



# REPORT

## **SUMMER ACADEMIC INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME AT IMPR HUMANITARIAN**

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## Introduction

Since July 2016, IMPR Humanitarian has been implementing field based internship programmes for undergraduate and postgraduate students and those concerned for both part-time and fulltime who interested in humanitarian assistance that has more importance day-by-day within the region. Till now 169 interns have attended to the programme and completed 25-days internship programme.

IMPR Humanitarian has provided the persons deserved taking place in both theoretical and practical stage in terms of building the capacity of the persons who have educated in the field of humanitarian studies by means of internship programme. Thus the programme has contributed the trainees with regard to increase knowledge, skill and exercise.

After completing her 3-months long-term internship programme, Tilloeva Gulnigor Salimovna, one of IMPR Humanitarian's intern, has written her own thesis.

## Background of the Organization

The internship I was completing within this summer had taken place in the International Middle East Peace Research Center or IMPR Humanitarian as it is known today throughout Turkey and the region, which is one of the biggest non-governmental, non-profit and humanitarian aid organizations based on Turkey. It was established as a think tank organization in 2011 with the name of IMPR and was conducting research on the main social issues of the Middle East region. In 2013, the organization opened humanitarian aid department that is currently known as IMPR Humanitarian and continued its work on the humanitarian issues of the Middle East, especially the issues related to refugees. IMPR Humanitarian as non-profit organization plays an important role in Turkey and the region in addressing the issues related to the refugees.

The NGO aims at meeting the basic needs and improving living conditions of the individuals and communities that are affected by humanitarian crisis, conflicts, human rights violations and natural disasters. The organization continues its works at national

and international level in accordance with the international standards of humanitarian privacy. It functions with the principles of non-discrimination, transparency, impartiality, and accountability. IMPR Humanitarian plays an important role in enhancing the living conditions of crisis affected individuals and communities through activities and emergency responses carried out at national and international level. The organization directs the attention of relevant organizations to crisis regions by carrying out field studies, which regularly analyze the conditions of crisis-affected people, and publishing situation reports. Direct and quick response to the crisis affected individuals and communities is also one of the main principles of IMPR Humanitarian. In the humanitarian field, IMPR Humanitarian specifically works with refugees. Besides field visits the organization provides life improving protection support to vulnerable refugees and host families in Turkey, awareness rising counseling on work permit, early marriages, access to healthcare, child labor, women's rights, gender-based violence etc. It has Women Community Centers, Protection and Work Permit Offices, Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Offices and Field Offices in 21 cities and regions where majority of refugees live throughout Turkey with its headquarter in Ankara and the abovementioned offices in Istanbul, Izmir, Sanliurfa, Gaziantep, Urfa, Adana, Konya, Batman, Mersin, Bursa, Hatay, etc.



The organization meets its aims and objectives in partnership with European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Danish Refugee Council, (DRC) United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), US Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (USBPRM), Save The Children, International Rescue Committee, World Vision, Aktion Deutschland Hilft (ADH), Concern Worldwide, Irish Aid, Polska Akcja Humanitarian (PAH) and Turkish Universities and NGO's.

As an NGO working with refugees and for refugees, IMPR Humanitarian is working not only in national but also international level. In addition, it analyzes the political situations in Syria and Iraq and keeps its eyes close on protecting the rights of the refugees

coming from these countries. It has field offices in Syria and Iraq and cooperates with local institutions in these countries on information and awareness rising projects as well as aid provision. Majority of the beneficiaries and respondents of IMPR Humanitarian are refugees are from Syria followed by Iraq and Afghanistan. However, this does not mean that the organization is primarily focusing on the refugees from these countries. It works for people from all countries that have been affected by different socio political and natural crisis. Additionally, there have been cases where asylum seekers or international protection beneficiaries from Yemen, Sudan, Somali and Iran have benefited from the activities of IMPR Humanitarian.

Most important principles that IMPR Humanitarian's activities are based on are human and community based approaches, the scope of which is to carry out its works at the highest level for people in order to maintain their honorable right to life, which is attributed to them due to being human. In addition to that, IMPR Humanitarian follows a Non-Discrimination policy to ensure that the crisis affected people and communities use their protection rights offered by universal human rights norms, conventions, and laws. In doing so, the organization respects every and each individual's rights and has adopted a principle that each individual is born free and with equal rights. Independence and Impartiality are also important principles of the organization. Thus, the works that it conducts are independent and impartial from political actors. Additionally, IMPR Humanitarian gives high priority to humanitarian work at national and international level and adopts principles of independence and impartiality towards parties of conflict too. Other than that, IMPR Humanitarian teams adopt transparency and accountability as the most important principle towards beneficiaries, partners, associates and supporters throughout the course of its works.

