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Refugee Protection and Service Delivery project

Paving the way for refugees in Turkey: from reception to durable solutions

FINAL PUBLICATION



In collaboration with ICMC Europe & Human Resource Development Foundation



ICMC: A Continued Commitment to Refugee Protection

The International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) advocates and responds to the needs of the most vulnerable individuals and communities, contributing to preserving the dignity and rights of refugees, migrants, and other displaced persons, regardless of their faith, race, ethnicity or nationality.

Working around the world in partnership with governments, local actors, faith-based organisations, the UNHCR, and other partners, ICMC provides essential humanitarian assistance and support. Since 1951, ICMC has identified more than one million refugees for resettlement, and accompanied them through the resettlement process, including helping them prepare for their new lives abroad. ICMC's resettlement activities are carried out globally and have evolved over the years to address the changing needs of displaced persons.

The ICMC office in Brussels (ICMC Europe) works to promote resettlement, alternative legal pathways and refugee integration in Europe. Together with its partners IOM and UNHCR, ICMC Europe has developed the European Resettlement Network (www.resettlement.eu), which promotes information sharing, capacity building and exchange on best practices. In order to engage local actors in resettlement and integration, ICMC Europe implements the SHARE project to promote refugee protection, a culture of welcome, as well as planned and coordinated refugee reception and integration programmes in cities and regions across Europe.

The Human Resource Development Foundation

The Human Resource Development Foundation (HRDF) established in 1988 is a leading non-profit, non-governmental and autonomous organisation in Turkey, which seeks to assist vulnerable groups by finding solutions for problems stemming from irregular population movements, and eliminating the factors that hinder social development.

HRDF has been one of the internationally accredited executing agencies of the United Nations Population Fund since 1997, and, since 2002, has had a special consultative NGO status with the UN Economic and Social Council. HRDF received tax exempt status in Turkey with the Cabinet Decree in 2001.

During the early years of HRDF, urbanisation in Turkey gained momentum, cities became industrial centres, and mass migration movements started to change the social structure. Reproductive health was one of the areas influenced by this new era of vast changes. In the following years, empowerment of women with a focus on gender equality was included in HRDF's priority areas. Global changes have affected all countries and one of the many results of these changes was increased migration movements. Turkey has been influenced by these changes and turned from a country of emigration into a country of immigration. HRDF developed and implemented programmes in the migration area, initially targeting regular migrants, then refugees and then foreign victims of human trafficking. In response to the Syrian crisis, HRDF has started implementing activities to provide support to Syrian refugees who have fled war.

Refugee Service Delivery project

Following SHARE Network activities in the field of volunteering for refugees, ICMC Europe and project partner HRDF are partnering in the project entitled **Refugee Protection and Service Delivery Dialogue – Strengthening Partnerships to Respond to Syrian Refugee Needs** (referred to herein as the “**Refugee Service Delivery Project**”). The project is part of the EU-Turkey Civil Society Dialogue programme, bringing together civil society organisations from Turkey and the EU, to exchange knowledge and experience, and to facilitate an ongoing dialogue between organisations.

The project aims to strengthen capacity of Turkish civil society actors that are working with refugees by helping to set up volunteering programmes for refugee groups (Syrians under temporary protection status and other refugees); promoting the exchange of best practices to strengthen refugee protection and integration in Turkey; and providing a platform for participants to network, exchange ideas and build relationships to support durable solutions for refugees in Turkey and the European Union.

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Cover photo: *Syrian child refugees let pigeons fly at a refugee camp site which is constructed by the Turkish Prime Ministry's Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD) in Nizip district of Gaziantep, southeastern Turkey on May 31, 2015. Photo by Ozge Elif Kizil*

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Preface

It is with great pleasure that we introduce this final report, developed in the framework of the EU-Turkey Civil Society Dialogue programme, focusing on expert exchange between Turkish and European civil society to support volunteering within refugee service delivery in Turkey.

Integration, being an all-society approach, depends on strong partnerships to build inclusive, welcoming communities that support newcomers towards independence. The cooperation between ICMC Europe and HRDF within the framework of this project is a living example of a practical cooperation fostering inclusion and supporting durable solutions for refugees residing in Turkey.

Now in its 7th year, the civil war in Syria has caused the largest humanitarian crisis of our time. For many displaced Syrians, Turkey is the closest place to reach safety as well as the main transit country to reach Europe. However, Europe and the international community have not yet been able to provide a long-term sustainable response to the current displacement situation. Meanwhile, Turkey hosts more refugees than any other country in the world, having received more than 3.5 million Syrian refugees alone since the civil war began in 2011. Despite Turkey's generous humanitarian response, longer-term durable solutions for these refugees remain unclear.

