



BASIC AND HIGHER EDUCATION



CONTEXT:

The EU Trust Fund (EUTF) provides access for refugee, Internally Displaced People (IDPs) and host community children to formal education, non-formal education schemes, accelerated learning and catch-up classes, as well as remedial and homework support activities. There are three areas of support: Access to quality basic education; Improved teaching capacities; and Improved schools' infrastructures.

To date, the EUTF has funded 28 projects in basic education or with basic education components investing EUR 654 million in Lebanon, Jordan, Türkiye, and Iraq. The key implementing partners in this sector are UNICEF, UNRWA, AVSI, UNDP, UNHCR, Save the Children, World Vision, GIZ, KFW and the Ministries of Education in Lebanon, Jordan and Türkiye. Currently, five projects are still ongoing in Türkiye (T04.25 and T04.82), and Jordan, led by KFW (T04.112), as well as in Lebanon (T04.257, T04.302), led by UNICEF and Save the Children, respectively.

BASIC AND HIGHER EDUCATION OUTPUTS

Regarding **access to quality basic education**, the EUTF has subsidised education fees for more than 800,000 children in all partner countries, exceeding planned targets. More than 193,000 children have had access to non-formal education (NFE) with EUTF support, also overachieving targets. Referrals have reached more than 33,000 pupils - 83% of the overall target- mainly in Lebanon. The main challenge in relation to referrals to formal education is the context of economic hardship many families are facing so that children dropout. Additionally, the NFE referral pathways had faced some administrative barriers in past projects.

In all Figures the difference between total figures and the sum of disaggregated ones is due to a residual amount that hasn't been broken down by sex or community of origin at the source. This applies to all indicators where disaggregation is not fully available.



CUT OFF DATE: MARCH 2024 / 12 CONTRIBUTORS / 3 COUNTRIES

01.

Number children whose registration fees for public formal education are subsidised.



801,149
Aggregated current value
701,324
Target

ACCESS TO QUALITY BASIC EDUCATION FACILITATED

427,961

339,231



Women



Men

282,548

284,916



Refugee community



Host community

Lebanon



620,387 / 525,178

Jordan



168,740 / 164,146

Turkey



12,022 / 12,000

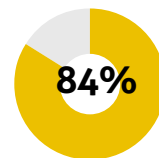
Figure 1.



CUT OFF DATE: MARCH 2024 / 5 CONTRIBUTORS / 2 COUNTRIES

02.

Number of children and adolescents referred to formal education.



33,805
Aggregated current value
40,058
Target

ACCESS TO QUALITY BASIC EDUCATION FACILITATED

8,894

9,843



Women



Men

33,215

590



Refugee community



Host community

Lebanon



32,510 / 38,858

Jordan



1,295 / 1,200

Figure 2.

In terms of **strengthening teaching and school capacities**, more than 60,000 teachers and education personnel have been trained and supported with salary incentives in Lebanon and Türkiye, and to a lesser extent, in Jordan and Iraq.

The topics of the training include child protection and gender-based violence, inclusive education, information management systems or, learning recovery, among others.

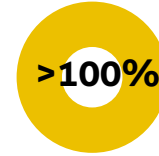


ACCESS TO QUALITY BASIC EDUCATION FACILITATED

03.

Number of children benefitting from non-formal education and learning support programmes.

CUT OFF DATE: MARCH 2024 / 15 CONTRIBUTORS / 4 COUNTRIES



193,723
Aggregated current value
148,551
Target

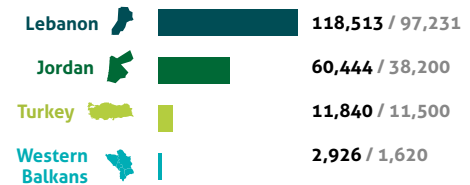
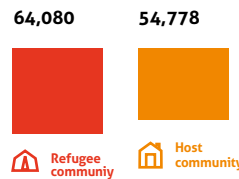
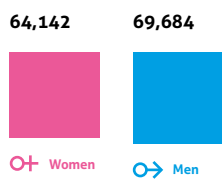


Figure 3.



IMPROVED SCHOOL/ TEACHING CAPACITIES

04.

Number of educational personnel, including teachers, volunteers and administrative staff trained.

