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Organization of the
United Nations



Gender mainstreaming in agriculture and food security:

FAO Türkiye's experiences 2021

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Abbreviations and acronyms

AEASs	Agricultural extension and advisory services
ASDP	Agricultural skills development programme
GAP	Gender action plan
FFS	Farmer field school
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IP	Implementing partner
KCB	Konya closed basin
MoAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
PDoAF	Provincial directorate of agriculture and forestry
SGK	Republic of Türkiye social Security Institution
SuTPs	Syrians under temporary protection
ToTs	Training of trainers
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UN	United Nations

Introduction

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Türkiye, in line with its overall mandate, supports the Government of Türkiye in close collaboration and synergy with line ministries, United Nations (UN) agencies, international organizations, civil society organizations, academia, research institutions and the private sector to strengthen three priority areas:

- (i) food and nutrition security and safety;
- (ii) sustainable forest and natural resources management, including fisheries; and
- (iii) institutional capacity enhancement of the public and private sectors.

Gender is one of the crosscutting themes that is mandatorily mainstreamed within all projects and regular work under the above-mentioned priority areas. FAO Türkiye's actions for the implementation of gender commitments are guided by the **FAO Policy on Gender Equality 2020–2030** which recognizes that persistent inequalities between women and men constitute a major obstacle to agriculture and rural development; and that eliminating these disparities is essential to building sustainable and inclusive food systems and resilient and peaceful societies.

National policy on the advancement of women and gender equality is embedded within circulars issued by the prime minister, a national action plan and sector-specific plans. In addition, gender concerns are mainstreamed in five-year national development plans. The implementation of equality goals and targets are the shared responsibility of line ministries, other government offices and civil society organizations. The national action plan on Women's Empowerment 2018–2023, for example, aims to: promote women's participation in economic and social life; ensure women's equal access to rights and opportunities; and mainstream the principle of equality between women and men into all of the main state plans and programmes. Furthermore, Türkiye ratified the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (cedaw) in 1985, and FAO, in turn, is mandated to support member countries to address the specific problems faced by rural women, as stipulated in article 14 of the convention.

Notwithstanding all of the work towards gender equality and women's empowerment, there is still a significant amount to accomplish: within the Turkish agriculture sector, for example, women continue to face unequal access to and control over resources. Moreover, women undertake a large share of agricultural labour but the relevant data are not available in national statistics; and the gendered division of labour and the burden of domestic responsibilities prevent women from realizing their full potential. According to Time Use Survey data for 2014–2015 (TurkStat, 2016), men allocate **1 hour 7 minutes** for household and family care per day, while women allocate 4 hours 59 minutes. Correspondingly, men spend **3.6 percent** of their time on daily chores and caregiving, and women spend **17.9 percent** of their time on these same tasks. Women's time poverty has implications for their ability to be formally employed in full-time work, to start and run their own businesses, to pursue education or training opportunities, and to enjoy rest and free time. Widespread discriminatory gender norms, such as women's restricted mobility, autonomy and freedom of choice, also help to maintain inequalities in access to resources and power (FAO, 2016).

In response to the challenges outlined above, FAO Türkiye – as mandated by its national and international commitments on gender quality – cooperates with the Government of Türkiye to deliver a range of gender-mainstreamed and women-focused actions. This compilation of practices from the field aims to raise awareness among practitioners by sharing experiences and lessons learned in order to develop future actions. A number of case studies are discussed, with a focus on exploring the key issues, the project interventions, the successful results and the challenges to consider when envisaging similar activities.







