

STRATEGIC ORIENTATION DOCUMENT FOR THE EUROPEAN UNION REGIONAL TRUST FUND IN RESPONSE TO THE SYRIAN CRISIS, "THE MADAD FUND"

The Trust Fund's establishment decision and constitutive agreement of December 2014 do provide the overall objective of the Fund as well as a more detailed description of the objectives and purpose of the Trust Fund:

"The overall objective of the Trust Fund is to provide a coherent and reinforced aid response to the Syrian crisis on a regional scale, responding primarily in the first instance to the needs of refugees from Syria in neighbouring countries, as well as of the communities hosting the refugees and their administrations, in particular as regards resilience and early recovery. The Trust Fund will thus focus on current priority needs and may also be adapted to reconstruction needs in a future post-conflict scenario. Assistance inside Syria will be considered taking into account, and avoiding overlap with, the action of other existing international funding instruments, and depend on agreement with the Syria Recovery Trust Fund as set out in Article 2 of this Agreement."

This overall objective and the detailed description of the objectives and purpose provide a framework for the initial five years lifetime of the Fund. Within that overall framework, the Fund should respond to initial short- to mid-term priorities to take account of intervening developments on the ground and shifting needs. To this end, these priorities might be revised, as necessary as well as the situation evolves.

Such priorities will be discussed at the level of the **overseeing Trust Fund Board** with all EU Member States attending, but where only Trust Fund Donors and the EU are having a vote. According to the Fund's Constitutive Agreement, the Trust Fund Board shall i.a. *"establish and review the overall strategy of the Trust Fund"*. In order to ensure continued coherence with the overall EU strategy for the region, the recent [Council conclusions adopting the EU regional strategy for Syria and Iraq as well as the ISIL/Da'esh threat](#), of 16 March 2015 provide detailed orientations in this regard. The action plan implementing the strategy would also need to be taken into account .

In those conclusions,

*"the EU commends the considerable efforts of all countries sheltering and offering protection to refugees. It will spare no effort to help them **provide protection and assistance to refugees and vulnerable host communities, build resilience and comply with international law, standards, conventions and humanitarian principles**, including through the new European Union Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syria crisis (the Madad Fund) which is open to all donors. The Madad Fund will operate in close co-ordination with existing funding mechanisms and in line with relevant national and international planning, responding to priorities set out in the UN Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan, to support an effective international response to the crisis."*

The Fund is explicitly mentioned on several occasions in the [EU regional strategy for Syria and Iraq as well as the ISIL/Da'esh threat](#) as a means of EU engagement (see annex). On this basis, the Fund should in its first year of operations focus in particular on (text in *italics* is quoted from the *EU regional strategy*):

1. The most critical needs and gaps for ***stabilisation and resilience aid to refugee and host communities in Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, and Egypt***, also with a view to reduce human trafficking and pressure on refugees to seek illegal migration to Europe, including by ***supporting the long term capacity of host states to address refugee flows in particular through [complementing] the Regional Development and Protection Programmes (RDPPs) in Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq, and by [...] supporting the effort of Turkish***

authorities to provide long-term hospitality and assistance to the Syrian refugees sheltered in Turkey.

2. *Displaced persons' needs, in particular **education for children and vocational training** or retraining for adults focusing on the jobs needed in a post conflict environment. Such vocational training should include training for women in order to boost their economic and social role in post-conflict reconstruction.*
3. *Exploring further possibilities to support neighbouring countries and universities in **providing higher education services to Syrian students**, as well as further opportunities for Syrian students and researchers through scholarships in Europe and vocational training opportunities in the region.*
4. ***In Iraq**, providing seed money in the effort to link development with humanitarian assistance. Such linkages need to build on existing support and be widened as soon as possible to **support conditions of protracted displacement and in preparation for the IDPs return to their homes**, in order to lay the foundations for stability and sustainable economic growth.*
5. ***In Syria**, reinforced resilience / recovery assistance such as targeted EU or Member State funded activities **supporting local communities and social actors** (including operations managed from Gaziantep with the participation of several Member States).*
6. *Facilitate EU **support to governments of the region to pursue policies conducive to enhanced economic resilience among refugee and host communities, promote prospects for young people and respect gender equality**, and high-level political dialogue both collectively and bilaterally with the countries hosting Syrian refugees ... to ensure that protection and perspectives can be offered to refugees (notably on access to education, labour market, etc.).*

In focusing on these priorities, the Fund shall also:

7. ***Build upon existing joint humanitarian aid/development frameworks** in the field and establish joint programming in Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey when relevant;*
8. ***Enhance communication about EU assistance both in the region and in the EU.***
9. *Give European aid in this crisis a more European face, by **better leveraging European capacities and knowledge** already built up by partners over the past 2-3 years in the region. It will thus initially focus, where feasible, on actions with European partners, who already have operations and capacities in the region.*
10. *Seek added value and impact by **maximizing coherence and synergies** through **encouraging larger multi-partner, multi-country, and multi-year actions**, which will also reduce transaction costs of Fund interventions. Partners are therefore encouraged to identify maximum scope for joint regional proposals.*

Within its overall objectives, the Fund should also be responsive to specific EU political priorities in the countries it covers as they may arise during the ongoing crisis.

Annex:

Sections relevant to the Madad Fund from the EU regional strategy for Syria and Iraq as well as the ISIL/Da'esh threat

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2.1 OBJECTIVES COMMON TO SYRIA, IRAQ AND OTHER AFFECTED COUNTRIES

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2.1.4 Provide life-saving humanitarian aid and international protection

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Public diplomacy and visibility of aid

- Enhance communication about EU humanitarian and development assistance both in the region and in the EU, if needed on the basis of reviewed communication/visibility guidelines.