CUT OFF DATE: MARCH 2024 / 23 CONTRIBUTORS / 5 COUNTRIES



69,732
Aggregated current value
65,725
Target

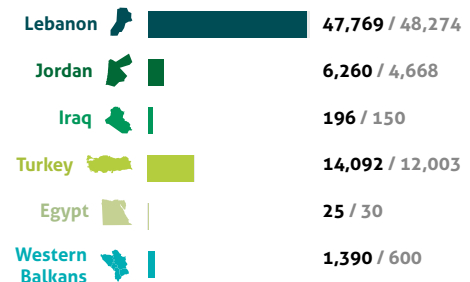
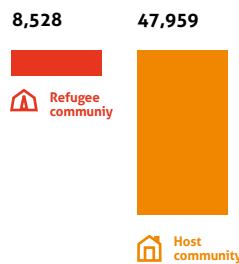
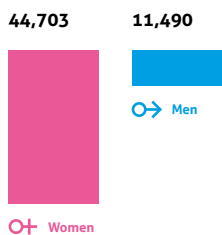


Figure 4.

The focus of **strengthening educational infrastructure** has been on refurbishing and building schools in Türkiye, Jordan and Lebanon, and to a lesser extent in Serbia. To date, 87% of the global targets have been achieved. There are still projects ongoing in Lebanon, Jordan

and Türkiye, so that there is scope to finalise implementation. Some of these projects have faced delays related to the selection of the schools for the refurbishment (Lebanon), different aspects of the procurement process (Jordan), or the earthquake in Türkiye.

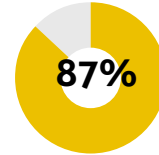


IMPROVED SCHOOL / TEACHING CAPACITIES

CUT OFF DATE: MARCH 2024 / 21 CONTRIBUTORS / 5 COUNTRIES

05.

Number of schools and other educational facilities constructed, refurbished or equipped.



663
Aggregated current value
759
Target



Figure 5.

The EUTF has focused its **higher education support** on **facilitating access to vocational and higher education** through scholarships. In the second and third round of EUTF higher education interventions, projects have been applying a more comprehensive approach with additional support, such as career counselling, psychosocial support, employability and entrepreneurship training, access to job fairs,

internships, placements. The EUTF has invested EUR 108 million in higher education through **11 projects** in total in Lebanon, Jordan, Türkiye, and Iraq. Currently, three projects are still active in Jordan (T04.215), Iraq (T04.218), and Lebanon (T04.220).

Regarding **access to vocational and higher education**, targets have been overachieved in

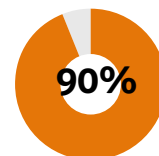


INCREASED ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

CUT OFF DATE: MARCH 2024 / 9 CONTRIBUTORS / 4 COUNTRIES

06.

Number of higher education certificates awarded (including for BA, MA and Vocational education).



5,742
Aggregated current value
6,350
Target

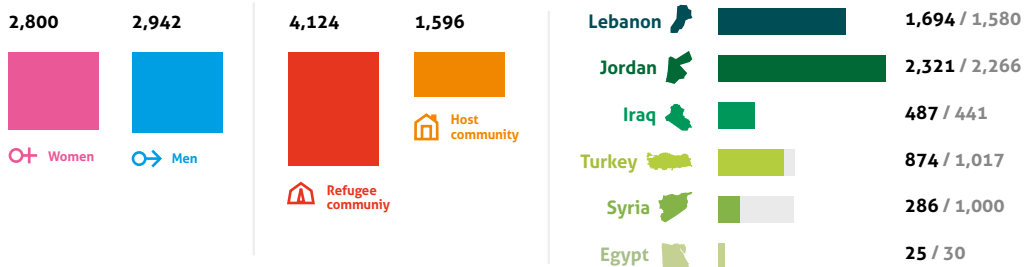


Figure 6.



CUT OFF DATE: MARCH 2024 / 10 CONTRIBUTORS / 4 COUNTRIES

07.

Number of youths, adolescents and adults accessing higher education with Trust Fund support.



