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Resilient nations.*

UNDP support to Municipal Resilience in Turkey

Increased capacities to respond
to additional demands for
services for Syrian refugees and
host communities



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Cover picture : UNDP Turkey, Reyhanlı, Hatay, 2018

Art direction : TASARIMHANE

For digital edition:



"Turkey has hosted the largest number of refugees in the world since 2014. UNDP Turkey is one of the leading agencies supporting the Government of Turkey to strengthen its resilience. For instance, UNDP invests in existing national and local systems for them to be able to respond to the increase and change in demand for basic services resulting from the large number of refugees the country of hosting. Municipalities have been at the forefront of the response since the start of the refugee crisis and will require continued support from international partners over the coming years to be able to cope and recover from the impact. UNDP has been one of the first UN agencies providing support to municipalities since 2014 and is considered one of the main partners to the Government on municipal service delivery as part of the Syria response. UNDP has provided over USD 30 million worth of support to municipalities, uniquely combining targeted infrastructure development with technical support."

Claudio Tomasi

UNDP Turkey Country Director

- In the global context of growing human mobility and decentralization, local authorities are regarded as strategic actors in migration and refugee policy development. Their strategic role has been recognized in most recent high-level global policy documents on humanitarian and development reform.
- Helping local institutions to cope with shocks, recover from them and transform accordingly lies at the heart of the UNDP resilience approach worldwide, and the provision of support for municipal service delivery in emergency contexts is one of UNDP's signature products.
- In Turkey, municipalities have acted as first responders in addressing the impact of the Syrian refugee presence and have played an essential part in the development of more resilient capacities for responding to the increase in demand for services.
- The surge in the population as a result of the refugee influx – an increase of 20% for municipalities in South-East Turkey – has placed local institutions under considerable pressure.
- UNDP was among the first of the Refugee and Resilience Response Plan (3RP) partners to step up its support for municipal institutions, working with the Government of Turkey to provide the affected municipalities with comprehensive support.
- As early as 2014, UNDP provided additional equipment such as fire-fighting and solid waste vehicles to the municipalities of Gaziantep, Sanliurfa, Hatay and Kilis. To date, almost 40 projects have been implemented, including the provision of over 70 vehicles. UNDP and the municipalities concerned have built on this early support and begun to work gradually towards introducing comprehensive changes in municipal service delivery management.
- UNDP support has allowed the municipalities to allocate corresponding amounts of resources to meeting other needs. So far, UNDP has invested over USD 30 million in the capacities and services of the four municipalities with the support of the governments of Japan and Korea, the BPRM (United States), the KfW (Germany) and the EU Regional Trust Fund for the Syria Response (MADAD).
- Initial infrastructural support soon set a virtuous circle in motion, with additional benefits in terms of the environment, public health and livelihoods of local communities. UNDP support made it possible to construct or renovate 11 waste water and solid waste management facilities and related infrastructure.
- The key to sustaining municipal resilience is to leverage the support provided to introduce transformative changes in the management of municipal services. UNDP is uniquely positioned to assist municipalities to achieve this objective precisely because it has been working hand in hand with them since the onset of the crisis.
- The Project Management Offices now being established within the municipalities supported by UNDP will work across municipal departments to identify efficiency gains and to prepare funding applications. This will be particularly timely as the total amount of support extended to municipalities under the 3RP tripled between 2017 and 2018, and IFIs have mobilized nearly USD 750 million in loans to support municipal services over the next few years.
- The role of the UNDP as a catalyst for change and the part it has played in paving the way for other actors to invest in municipalities demonstrates the added value of a resilience approach – the key to turning a seemingly insurmountable issue into an opportunity for local authorities and residents alike.
- However, these achievements need to be scaled up rapidly in two directions:
 - geographically – since the four border municipalities in South-East Turkey in which 85% of investments have so far been concentrated host only one-third of the refugee population;
 - thematically – since most of the support has focused on solid waste, waste water, and emergency services, whereas municipalities have a much wider range of competencies including transport, local infrastructure, and poverty reduction or social assistance. The total amount of support provided by 3RP partners represents only 10% of the costs which municipalities have incurred in catering for their additional refugee populations.

UNDP Turkey Approach to Municipal Resilience

This brochure illustrates how UNDP Turkey has been working with the Government of Turkey to provide comprehensive support to municipalities affected by the refugee influx, strengthening their capacities to respond to the crisis and to improve and expand service delivery. As municipalities become more resilient, they are better placed to improve the lives of members of both the refugee and host communities, and to strengthen social cohesion among them.