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Yükseköğretim Bakanlığı
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Türkiye'de Gıda Güvenliği ve
Ez Sektöründe Sektörün Geliştirilmesi
Bilgi ve iletişim teknolojileri
ve diğer teknolojilerin kullanılması
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Employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for Turkish and Syrian women and men in the food and agriculture sector

Key issues

The conflict in Syria continues to generate one of the most serious global displacement crises, bringing suffering to millions of people. As of November 2019, Türkiye had hosted nearly 3.7 million Syrians under Temporary Protection (SuTPs; FAO, 2020), the largest refugee population in the world. This population – of which 55 percent are men and 45 percent are women – accounts for more than four percent of the total population of Türkiye. A significant number of Syrians under Temporary Protection are exposed to social and economic vulnerabilities and struggle to access stable and reliable livelihood opportunities. Women are concentrated in agriculture, where heavy workloads, long hours and low pay deter further labour force participation by inactive women (TurkStat, 2021). Most Syrians under Temporary Protection and low-income Turkish host community members make their living from agricultural work and small-scale food businesses. Even though the food and agriculture sector is the most viable entry point into the Turkish economy, such opportunities are usually informal and seasonal, exposing those concerned to poor working conditions, and low and irregular wages. These circumstances negatively impact on the wages of workers in local communities who host Syrians under Temporary Protection, fuelling social tensions, discrimination and unfair treatment. The language barrier adds to the challenge, making integration in the communities even more difficult.

According to FAO's assessment of the agricultural labour market in 2018 (UNHCR), agricultural businesses have shown a high level of interest in employing both Syrians under Temporary Protection and local community members. However, the majority of SuTPs have to accept employment in the informal sector with wages lower than the existing minimum due to their low skills, and have to rely on daily and temporary job opportunities. At the same time, the private sector needs skilled and semi-skilled labour, especially in the agrifood sector, but according to the results of the needs assessment, there is a deficit of workers in the skilled labour force. For these reasons, to fill gaps such as market demand in the agriculture sector, vocational and on-the-job training courses were conducted to support SuTPs and host communities in skills development. The training focused on topics such as adoption of smart agriculture technologies, small entrepreneurship including women-oriented cooperatives, access to marketable skills including e-marketing, agribusiness development and local food production, job placement services, entrepreneurship in the agrifood sector, home-based and small agrifood businesses, and promotion of knowledge in entrepreneurship practices.

The agriculture sector engages more women than any other sector, but women working in this sector are more often engaged in seasonal, low-paid and low-skilled jobs, and their participation is always combined with a primary caregiving role in families. Given the traditional cultural context, many women, especially SuTP women, are restricted in the activities they can participate in, for example, using innovation and new technologies, digital platforms, e-commerce and e-marketing modalities and accessing land and other productive assets, and they also have no access to childcare. Their limited or lack of access to land, agricultural inputs and economic activities, as well as unpaid and time-consuming domestic chores, function as significant obstacles to the development of their own businesses.

Enabling access to productive assets, training and skills

In April 2019, FAO launched a project to support SuTPs and representatives from host communities through entrepreneurship in food and agriculture in the provinces of Izmir, Sanliurfa and Mardin, with the financial support of the Japanese Government.¹

Within these provinces, **121 women and 29 men** SuTPs and host community members received vocational training in agricultural and food production and processing, including growing and harvesting vegetable crops, repairing fishing nets, stuffing mussels (midye) and soap production. To support effective social and economic integration within the host communities, complementary training sessions were provided for **118 Syrian women and 27 Syrian men** on Turkish language skills, occupational health and safety, food hygiene, basic life skills and work ethics. One of the preconditions of the project was the consideration of compulsory quota measures for women's participation.

The project also undertook capacity building with **50 entrepreneurs (35 women and 15 men)** selected from the graduates of the vocational training courses. These participants gained skills in business planning, financial management, networking, marketing and sales, and time management. FAO provided the necessary tools, equipment and technical support services to participating entrepreneurs to enable them to start small-scale businesses and production.

¹ The project is entitled "Promoting self-reliant livelihoods of Syrian under Temporary Protection (SuTP) and host communities through provision of productive assets and skills trainings".

In order to support women, FAO Türkiye conducted market assessments to identify agrifood products with a strong and stable consumer demand in local markets and assess the feasibility of small-scale joint production cooperatives. The project allocated priority to unemployed women and women willing to start small-scale income generation activities. In Izmir, for example, FAO and the Izmir Provincial Directorate of Agriculture and Forestry (Izmir PDoAF) provided support to **ten Syrian and ten Turkish women** to establish a cooperative for stuffed mussel (midye dolma) production, a popular national food. The cooperative is named Turna, after the crane, which is a symbol of peace and hope in a legend originating from Japan.