9,548
Aggregated current value
7,730
Target

INCREASED ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

4,843



Women

4,670



Men

6,051



Refugee community

3,479



Host community

Lebanon



2,653 / 1,710

Jordan



2,341 / 2,236

Iraq



627 / 487

Turkey



3,072 / 2,251

Syria



785 / 1,000

Egypt

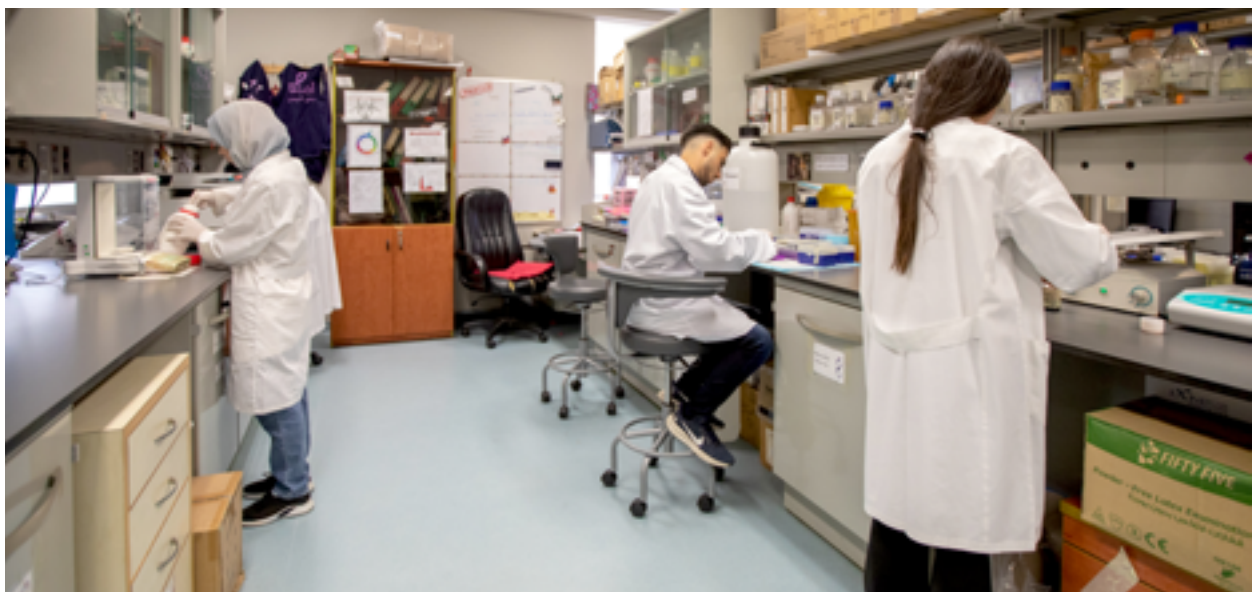


70 / 46

Figure 7.

all countries -Lebanon, Jordan, Türkiye, Iraq, and Egypt- except in Syria. The **graduation rate** has reached 90% globally. In Jordan, there is still one project ongoing that will increase its contribution to the graduation KPI globally. In Türkiye, graduation has reached 71% of the planned

targets, but there are still students enrolled who will graduate soon. In some cases, the dropout rate has been slightly higher than expected due to economic difficulties faced by students, migration or other family challenges.





BASIC EDUCATION OUTCOMES IN LEBANON

Strengthening the public education system in Lebanon to deliver inclusive and quality education for vulnerable school-aged children - including Syrian refugees - ensuring their full access and retention in Lebanon: UNICEF, T04.257

The main aim of this EUTF project is for vulnerable children (aged 3 to 14) to have access to quality and inclusive learning in a safe and protective environment in public schools. This includes access to education and retention for refugee and vulnerable Lebanese children in two scholastic years, promotion of inclusive education approaches in formal and non-formal education, and strengthened capacities of the education system, especially of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE).

Regarding **individual changes**, the recent **ROM report (05/24)** highlights access to education has been ensured for more than 210,000 children on average (56% Lebanese, 48% Syrian) during the years 2020, 2021 and 2022. Completion rates are satisfactory, with 86% for the afternoon shift and 92% for the morning shift (2020/21). Passing rates in G12 official exams were 87% for the afternoon shift and 60% for the morning one (2021). The average pass rate decreased from 76% (2019) to 73% (2022) since many factors are negatively impacting pupils' performance, such as school closures, safety issues, and political instability. To assess absenteeism, UNHCR has provided some data that suggests that only 4.45% of children benefiting from cash for education were absent for more than 10 consecutive days.

