Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) Programme for Syrians and Other Refugees
- June 2020 -

Background

The Syrian refugee crisis is in its 10th year, with no end in sight. Millions have been forced to flee their homes to neighbouring countries, their futures uncertain. Children continue to pay the highest price and bear the heaviest burden of the crisis: their education, their hopes and dreams, and even their lives, all continue to be at risk. Turkey is home to the largest number of refugees, migrants and asylum seekers, standing at over 4 million. Nearly 3.6 million are Syrian including over 1.6 million children. More than 680,000 refugee children have enrolled in schools. Despite significant achievements and the commitment of the Government of Turkey, hosting the highest number of refugees in the world is putting enormous strain on the country’s basic services and infrastructure, particularly when it comes to education and child protection.

The Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) programme aims to encourage enrolment and improve school attendance of children. It is a national social assistance programme which has been implemented by the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services since 2003 and was extended to Syrian and other refugee families in mid-2017. This extension is being implemented through a close partnership between the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, the Ministry of National Education, the Turkish Red Crescent and UNICEF, and has been made possible by the generous support of the European Union, as well as the Governments of Norway and the United States of America. After a very successful implementation during 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years, CCTE continues to reach refugee families in the new school year. Furthermore, as of September 2018, CCTE for Refugees is also reaching children enrolled in the Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) which is intended for out-of-school children as a transition pathway into formal education. And as of September 2019, increased ‘beginning of term’ payments have been introduced for secondary school and ALP students to further encourage their schooling.

Cash Transfer Component

The cash transfer component of the CCTE for Refugees programme applies the same rules and regulations as applied for Turkish families under the national CCTE programme. The families receive cash support every two months through Kızılaykarts on the condition that the child has attended school regularly (at least 80%) in the relevant preceding school months. Families of students enrolled in Turkish public schools, temporary education centres and Accelerated Learning Programme are eligible to benefit from the programme. The cash component of the programme is nationwide.

The amounts paid depend on the gender and the grades of the school-going children. Kindergarten and primary school children (from kindergarten to 8th grades) are entitled to monthly amounts of 35 TL for boys and 40 TL for girls. Students in high school (from 9th to 12th grades) receive monthly amounts of 50 TL for boys and 60 TL for girls. Students in ALP receive a monthly amount of 60 TL regardless of gender. Furthermore, additional support is provided to families at the beginning of each school term in the form of 100 TL per beneficiary child in primary school (including Kindergarten), 200 TL per beneficiary child in lower secondary school and 250 TL per beneficiary child in upper secondary school or ALP. About 78% of CCTE beneficiaries also benefit from the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) programme which provides monthly cash transfers of 120 TL per family member.

The extension of the CCTE programme to Syrians and other refugees is made possible through financial support from EU’s Directorate General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migrants (PRM) of the US State Department and the Government of Norway.

Despite the closure of schools as part of the confinement measures imposed to curb the spread of COVID-19 pandemic, the cash assistance continued as scheduled for all eligible children, in line with the national programme.
The CCTE Programme includes a strategic child protection component to ensure the continued school enrolment and attendance of the most vulnerable refugee children, as well as their referral to child protection services, when needed. This component is implemented by outreach teams consisting of social workers and translators working in the field. The outreach teams visit families whose children are not meeting, or are at risk of not meeting, the attendance condition of the CCTE programme. These teams assess and identify the children’s and families’ needs in order to address them in a personalized and systematic manner. Through this component, the CCTE programme is expected to mitigate child protection risks and violations, which are closely intertwined with economic vulnerabilities and contribute to non-attendance at school as well as child labor, child marriage, physical and emotional violence and family separation. The child protection component is focusing on 15 provinces with the highest number of refugees.

Due to movement restrictions put in place due to the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, TRC Child Protection teams were not able to carry out household visits from mid-March 2020 through June 2020. During this period, the teams focused on following up at risk cases that had previously been identified. Therefore, no new data is available for the reporting period.

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