While looking for different international, national and local organizations working on human rights issues, throughout the course of 2015-2016 academic year I had applied for internship in many organizations working in the fields of human rights in many EU countries, Eurasian countries and Turkey. I had acceptance from UN Women in Tajikistan and an organization working on migrants rights in Russia. Internship opportunities at IMPR Humanitarian were suggested to me by a friend. As I went deeper into the details and the area of activities of the organization, I was deeply interested in getting an internship position here. Therefore, I made an application for internship in this organization and was accepted. My decision to accept this offer was driven

by my desire to be part of humanitarian rights issues in the Middle East, go deeper into the issues related to refugee movements and learning in details about refugees' problems and their day-to-day concerns in the country different than their own.



Additionally, this internship opportunity was very unique as it was dealing with very ongoing issue that is worth to be part of as it opens your eyes to the very important reality of today's world. Most importantly, this internship opportunity was giving me an opportunity to observe human rights under conflict situations and see the hardships that they go through in order to preserve their basic human right that is the right

to life, which is hardly possible in the countries they come from. By doing so I wanted to feel, see, observe and help to the best of my abilities the refugees in the most challenging and unwillingly transitional moment of their life, which would make me able to address their problems more analytically.

## Duties and Responsibilities in the Protection and Work Permit's office

I started my internship with IMPR Humanitarian on 27th of June and finished it on 27th of September. For 5 weeks, I was working in the Protection and Work Permit's office of IMPR Humanitarian as a protection assistant, which is located in Dogantepe area of Ankara. This branch of the organization implements its works in coordination with UNHCR. It was established in January 1, 2016 and by the time, I switched to the other office; they had already visited 1187 cases. It also on the daily basis conducts sessions and counselling on different important issues mainly child labor, education for children from refugee families, early marriages, work permit, access to healthcare, and university scholarships for refugees, etc. As a protection assistant I was going to house visits together with a supervisor from the organization and was involved in the face-to-face communications with the refugees, was observing the housing conditions of the families, their health conditions and studying their problems and reporting

about this to the officer during the sum-up meeting by the end of the working day. Besides the house, visits I was helping the office in entering the data gathered from the field into the online information system of the organization. Within the frame that I was in the Protection and Work Permit Office, I entered 49 cases from paper to the online system.

During the 5 weeks of work in the protection office, I visited 64 houses with the protection team and observed the conditions of these families. However, my communication with them was indirect because of the language barriers. When we were visiting the households we were going in a pair of two one male and one female because of the ethical norms of the organization and the cultural differences. Usually the pairs were organized with one native Arabic speaker and a staff from the organization. Therefore, in this sense, the Arabic speakers were translating for us the interviews and we were writing them down in English. IMPR Humanitarian has a house visit Protection Screening Form, which mainly covers the day to day material, social, legal, healthcare and family problems refugees face with while being in Turkey. This form is used for house visits by the Protection and Work Permit's office as well as the Aid and Relief Center of IMPR Humanitarian, where I did the remaining 7 weeks of my internship.

Besides the protection house visits I had a chance to visit 6 households with the Educational Team project. The education project was a 3 month project that was based on a survey that aimed at finding out about the educational level of the children and their parents and see whether children are going to school or not and if not why. Additionally it aimed to find out whether parents are willing to send their children to school or not and if they send would it be Turkish or Arabic Schools. This project also aimed at finding out whether parents want to send their children to English, Turkish, Arabic, Computer literacy courses after-school programs and literacy/numeracy, life-skills, remedial and catch-up programs if they are offered by an organization. In addition, the questionnaires included a section on how the refugees get access to information about their rights. As the observations showed generally, the parents of the children are interested in sending their children to school. However, because of the problems with ID they could not register their children to school. Most of the parents were willing to send their children to Turkish regular schools because they want their children to be more integrated into the Turkish society. Those who wanted their children to attend Arabic schools explained that they hope to return to their countries

after the war finishes and it would be easier for the children to continue their education in the countries of their origin. Most of the respondents interviewed on this date informed that they have obtained information about their rights through social media such as Facebook, the municipality and information from friends. Generally, this only day of house visits showed that access to education is a key problem for refugees from because of their invalid IDs.