Municipalities and the refugee influx

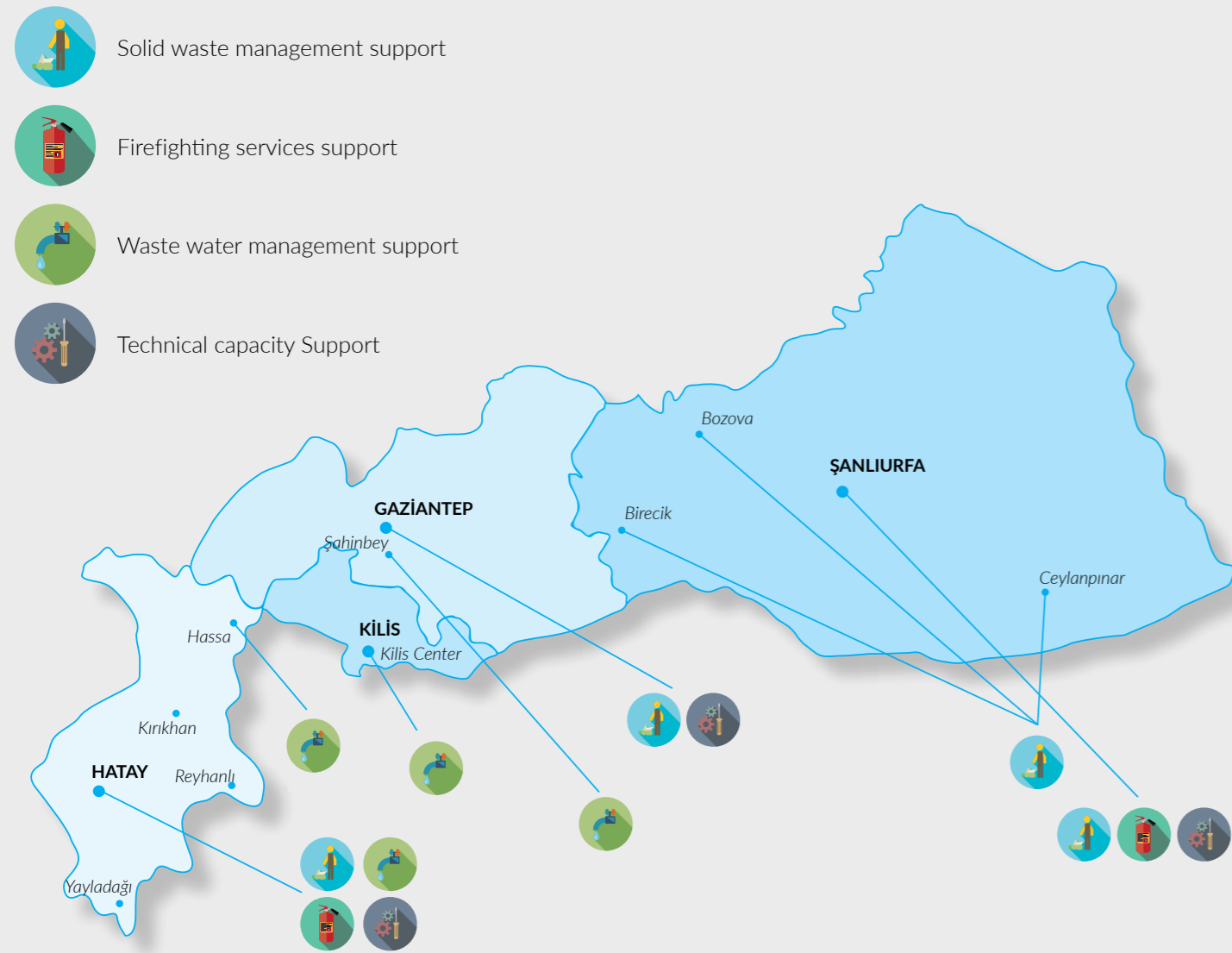
As 94% of the 3.5 million Syrians living under Temporary Protection in Turkey are located within host communities, municipalities have been among the primary responders in addressing the impact of the Syria crisis, and have played an essential part in increasing resilience through strengthened capacities to respond to the increase in demand for services.

While the Government of Turkey has demonstrated remarkable national ownership of the response by providing a solid and comprehensive rights-based legal framework, the large increase in the population has placed local institutions under considerable pressure. Municipal services are automatically affected by any sudden population increase such as may arise due to a refugee influx. The municipalities in South-East Turkey collectively host over 1.3m refugees, representing over 20% of their pre-crisis population. This increase in numbers has led, among other things, to the consumption of 70 billion litres more water and the generation of 1 million tons of additional solid waste per year.

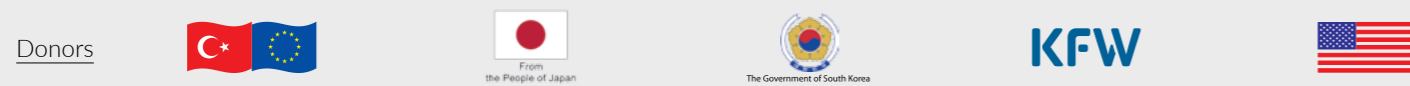
In a context where municipal capacities were already stretched, the demographic shock created by the refugee situation constituted a serious test of municipal resilience. Resentment and competition between communities emerged over access to services, and there was a high risk that residents' trust in local institutions, and satisfaction with their work, would be undermined. Yet, municipalities have demonstrated since day one their ability to act as the front-line institutions in the response to the crisis, showing great adaptability and creativity to expand services to the refugee population and cater for its specific needs while also maintaining social cohesion.



UNDP Municipal Interventions since 2014



UNDP Partners



Municipalities and migration in global context

In the global context of growing human mobility, decentralization, urbanization and inequalities, local and regional authorities are now also regarded as strategic actors in migration and refugee policy development. Their strategic role and the issue of localization has been recognized in most recent high-level global policy fora and documents on humanitarian and development reform, such as the Global Forum on Migration and Development, the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, the 'Grand Bargain'; the two Global Compacts on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and on Responsibility Sharing for Refugees, the New Urban Agenda adopted at the UN HABITAT III Conference in 2016, and of course the Sustainable Development Agenda for 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – particularly SDG 11 and SDG 16.

