CASE STUDY
CONNECTING LOCAL TALENT TO GLOBAL OPPORTUNITY

How TPF Connected Underserved Students in Türkiye with Worldwide Career Mentorship

PROJECT NAME:	English Chance Program & Goldman Sachs Speed Mentoring
STAKEHOLDERS:	Turkish Philanthropy Funds (TPF), Esas Sosyal (Esas Social), Goldman Sachs
TIME PERIOD:	April 2024-May 2025

Overview

Through the English Chance Program and a unique partnership with Goldman Sachs, TPF and Esas Sosyal opened new pathways for students from under-resourced Turkish universities to strengthen their English, build professional skills, and connect with global career mentors.

While the English Chance Program already provides language training, career development, and mentoring, the partnership with Goldman Sachs Community TeamWorks added a powerful new dimension: the Speed Mentoring Event.

This initiative brought together Goldman Sachs professionals from around the world with Turkish students for real-time, high-impact guidance—broadening horizons, building confidence, and exposing participants to career perspectives at a truly global level.

Key Takeaways

FIRST GLOBAL MENTORSHIP LINK
Through TPF's facilitation with the leadership of Basak Yavuz, a long-time TPF donor and a Partner at Goldman Sachs, Esas Sosyal partnered with Goldman Sachs to bring international professionals directly into the English Chance Program for the first time.

DIRECT GLOBAL EXPOSURE
28 students engaged with 12 Goldman Sachs mentors from offices across the U.S., U.K., and beyond—gaining access to perspectives rarely available to students from lesser-known Turkish universities.

HIGH PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION
Students rated the event extremely positively (overall satisfaction 9.29/10; communication skills 9.29/10; productivity 9.04/10).

CONFIDENCE & CAREER READINESS
Students reported increased confidence in English communication, improved self-expression, and new insights into professional pathways.

MUTUAL VALUE
Mentors also described the exchange as inspiring and enriching, highlighting the two-way benefits of cross-border knowledge-sharing.

SCALABLE MODEL
The success of this pilot shows the potential of corporate volunteer programs to complement language and skills training with real-time global mentorship.

The Challenge

LANGUAGE BARRIERS
Research by Esas Social shows that one in four Turkish university students report inadequate English proficiency.

SKILL GAPS
55% of university students seek additional courses outside of school to strengthen employability.



NETWORK LIMITATIONS
Students from lesser-known universities lack exposure to industry professionals and global career pathways, which hinders competitiveness in the job market.

The Response: Supporting Youth Through Skill-Building

Youth employment in Türkiye is not only an economic challenge—it is also a matter of equity and inclusion. Proficiency in English, professional soft skills, and access to diverse networks are vital drivers of upward mobility, yet for many first-generation university students, these opportunities remain out of reach.

Esas Social launched the English Chance Program in 2020 to address these challenges by offering English training, structured soft-skills workshops by a prestigious institution, Berlitz,—including time management, CV preparation, diversity and inclusion, and interview simulations—and comprehensive career development resources.and global career pathways, which hinders competitiveness in the job market.

Innovative Partnership for Greater Impact
Esas Social, TPF and Goldman Sachs

The collaboration between Esas Sosyal, TPF, and Goldman Sachs shows how cross-sector partnerships can multiply social impact. Esas Sosyal brings local expertise and a data-driven approach to youth development; TPF contributes its philanthropic network and facilitated the connection with Goldman Sachs through the Community TeamWorks Program; and Goldman Sachs provides global corporate expertise and volunteer mentorship.

The **Speed Mentoring Event**, which connected Turkish students with Goldman Sachs professionals worldwide for real-time, high-impact career guidance merged language training, professional skill-building, and international mentorship into a single experience. The initiative strengthened employability, built confidence, and expanded students' career horizons.

This partnership demonstrates that when underserved youth, particularly women and first-generation graduates, are equipped with targeted training, mentorship, and access to global networks, they are more likely to overcome systemic barriers. Empowering young people with these tools fosters inclusive economic opportunity and drives long-term social mobility in Türkiye.

"One word: EXCELLENT. Through Esas Sosyal, I had the opportunity to meet mentors whom I would rarely have the chance to meet given my own life circumstances and network. From the moment I joined the program, as Emine Hanım rightly pointed out, the emphasis on social aspects and providing equal opportunities was a priceless example of a future role model for me. Having direct communication with those mentors and participating in such a high-quality institutional event was truly delightful for me. I found the event to be highly productive until the very last minute, and I didn't want it to end."

