrian refugee response as well as forthcoming relief and recovery interventions. It needs to be considered that usually poor and vulnerable individuals are less visible in the urban context, which requires more attention and effort to reach them. STL has already done so with its voucher programme, it can also look into upgraded data management systems resulting in further digitalising its assessment, beneficiary and distribution database.

In contrast with Altınözü, which could be considered a rural settlement, the whole urban population cannot be covered in more urbanized areas such as Kırıkhan. Blanket coverage shouldn't be an approach to assist the affected population. As a result, stricter criteria can be utilized from the launch of such programmes. Otherwise during project implementation additional prioritisation would be needed. Prioritisation and announcement of criteria needs to be established from the start of the interventions and needs to be conducted carefully and transparently to avoid miscommunication and accountability. In terms of identification of affected population, urban assessment for cash assistance should focus on livelihoods, household expenses for public services and assets, and needs to be conducted in a more participatory manner.

7.4. Program development

Project management tools such as logical frameworks need to be utilized as guides for impact measurement with regular updating, ownership and understanding of their purpose. A checklist of indicators can be developed and shared with cash based

¹³ http://esa.un.org/wpp/Documentation/pdf/WPP2012_HIGHLIGHTS.pdf

assistance staff and protection team in order to be sure about what type of change STL would like to achieve.

In relation to community center activities, continuity of beneficiaries to community centre is one of the most crucial indicators in terms of success, so target numbers should be achievable in order to ensure smooth project implementation.

7.5. Monitoring and Evaluation

Additional staff would be needed to conduct sufficient levels of verification and monitoring visits to households in cash assistance programmes.

Although field based managers have little experience in planning and managing especially evaluation of humanitarian action, commissioning of evaluations needs to be continued and should be shifted from headquarters to field-based staff as humanitarian aid decentralizes.

7.6. Participatory approach

Community participation in programmes should be enhanced. Participatory approaches, involving refugees from all population groups (women, men, boys and girls, older persons and host community) in programme planning, assessment, implementation and even in monitoring, should be ensured.

Relevant training and promotion system must be ensured by STL HQ for participatory process to be established. Syrians as culture and as “guests” in Turkey are not pro participation in planning, criticism in programmes whereas in a local context this would have been in place much earlier and swifter.

7.7. Mainstreaming protection¹⁴

STL should continue to provide protection assistance to Syrian refugees and wherever possible should build on and strengthen existing protection systems and train staff to detect and support psychosocial distress. Nevertheless, the long-term sustainability of interventions depends upon STL working to strengthen communities, institutional links, With relevant local and international actors that have diverse networks and fields of expertise in various sectors of interest..

¹⁴ **Definition of Protection:** All activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law. Human Rights, Humanitarian Law and Refugee Law” (IASC)

Definition of Mainstreaming Protection: “activities.. and humanitarian response is carried out with a ‘protection lens’.. includes requirement that all humanitarian action both avoids creating or exacerbating threats to civilians, and contributes to actively reduce existing threats” (IASC) “..Fundamental human rights principles, including non-discrimination, meaningful access, safety and dignity are recognized and realized in program design & implementation..”

Suggestions for community centre activities can be intensive language trainings including advanced Turkish lessons, promotion of school enrolment, vocational trainings, lifeskills modules such as self resilience, community solidarity and mobilisation and extra-curricular activities.

Further activities might consider gender balance, where there have been women-specific interventions also specific trainings and income generation activities for men.

7.8. Communication

The communication component can be divided into three folds: the beneficiaries, public authorities, and internal communication.

Development of a relationship framework is identified as an area of growth. In order to avoid frustrations, all programmes should inform beneficiaries about the objectives of the projects clearly. Additionally each program needs to be informed of the scope of the service, limitations of the service and relationship framework between CC staff and beneficiaries and needs to inform beneficiaries about the CC programmes. If this approach is not applied from the beginning, each different programmes needs to identify the time frame for relationship framework.

By building active relationships, relevant government agencies can reduce the sense of 'us' and 'them'. In order to build a foundation of trust that is valuable, an invitation to participate and genuine listening are crucial. It is important to overcome tendencies to avoid or engage with government-only needs basis; instead, plan from start, strategies to engage, including work with existing state institutions. Communication with government bodies requires the development of strategies at multiple levels of government such as municipal, state, and national, which needs to be consistent with each other.