As the UN's global development network and the chair of the UNGD, and as a partner with a focus on development solutions for displacement challenges and the ability to promote the important interface between local, national and global communities, UNDP is uniquely positioned to champion the role of municipalities in harnessing the positive benefits of protracted displacement and managing the negative impacts. The UNDP's value added in post-crisis contexts is to ensure that early recovery is included as part of the overall humanitarian response, bringing development principles into the relief stage and seizing opportunities to go beyond saving lives and start restoring national capacities, livelihoods, and peaceful conditions for sustainable human development. Through a resilience-based development approach, UNDP takes a longer-term perspective from the outset, focusing on strengthening the capacity of communities and local governments to better cope with the consequences of protracted displacements.

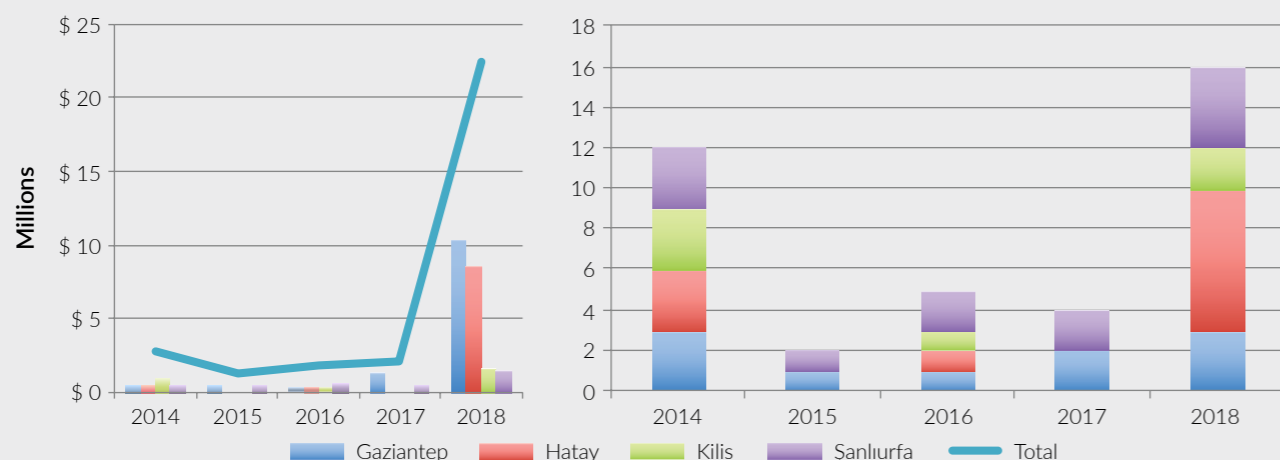
UNDP Support to Refugee-hosting Municipalities in Turkey

In line with this global role, UNDP Turkey was among the first of the Refugee and Resilience Response Plan (3RP) partners to step up its support to municipal institutions and has been a reliable and trusted supporter of the municipalities ever since. The UNDP Turkey Syria Response Strategy highlights how helping local institutions to cope, recover and transform from shocks is at the heart of the UNDP resilience response to the refugee influx:

"Resilience is the ability to cope with and recover from shocks and sustain development gains. This includes strengthening the required capacities at all levels to be better able to resist shocks. A resilience-based development approach that complements the humanitarian response is more relevant than ever, including in Turkey, currently hosting the largest number of refugees in the world."

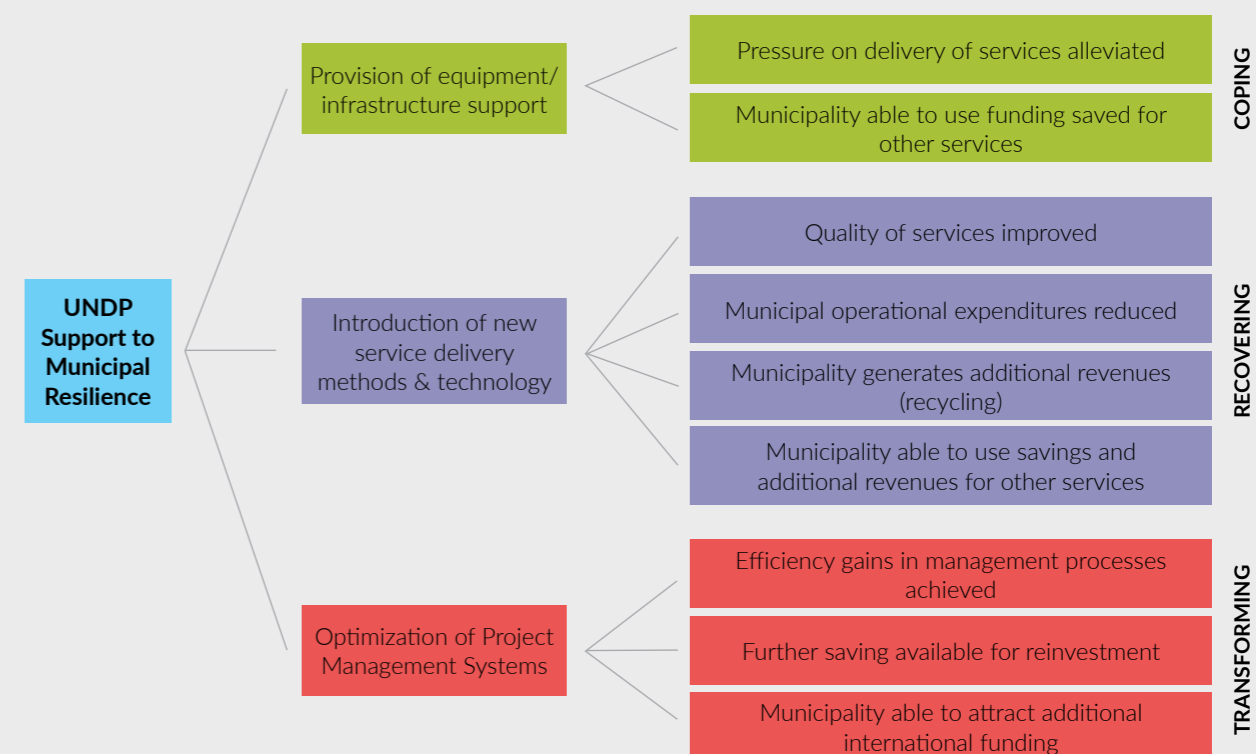
Figure 1 illustrates the growth of the support which UNDP has provided to municipalities since 2014.