"At a time when I felt inadequate due to lack of experience after the job interviews as a recent graduate, this program gave me hope. I left with many notes; it was fantastic for me."

"Excellent organization and execution of the event. I was very surprised on how outgoing, open and honest the participants were communicating / exchanging with me. A very natural dialog on many different topics. I had an unforgettable time, still smiling full of joy."

M.C., GoldmanSachs Mentor

ESAS SOCIAL

Esas Social is a pioneering social investment platform established in 2015 by Esas Holding, one of Türkiye's leading investment firms. Focused on addressing systemic inequality, Esas Social develops long-term programs that create equal opportunities for young people from underprivileged backgrounds—especially first-generation university graduates from public universities.

Its flagship initiatives, such as the First Chance Program and the English Chance Program, provide comprehensive support through training, mentoring, employment readiness, and language development. Esas Social stands out for its data-driven approach and commitment to measurable impact, social justice, and intergenerational equity.

With strong ties to civil society and the private sector, Esas Sosyal acts as a bridge between youth and opportunity. Their partnership with TPF has enabled their work to reach a wider, global audience and connect with the Turkish diaspora in meaningful ways.

GOLDMAN SACHS

Goldman Sachs is a global financial powerhouse that also leads in corporate citizenship through volunteerism and philanthropy. With a focus on economic empowerment, education, and inclusive growth, Goldman Sachs encourages its employees to engage in meaningful service—mentoring young people, sharing expertise, and supporting social causes around the world through the Goldman Sachs Community Teamworks Program.

As part of this commitment, Goldman Sachs partnered with Esas Social and TPF to participate in the Speed Mentoring event for the English Chance Program volunteers from various Goldman Sachs offices around the world including the London, New York, Zurich, offered real-time career advice, mentorship, and inspiration to Turkish youth navigating academic and professional transitions.

This partnership reflects Goldman Sachs' belief in the power of knowledge-sharing and inclusive mentorship. By connecting with young people in Türkiye, they help expand career aspirations, build confidence, and open doors to global perspectives.



Impact in Numbers

ENGLISH CHANCE PROGRAM
(4th Cohort, Apr 2024 – May 2025)

500
participants (69% women)

88%
program completion rate

85%
accessed internships, workshops, trainings, or international programs during the program

93%
reported the program strengthened their CVs

86%
felt their employment prospects improved after graduation

84%
gained valuable networking opportunities

Social Return on Investment (SROI):
1 TL invested = 6.6 TL in social value

GOLDMAN SACHS SPEED MENTORING
(July 17, 2024)

28
mentees

12
Goldman Sachs mentors

Overall satisfaction:
9.29/10

Productivity rating:
9.04/10

Communication skills rating:
9.29/10

Impact Beyond Numbers

Beyond the numbers, participants reported increased confidence, improved self-expression, and enhanced networking skills—particularly in English. Engaging with global professionals offered valuable inspiration, career guidance, and motivation to pursue future goals. The experience fostered a strong sense of inclusion, belonging, and career readiness, while providing hope and encouragement to recent graduates facing challenging job market conditions. Mentors and mentees alike described the exchange as mutually enriching, with both sides gaining new perspectives and learning from one another.

Conclusion

The collaboration between Esas Social, TPF, and Goldman Sachs demonstrates how targeted investment, corporate voluntary engagement, and grassroots expertise can unite to empower youth and unlock their potential. Programs like English Chance are vital for closing opportunity gaps and preparing Türkiye's next generation for success in a global economy.

By integrating language training, professional skills development, and global mentorship, and by leveraging innovative cross-sector partnerships, this model not only equips Türkiye's young people for today's job market but also positions them to thrive in an interconnected world.

"I am honored to connect talented young people in Türkiye with experienced professionals through Goldman Sachs' Community TeamWorks. The participants, selected from Esas Sosyal's English Chance program, exemplify the potential of youth empowered through education and mentorship. Seeing my colleagues step up to mentor, share their experiences, and inspire students was deeply meaningful—not just for the participants, but for us as well. Bringing my colleagues on board has been incredibly rewarding; witnessing them guide students, share insights, and build confidence shows the real impact mentorship can have. Initiatives like this open doors for youth, broaden perspectives, and create opportunities that truly change lives."

Başak Yavuz
Partner, Goldman Sachs