Civil society in Turkey has done an admirable job responding to the needs of displaced Syrians, many of which are very vulnerable. Refugee-supporting NGOs in Turkey have grown and developed in the face of this challenge. During the 19 months implementation, the Refugee Service Delivery project witnessed how citizen engagement and volunteering have rapidly grown in the country. Similarly, the service landscape offered to refugees in Turkey has developed considerably. NGOs and citizen-led grass-roots initiatives offer creative and innovative solutions to meet the humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable in society as well as address refugees' longer-term needs to settle and integrate in local communities.

This report provides an overview of the refugee context in Turkey and civil society's response to the large numbers of vulnerable refugees residing in the country. It also offers a brief assessment of recent policy developments towards displaced Syrians in Turkey, summarising changes in Turkey's asylum and protection regime before looking at the role of local authorities and their ongoing challenges of building welcoming and inclusive local communities. Finally, it provides the overview of the volunteering culture, tools and best practices to receive and integrate refugees – both from Turkey and the EU - and gives practical recommendations with respect to engaging volunteers in refugee service delivery in Turkey.

We hope that this summary of practices, tools and recommendations produced by ICMC Europe and HRDF (and available at www.resettlement.eu), will support Turkish actors offering protection and integration support to refugees in Turkey and provide inspiration for all those seeking to engage volunteers at their respective organisations.

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Introduction

As a result of the ongoing conflict in the region, its geographical position and its generous open-door policy, Turkey has become host to the world's largest refugee population, mainly Syrians, but also Iraqis, Afghans, Iranians and stateless people. According to United Nations estimates, the number of Syrian refugees in Turkey increased to over 3.5 million as of April 2018¹ and the large unregistered refugee population means that the true figure is even larger. Turkey has made huge strides in responding to the crises - enacting legislation to respond to the numbers and complexity of the protection situation, building a new infrastructure in the form of a Directorate General for Migration Management, and notably, providing, healthcare and education to refugees throughout Turkey. These significant achievements should be applauded. Turkey has succeeded by many measures in meeting the immediate protection needs of vast numbers of refugees over a very short period.

The Syrian civil war is in its 7th year and there is no sign as to when and how it will end. The absolute number of refugees seeking protection in Turkey has grown dramatically over the years and what was once perceived as a short-term and temporary issue, is now recognised as a longer-term one. The large and mostly Syrian refugee community has been staying in Turkey considerably longer than anticipated. The situation calls for a comprehensive long-term strategy which encompasses a variety of aspects such as social, economic and cultural integration, as well as access to the basic services of healthcare, education and housing. This long-term strategy will require attention and contributions from various actors in society, particularly from civil society.

ICMC Europe spearheaded the [SHARE project](#) from 2012-2015 to build a European resettlement network of regions, cities and civil society partners to promote refugee resettlement but also a culture of welcome and increased capacity to plan and coordinate refugee integration programmes in cities and regions across Europe. Through targeted training, workshops and other efforts designed to share best practices, partners at the local level were able to learn from one another with a view to building or improving efforts to promote welcome and integration.

The SHARE experience highlighted the critical role of civil society in this effort as well as the key role that volunteers can play. With limited financial resources, volunteers can help extend services in a variety of ways such as by helping with language learning, coaching refugees on their way to employment, providing accommodation, helping refugees navigate services such as healthcare, or simply by giving refugees the opportunity to have direct contact with citizens and thereby better understand the local culture. However, volunteering is a reciprocal arrangement and volunteers also learn from refugees and gain exposure to new customs and traditions. Volunteers are essential in raising awareness about refugee protection needs in society and building bridges between refugees and the local communities. This direct exposure plays an essential role in promoting social cohesion and fighting xenophobia.

¹ See UNHCR Syria Emergency: <http://www.unhcr.org/syria-emergency.html>

With the SHARE experience in mind, and recognising the important and growing role of volunteering in refugee integration, ICMC Europe developed the “Volunteering for Refugee Protection: Building capacity to strengthen refugee assisting services and raising awareness on refugee protection in Turkey” project designed to share best practices on volunteering in order to promote and improve volunteering to help refugees and thereby improve social cohesion in both Turkey and Europe. The 19 month long project was led by ICMC Europe together with its Turkish partner Human Resource Development Foundation, HRDF.

