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My Burch Fellowship project has been rooted in my passion for educating young women in STREAM (Science, Technology, Robotics, Engineering, Arts, and Math). My efforts for this cause precede my Burch Fellowship project. In 2018, I founded Pink STREAM, a non-profit organization providing educational programs for young women. After delivering courses and workshops in North Carolina for 4 years, I decided to take my teachings to different settings to expand my vision as an educator.

With four million refugees, Türkiye is the world's largest refugee-hosting country, according to data from UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency. This creates a refugee crisis with many needs and issues to be addressed: shelter, food, jobs, social dynamics, integration, and more.

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STEM Education Programs for K-12 Girls in Turkey

These many pressing issues often cause education to be dismissed and deprioritized. Girls' education in particular is viewed as a luxury by their families and communities. As local community leader Shahla Raza said in our interview: "Girls' education is the first casualty when refugee families face financial hardship."



There are 576,500 Syrian refugee girls in Türkiye from ages 5 to 18. Having a good education is crucial for these girls as it shapes their social status, economic standing, career, and future.

As Pink STREAM, our vision is to provide inspiration, empowerment, and educational opportunities for girls to succeed in their academic journeys, becoming successful individuals and leaders in society. STREAM education holds much potential for this vision because it increases creativity, problem-solving, critical thinking, and overall academic success. Additionally, STREAM careers can offer great opportunities for refugee women as they are well-paid, stable, secure, flexible, and diverse.

Our approach is to provide free courses and workshops on STREAM topics that are shaping the future: robotics, coding, electronics, 3D printing, artificial intelligence, and virtual reality. These programs introduce and accelerate students in



STREAM, motivating them to pursue these fields. We deliver these programs by partnering with refugee community centers, schools, and organizations as part of our collective impact model.

As my Burch Fellowship project, I spent 3 months in Türkiye in the summer of 2022 delivering educational STREAM programs to marginalized communities. I established partnerships with 3 refugee community



centers and 2 public schools. We hosted 11 educational programs in 3 cities with a total of 200 participants. I was also able to network and conduct interviews with different

community leaders, nonprofits, and organizations. Additionally, I shared stories about my entrepreneurial activities at conferences, breaking the stereotypes of an entrepreneur and computer scientist.

My experience in Türkiye was both eye-opening and life-changing for my career, lifestyle, perspective, and vision. This experience has empowered me to keep working on these issues after graduation as a community leader and social entrepreneur. I have proven to myself and others that I have the unique set of skills and experience to successfully continue this work and have an impact on many lives. Whatever challenges that might come with being a social entrepreneur, this experience has prepared me for them. I am now ready to dive into a life of a changemaker.

Pink
STREAM