Strengthening Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Sexual and Gender Based Violence Services for Syrian and Other Refugees thru Women and Girl Safe Spaces (WGSS)/Women Health Counselling Units Project

Hacettepe University Research and Implementation Center on Women’s Issues (HUWRIC)
Current Situation


In this context, 88,739 Syrian migrant population are living in Ankara (12.10.2017).

Most of this population consists of women and children.
Strengthening Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Sexual and Gender Based Violence Services for Syrian and Other Refugees thru Women and Girl Safe Spaces (WGSS)/Women Health Counselling Units Project
Project Coordination: HUWRIC

Responsible Person:
Prof. Dr. Ü. Şevkat BAHAR ÖZVARIŞ

Financial Support:
European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO).

Project Partners: UNFPA, Ankara Public Health Provincial Directorate
Within the Scope of the Project;

- Three Women’s Health Counselling Units were established.
- These three Centers are all inside the Migrant Health Center’s buildings belonging to Ankara Provincial Public Health Directorate.
The Project has started with a single center in March, 2015.

Still continues with three centers since February, 2016.
MAIN ACTIVITIES OF THE PROJECT

- Sexual and reproductive health and family planning services
- Supporting women who experience violence
- Gender based violence prevention
- Empowerment of migrant women and girls
52 Personnel have been Working at the Centres... 

- A project coordinator.
- 3 social workers who can speak Arabic very well.
- Arabic speaking psychologist (Works at three centers by rotation).
- 3 Iraqi doctors and 1 Iraqi nurse.
- A Syrian psychologist (part time).
- 3 Syrian/Iraqi women cleaning personnel.
- 3 Syrian women translators.
- A total of 32 Syrian health mediators at three centers.
- 3 Turkish women security personnel.

44 migrant women have been employed within the Project.
SERVICES PROVIDED AT THE CENTERS
Individual counselling and group trainings on SRH and Family Planning.
- Women are referred to hospitals and other related institutions in order to receive more comprehensive services.

- Many women were referred to hospitals due to hypertension and diabetes which were detected during antenatal follow ups.

- Many women received group or individual counselling on modern contraceptive methods.

- Also, counselling is given to women with regard to ID problems.
Services Provided at the Centers (2)

Awareness raising activities on gender based violence.
Women and girls attend to several training programmes which empower them.

Routine training programmes are being conducted at the Centers both for the service providers and for the service users.

Visit was organised to Ankara Violence Prevention Center for our health mediators in order to raise their awareness on ŞÖNİM’s services and procedures.

Two Panels were organised on Child Marriages (One for women and young girls and the other for men.)
Approximately 350 refugee women and 250 refugee men participated.

Panel Programme:

- Child Marriages and Health Results
- Child Marriages According to Legislations in Turkey
- Early Marriages According to Islamic Law
- 2 Refugee women/men shared their experiences
Psychosocial support for women exposed to gender based violence.
Many women received psychological support after they were exposed to violence.

Women who have been applied to the Centers due to violence are directed to Violence Prevention Centers (ŞÖNİM).

Some children are taken under protection / institutional care due to neglect and abuse.

Many child marriage cases have been managed in collaboration with related institutions.
Empowerment activities (ex. Turkish courses, city trip, bazaar trip, picnic, etc.).
Turkish language courses
«I Know My Rights» Training
May’2017 - Ankara

- Migration System in Turkey and in the World
- The Law System in Turkey
- Rights of Migrants in Turkey
- Procedures Related to Marital Status
- Common Problem Areas and Suggested Solutions
Two lawyers have been giving legal counselling to our service providers at the Centers.
Other Empowerment Activities...

- Cultural Sensitivity Focus Group Discussions (August’2017)
- Child Marriage Focus Group Discussions (September’2017)
- Beypazarı and Eskişehir visits
- Visit to Ankara Bar
Programmed trainings of migrant health mediators who are employed within the scope of the Project.
Training Programme of Health Mediators

- Personal hygiene
- Family Planning Methods
- Pregnancy
- Mother-Child Relationships
- Infant Care and Child Care
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- Communicable Disease Prevention
- Adolescence
- Healthy Life and Nutrition
- Human – Women – Refugee Rights
- Violence Against Women
- Awareness Raising on Laws and Public Institutions in Turkey
- Health System in Turkey
- Differences and Richnesses of Cultural Norms and Traditions
- Daily Life in Ankara
Services Provided at the Centers (6)

Activities for migrant children
Services Provided at the Centers (7)

Distribution of kits provided by UNFPA
Ankara-Ulubey
Number of new beneficiaries is increasing gradually.
From in-depth interviews conducted with women...

- «When I first came to the Center, I was so embarrassed and I stayed outside. I had nothing to do outside, but I stayed there (laughing). I came in, checked in, joked with the social worker and then I felt as if we have been knowing each other since many years. After I came to the Center, I started socializing with people a little bit.»

- «My children are still afraid of everything. When they hear something outside, they suddenly come and embrace me. However, they are getting better day by day as they are going to school and they feel relieved gradually.»
Sincere gratitudes for your consideration...