The Protection and Work Permit Office was also providing help to refugees in the hospitals with translation and healthcare arrangements. I had a chance to visit the hospital twice. First case we were following up the case of a family from Yemen who was in Turkey as an International Protection Applicant. They had come for treatment of their children. The family had 3 children with physical and mental disability and we were helping them with arrangement of their place and getting proper treatment in the rehabilitation center. Among these three children their 9 years old son had 90% mental disability, 80% physical disability and 27 visual disability and was thus 99% disable. Their 5 years old daughter was 80% physically, 70% mentally, 27% visually disable, and thus 96% disable. Their 4 years old daughter had 5% mental, 8% physical and 27% visual disability. This family was hosted free by a municipality in Ankara and were provided with shelter because of their children's health condition and economic situation. We talked to the doctor of the children and the children were placed in the rehabilitation center. Their mother was asked to stay with them in the hospital to take care of them. The second case I visited in the hospital was of a Syrian family. They were living in Sanliurfa and came to Ankara for treatment of their 2 month old, who had hole in the heart. We arranged their treatment in the hospital, helped with translation and placing the child and his mother in the hospital. Took his father to a dormitory, which is provided by the Ankara Municipality for people who come especially to Ankara for treatment. It is a short-time accommodation that is provided to refugees for one month for free by the Turkish government, especially to those who are in Ankara as a result of the health treatment of their children or first-degree family member.

Besides all this, I was taking part in the group counselling and helping with the arrangement of the group counselling meetings. Beneficiary of these counselling were mainly Syrian and Iraqi (very few) refugees. During the data entering process there were some cases that had been written in Turkish and I was translating

them to English. My Turkish level was enough to translate those backgrounds because the situations were generally similar and knew the important terms. In case of not knowing a word, was using online-translators. For assurance of the correctness of the translations, the supervisors were checking at the translated cases. The Protection and Work Permit Office had protection team, which was going for house visits, Work Permit advisor who was providing beneficiaries with relevant information about obtaining work permit. Also, a lawyer was helping beneficiaries with legal services and assistance in case of necessity. Volunteers and interns were also contributing greatly to the work in the office. Volunteers in IMPR Humanitarian are mainly from among the refugees and their work was paid. They were working only 10 days a month. Interns were considered as part of the protection team and their work was unpaid.

## Duties in the Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Office of IMPR Humanitarian

I spend the second half of my internship in the Aid and Relief Center of IMPR Humanitarian, which implements its work in cooperation with the Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection of EU and World vision. It was established on April 15, 2016. It is located in Yesiloz neighborhood of Kecioren district of Ankara. I worked there from the beginning of August until the end of September. This office as the Protection and Work Permit office carries out house visits. The protection screening form for this office is the same as in the Protection and Work Permit Office. Therefore, here as there we were constantly visiting refugee households. However; this office besides going for house visits to study the problems of the refugees was also going for house visits to provide aid to most vulnerable families. The aids that were provided were mainly food baskets, baby needs, diapers, wheelchairs and in some cases some furniture that were taken to the office by individuals and the partnering organizations. Aid provision to the most vulnerable groups was provided based on the criterias of the Special Needs Funds (SNF). Based on those criterias we were visiting households for rechecking in order to make sure that those families who were graded as SNF were in real need of aid. Only after reassurance it was decided by the committee to be more objective. Whether to provide aid to the case or not, the SNF cases were submitted to the responsible institutions to bring us aid and then we distributed them. The Aid and Relief Center was also providing livelihood group counselling, referral and

awareness raising activities. It also had a psychologist and lawyer who were providing help to the people in need. The psychologist was providing individual consultations for people who were going through psychological distress as a result of the stress experienced during the war in the countries of their origin. Access to education is a major problem for refugees in Turkey, because most do not have awareness about access to schooling for their children in Turkey. In such cases, our lawyer has helped families to register their children at school. The lawyer helps beneficiaries with other day-to-day legal issues. This office also has a protection desk, where refugees come on daily basis, report about their problems and concerns, and get information or advice.