Figure 1 Value of support (left) and number of projects (right) delivered by UNDP in support of municipalities in South-East Turkey by year



Municipalities have been able to leverage the support of the UNDP to serve various needs beyond those directly targeted in the project. A key aspect of this is how the partnership with municipalities has allowed them to generate additional revenue and funding, as illustrated in Figure 2. More importantly, UNDP support has also been crucial in demonstrating the impact which municipalities have on the daily access to services of the refugee and Turkish communities. This has paved the way for 3RP partners and others, including international financial institutions (IFIs) to scale up their own municipal support programmes. As a result, while UNDP was the only agency supporting municipalities in 2014, with USD 3 million worth of support, 3RP partners are now providing municipalities with investments of over USD 25 million, and IFIs are gradually extending loans and grants of up to USD 750 million¹. This virtuous circle of increasing support to refugee-hosting municipalities will be crucial for covering their remaining needs, notably in areas of services and infrastructure not yet supported by UNDP or other 3RP partners.

Impact of UNDP Support on Municipal Resilience



- However, these achievements need to be scaled up rapidly. In addition to maintaining the positive dynamic created by the recent surge in support to municipalities, investments need to be extended in two directions:
 - geographically – since the four border municipalities in South-East Turkey in which 85% of investments have so far been concentrated host only one-third of the refugee population.
 - thematically – since most of the support has focused on solid waste, waste water, and emergency services, whereas municipalities have a much wider range of competencies including transport, local infrastructure, and poverty reduction or social assistance. The total amount of support provided by 3RP partners represents only 10% of the costs which municipalities have incurred in catering for their additional refugee populations.

¹ 3RP Inter-Agency, Strengthening Municipal Resilience in Response to the Impact of the Syria Crisis in Turkey – 3RP Response Strategy and Conceptual Framework for Impact Measurement (September 2018), and mapping of IFI intervention (October 2018).

UNDP Added Value and Comparative Advantages with respect to Municipal Support

Examples of the impact of UNDP support on the resilience of the municipalities supported:

- In Kilis, UNDP relieved the municipality of overwhelming pressure on its waste disposal infrastructure through the provision of a solid waste compactor which extended the existing solid waste storage capacity by two years. UNDP is now establishing a leachate treatment and evaporation system within the Kilis sanitary landfill site to eliminate contamination risks. This will have major benefits for health and the environment.
- In Sanliurfa, UNDP analysis of the solid waste management system revealed that waste transportation was inefficient and unsustainable. Thanks to UNDP investments in Solid Waste Transfer Stations, the transfer of waste from district to central facilities has improved greatly. The transfer stations significantly improved the environment by preventing the use of wild dumpsites while generating economic benefits through recycling and cost savings.
- Gaziantep, Hatay and Sanliurfa municipalities are now using the UNDP project management approach to take proactive and preparatory steps prior to the submission of projects to international donors. This represents a major change in their operational culture and will enable them to leverage the support provided by UNDP and increase their capacities beyond the pre-crisis levels.

Key figures:

- More than USD 30,656,000 so far invested by UNDP since 2014.
- 4 municipalities supported: Gaziantep, Hatay, Kilis and Sanliurfa.
- 39 projects implemented.
- 71 vehicles provided to increase solid waste management and emergency capacity.
- 11 new infrastructure facilities constructed to improve waste water and solid waste management.
- 3 project management offices established.
- TL 30 million saved by Kilis municipality by making better use of its landfill site.
- USD 500,000 saved by Sanliurfa municipality each year thanks to the new solid waste management system.

For more information:

UNDP support to municipalities in displacement contexts:

- Municipalities and People on the Move: Cities' Development Policies for Successful Local Management of Migration and Displacement – [Guidance Note](#)
- Municipal Solid Waste Management in Crisis and Post-Crisis Setting – [Guidance Note](#)
- Building a Resilient Foundation for Peace and Development - Local Governance in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Settings - [Guide](#)
- Integrated Framework to Support Local Governance and Local Development – [Joint Report with UNV and UNCDF](#).