Regarding access to NFE, more than 2,000 children with disabilities are enrolled in NFE programmes promoted by UNICEF. The target of 10% of children with disabilities in Inclusive Pilot Schools has been exceeded with 11%. In relation

to having a positive impact on *"cut-off school children providing them with learning opportunities"*, the project used two approaches: Dirasa, a school-based bridging programme; and Makani Multi-Service Community Centres as a community-based programme. The beneficiaries from UNICEF NFE and from the Cash-For Education (CFE) *"positively assessed"* project outcomes, according to the ROM report. CFE and top-ups for teachers had a positive impact on families' motivation creating a conducive environment to ensure not only children's access, but also attendance and retention in formal education. Caregivers also praised the CFE to cover transportation costs and support attendance, the payment modalities, communication and reach out workshops from UNICEF as *"very efficient"* and effective to identify their disability related needs and optional services.

At **institutional level**, the ROM report underlines the importance of 80% of schools expected *"to report on budget planning and expenditures through MEHE's financial management application by the second quarter of 2024"*. This might improve resource allocation and mobilisation. The conducive Transition Resilience Education Fund (TREF) and the collaboration with NGOs (AVSI, LOST, Al Fayhaa, War Child Holland, and World Vision) are mentioned as key factors having helped to implement this institutional improvement. Due to the project, schools have also *"improved data and financial management to ensure needs-based budgeting"*. The consultation process that the project established with target groups and beneficiaries, on the one hand, and with donors, and various stakeholders, on the other, have led to satisfactory feedback and improve MEHE's capacities and the policy framework, ensure access to formal and non-formal education, including children with disabilities. The strengthening of teachers' capacities and officers in Makani centres, Dirasa schools and the ones who will support the newly created Inclusive Education Unit at MEHE, is highlighted in this context, too. Another effect of the project is the request from the Ministry to strengthen MEHE's regional offices to improve its inclusive education mandate.



At **policy level**, changes underlined by the ROM report include the launch of the National Policy on Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs in June 2023. Inclusive schools have increased from 30 to 110. A policy implementation map is being developed by the General Directorate of Education (DOPS), MEHE and UNICEF and is expected in July 2024. MEHE's officers also "*valued the technical support and the project's role in policy revision and development*". After being reviewed, the rollout of the Child

Protection Policy has reached 219 schools, and the ROM report, adds "*with further plans to expand*". Due to the project, MEHE is "*taking practical steps to initiate a coordinated reform roadmap (to improve) teaching and learning governance and cost efficiency*". Although there are limited numbers of children changing from non-formal to formal education, the new legal framework is expected to facilitate this transition.

BASIC EDUCATION OUTCOMES IN JORDAN

EUTF Support to Equitable and Quality Education for Syrian Refugees in Refugee Camps in Jordan: Jordanian Ministry of Education, T04.261

The EUTF, with this third phase of the budget support to the Ministry of Education, has committed to support the Accelerated Access Initiative (AAI) 2.0 as part of Jordan's commitment to prevent a "*lost generation*" of Syrian children. The strengthening of the capacity of the education system to support Syrian refugee children in camps is in the centre of this support. It puts the focus on increasing access of Syrian refugees' students to quality education at the levels of kindergarten, primary and secondary education in camps for the school year 2021-2022, in safe and inclusive learning environments.

At **individual level**, according to the recent **ROM mission (02/24)**, it can be stated that this support has increased enrolment, with more than 35,000 Syrian children accessing education in the camps and that 87% of school-aged children were enrolled in Azraq and 83% in Za'atari. The ROM report underlines that the "*camp schools appear to be working best at kindergarten level and are progressively less satisfactory at higher primary and secondary levels*". There are

currently challenges that are leading to declining enrolment rates in both camps. For example, there are no further educational or vocational opportunities for girls who are performing better in schools. In addition, learning environments are not being comprehensively improved, such as IT facilities, libraries, or science laboratories. There is no access to internet in schools and the schools are not sufficiently supervised nor have proper insulation. There are no greening or beautification measures in the camps, due to the lack of authorities' will to transform Za'atari into a permanent village. All these factors are not conducive to improved learning outcomes. A recent National Diagnostic Assessment (2022) highlights challenges in learning loss in Arabic and Mathematics for both, Jordanian and Syrian pupils. Furthermore, according to the ROM report, the schools continue to run on a "*two-shift*" system, with often overcrowded conditions, which does not improve the quality of the educational environment and its associated outcomes.