The project aimed to inspire and support Turkish civil society to engage volunteers in their work for refugees and to structure their existing volunteering programmes through tools and exchange. Both Turkish and European civil society benefitted from good practice exchange and expert inputs e.g. the European Exchange visits (in Turkey and Italy), jointly defining a volunteer strategy, creation of a Turkish e-learning module to train volunteers online, as well as numerous presentations and reports on volunteering and refugee service provision in Turkey and the EU. The Project brought together civil society actors from both Europe and Turkey. Activities included: six in-person events, namely two European Exchange visits to Istanbul and Milan, two Awareness-Raising events at universities in Istanbul, a local Roundtable conference in Eskisehir and a final conference in Ankara in total gathering 200 participants (representing civil society, university, national, local and regional authorities, International organisations).

We hope this report provides a useful summary of the current framework for refugees in Turkey and how volunteering can play a role in providing a durable solution through strengthening refugee integration, the specific project activities and recommendations going forward as to how civil society volunteering can be accessed and improved with a view to fostering social inclusion and the integration prospects of the millions of refugees in Turkey, many of whom are likely to stay.

PART 1

BACKGROUND: REFUGEES IN TURKEY

This section provides an overview of the legal regime for refugees in Turkey. The first part concerns the laws governing the status of those seeking legal protection in Turkey and the protection and services available to those who qualify for protection. The second part describes the establishment of a new directorate general for migration in Turkey and outlines the role and the powers of the new directorate. Finally, the third section outlines the role of local authorities in migration and some of the challenges faced by local actors.

1.1 LEGAL PROTECTION FRAMEWORK

The influx of refugees (particularly Syrians) to Turkey was unprecedented and unexpected. According to United Nations estimates, the number of Syrian refugees in Turkey increased to 3.5 million as of March 2018 and the large unregistered refugee population means that the true figure is even larger.² Recent legislation has attempted to respond to the crisis. And while the Turkish government is working to reform its legal framework to adapt to the large numbers of refugees seeking protection in Turkey, it remains the case that currently there are uncertain prospects for refugees of non-European origin to obtain any sort of permanent legal status in Turkey. As a result, durable solutions and progress towards long-term integration are limited. Signs of recognition by Turkey that many refugees may be there to stay are encouraging and suggest that a greater focus on integration may be forthcoming and welcome. Providing refugees with security by granting a legal status, and thereby the opportunity to settle in Turkey, will further increase their personal efforts and investments in longer-term integration.

Currently there are four avenues to legal protection in Turkey. Three of these fall directly under the new Turkish Law on Foreigners and International Protection³ (the “LFIP”) of 2013 and the fourth (the primary route for Syrians) falls under the Temporary Protection Regulation (the “TPR”) of 2014. In terms of its obligations to afford international protection under the 1951 Refugee Convention, it is important to note that Turkey has maintained its geographical limitation to the Convention.⁴ Accordingly, persons of *European* origin who qualify as a refugee under the definition in the Convention are afforded “refugee” status and afforded the rights and benefits required under the Convention, including the prospect of long-term integration.

Persons of *non-European* origin who qualify as a refugee under the definition in the Convention may be afforded “conditional refugee” status and persons who would be sentenced to death or torture upon return to a country of origin may qualify for “subsidiary protection.” These asylum seekers are *allowed to reside in Turkey temporarily* under a satellite city system until they are resettled elsewhere. Applicants are assigned to a province where they are required to reside during their procedure. The residence requirement persists even after a refugee has been granted conditional or subsidiary protection status. This requirement is somewhat anomalous given that Syrians who register under the TPR (as described below), enjoy more freedom to choose where to register. According to the LFIP, International protection applicants and beneficiaries must secure housing at their own cost.⁵

2 See UNHCR Syria Emergency: <http://www.unhcr.org/syria-emergency.html>

3 Law on foreigners and International Protection which entered into force in April 2014. Law on foreigners and International Protection which entered into force in April 2014. Directorate General of Migration Management, “Law on Foreigner and International Protection”, *Republic of Turkey DGMM*, accessed July 28, 2017, http://www.goc.gov.tr/files/files/eng_minikanun_5_son.pdf.

4 When Turkey became a signatory to the Refugee Convention it availed itself of an option to limit its obligations to refugees originating from European countries and it currently maintains this limitation. Accordingly, Turkey considers itself bound by the Refugee Convention’s obligations with respect to refugees of European origin. The LFIP affords non-European refugees protection offering a lesser set of rights and entitlements than those available to refugees of European origin. See: Kemal Kirisci ‘Is Turkey Lifting the ‘Geographical Limitation’? – The November 1994 Regulation on Asylum in Turkey’ *International Journal of Refugee Law*, 1996.