Following business training, the female entrepreneurs analysed various markets (within and outside the province), spoke with traders and retailers, and researched marketing patterns, consumer preferences, prices, and supply and demand requirements. The all-women cooperative started production of stuffed mussels on 13 November 2019, establishing flexible working hours for women new to business and unable to work a full week due to domestic care obligations. As of February 2020, the cooperative was selling an average of 500 kg of stuffed mussels every week and the women ensure that the stuffed mussels meet quality and safety standards.



"We buy mussels from certified local farms, produce stuffed mussel (midye dolma) hygienically, and supply them to the market," explained Derya Davaz, the leader of the cooperative. "Our goal is to attain a stable position in the local market," Derya added, further reflecting, "I am very happy to be part of this cooperative. We are not only enjoying new friendships with Syrian women, but also exploring new opportunities in business, and consequently, building self-confidence."





FAO was also able to achieve better results with the support of women in local administration, who helped to advocate for targeted actions on women's entrepreneurship. Niğar Şavluk Gürel, who is the representative of the Izmir PDoAF, and the focal point for the initiative, explained some of the issues that women face:

"Many women dependent on their husbands, while they have many responsibilities at home such as housework and taking care of children and elderly people. Women who want to gain their economic freedom cannot find financial and social support. They face many challenges to starting their own businesses due to poor access to collateral, in addition to the fact that women in Türkiye rarely own real estate, houses or vehicles and have difficulty meeting the collateral requirements imposed by banks. Predominant stereotypes about women's role in financial decision-making also complicate the process of obtaining credit. When they apply to banks for financial support, the banks are hesitant to give them loans because they have no guarantee. FAO helped them by providing financial support to give them an initial start."

Another initiative that has been launched is a new soap production workshop in Mardin. The workshop has been established within an existing women's cooperative which has **30 members (15 Syrian and 15 Turkish citizens)**. The cooperative has obtained state certification and has started to produce production workshop.² The soaps are then sold through the Soil to Plate Social Development Cooperative (Topraktan Tabaga).³

Facilitating employment opportunities

Since 2016, FAO Türkiye has been collaborating with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MoAF), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees UNHCR and the private sector to carry out agricultural skills training for unemployed Turkish and Syrian women and men.⁴ The main objective of this partnership is to combat poverty among the most vulnerable SuTPs and host communities through an economically sustainable empowerment mechanism which enables beneficiaries to exit from the state of aid dependency.

² More information on the soap production workshop is available at <https://ebrubaybarademir.com/en/halep-soap/>.

³ Additional information about the cooperative is available at <https://semimsoap.com/kurumsal/hakimizda/>.

⁴ This project is entitled "Increase self-reliance and improve agricultural livelihoods of refugees through employment opportunities (phase III)".





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In 2019, 1 078 people (70 percent SuTPs and 30 percent host community members, out of which 58 percent were women) from the provinces of Adana, Bursa, Gaziantep, Izmir, Kilis, Manisa, Mardin, Mersin and Sanliurfa received training on a variety of agricultural topics, including but not limited to, livestock care and herd management, cultivation, harvesting, postharvest processes (for different crops/fruits such as olives, pomegranates, pistachios, grapes, citrus and vegetables) and food processing. Training on complementary skills, including occupational health and safety, food hygiene, basic life skills, work ethics and maintaining a healthy diet, were also provided to improve the livelihood skills of trainees and promote their effective social and economic integration. In order to facilitate the employment of trainees equipped with the necessary technical knowledge and skills, job fairs were organized at the end of the vocational training, in close collaboration with İŞKUR⁵ and the private sector. A job fair is a platform, provided and facilitated by FAO, where the representatives of different agricultural businesses can meet with potential trained employees. Overall, **118 employers and 889 trainees participated in the job fairs, out of which 482 were women.** The full number of women and men beneficiaries who successfully completed the training and gained vocational skills essential to accessing job opportunities was reached through the applied compulsory quotas.