In the Aid and Relief Center, I was also visiting households together with another pair to register the families and determine their major problematics. Within the timeframe I was there, I visited 41 households with the protection team and we were registering the families, learning their problems and reporting about the SNF cases to the SNF case management officer. The households that I visited during the house visits with the protection team from this office were mainly located in Baraj neighborhood. This is a very newly built neighborhood and the housing conditions are very good here. Other areas where majority refugees live are Yeshiloz, Altindag, Doghanteppe, Onder, Chubuk, Solfasol, Mamak, Baghlarichi etc. Housing conditions are really good only in

Mamak and Baraj neighborhoods rental costs which range between 400-600 TL. Other areas have from bad to very bad conditions and the rent costs from 100 to 250 TL. I was also working with the SNF team on SNF case determination and SNF case re-assurance. For the SNF case reassurance, I visited 23 houses. We were talking again to the families about their needs, taking notes of their needs, checking the housing conditions, food needs, housing facilities and clothing. The cases that we revisited during this visits all met the SNF criterias. During all the house visits, I was taking notes on the responses of the responses and the supervisors were filling out the questionnaires. I was also assisting the office in entering data gathered from the field to the online information system. Altogether, entered 90 cases to the system in the Aid and Relief center. Other than that, I was helping the SNF case management officer with filling referral forms. I filled in 34 SNF cases, by reading the responses to the protection screening forms and determining whether the case meets SNF criterias or not. The Aid and Relief Center also provides aid to the SNF cases. I was able join the aid provision team with only one case at the time aids were available. We provided food basket and baby needs to a family that arrived in Turkey three months ago and had 6 children. Their housing conditions and financial situation was hard because the husband was not working and couldn't find job. In the two last days of my internship, 100 hygiene packages were provided to our office by one of the partner organizations and I joined the aid provision team again for aid distributions. I visited 30 households for providing hygiene packages to the families. It was an amazing feeling to see how happy the families were when we provided them with the aid. Whereas in the protection office I had only met Syrian and Iraqi refugees in this office I got a chance to work with Afghan refugees, who were living in the neighborhood where this office was situated. During the days that I was in the office, I was helping the protection desk and the management with oral translation of the Afghan refugee's questions, concerns and complaints. However, I was helping with translation from Persian to English only when our translator was not available, because there is an English-Arabic-Persian-Turkish translator working as a full-time employee in the office.

## My experience

Generally, the internship gave me an amazing opportunity to meet my own objectives in terms of being part of the discourses related to humanitarian crisis, refugee's situations and their problems. It was an amazing opportunity to observe the multifaceted reality of life of the refugees. I could deeply delve into the activities of the organization as the tasks that were given to me were very much related to my professional and academic interests. I was very passionate about doing the field visits, observing the realities and analyzing the problems of each refugee or international protection beneficiaries be they from Syria, Iraq or Afghanistan. It was a great experience also to work with so many volunteers and staff of the organization who were from Syria, Iraq or Afghanistan and listen to their stories. This as well as all the household visits helped me a lot in terms of developing my personal and professional qualities. Most importantly as human being, the observed reality helped me a lot in terms of learning more about human nature, his patience and stability despite what he goes through. Besides, the personal growth the internship also opened my eyes to some research and analytic techniques. It also introduced to me many human right terminologies as well as approaches to helping people during humanitarian crisis and evaluating their needs. Additionally, I learned a lot about the backgrounds of the problems arising in terms of human rights violations during the time of war, border crossing and getting integrated into the new place. Most importantly, it helped me to determine the most important problems of refugees in countries other than their own, which ranged from invalid IDs to inability to register at schools, go to hospitals because of it, face financial and material shortages, not having access to work, working in heavy jobs, etc. The internship meets the requirements of social discipline as it deals with most ongoing and important problem of our age, which is related to the humanitarian crisis and refugee issues. It opened space in my mind for many questions that would demand deeper analytic research. Developing these questions into an academic research and making people more academically aware about the problems refugees face therefore, would open space for finally solving solution to their problems by giving policy recommendations. In addition, in doing so the internship motivated me more to contribute in the future to peacebuilding and human rights. This internship made my summer more analytically aware and helped me look at the problems of refugees from multiple angles. Therefore, I would suggest this internship opportunity for the other students who are interested in human rights issues.

# ABOUT IMPR HUMANITARIAN

IMPR Humanitarian, is a non-governmental and humanitarian aid organization which mainly aims at meeting basic needs and improving living conditions of the individuals and communities who are affected by humanitarian crisis, conflicts, human rights violations and natural disasters.

IMPR Humanitarian continues its works at national and international level within principles of non-discrimination, transparency, impartiality, and accountability, according to the international standards of humanitarian privacy. IMPR Humanitarian has a role in enhancing living conditions of crisis affected individuals and communities through activities and emergency responses carried out at national and international level.

IMPR Humanitarian, by carrying out field studies which regularly analyze the conditions of crisis affected people, and publishing situation reports; directs the attention of relevant organizations to crisis regions.

IMPR Humanitarian, pursuant to the principles of non-discrimination, transparency, impartiality and accountability, adopts direct and quick response to the crisis affected individuals and communities, as the main principle.