In terms of **institutional changes**, the ROM report highlights that the budget support has contributed to improved teaching capacities due to an increased number of teachers and increased access to textbooks and teaching materials. However, organisational and institutional changes at local level have been only partially achieved. Ongoing infrastructural needs to improve insulation or access internet, as mentioned before, are not met yet. At national level, the report underlines the very good technical work



and results of the “*pivotal educational quality and accountability unit (EQUA)*”, which “*provided valuable insights about quality of teaching in camp schools*”. The weakening of supporting structures in the camps is one of the existent challenges, due to a “*considerable reduction in the number of community social organisations (CSOs) and NGOs, operating within the camps and amongst other affected communities*”.

At **national level**, the report points out that MoE shows a “*strong preference for the off-budget pooled finance of the other AAI donors to the non-targeted EU budget support as they considered it to be more flexible and timelier*.” In terms of policy dialogue, the strategic situation, being the EU, the only donor using budget support in education,

has helped to move from “*an emergency to a development context*”. However, this also might put the allowances to Syrian teaching volunteers at risk. The ROM mission highlights the importance of maximising the potential of policy dialogue to ensure effective decision making to protect this type of investments. The short duration of this action does not help to plan wider support and/or reforms either. In general, it is not possible to attribute changes to the budget support. However, it is evident that this budget support as part of the AAI 2.0 framework has been vital to prevent the collapse of the education system in Jordan.

HIGHER EDUCATION OUTCOMES IN LEBANON

Higher and Further Education Opportunities and Perspectives for Syrians and Vulnerable Youth in Lebanon (HOPES-LEB), DAAD, T04.220

HOPES-LEB, implemented by DAAD, Campus France and Nuffic, promotes higher and further education opportunities and perspectives for Syrians and vulnerable youth in Lebanon to improve livelihood prospects. Specifically, the project aims at increasing access to higher education opportunities, improving employability prospects and strengthening higher education institutions, local and regional institutions to provide better support around higher education.

The recent **final evaluation (02/24)** highlights the award of 559 scholarships for the public Lebanese University (LU) and the Lebanese International University (LIU), the biggest private higher education institution, exceeding the 400-target. Scholarships includes registration and tuition fees,

a living allowance, and local transportation. In terms of graduation, the most recent QIN (03/24) reports that 72.2% of all students (90% target) received their diploma, due to a higher dropout rate. Reasons for dropout include leaving the country, failing exams, application for scholarships abroad or work responsibilities. Regarding access to courses to improve employability, 580 have completed from a total of 987 scholarships awards, showing a 59% (target of 75%) completion rate. From the courses, students appreciate access to improve: English competence, specialisation in their field, digital skills, and job search and application skills. According to the evaluation, students, in general, showed high degree of satisfaction. Regarding **individual changes**, all students are facing a difficult context, but the possibility of pursuing further educational opportunities and self-development are highlighted in the final evaluation as positive effects. Most of them underline the financial and family situation as main challenges. They state that HOPES-LEB has helped them “*overcome the difficult times and increased future life and career prospects, especially outside Lebanon*” and contributed to their networking with fellow students.



Regarding **institutional changes**, a wide range of 20 projects (target of 18) has been implemented to support more than 5,300 students, with a completion rate of 78%, according to the evaluation. The projects aimed at facilitating the transition from secondary to higher and further education, or from higher and further education to the labour market and limiting the risk of students dropping out. Despite some weaknesses in terms of too high ambition of the projects, the timing or requirements for students in terms of dedication, the evaluation states that those *“short projects contributed to capacity development of institutions involved not only in terms of project implementation capacity, but also through increasing the teaching and training skills of their staff.”* Another effect of the project activities mentioned are the *“linkages established between the higher education institutions and NGOs and participant’s motivation to work together”*. Other elements of positive impact include *“enhanced fundraising skills of their participants, established connections between the implementing partners, enabled creation of project consortia for future Erasmus+ calls”* or *“further development of partner institutions’ capacities in the provision of customised trainings for vulnerable Lebanese and refugee youth”*.