According to the results of the post-project monitoring survey conducted in December 2019, **23.9 percent (267 trainees)** of those who had completed the vocational training obtained seasonal jobs in the agrifood sector; and **101 of the 267 employed trainees were women.** In order to formalize the employment of trainees, FAO and the implementing partners (IPs) facilitated the process of granting work permits and work permit exemptions.

⁵ İŞKUR, the Turkish Employment Institution, provides employment services in accordance with the needs of the labour market. The institution enables, maintains, develops and diversifies employment and provides temporary income support to people.


In addition, FAO established complaints boxes as a feedback mechanism for women and men beneficiaries to report cases of mismanagement, misconduct and/or sexual exploitation during the project's implementation. Information about the purpose and location of the boxes was disseminated and complaints were classified as either coming directly from project beneficiaries or from/through the IPs. The feedback received was not related to issues of safety and fair treatment in the workplace. Out of 154 submitted forms, the large majority of beneficiaries (73 percent) expressed their gratitude for participating in the vocational training, indicating that the training significantly contributed to their skills development. The second most commonly expressed issue related to extending the duration of the vocational training. No issues of mismanagement, misconduct or sexual exploitation were reported through this mechanism. It appears that women and men beneficiaries need to be more informed about and better understand the concepts of mismanagement, misconduct and sexual exploitation. Clearly disseminated information on mechanisms of reporting is required to encourage beneficiaries to submit complaints in order to improve working conditions and facilitate the prevention of and protection from discrimination and violence.

Voices from the field

Ms Kamar shared her story about how her engagement in the project began: "Syria was in the throes of conflict, and there wasn't much of a future there for me and my family. My husband and I sold our house in Syria and fled to Türkiye, hoping to start again. We came here for the future of my children," she said. "We moved to Izmir and started looking for jobs as we were out of money."

Ms Kamar's husband, a construction worker, could work from time to time, but an injury to his left arm had resulted in limited movement. Ms Kamar knew she needed to find work. "My neighbours informed me about the culinary courses provided by FAO," she explained, adding, "I decided to sign up and learned to cook Turkish dishes. Now, I am selling the food that I cook at home to restaurants."





Rabia Baş, a Turkish woman, has worked in greenhouses for nearly her whole life. She participated in greenhouse training organized by FAO in collaboration with the PDofAF in Izmir as part of the project and learned many new skills.

"Whatever you do, a person needs to receive the proper training," she said. "Even though my family started greenhouse farming when I was eight years old, I learned a lot from the training. For example, I kept in mind that 'cucumber flowers are burnt because of sun'. I learned during the course that the flowers are burnt due to increased humidity, and that we needed to install a moisture meter to measure the conditions in our greenhouses. I learned this after 15 years. During the training, we gained so many significant technical details."

Today, Rabia works alongside her husband in the greenhouses, and together they are able to meet their daily needs. Rabia also works as a tailor during the winter months to support the family budget.

Mainstreaming gender equality concerns into FAO-supported initiatives on land management, climate-friendly agriculture and extension services

Key issues

Loss of ecosystem integrity is perhaps the most evident indicator of land degradation in the Konya closed basin (KCB) in Türkiye. The conversion of pastures to forests in an unsustainable way has led to the degradation of the KCB's ecosystems. Inappropriate agricultural practices by local communities, such as overgrazing and excessive tilling, trigger erosion and reduce steppe species including plant diversity. Furthermore, the pollution of surface and ground water from the incorrect disposal of agricultural waste degrades aquatic and wetland habitats; and excessive use of water resources by local populations depletes water resources, increases salinization and the risk of dust storms, and reduces land resilience.



According to climate change scenarios completed by independent experts, the Konya closed basin will be one of the regions in the country most negatively affected by climate change (Climate change post, 2022). This prognosis is directly related to existing and increasing levels of land degradation by local communities, which will be exacerbated by climate change.