Cater to displaced persons longer-term development needs

- Focus part of the EU's development assistance in Syria and Iraq as well as in neighbouring countries on displaced persons' needs, in particular education for children and vocational training or retraining for adults focusing on the jobs needed in a post conflict environment. Such vocational training should include training for women in order to boost their economic and social role in post-conflict reconstruction.

Resettlement and asylum

- Continue to support the long term capacity of host states to address refugee flows in particular through the Regional Development and Protection Programmes (RDPPs) in Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq, and by helping Turkey to provide humanitarian assistance to Syrian refugees and supporting it in the establishment and operation of a modern and stable asylum system.

2.1.5 Strengthen local resilience capacities in Syria, Iraq and the affected neighbouring countries

Humanitarian efforts must be linked with the affected person's longer term development needs as a means to promote post-conflict reintegration and development and to counter potential extremism amongst refugee populations and host communities. Basic rule of law, provision of basic services and economic activities should be re-established quickly in areas freed from Da'esh both in Syria and Iraq, to avoid Da'esh gaining any further appeal and to create minimum conditions for the voluntary return of IDPs and refugees in safety and dignity.

These actions should aim at supporting the resilience of individuals, communities and institutions in coping with the effects of the crisis.

In parallel to this assistance, high-level political dialogue both collectively and bilaterally with the countries hosting Syrian refugees is needed to ensure that protection and perspectives can be offered to refugees (notably on access to education, labour market, etc.).

Means of EU engagement:

Resilience/recovery assistance and support to local communities and social actors in Syria, Iraq and the neighbouring countries through the 'Madad fund', IcSP, and direct Member States contributions, in particular:

- build upon existing joint humanitarian aid/development frameworks in the field and establish joint programming in Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey;
- use the 'Madad fund' for stabilisation and resilience aid to refugee and host communities in Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, and Egypt. This needs to be achieved in a holistic way, in coordination with existing funding mechanisms and in line with current national government planning and the UN 3RP approach;

- *support governments of the region to pursue policies conducive to enhanced economic resilience among refugee and host communities, promote prospects for young people and respect gender equality; and*
- *implement the programme of additional assistance to Turkey announced following the Kobani crisis, aimed at supporting the effort of Turkish authorities to provide long-term hospitality and assistance to the Syrian refugees sheltered in Turkey.*

2.2 COUNTRY-SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES - SYRIA

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2.2.3 Provide basic services and contribute to rebuilding an administration in areas of reduced violence

- *Enhance the level of cross-border and cross-lines provision of non-humanitarian assistance in Syria.*
- *Help the moderate opposition and civil-society entities re-establish an administration and public services (including civil protection, health, education), as well as overall economic activity, in areas of reduced violence, in areas previously occupied by Da'esh, and in the mainly Syrian Kurdish populated regions of the north of Syria.*
- *Support the delivery of basic services in key areas, based on the principles of inclusivity, good governance and community consultation, and support resilience activities, including sustainable management and protection of natural resources.*

Means of EU engagement:

- *Reinforced resilience / recovery assistance such as targeted EU or Member State funded activities supporting local communities and social actors (including operations managed from Gaziantep with the participation of several Member States), supported through the 'Madad fund', IcSP or ENI.*

2.2.5 Prepare for the 'day after'

- *Continue to plan for long term recovery and the reconstruction of Syria and pave the way for the return and re-integration of refugees and internally displaced persons, notably through regular damage and needs assessments in Syria.*
- *Continue building the capacities of Syrian citizens and Syrian civil society, including organisations that promote gender equality and empowerment, to allow ordinary Syrians to play an active role in Syria's reconstruction.*
- *Explore further opportunities for Syrian students and researchers through scholarships in Europe and vocational training opportunities in the region.*
- *Continue to identify opportunities for building capacity and skills of Syrians to steer the transition (in areas such as media regulation, decentralisation, administration of municipalities, constitution drafting, etc.) with due consideration to women's needs and role.*
- *Continue to carefully plan for a disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration process as part of a security sector reform.*
- *Continue to assess regularly whether the current conditions permit the preparation for and implementation of transitional justice measures designed to promote reconciliation, foster trust and strengthen the rule of law.*
- *Carefully pave the ground for constitution and electoral reform, including the political party laws.*
- *Reflect on means to protect the remaining cultural heritage and to promote cultural diversity, in particular through educational and sensitisation campaigns.*
- *Maintain the EU's leading role in donor coordination in order to enhance coherence, coordination and predictability of the international assistance to the reconstruction of Syria.*

- Fully use the potential of the Erasmus+ programme which finances scholarships for the mobility of Syrian students and cooperation projects involving Syrian higher education institutions aiming at their modernisation. Explore further possibilities to support neighbouring countries and universities in providing higher education services to Syrian students.

The EU will pursue those efforts, bearing in mind that the collapse of State institutions in Syria must be avoided.

Means of EU engagement: ENI, **'Madad fund'**, IcSP ("Tahdir programme: Preparing for Transition in Syria"), trilateral agreement between the UN, the World Bank and the EU on Post-Conflict Needs Assessments, Erasmus+.

2.3 COUNTRY-SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES - IRAQ

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2.3.2 Support basic services, economic development and fight corruption

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Means of EU engagement:

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The **'Madad fund'** and IcSP could provide seed money in the effort to link development with humanitarian assistance. Such linkages need to build on existing support and be widened as soon as possible to support conditions of protracted displacement and in preparation for the IDPs return to their homes, in order to lay the foundations for stability and sustainable economic growth.