Qudra – Resilience for Syrian refugees, IDPs and host communities in response to the Syrian and Iraqi crises

Factsheet on the Kurdistan Region of Iraq

The context

The civil war in Syria has produced tragic statistics, with more than a quarter of a million dead and over 13.5 million forced to flee their homes from Syria. Among those displaced have sought refuge beyond Syria’s borders, the majority in neighbouring countries of Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey.

In Iraq, following several decades of multiple crises and complex emergencies, 8.7 million people are in need of assistance with over 3 million people internally displaced in the past three years alone. The Kurdistan Region of Iraq hosts the majority of refugees and IDPs, which is estimated to be more than 1.3 million people (Joint Crisis Coordination Centre, Ministry of Interior). In the KRI, about 248,000 Syrians are registered as refugees (UNHCR, August 2018), in addition it hosts over 1 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). Thus, today, the region is affected by a complex financial, political, security and humanitarian crisis that has turned protracted with new emergency peaks within the larger crisis.

Qudra: Europe’s response

Together, the EU and the German Government are responding to this situation by jointly providing support for projects that aim to mitigate the realities of the region. One of them is ‘Qudra - Resilience for Syrian Refugees, IDPs and Host Communities in Response to the Syrian and Iraqi Crises’.

Qudra, an Arabic word meaning ‘strength’, ‘ability’ or ‘resilience’, is funded by the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis, the ‘Madad’ Fund and the German Government and implemented in programme partner countries of Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI).

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Programme name</th>
<th>Qudra - Resilience for Syrian Refugees, IDPs and Host Communities in Response to the Syrian and Iraqi Crises</th>
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<tr>
<td>Commissioned by</td>
<td>German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Co-funded by</td>
<td>EU (Madad Trust Fund)</td>
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<td>Countries</td>
<td>Kurdistan Region of Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey</td>
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<td>Implementing organisations</td>
<td>GIZ in cooperation with AECID, Expertise France and Hungarian Interchurch Aid (HIA), Qudra Iraq: GIZ and HIA</td>
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<td>Duration</td>
<td>June 2016 to June 2019</td>
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<td>Budget</td>
<td>Total: EUR 85.4 million (EUR 10.8 million from the BMZ; EUR 74.6 million from the EU)</td>
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Qudra aims to strengthen the resilience of host communities, refugees and displaced persons in five key areas:

- Improving school infrastructure and access to extracurricular activities (e.g. sports)
- Expanding and improving basic vocational skills
- Strengthening social cohesion through community-based services
- Strengthening the capacities of local administrations
- Promoting dialogue and exchange of experience among the key stakeholders of the action.

In all these areas, the programme draws on the experience of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AECID), Expertise France (EF) and Hungarian Interchurch Aid (Ökumenikus Segélyszervezet, HIA) in order to develop and implement shared European solutions.

Qudra contributes to transparent, inclusive delivery capability of local administrations and other organisations regarding basic services for IDPs, refugees and local populations in the four governorates of Erbil, Dohuk, Halabja and Sulaymaniyah.

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Strengthening the Capacities of Local Administrations

The objective of this module in KRI is to contribute to transparent, inclusive delivery capability of local administrations and other organisations regarding basic services for IDPs, refugees and local populations in the four governorates of Erbil, Dohuk, Halabja and Sulaymaniyah.

The impact of the action is threefold:

- Strengthening administrative structures at the level of the governorates
- Supporting quick impact projects with direct benefits to refugees, IDPs and vulnerable host communities.
- Strengthening economic opportunities and livelihoods

Qudra supports the Kurdistan Regional Government in strengthening the Joint Crisis Coordination Centre (JCC) and its governorates’ offices. JCC operates as a coordination hub of the region’s crisis response network. Qudra’s institutional and human capacity development efforts target essentially the strategic and operational levels in the priority areas of administration, management and leadership. This contributes to developing sustainable structures and capacities within the local administrations to cope with the short and long-term effects of the current and future crises.

Further, jointly with the Kurdistan Regional Government and strong support from its political partner, the Ministry of Planning, Qudra set up a facility to provide funding and technical support for community-based projects benefiting refugees, IDPs and local population in host communities in order to improve access to and provision of basic services. Community participation and ownership are essential guiding principles. This action improves the living conditions of the local and displaced populations residing in the hosting communities.

In three years of programme implementation, local partners have realised 58 projects that addressed gaps essentially in infrastructure and livelihood in the sectors of electricity, water, and agriculture. EURO 2,900,000 in EUTF Madad and German Government funding has been allocated reaching more than 300,000 beneficiaries.

The project design helps the local administration to develop sustainable capacities and basic service delivery capabilities which will facilitate social stabilisation in the communities.

HIA’s activities focus on income generation of the three target beneficiary groups. The first area of focus labour support which can be described as the development of marketable skills and the facilitation of integration to the labour market through on-the-job training under apprenticeship structure. The scheme mentioned above can work as a multiplier effect in the labour market.

Secondly, HIA is working on livelihood opportunities, by supporting livelihoods through training in apiculture, animal husbandry, and maybe most importantly, by rehabilitating irrigation systems, providing water for the territories and people in need.

The setup and development of Micro- Small and Medium Enterprises contribute directly to multiplicative job creation, through the implementation of business ideas or the rehabilitation of damaged businesses. Furthermore, HIA supports the economic growth through enhancing capacities of the local government structures and organisations, e.g. Employment Promotion Centres, supporting employment facilitation.

Promoting Regional and National Dialogue

Qudra brings refugees, IDPs, host communities and local, national and regional stakeholders together to define new options for action and prospects for the future. Various constructive dialogue formats are being utilized for interactive knowledge sharing, best practices exchange and collaborative learning in a participatory approach. This plays an essential role in developing strategies and possible measures for an appropriate response to the region’s refugee crisis. ‘Madad Labs’ provide a forum for such encounters: refugees and other stakeholders work together to identify key issues and jointly develop sustainable innovative solutions and initiatives. Through Labs, workshops, expert meetings, national and regional conferences, progressive policies conducive to enhanced economic resilience and future perspectives for Syrian refugees and host communities are developed, different dimensions of the refugee crisis are analysed and best practices are communicated to relevant stakeholders.