Rural women's and men's ability to adapt to the climatic changes that threaten their food security at household and community levels depends on their access to resources and responsible agricultural practices. However, women face additional difficulties when it comes to accessing financial resources, capacity-building activities and technologies, and experience greater restrictions on their rights, mobility and ability to shape intra-household decisions. In addition to this, women tend to be underrepresented at all levels of decision-making on climate change. All of these factors often stand in the way of women's empowerment in general and their role concerning climate change adaptation and mitigation.







Since 2015, FAO Türkiye and the MoAF have been working together to improve pasture and forestland use management through the adoption of low-carbon technologies and by addressing issues related to gender-sensitive sustainable land management, biodiversity conservation and climate change in the Konya closed basin.⁶ The project has established a farmer field school (FFS) model that is designed specifically to empower farmers to become better informed regarding steps they can take to improve production, maintain ecosystem integrity, and reduce the long-term economic risks associated with degradation. This model is interwoven throughout all project components, using the various investments as a way to strengthen the knowledge base of local resource users and government extension officers. The FFS model provides a conduit for the continued delivery of learning between government staff and farmers. One of the key aims of the project is to improve the livelihoods of female farmers in rural areas. In this context, a socioeconomic analysis was conducted at the project sites and a gender action plan (GAP) was developed to support effective land management and climate-friendly agriculture initiatives in the basin.

To ensure the inclusion of gender equality principles into climate-friendly agriculture, the project, at the design stage, generated an understanding of both female and male farmers' practices using a socioeconomic analysis approach. This analysis considered perceptions of existing gender relations within the social context, gender roles in decision-making including

⁶ The "Sustainable Land Management and Climate Friendly Agriculture Project".



around the adoption of technology, the types of farming practices used and women's specific roles in the production system.

The findings informed the development of the **gender action plan 2021** to support the government to eliminate persistent gender imbalances in the agriculture sector and to better mitigate climate change through providing the relevant gender sensitization and training, mobilizing adequate resources to support smallholders to increase their use of land in agricultural activities, and improving food security, income, health and environmental sustainability.

Using the farmer field schools model to ensure women's participation

The project introduced and implemented the farmer field schools model, which was tested for the first time in Türkiye. It was designed specifically to encourage women and men farmers to improve production by sustaining ecosystems and reducing the long-term economic risks associated with degradation. This model offers a set of practical field exercises using direct observation, discussion and decision-making: in sum, learning-by-doing. It also addresses the specific needs and vulnerabilities of both women and men. At the outset of the project, the implementing partners were informed about the FFS model,




the criteria for women's inclusion were established and the relevant actions were designed. The first six FFSs were created in 2016, engaging both women and men farmers. Today, 180 farmers, out of which **60 are women**, have benefited from these schools. During one of the field trips to the Sarayonu FFS, women participants shared their insights with the project manager, with one woman explaining, ***"We have not only learnt a lot about responsible agriculture practices from experienced farmers, but also felt pride to be part of [the] FFS, we enjoyed participation. It was the first time we were asked to be part of such a learning exercise."***

Voices from the field

"My name is Fadime and I live in the village with my husband's mother and father. Our two children left the farm to attend the university. My husband is a farmer and I am a housewife, working at home from morning till night. When household chores allow me to do so, I join my husband in the field and help with the farm. We have been working together in the field for 21 years and did our business as usual, but this year we realized that the usual is not necessarily effective!

One sunny day in 2018, my husband suggested to me that I should participate in the farm school organized by FAO, where within several weeks, we had learned how to use the soil correctly. As a result of this training, we planted wheat instead of beets and obtained a good yield. If only we had known that before! We've acquired knowledge on when and how often to water our field and how to treat the soil. Apparently, the way we were doing this before was not only ineffective, but also harmful for the soil – we were using practices that were basically destroying the farm. Now I know that we can have a good yield and take care of the land at the same time. Our land feeds us and will feed our children ...