UNDP Turkey Syria Response:

- Elevating Hope: UNDP Turkey Syria Crisis and Resilience Response Programme - [brochure](#)

Inter-Agency Refugee and Resilience Response Plan Support to Municipalities:

- Strengthening Municipal Resilience in Response to the Impact of the Syria Crisis in Turkey – 3RP Response Strategy and Conceptual Framework for Impact Measurement – [report](#).

UNDP has a strong track record in Turkey including Southeast Anatolia. For more than 50 years, UNDP has been working in close partnership with the Government of Turkey and multiple national and international institutions in the areas of Inclusive and Sustainable Growth, Inclusive and Democratic Governance, and Climate Change and the Environment. Since 1986, it has conducted over 80 programmes across the country. UNDP Turkey has over 20 years of development experience in the Southeast Anatolia Region. UNDP is also a main partner for the Government of Turkey with respect to the implementation of the SDGs, including the commitment to 'leave no one behind'.

UNDP co-leads the overall coordination of the Syria response in Turkey at strategic level. UNDP co-leads the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) at the regional level and in Turkey in conjunction with UNHCR. UNDP is the lead agency on resilience, as well as the sector lead for the 3RP Livelihoods Sector.

UNDP Turkey has strong existing partnerships at the national and local levels. All UNDP Turkey's projects are developed in close cooperation with the Strategy and Budget Department of the Office of the Presidency (formerly the Ministry of Development). In addition, all UNDP's projects are implemented within one or more implementing line ministries. For municipal support programmes, ILBANK, the official development bank for the provinces, is UNDP's implementing partner. UNDP has also established a working group involving ILBANK, the Strategy and Budget Department of the Office of the Presidency, and the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization to coordinate implementation of such programmes. This is critical for ensuring ownership, timely implementation, sustainability of the results, as well as linkages with national priorities.

Since 2014, UNDP has been a leading partner for municipal service delivery. Support for municipal service delivery in emergency contexts is one of UNDP's signature products. In Turkey, UNDP was the first agency to provide support to municipalities to help them respond to the increase in demand for services arising from the Syrian refugee influx. It has done so with support from the governments of Japan and Korea, the BPRM (United States), the KfW (Germany) and the EU Regional Trust Fund for the Syria Response (MADAD).

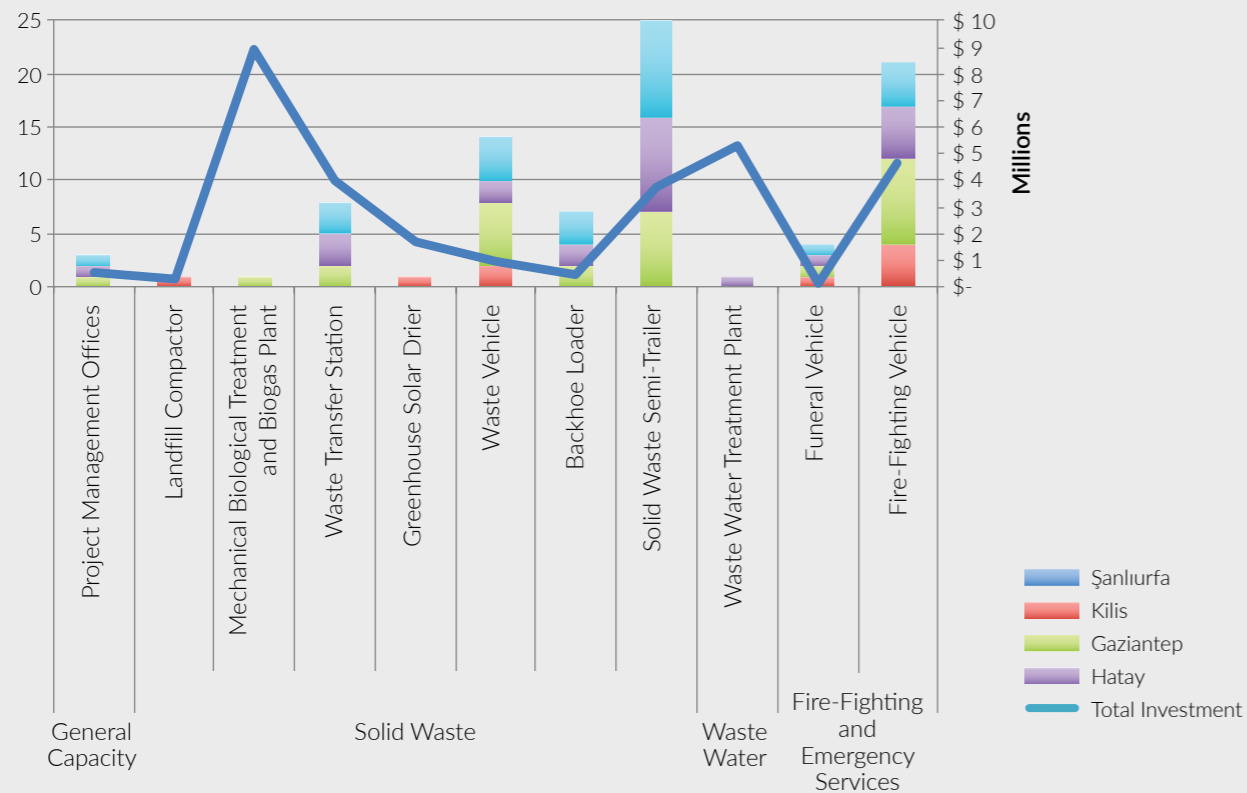
UNDP uses its own procurement rules and regulations. UNDP Turkey has an agreement with ILBANK which allows UNDP to lead the procurement process for municipal infrastructure development works on the basis of UNDP's own rules and regulations. UNDP is currently the only agency that has such an agreement. This has proved to be essential in terms of timely delivery and oversight.