At **national level**, thanks to HOPES-LEB, the Alumni network is well established and involves scholarship holders of DAFI (UNHCR programme), HOPES-LEB, EDU-SYRIA and SPARK, networking more than 1,000 participants, where 71% are Syrian, 13% Lebanese and 8% Jordanians. A wide range of activities and training sessions -all very positively assessed- has been organised and attracted a high number of students, although the facilitation of jobs and internships has been limited due to the situation in the country and limitations in the labour market for Syrian refugees. At sectoral level, the paper developed by HOPES-LEB Higher Education in Times of Collapse (2022) has been broadly accepted by decision making stakeholders in the higher education sector in Lebanon, according to the final evaluation. It has informed the Lebanon Five-Year Higher Education plan 2023-2027 and the Brussels VI Syria conference. Although the evaluation has not had the chance to interview the Ministry of Higher Education, it reports that *“a considerable dialogue has been established between the HOPES-LEB and institutions”* in the country and at international level. The sustainability of these efforts remains unclear, although it is evident it would be advised to link the Alumni network to an existent institution.

HIGHER EDUCATION OUTCOMES IN JORDAN

Vocational Education and Training & Higher Education Programme for vulnerable Syrians and disadvantaged youth from host communities (EDU-SYRIA II – Additional Scholarships), GJU, T04.166

The second phase of EDU Syria *“Vocational Education and Training & Higher Education Programme for vulnerable Syrians and disadvantaged youth from host communities (T04.166)*, implemented by the German Jordanian

University (GJU) aims at providing access to higher and vocational training to the Syrian and disadvantaged Jordanian students.

The recent **ROM mission (03/24)** assesses effectiveness of the programme as *“good”*. The programme has awarded more than 250 scholarships (43% for bachelor Syrian students, 30% for Jordanian master studies, 8% for Business, Technology and Education Council -BTEC- level 5 to Jordanian students, and 19% for BTEC 5 to Syrian students. At the time of the ROM, 75% had been graduated, while 11% were still enrolled and 13% had dropped out. In the recent QIN (03/24), the number of graduates has already exceeded the target of 200. At the same time, the dropout rate will be 16%, which is higher than the



10% target that had been set. There are several reasons why dropout is slightly higher, such as the effects of the pandemic, limited living allowances, financial challenges, immigration, poor academic performance, limited English proficiency, or time management issues due to work and family responsibilities.

According to the ROM report, **changes at individual level** after graduation include academic achievement, as well as *“increased motivation, self-esteem and confidence to pursue their education and self-development further”*. In terms of employment, information from tracer studies is still very limited. However, some graduates, despite praising the quality of their studies and the university, are frustrated due to limited access to jobs. Jordan continues to show high level of unemployment and the BTEC Level 5 diplomas are not always accepted as other bachelor's degrees. Syrian students face similar challenges than Jordanian ones, but in a more amplified way since they are affected by additional restrictions in the labour market. This leaves them less options, such as accepting underpaid jobs, work remotely for other companies, migrate or work without a work permit. Nevertheless, the ROM report underlines other positive effects. The National Action Fund (NAF) reported that 90% of Jordanian graduates' families from EDU-SYRIA *“stopped receiving NAF's aid due to reaching the minimum income level for a decent life”*. The scholarship is not the only factor than can be attributed to this, but it has likely contributed.

Institutionally, the cooperation mechanism between the consortium members, GJU, Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST), Luminus Technical University College, and Zarqa University, has been strengthened since 2016 by the EUTF support. The ROM report shows how all partners have been directly involved in the planning phase so that they were able to *“use their teaching capacities, generate additional income and fulfil a humanitarian part of their institutional mission.”* This means providing discounts on their tuition fees and taking additional care for students coming from other universities (in case of master's level students) or from the refugee community (in case of Syrian students). This has been praised by the ROM mission as the *“most significant”* strength of EDU-SYRIA. The cooperation between the consortium, the Ministry of Social Development and NAF has contributed to do effective outreach

to disadvantaged Jordanian students. At regional level, the EU Regional Network for Alumni allows EDU-SYRIA graduates to benefit from job skills training sessions, events, and a mentoring programme. Currently, 179 graduates were registered. Sustainability of the network, however, is ensured until October 2024. National policy changes were not part of the EDU-SYRIA project, although national stakeholders were involved, such as the Ministry of Higher Education, the Ministry of Social Development or NAF.

Changes at **national level** are not yet evident at this stage. Nevertheless, a new Higher Education Alliance has been initiated by UNHCR *“to better coordinate and facilitate refugees' access to higher education and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) opportunities”*. GJU had recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with UNHCR to align their respective scholarship programmes. Furthermore, the success of EDU-SYRIA has attracted additional resources, EUR 9 million from the Neighbourhood, Development, and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI – Global Europe) that will be implemented until 2030.