My husband told me there were many other good outcomes: in Cihanbeyli farm school, for example, beans were sown directly in the field by the farmers, as a second crop, following the harvesting of barley. Native forage peas were also sown along one side of the plot to combat bean aphids. Frost during the night of 24 September 2019 halted growth of the beans, which was unusual for the site at that time of the year. Yet, the frost did not affect the forage peas. Amazing, don't you think? And this is why the farmers started to discuss the impact of climate change, and [the need to find] resistant species.

A woman wearing a light-colored headscarf and a patterned long-sleeved shirt is smiling and looking down at a large white and green bag. The bag has the word 'BETA' printed on it in bold black letters. She is holding the bag with both hands. The background shows a clear blue sky with some white clouds and a green field. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

We had never had this kind of training before, and importantly, women were taking part too! Usually, men say that our place is at home, but not this time – someone convinced them to let us take part. Fatma told us that in some other villages, women beneficiaries who attended the courses went on to establish cooperatives. Oh, I wish I could see how they do it, but these villages are far away from our village. Next time, when I have this chance, and when I am able to convince women in our community, we will be able to gain the experience. You know, women in Bogrudelik village are not very active, or maybe they are afraid to get into something bigger than a small piece of land they cultivate or kitchens in their homes. I was the same before, but after seeing that women can do anything, I have changed!

I always had dreams and only now, after realizing that there is nothing to be afraid of, I share them with my friends. I want to establish a goose farm, so that it is both profitable and ecologically sustainable too."

Agricultural extension and advisory services

Key issues

Agricultural extension and advisory services (AEASs) offer advice and support to individuals and households in rural areas, particularly those engaged in farming activities. AEASs can help both women and men farmers increase their yields, connect with markets and take advantage of entrepreneurship opportunities. The agricultural extension system in Türkiye consists of public institutions, private organizations, and NGOs such as chambers, unions, associations and so forth. The system includes a variety of actors, but the MoAF is the main body that provides extension services both at the central and local levels.

In Türkiye, women experience limited access to agricultural extension services due to gender norms and the inability of agricultural extension service providers to reach women due to a lack of capacity and understanding of women's issues. The methods used to deliver extension services, in particular to women farmers, suffer from a lack of tailored approach: the information, technologies and services provided tend to be less relevant to the needs of women farmers (FAO, 2017). As a result, women have limited knowledge and experience of expressing their concerns and understanding of what assistance can be obtained from agricultural extension services. This is also exacerbated by the insufficient participation of women farmers in AEAS planning and development.



A rapid needs assessment of extension services

FAO Türkiye carried out a rapid needs assessment of extension services on 3 January 2019 to understand how a gender-responsive and inclusive approach could be introduced (FAO, 2017). Based on the results of the assessment, a specific training module was developed for women farmers from different districts in each province. In order to support women's initiatives, the module provided practical information on marketing and agricultural marketing, product development, entrepreneurship, case studies of successful cooperatives and producer associations, and the role, establishment and management of cooperatives in agriculture and rural development. In addition, the training provided core information on gender equality principles and the roles that women play in agriculture. To sustain the action, training of trainers (ToTs) was organized for extension staff at the MoAF on gender-responsive agricultural extension and rural advisory services. The training also included exchange experience field visits to four women's cooperatives organized for women farmers from Eskisehir and Sanliurfa.⁷

To strengthen the initiative, rural women's advisory groups were set up in the provinces of Eskisehir and Sanliurfa to support gender-responsive agricultural extension. Each group

⁷ The "Strengthening Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services" Project (TCP/TUR/3602).



consists of **25 women members: representatives of farmers' unions, chambers, public institutions, academia and other sectors.** These advisory groups monitor and report issues of particular concern to women to Provincial Technical Committees for discussion and resolution. Establishing these groups constituted an important step in ensuring that women farmers' perspectives and concerns were heard by provincial and national decision-makers, and in empowering the women farmers themselves.

FAO was also able to support gender-responsive policy interventions. A National Strategy for the Extension System in Türkiye envisages a chapter on gender-sensitive agricultural extension, developed through an inclusive and participatory approach. The strategy lays out specific actions to be taken by the state to enable women to access agricultural extension services and is currently in the process of being adopted.