UNDP Turkey has strong relationships and existing cooperation with key municipalities. Such partnerships allow for strong local ownership of the projects that are identified and ensures that they are feasible and can be implemented within a short period of time. UNDP is also able to build on its Local Administration Programmes, under which it has established strong and sustainable relations with local authorities since 2007.

UNDP Turkey has dedicated in-house civil and environment engineers for the Syria Crisis Response and Resilience Programme. The availability of dedicated engineers is critical when supporting national and local partners with the development of new project ideas, ensuring they are ready to implement by the time funding is granted and providing for quality control.

When a crisis occurs, municipalities often act as first responders. They cannot afford to wait for international funding to be mobilized or for legislative changes to be adopted at national level. The influx of refugees to Turkey immediately triggered action from the host municipalities, but it also posed challenges, such as a sudden increase in waste generation, water consumption and traffic accidents. Building on its long-term engagement with local institutions, UNDP responded quickly to the need to work with the government to provide direct support to the municipalities to allow them to cope with the immediate consequences of the refugee influx.

As early as 2014, UNDP provided additional equipment, including fire-fighting and solid waste vehicles, to the municipalities of Gaziantep, Sanliurfa, Hatay and Kilis to help relieve the immediate pressure on municipal services (see Figure 3 for the infrastructure and equipment provided to date). This early engagement played a key role in helping municipalities to cope with the immediate impact of the refugee influx, maintain a grip on the situation and pave the way for future, more substantive investments.



The following example, concerning the solid waste compactor provided for the Kilis municipality landfill site, illustrates how this coping dimension of the resilience approach opens the door to longer-term support. In this case, the equipment provided not only allowed the municipality to address the main emergency created by the population increase, but also save funds that could be used to support other services. Moreover, this example demonstrates how this type of support is far from a one-off intervention, but actually constitutes an entry point into the area of improving municipal services in general.

Supporting municipalities to cope with sudden pressure on basic services: solid waste in Kilis

The municipality of Kilis hosts over 130,000 Syrian refugees and is the only municipality in Turkey where refugees outnumber the local population. Moreover, as a provincial municipality, Kilis has access to fewer resources than the larger metropolitan municipalities. Prior to the crisis, the municipality had only a small landfill site for solid waste management. As the population doubled, the site started to fill up rapidly. UNDP therefore procured a solid waste compactor for the municipality, so that the waste could be compressed and space could be saved in the landfill site.

The compactor – which was provided by UNDP with funding from BPRM (United States) at a cost of USD 326,000 – extended the lifetime of the site by two years. This relieved the immediate pressure on the municipality and allowed it to defer the TL 30 million investment that would have been required to invest in a new landfill site. It was then possible to divert this funding towards supporting other services affected by the refugee influx. Furthermore, the municipality gained the time it needed to prepare to mobilize international funding for the new landfill site. All in all, the support provided by UNDP relieved the municipality of the overwhelming pressure of the demographic shock and gave it the necessary time and flexibility to plan a more comprehensive response.

This initial experience provided a foundation for the development of further projects by the municipality of Kilis and UNDP. The landfill site still requires urgent improvements. A pressing concern is the leachates (i.e. toxic liquid runoff) that are produced by badly managed landfills and random dumpsites. When these toxic chemicals find their way into the food chain, there is also an additional risk of bioaccumulation of hazardous waste in food. A process of leachate management is required to prepare the waste ready for proper storage and thermal reduction. The Kilis site had a reservoir allocated for leachate with a capacity of 6,000 m³, with pumps installed for recirculation and passive evaporation. However, the increasing amount of solid waste generated in the city soon exceeded the total capacity of the reservoir. The sludge was constantly leaking, creating a significant environmental hazard.

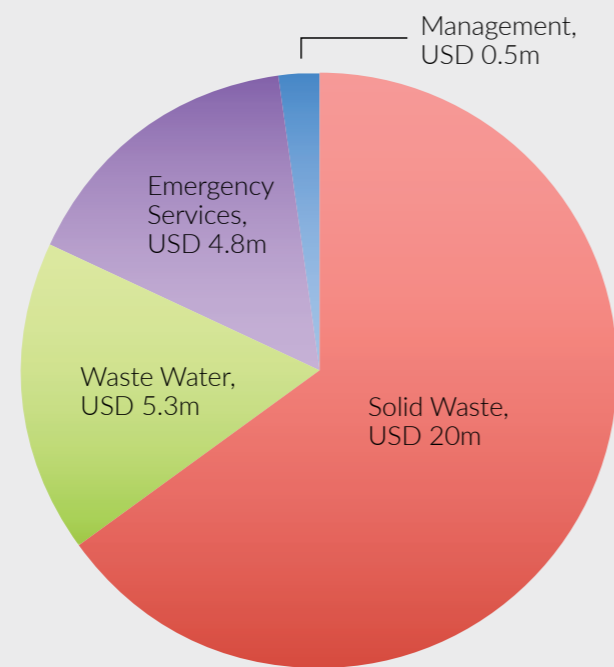
To reduce these risks, UNDP secured funding from the EU to establish a Greenhouse Solar Sludge Drier within the Kilis sanitary landfill site. The 6,000m³ leachate facility is to be renovated and refurbished with the required pumps and equipment for sustainable leachate and sludge management. The renovation work will include an expansion of the capacity of the landfill site and improvements to increase efficiency. All in all, UNDP will have provided comprehensive support to the waste management capacity of Kilis Municipality, allowing it to focus its own resources on other services.