Each programme should be aware of other programmes on the ground and plan in order to transfer consistent messages. As per mentioned by STL staff members, developing sound internal communication processes and evaluating these processes on a regular basis is critical for efficient project implementation and for solid management. Tools and tactics for internal communication can include regular all-staff meetings, individual meetings, recognition programmes, social events, internal newsletter, resource library, notice board, mailing list, social media tools, team building activities, etc. A lack of systematic communication and coordination between projects has been identified. For better coordination, in order to prevent complications and provision of updated beneficiary data, a joint list of voucher and community center beneficiaries (central data management) can be utilized after careful assessment and clear identification of project needs, with a team of minimum three members.

7.9. Human Resources

The need for technical support to increase the quality of programming has been observed, along with the need for clarification of job descriptions and roles of staff as well as line management and communication lines. Moreover, an increase in human resources both at HQ and field level is recommended in order to prevent burn-out in staff.

Building up the psychosocial skills of STL project staff is crucial in order to enable them to cope with beneficiaries' emotional pressure, anger and blame. Additionally, psychological support needs to be made available for individual members in order to maintain duty of care. Furthermore stress management monitoring and support systems can be established, such as a peer support staff network. A full time psychologist for the teams, rather than visiting psychologists can be a considerable and effective option.

In most of cases, proper capacity building for the staff requires a minimum of two months, which needs to be planned ahead. Given the fact that training opportunities for relief workers are limited in Turkey, STL should develop its own personnel training and capacity building opportunities, including trainings in technical areas such as food security and cash based assistance. Overall, the level of capacity especially in nutrition and protection programmes needs to be raised through better investment in skills development and capacity building.

Hiring volunteers from the refugee community is a sensitive issue, which needs to be carefully handled in order to avoid dissensions. Volunteers should be selected based on their skills, qualification, and background.

7.10. Humanitarian safety and security

For many of STL beneficiaries, cash assistance is critical to the survival of families as refugees in Turkey. In relation with humanitarian security, changing previously set criteria for cash assistance in areas already covered by STL can be a risk for field staff and needs to be carefully and consistently handled.

7.11. Further needs

Income generation activities need to be initiated to complement STL's relief interventions and to enable refugee communities to regain their self-dignity and sense of hope. Government certified vocational trainings would add further value to trainings, and might increase employment opportunities for trainees. The provision of specific assistance for families to favour school attendance can be fully justified due to the lack of financial resources of refugee families.

7.12. Coordination

As stated by core staff members, STL as an institution needs to devote more time and effort to working with stakeholders and sharing project activities, results and impacts.

Annexes

Annex A: Terms of Reference of Impact Evaluation Report

Terms of Reference

Impact Evaluation of Support to Life's (STL) Syrian Refugee Relief Program, 2012-2013

1. Background

Violent conflict between the Assad regime and the armed opposition groups is now into its third year. 2.1 million refugees fleeing Syria have sought protection in neighbouring countries. According to UNHCR, 80% of the refugees are living outside camps in urban settings amongst host communities across the region. With an average of almost 5,000 Syrians fleeing into neighbouring countries everyday, the need to significantly increase humanitarian aid and development support to host communities has reached a critical stage.

STL continues to distribute food and non-food items since October 2012 to Syrian refugees who are staying outside of the camps in Hatay, Kilis, Şanlıurfa provinces, having reached out to over 4,000 beneficiary families. In addition to relief item distribution, Syrian refugees have been provided with cash assistance through an electronic card system. By use of this card system, beneficiaries can visit identified markets and obtain food and non-food items by themselves.

Extending its program beyond relief, STL has been supporting Syrians and host families in the community centres in Altınözü and Kirikhan since January 2013. The main aim of STL's psycho-social program in the community centres is reducing the effects of war and creating a safe place to socialize and heal for both Syrians and host community in and around the vicinity of the centers.

A total of 8 projects are completed while 6 projects are ongoing in Hatay, Kilis and Şanlıurfa. Approximately 4 million Euro funding from 6 different donors has been secured for 14 projects.