One of the key project successes was the establishment of the rural women's advisory groups under the Provincial Technical Committees. This ensured that women farmers were heard by local and national decision-makers. As an example, when developing the above-mentioned National Strategy, the suggestions made by the rural women's advisory groups about their needs and concerns were incorporated into the strategy.

Voices from the field

"My name is Fatma. I am 33 years old. I am a farmer in the Kisas district in Sanliurfa. I am a very active farmer, and in my field, I grow cotton, wheat, corn, barley and vegetables, but I should [add], this is not that easy. As a woman farmer I face many difficulties, because women must perform a lot of tasks that relate to care and other chores – we are carers and mothers on top of everything. I usually finish my work late at night, at about 23.00. Even when going to bed, I am still thinking about whether there is work that was not done. Early in the morning at around 04.00 to 04.30, I wake up and continue to perform multiple tasks: it is not simply owning a field, to provide for a family in the village. You have to know how to treat the land, how to water the crops, which vegetables are profitable to grow this year and so on. Usually, the men in the village refer to the Provincial Directorate of Agriculture and Forestry (PDoAF) for training, and this year, the training was available for women! To be honest, this was my first time of attending the training and [benefiting from] the practical application of skills with extension services. I wish I had been consulted before. Very often, we women do not know where to get information, unless it is shared by our husbands, or we are approached by other people who are more knowledgeable. I want to thank FAO for considering women's access to consulting services. One example from my own experience: the PDoAF has already helped me to identify wheat rust disease and I have learned how to cope with it."



Promoting resilience through improved livelihoods

Key issues

The empowerment of women and girls is one of the fundamental objectives of the “Building the resilience of Syrians under temporary protection and host communities in Türkiye through supporting socioeconomic integration and creating livelihood opportunities” project. The project aims to address women’s needs and priorities by providing a range of opportunities including skills development, access to agricultural production and inputs, and access to employment opportunities.

Beneficiaries have the opportunity to increase self-confidence, receive childcare services to combat gender-based discrimination, and use a complaints mechanism to address gender-based violence, and the project also addresses restrictions on girls’ access to education. All actions aim to strengthen women’s roles in the family, at work and in society.



Vocational training and child care services

By the end of 2021, the full programme of agrifood vocational training was completed. Out of a total of 2 952 trainees, 1 842 were women (62.4 percent). In addition, beneficiaries (50.5 percent were Syrian, Iranian, Afghan and Iraqi, 49.5 percent were Turkish) received training on a variety of agricultural topics including laying hen production, meat cutting and processing, dairy hygiene and processing of milk and milk products (cheese), bakery (flat bread production), viticulture, herd management staff, dairy cattle herd management, vegetable production (including vegetables grown under cover), local food products, strawberry production, packing and packaging, and pepper production.

The lack of child care facilities is an additional obstacle in women's ability to actively engage in the agriculture sector. Realizing the importance of women's employment, FAO makes every effort to promote gender equality and women's empowerment by providing opportunities to gain skills and access decent employment. Where possible, FAO also supports child care facilities. These efforts enable women to compete in the labour market for better-paid and more sustainable jobs.

Within the project, FAO provided child care services to encourage women's participation in the vocational and language training courses. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority of women beneficiaries did not want to leave their children at the child care facilities. In total, **48 women, 36 girls and 30 boys** have benefited from the child care services in the provinces of Hatay, Kahramanmaras, Kilis, Manisa and Sanliurfa; and two kindergartens were established in Sanliurfa in collaboration with the Akcakale District Governorate. In the provinces of Bursa, Gaziantep, Kahramanmaras, Sanliurfa and Van, toys and training materials were provided to women beneficiaries with children younger than 7 years old (78 girls and 63 boys in total). Moreover, UNICEF's "Early Childhood Education Set" has been shared with all implementing partners.