© Kıvanç Özvardar, UNDP Turkey, Gaziantep, 2017

Its pioneering work with municipalities in the wake of the refugee influx has allowed UNDP to build strong partnerships with local institutions over time, and to use this early support as an entry point for engaging with municipalities in efforts to introduce comprehensive changes in municipal service delivery management (see Figure 4 for UNDP investments in various municipal services). The idea is to support municipalities as they recover from the impact of the shock population increase not only by expanding their capacities but also by improving the delivery of local services. In this way, besides addressing the consequences of the crisis, the municipalities will be able to deal with some of the pre-existing challenges undermining their resilience. This approach is well illustrated by the work which has been done with Sanliurfa municipality to expand the existing solid waste management capacity by introducing waste transfer stations. This case demonstrates how infrastructure support quickly generates a virtuous circle and spawns additional benefits not only in terms of the environment and public health, but also with respect to the livelihoods of local communities.

Figure 4 UNDP Investment by municipal capacity



Waste Transfer Station in Sanliurfa – Reforming service management systems to turn a challenge into an opportunity.

As in Kilis, the impact of the Syrian refugee crisis on the volume of solid waste in Sanliurfa, which hosts close to 500,000 refugees within its large territory, was particularly acute. This increase in solid waste led to dumping into wild sites, including from the Temporary Accommodation Centres located in the province.

In response, the Municipality of Sanliurfa and UNDP cooperated on an analysis of the waste management system and determined that, as things stood, it was not possible for all of the solid waste being generated to be transported to the sanitary landfill site, given the high costs of transporting solid waste over long distances with inadequate vehicles. The analysis underlined that the current manner of transporting solid waste from the districts was inefficient and unsustainable as the hauling operations were being carried out using standard compactor trucks with limited capacities. The use of transfer stations would enable the municipalities to conduct long distance solid waste hauling more efficiently, as it would be possible to use a single semi-trailer to carry five standard truckloads of municipal solid waste. Aside from the major environmental benefits to be gained from the prevention of the use of wild dumpsites, the economic benefits would be significant. The general costs for the collection and transport of municipal solid waste in the region were estimated to be about TL476/ton. However, the population increase had resulted in significant increases in operating costs due to the distances involved and the large number of hauls. There was scope to reduce costs in waste transfer operations by at least 25%.

By way of a durable solution, UNDP and the municipality constructed a solid waste transfer station in the Ceylanpinar district of Sanliurfa, making use of EU funds. The waste transfer station was built on a site that had previously been used as a wild dumpsite. In this way, public health risks were alleviated and the amount of solid waste needing to be transported over long distances by truck was reduced. Sanliurfa is a metropolitan municipality with a large catchment area, and the district targeted is located 150km from the sanitary landfill site, making transportation to the centre very impractical. The waste transfer station is able to process 150 tons per day, which is equivalent to the entire solid waste generation of the area served. Accordingly, it has prevented further dumping of waste and facilitated the efficient transport of solid waste originating in the Ceylanpinar district and in two temporary accommodation centres for Syrians. Together with the procurement and delivery of three high-capacity semi-trailers and a backhoe loader, the waste transfer station facilitates the efficient transfer of 42,705 tons of solid waste per year on the basis of two hauls per day. The annual estimated savings for the municipality are USD 500,000. At this rate, it is calculated that the investment in the facility will repay itself in 1.4 years.

The success of this project demonstrated both the appropriacy of such approaches and the need for further infrastructure investment to address the additional demands and needs both of the Syrians and of members of host communities. At the same time, the fact that Sanliurfa Municipality has a waste-to energy facility at its sanitary landfill site creates extra opportunities. UNDP has therefore embarked on the construction of three more waste transfer stations through fresh EU funding, while the municipality is constructing two more. Thanks to these investments, and the use of a more efficient waste transfer model based on larger trucks (semi-trailers), volumes of traffic, greenhouse gas emissions and fuel consumption will be reduced. Meanwhile, the municipality is using its newly established Project Management Office to carry out the necessary preparatory work for a project application to build a new sanitary landfill site.

As an added benefit, the transfer stations are feeding Sanliurfa's central recycling facility, which needed more waste in order to operate. This in turn is supporting local employment. A secondary economic benefit is anticipated as the increased amount of solid waste being transferred to the sanitary landfill site provides increased inputs for the renewable energy facilities there, with a consequent increase in electricity production. The energy produced is currently sold by the contracted company to the grid and half of the income is deposited in the accounts of Sanliurfa Municipality. Going forward, UNDP has proposed a Solid Waste Value Chain Analysis to identify where job creation can be boosted alongside the waste management process.

Overall, the work done to enhance solid waste management in Sanliurfa constitutes a good practice which exemplifies the added value of a resilience approach – the key to turning what looks like an insurmountable issue into an opportunity for local authorities and residents alike.