2. Objectives of the Evaluation

This evaluation aims at assessing the achievements, quality and overall impact of STL's humanitarian response of Syrian refugees in Turkey.

More specifically, the aim is to identify lessons learned and develop recommendations that will assist STL Hatay team to build capacities into future programming in order to help communities better cope with risk and to enable a more timely and appropriate response to the continuing humanitarian crisis.

3. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation will use OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, namely Relevance, Appropriateness, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact, and Sustainability, to have an overview of STL's response to the Syrian refugee influx in Turkey. Specific questions in relation with the set criteria include:

Efficiency

- What was the cost-efficiency of the chosen transfer modality?
- How efficient were the delivery mechanisms (shops, outlets, etc.)?
- How did the selected transfer modality affect the timeliness of the intervention?

- Was targeting affected by the transfer modality used?
- Did the transfer modality affect women's access to resources?

Effectiveness

The transfer modality is a means and not an end, and therefore it should not affect the project objectives. However, different transfer modalities may have different unintended effects.

- Did the choice of transfer modality affect:
 - Participant numbers and/or the level of support per participant?
 - Local markets and production?
 - Non-beneficiaries in terms of inflation and price increases?
 - Women and children's access to food and resources?
- Did the chosen transfer modality induce a significant and lasting change (positive or negative), which would not have happened, had another transfer modality been selected?

Relevance and Appropriateness

- Were the assessments undertaken appropriate for the identification of real needs?
- Was sufficient attention given to the identification of clear objectives and activities?
- Was the assistance appropriate in relation to the customs and practices of the affected population?
- Was the transfer modality the most appropriate to meet beneficiary needs?
- Was the transfer modality the most relevant to the context (host community interaction, market conditions, availability of food, supply chain, risks, gender consideration, seasonal factors, etc.)?

Impact

- Were beneficiaries satisfied with the assistance provided?
- Was quality good?
- Were cross cutting issues (gender, age and environmental issues) taken into consideration adequately in all relevant areas of the response?

Sustainability

- What efforts were made to build on local capacities?
- Were feedback and communication systems in place for the beneficiaries?
- What were relations with external actors?
- How will recurrent costs and future expenditures be covered after the end of STL operation; what is the effect on other economic activities?

The evaluation will also review the performance of STL's program and resource management, as guided by the questions below:

- How did STL's capacity of staffing affect the quality of the response?
- How effective and appropriate were these processes in ensuring relevant and timely project delivery in support of Syrian refugees?

Specifically, the proposed evaluation will address the following considerations:

- Sphere Minimum Standards, (where applicable)
- Red Cross/NGO Code of Conduct,
- Humanitarian Law and relevant Geneva Conventions and Protocols
- Cross cutting issues including gender, conflict management, environment, participation of primary stakeholders (approaches used during project cycle),
- Coordination with other stakeholders

4. Evaluation Methodology

The proposed evaluation will use a learning-oriented approach in order to establish a more coherent framework to guide STL's response. The methodology of the evaluation will include a combination of desk review of all relevant documentation of STL's Syrian Refugee Relief Program, along with field travel, key informant interviews and focus group discussions both with beneficiary communities, STL staff in Hatay and Kilis, and key external stakeholders such as other international NGOs, and UN agencies if appropriate government representatives and other local authorities.

The evaluation team will use appreciative inquiry, gender-sensitive and participatory approaches to seek the views of beneficiaries and, where appropriate, non-beneficiaries. Inclusive techniques will be another important approach of the evaluation in order to ensure active participation in the evaluation by staff of implementing partner agencies and local and central government officials.

The evaluation team will ensure confidentiality of information, in that all documents and data collected from interviews and focus group meetings will be treated as confidential and used solely to facilitate analysis. Interviewees will not be quoted in the reports without their permission.

For the communication of results, an official report of the evaluation will be prepared and presented. This report focusing on practical recommendations will provide lessons to STL project staff and senior management for improvements in the continuation of STL's response related to the Syria crisis.

This report will also be supplemented by a presentation of preliminary findings to key stakeholders (both internal and external) to provide immediate feedback especially to STL Hatay team and to give the evaluation team an opportunity to validate findings.