Capacity development and employment outcomes

A total of **812 project participants (57 percent of them women)** received and successfully completed Turkish language training, and by the end of 2021, **1 500 trainees (38.5 percent women) had graduated from the farmer field schools. Of the FFS graduates, 4.6 percent were Syrian and 95.4 percent were Turkish.** Ten İŞKUR Agricultural Service Points (agricultural employment desks) were established and operationalized within ten provinces, and 114 women, men and young people registered with the service points. Through









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T.C. AİLE ÇALIŞMA VE
SOSYEL HİZMETLER BAKANLIĞI

ing Resilience of Syrians Under Temporary Protection and Host
Communities in Turkey Through Supporting Socio-Economic
Integration and Creating Livelihood Opportunities

yoekonomik Entegrasyonun Desteklenmesi ve Geçim Sağlama
larının Yaratılması Aracılığıyla Türkiye'de Geçici Koruma Altındaki
riyeliler ve Ev Sahibi Toplulukların Dayanıklılığının Geliştirilmesi

تمكين السوريين تحت الإقامة المؤقتة و المجتمعات المضيفة عن طريق دعم التكامل
والاقتصادي وخلق سبل العيش

(OSRO/TUR/901/EC)

PROJECT PROVINCES / PROJE İLLERİ

Adana, Bursa, Gaziantep, Hatay, İzmir, Kahramanmaraş,
Kilis, Manisa, Şanlıurfa, Van



consultations with the private sector, job fairs and on-the-job work experience embedded in the vocational training, FAO (in collaboration with provincial İŞKUR and the Social Security Institution (SGK)) raised awareness among private sector agricultural production enterprises and agrifood industries, self-employed smallholder farmers and seasonal agricultural workers from the target provinces on:

- (i) the socioeconomic benefits of promoting formal employment and access to social security for agricultural workers;
- (ii) the socioeconomic benefits of empowering rural women in home and female group-based income generating and employment creation initiatives; and
- (iii) the type and modality of social assistance programmes. İŞKUR service points have achieved good success rates since their establishment.



The employment rate has increased by **38.8 percent, against a target rate of 40 percent.** Furthermore, **806 women out of 1 408 participants** benefited from the agricultural skills development programme (ASDP). FAO provided social security premium payments to the male and female beneficiaries who found employment after graduation and were willing to receive premium support. FAO also supports the women-oriented agricultural development cooperatives in each of the project provinces that are operating in the area of agrifood business development, to strengthen self-resilience, create new employment opportunities and increase the income generation of vulnerable groups.



Voices from the field

Naile Simsek, a farmer field school beneficiary, has recently hired **25 people**, most of whom have acquired practical, vocational training at her greenhouses. Out of these employees, 10 are Syrians and 19 are women.

"My favourite part of the training was the step-by-step guidance we received from our trainers, both theoretical and in the field," Naile explained. "It has given us an entirely different perspective on agriculture," she reflected. "Once I realize my dream of the cooperative, I'll have other, bigger dreams to pursue," she added.⁸

A Syrian ASDP beneficiary, Nariman Ladaa, gained new gardening skills during the project which will help her to find better jobs in the future. She said, "I never worked back in Syria, but in Türkiye life is hard and we need to feed our families, so this short-term job helped me become productive. I am looking forward to receiving ASDP allowance to help the family pay debt and prepare for Ramadan Eid."

⁸ Read more about Naile's story at <http://www.fao.org/fao-stories/article/en/c/1440376/>.





Conclusion

The examples presented in this compilation demonstrate the ways in which FAO mainstreams gender equality concerns in its interventions and highlight how a range of actions in different areas can benefit both women and men equally. To achieve this, a tailored approach is needed which aims to respond to the needs and priorities of groups at risk of exclusion, including the most disadvantaged and vulnerable ones. It is important to recognize that the projects reporting successful and solid gender-responsive results recommend the following:

(i) the availability of sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis;

(ii) the delivery of special actions to encourage women's participation in the context of societal norms and attitudes that prevent women from enjoying equal opportunities, and the provision of favourable conditions to allow women to participate equally with men as decision-makers in rural areas; and

(iii) the development of targeted actions to increase women's access to training and resources and to reduce women's work burden through improved technologies, services and infrastructure.

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