The direct support extended to municipalities for the delivery of services has allowed them to allocate the resources saved to meet other needs. This may include priorities that are out of reach of UNDP – for example, the funding of a waste transfer station by UNDP could allow a municipality to use the equivalent amount of funds for other services, such as transport. However, compared to both the scale of the crisis and to the overall budgets of the municipalities, the support provided by the partners remains relatively small. The total amount of support provided by UNDP partners to the municipalities of Gaziantep, Hatay, Kilis and Sanliurfa represents only 2-3% of their total budgets – a modest proportion when compared with the 20% increase in the population and demand for services which the municipalities have faced.

The key to achieving sustainable changes that make municipalities more resilient is therefore to leveraging the support provided to introduce transformative changes in the management of municipal services.

UNDP is uniquely positioned to assist municipalities to achieve this objective precisely because it has been working hand in hand with them since the onset of the crisis. The trust and experience that have been built up over the years, together with the achievements highlighted above, have created unique conditions for cooperation between UNDP and the municipalities on the introduction of more systemic changes in the way the latter are managed. The case of Sanliurfa's waste management processes illustrates how in-depth analysis can be the key to identifying practical, easy-to-implement changes with the potential to deliver long-term benefits. This success story has driven the municipalities and UNDP to anchor such project management approaches within the municipal administration rather than merely conducting them as ad hoc exercises. More specifically, UNDP has taken advantage of the substantive investments made under its current projects funded by the EU MADAD fund to establish Project Management Offices (PMOs) within the municipalities which it has supported. The PMOs are working across municipal departments and competencies to identify potential efficiency gains, process optimization opportunities and training needs, and to prepare applications for national and international funding.

“We would like to thank the UNDP colleagues with whom we have been working as one team at technical and social levels right from day one. Considering the increasing numbers in refugee and Turkish communities in the region, our large-scale operations like the Mechanical Biological Leachate Facility and Gaziantep Solid Waste Management Plan will help improve the municipality's environmental operations. We certainly want to work together again on new projects in the future.”

Emel Kırac
Head of Environmental Protection and Control Department,
Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality

Project Management Offices: Optimizing municipal management processes to sustain development gains

Following the positive results of the first studies on the optimization of procedures within specific municipal departments (solid waste and fire-fighting) in Sanliurfa and Hatay, UNDP and the three metropolitan municipalities of Gaziantep, Sanliurfa and Hatay decided to institutionalize such approaches through the establishment of dedicated project management offices/resources within the municipalities under new UNDP projects funded by the EU.

The Project Management Offices (PMOs) are mandated to identify and secure efficiency gains in specific municipal departments, to support the training and capacity development of municipal staff, and to work on the development of projects and proposals, particularly with a view to accessing international funding. As such, the PMOs are intended to overcome a structural challenge for municipalities – namely, the lack of capacity for project management and planning, which are often perceived as obligations imposed by central government or donors rather than as strategic tools.

The piloting of the PMOs duly illustrated the important benefits which very modest investments in studies and internal reviews of procedures can yield. For example, a study of process optimization in solid waste management in Sanliurfa quickly identified an issue related to data management: there was no record of the operations of waste transfer vehicles in most districts. As a result, the waste transfer system varied from district to district with respect to working hours, collection periods and the types of vehicle used. Based on this analysis, a number of concrete changes were suggested, such as re-allocating vehicles across districts, replacing private contractors by municipal staff and linking districts to alternative transfer stations. As a result, the municipality was able to reduce its annual expenditure of the transfer of solid waste from TL2.2 million to TL1.3 million – a saving of TL 920,000, or 42.7%, compared to a set target of just 5%.

A similar examination of the fire-fighting department in Gaziantep showed how re-allocating emergency equipment such as fire-fighting vehicles across the municipality, based on an analysis of population size (including the refugee population) and the occurrence of incidents, would extend the coverage of the emergency department from 800,000 people to 1,000,000 without any increase in resources.

The process of institutionalizing such reviews is already well advanced in all three municipalities. In Sanliurfa, the PMO is about to be established. The municipality is planning to build a new landfill dumpsite, and to use the PMO for land allocation and design, and for obtaining environmental permits, so that the project will be ready for implementation as soon as funding is granted. The PMO will also carry out work on project development training for municipal staff. In Hatay, the PMO is already physically established and three staff members have been appointed by the municipality. UNDP will hire consultants in 2019. Gaziantep decided that it did not need to establish a PMO as such but requested support in the preparation of projects to submit to donors. The municipality had identified priorities but needed to turn them into a strategy document while taking practical steps such as working on design and land allocation issues for priority projects.

The fact that municipalities are using the PMO approach to take proactive and preparatory steps ahead of project submission (such as resolving land allocation issues or seeking the various permits required) bears testimony to the cultural change that this approach facilitates. This will be critical if the municipalities are to emerge from the crisis stronger. Indeed, while donors and international financial institutions like the World Bank, Japan International Cooperation Agency and KfW (Germany) have made significant amounts of funding available to support municipalities, these amounts are still relatively small when compared either to the regular budgets of the municipalities or to the overall impact which the crisis has had on services. Making best use of the time, resources and skills already available to the municipalities is therefore the best way to expand their capacity to match the increased demands of their population. UNDP's role as a catalyst for change has therefore been crucial to the successful transformation of approaches to municipal management.



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For further information, please visit

<http://www.tr.undp.org/content/turkey/en/home/syria-crisis-and-resilience-response.html>