5. Components of the evaluation report

The proposed evaluation report will include the following headings:

- Overview of the context
- Key Findings
- Lessons Learnt
- Organizational Capacity and Management
- Partnerships
- Key Recommendations

6. Evaluation Team Composition

The proposed evaluation team will be made up of 5 persons, 3 external evaluators, and 2 local STL staff members. Based on their availability, two STL staff member of STL (if possible one female and one male) will join the evaluation team.

7. Proposed Schedule

A total of 45 man-days is envisaged for the entire evaluation, preparation and report writing included. Each external evaluator will work 15 days each.

The evaluation schedule looks as follows:

Activity	Planned Days	Person(s) responsible	Total days	Proposed dates
Preparation Phase				
Finalizing of the evaluation ToR		STL		15-Nov-13
Desk review of key documents and development plan	1 day	3 experts	3	25 to 29-Nov-13
Logistics arrangements		STL field offices		2-Dec-13
Field Phase				
Travel - arrival in Hatay (early morning)	½ day	3 experts	1.5	1-Dec-13
Briefing and brainstorming at STL Hatay Office	½ day	Full team	1.5	2-Dec-13
Field visit to project sites*	4 ½ days	Full team	12	2 to 7-Dec-13
Organizational assessment and stakeholder visits	1 day	Full team	3	5-Dec-13
Preparing for the debrief (presentation of main findings)	1 day	Full team	3	8-Dec-13
Debrief session at STL Hatay office and feedback from team	½ day	Full team	1.5	9-Dec-13
Departing from Hatay (late evening)	½ day	3 experts	1.5	9-Dec-13
Reporting Phase				
Drafting the report	4 days	3 experts	12	11 to 18-Dec-13
Final Report (after incorporating feedback on draft)	1 day	3 experts	3	25 to 27-Dec-13

* Third evaluator will be in the field for 2 days only.

Annex B: List of meetings, interviews and focus groups

Monday/02.12.2013
Brief Meeting with STL Staff (9 participants)
Interview – AFAD Provincial Director
Interview – DRC Turkey Head of Mission
Tuesday/03.12.2013
Evaluation Meeting - Altınözü Community Center (CC) Staff (7 participants)
Focus Group – Altınözü CC and Cash Assistance Beneficiaries (10 Females)
Group Interview – Altınözü CC and Cash Assistance Beneficiaries (5 Males)
Focus Group – Altınözü CC Beneficiaries (7 Male Teenagers)
Wednesday/04.12.2013
Interviews with Muhktars – Altınözü (4 muhktars)
Interviews with Market Owners – Altınözü (3 owners)
Interviews with Cash Assistance Beneficiaries – Altınözü (13 females and 5 males)
Thursday/05.12.2013
Evaluation Meeting – Kırıkhan CC Staff (8 participants)
Interview with Kırıkhan CC Project Manager
Interviews with Market Owners - Kırıkhan (3 owners)
Interviews with Cash Assistance Beneficiaries – Kırıkhan (5 males and 2 females)
Interviews with Market Owners – Kilis (2 owners)
Interviews with Cash Assistance Beneficiaries – Kilis (7 females and 1 male)
Interviews with Muhktars – Kilis (3 muhktars)
Interview with Deputy Governer – Kilis
Friday/06.12.2013
Interviews with Muhktars – Kırıkhan (2 muhktars)
Focus Group – Kırıkhan CC and Cash Assistance Beneficiaries (9 Females)
Focus Group – Altınözü CC, Cash Assistance Beneficiaries and Non-beneficiaries (8 Males)
Interviews with Cash Assistance Beneficiaries – Kırıkhan (2 males and 7 females)
Interviews with Mother&Nutrition Program Beneficiaries – Kırıkhan (7 females)
Saturday/08.12.2013
Evaluation Meetings with STL Staff (Finance, Logistics, HR + Program Managers; 7 + 2 participants)
Sunday/09.12.2013
Evaluation Team Study - Identification of the main findings
Monday/10.12.2013
Meeting with STL Staff (Presentation of main findings and debriefing; 13 participants)

