PURPOSE OF THE EU MADAD INNOVATION FUND

The EU Madad Innovation Fund is designed to provide seed funding to develop and cultivate promising prototypes developed by Madad Lab participants and thereby enabling innovation.

The main objectives of the EU Madad Innovation Fund are:
- Fostering mutual learning and collaboration amongst partners and stakeholders of the programme
- Creating a learning and innovation network that promotes innovative and effective evidence-based solutions to challenges in Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq/IRI based on the specific objectives of the Qudra Programme: education, skills development, social cohesion, and support for local administration
- Encouraging the development of innovative ideas that address the question of the lab
- Supporting the realization of demand driven initiatives/activities developed by lab participants

Following an iterative prototyping process, the EU Madad Innovation Fund allows for rapid testing and improvement of proposed solutions through frontloading loops which increase the possibility of obtaining favourable, lasting solutions. It also encourages the participants to employ an inclusive and collaborative approach to project design and implementation, as the solutions are co-created with beneficiaries and stakeholders. Solutions that prove effective are endorsed, tested, and implemented.

The EU Madad Innovation Fund is committed to improving also the effectiveness and sustainable impact of the partners and stakeholders in the Qudra programme by documenting, sharing, and disseminating the most effective practices and lessons learned through various channels such as the online platform of the programme and publications.

The civil war in Syria has produced tragic statistics, with more than a quarter of a million dead, more than 5.6 million Syrians forced to flee their homes, more than 4 million people are displaced internally. Among those who were displaced many have sought refuge beyond Syria’s borders, the majority in neighbouring countries of Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey. Even before the outbreak of the Syrian conflict some countries such as Jordan and Lebanon were already hosting large numbers of refugees from the Palestinian territories. It is currently estimated that more than 17 million people need humanitarian relief in the region, making this the biggest refugee crisis since the Second World War. Together, the EU and the German Government are responding to this situation by jointly providing support for the programme Qudra -Resilience for Syrian refugees, IDPs and host communities in response to the Syrian and Iraq crises. This regional action is financed by the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis, the ‘Madad’ Fund and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). Qudra is an Arabic word meaning strength, ability or resilience. The programme works with refugees, IDPs and host communities in countries bordering Syria: Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq/IRI. Roughly 80-90% of Syrian refugees and internally displaced persons in these countries are living out of camp and their circumstances and status vary considerably.

The regional approach of the Qudra Programme provides many opportunities for knowledge exchange and transfer. It is conducive for a vital culture of cooperation. In a situation of cross-country crises and challenges, the development and promotion of ideas cross-borders contributes to effective solutions.

Qudra aims to build the resilience of refugees, IDPs and host communities in five key areas:
- Improving school infrastructure and access to extracurricular activities
- Expanding and improving basic vocational skills
- Strengthening social stability through community-based services
- Strengthening the capacities of local administrations
- Promoting dialogue and exchange of experience between refugees and host-communities, with a focus on social relations.

TARGET GROUPS OF EU MADAD INNOVATION FUND

The EU Madad Innovation Fund will seek out and support the most creative and engaged participants of the Madad Lab to encourage them to develop better strategies and mechanisms for dealing with the challenges amidst the refugee crisis. It supports the Qudra country teams as they refine and hone their ideas and, where appropriate, test their modifications/adaptations on a limited scale. It will be a channel to promote and strengthen innovation and research and development in the scope of the programme. The EU Madad Innovation Fund will be given to local or regional NGOs who mentor the groups and support them during the first stage of implementation.

In all these areas, the Programme builds on the know-how and implementation experience gained by European countries through their international cooperation, using best practices from bilateral projects of EU member states as a basis for scaling up. In this spirit, Qudra is implemented by a group of European Union Member State Agencies (EUMSA) comprising the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, the French Agency for International Development (AECID), Expertise France (EF), and Hungarian Interchurch Aid (HSI).

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The EU Madad Innovation Labs (‘Labs’) are a part of a growing number of innovation labs, bringing together people from diverse backgrounds to learn with each other and test new approaches in a specific context. In this case, the context is the Syrian and Iraq refugee/IDP crises and their impact on host communities in neighbouring countries. Against this background, the Labs seek to provide a platform for sharing experiences, learning lessons, learn with each other, and develop innovative approaches and project ideas, what we call prototypes, to strengthen the resilience of refugees/IDPs and host communities.

The Labs are a key element of the Qudra Programme, which works on the link between humanitarian relief and development in Jordan, Lebanon, North Iraq/KRI and Turkey. They are implemented by Module 5 of the Qudra Programme and provide a safe space for experimental learning for and by stakeholders, partners and beneficiaries and the outcomes feed back into the activities of the other Qudra Modules 1-4.

Module 5 at the same time establishes platforms for dialogue and exchange and thereby gives a voice to refugees, members of host communities and IDPs through the Labs.

**EU MADAD LAB I**

**Skills Development**

The pilot round of the EU Madad Innovation Lab focused on the question “How can we improve the skills development measures for youth amongst Syrian refugees, host communities and IDPs?” It was piloted in January 2018 and resulted in prototypes ranging from a training system for employees and HR departments to enhance job retention (Jordan) to a multi-step platform to increase the access to personalized services to Syrian refugees (Lebanon). After submitting their project proposals for the Madad Innovation Fund currently four prototypes are in their implementation phase in Jordan, Lebanon and in the Kurdish Region of Iraq (KRI).

**EU MADAD LAB II**

**Youth and Digital Innovation**

Under the objective to recognize the approach of “Youth by Youth” young people were supported with a platform for exchanging experiences, learning participatory techniques, and developing their prototypes to strengthen the resilience of refugees/IDPs and host communities. Acknowledging that the digital revolution has a huge potential in supporting development, by giving people the technical skills to access information, engage in political processes and a wide array of other services, the EU Madad Innovation Lab II built on efforts to enhance the digital literacy made by public authorities and international organizations.

The Labs entail a sequence of meetings over the course of several months, in which participants within their country groups develop their prototypes. The group work during and between the meetings is facilitated by experienced facilitators and further enriched through input and capacity development from relevant stakeholders. The working groups are invited to hand in a project proposals to receive funding and technical support by the EU Madad Innovation Fund in the early stage of the implementation.

**LAB OBJECTIVES**

**CREATE INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS**

Providing a safe space for dialogue and learning
Lab participants are guided through individual and collective learning processes and are encouraged to share their learning experiences with others as multipliers (peers, employers, indirect beneficiaries). Participants are strengthening their self-confidence, interpersonal skills, and learn building abilities in a horizontal learning community. Furthermore, they gain topical knowledge through lessons from the field and on national and regional collaboration across (local) governments, NGOs, the private sector, the donor community, and refugee, IDP and host communities. Finally, they are trained in innovative design thinking methods.

Foster and facilitate sustainable innovation
Building on the design thinking training and on the new insights gained on the nature, sensitivities, and needs of the identified challenges, participants will jointly develop innovative solutions and approaches and implement these as prototypes. In this iterative process, thinking outside of the box and being experimental is highly encouraged. The Madad Lab Innovation Fund allows participants to take their ideas beyond theoretical design and facilitates the testing and adapting of the prototypes into reality. Due to the bottom-up approach of identifying challenges and solutions, the prototypes will have full local ownership and carry the potential to live beyond the end of the Qudra Programme.