5 DGMM is authorized to set up Reception and Accommodation centres and has made very modest progress with 100 beds as of Dec 2015 with other centres in progress - notably Erzurum with 750 capacity. “Country Report: Turkey”, *aida: Asylum Information Database*, last updated March 2, 2017, <http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/turkey>.

BACKGROUND:

The fourth avenue to legal protection in Turkey, was contemplated by the LFIP (Art 91) but made concrete in an implementing regulation, the TPR on October 22, 2014 (“TPR”) and is the main source of protection for the over 3.5 million Syrian refugees in Turkey today. While the TPR establishes a status for legal stay in Turkey for “Syrian nationals, stateless people and refugees originating from Syria,” it precludes long-term stay in Turkey.

Turkey has done an admirable job of receiving huge numbers of arrivals - approximately 3.5 million - in a very short period and refugee-receiving communities were initially welcoming. However, the magnitude of the numbers puts pressure on the reception system and host communities. More than 1 million Syrians reside in the Southeast, which is a region of approximately 8 million⁶. Absorbing a refugee population 1/8 the size of the local population would be a challenge anywhere. In 2015, unemployment rates in most parts of the Southeast reached 18-25%, nearly double the national average of 10.3%.⁷ Thus, the need for a holistic approach to integration becomes even more important in order to provide refugees’ economic independence while not neglecting the needs of the local populations in regions that are challenged by economic stagnation or decline.

6 European Commission, COM(2017)130 final

7 Directorate General for Internal Policies, “Turkey: Labour Market Integration and Social Inclusion of Refugees”, *European Parliament*, accessed July 28, 2017, 9, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/595328/IPOL_STU\(2016\)595328_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/595328/IPOL_STU(2016)595328_EN.pdf).

1.2 ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS ON REFUGEES

The current framework of the LFIP and TPR centre around a main central civilian agency, the Directorate General of Migration Management (“DGMM”), with concentrated authority to implement migration policy and strategy. It is also charged with carrying out activities related to integration.⁸ ICMC Europe, through the SHARE project, has seen an invaluable role for local governments and non-government actors in migration policy and particularly with regard to integration.⁹ Integration happens locally in schools, community centres, etc. and close, local cooperation will be essential in terms of a long-term integration strategy for the Syrian and other refugees currently residing in Turkey.

Establishing a centralised department dealing with migration and protection needs is a new approach for Turkey but it is expected that the DGMM will build its infrastructure significantly over the coming years. DGMM operates through headquarters and also through Provincial Directorates to register those seeking temporary protection and process claims for international protection. Currently, a parallel procedure exists whereby asylum seekers register with UNHCR mainly so that UNHCR can be aware of those seeking international protection, oversee their access to protection, intervene where necessary and identify individuals for UNHCR resettlement.¹⁰ But applicants must register with their assigned province and apply for protection via DGMM which has ultimate responsibility over their claims. DGMM is also responsible for the registration of Syrians under the TPR and has significant duties in this regard considering the numbers of arrivals. It remains to be seen how processing of claims for international protection with DGMM will proceed in terms of speed and outcome and how the current parallel structure with UNHCR will evolve.

While DGMM is charged with social inclusion of refugees, priority thus far, understandably, appears to have been first, registering refugees and second, processing claims in an effort to provide for basic protection. The LFIP (Article 108) establishes the *Harmonisation and Communications Department* of DGMM and provides that such department shall “carry out activities and actions related to the social harmonisation of foreigners.” The LFIP (Article 96) provides that DGMM may plan for harmonisation activities, “to the extent that Turkey’s economic and financial capacity deems possible” and that foreigners may attend courses focused on integration and language learning. It is noteworthy that Turkish official institutions prefer the term “harmonisation” instead of “integration” as commonly used in European contexts, suggesting that this process is understood to be one-sided, namely Syrians adapting to Turkish society. Dr. Murat Erdoğan *et al.* argue that there is a certain hesitation about what is meant by the concept, rather than the concept itself because the concepts of integration-harmonisation evoke the meaning of “not being a guest anymore” or “permanence.”¹¹

8 Article 103 and 104 of Law on Foreigner and International Protection, Republic of Turkey. Directorate General of Migration Management, “Law on Foreigner and International Protection”, *Republic of Turkey DGMM*, accessed July 28, 2017, http://www.goc.gov.tr/files/files/eng_minikanun_5_son.pdf.

9 SHARE campaign. International Catholic Migration Commission, “Building a Resettlement Network of European Cities and Regions”, *European Resettlement Network*, accessed July 28, 2017, <http://resettlement.eu/page/share-final-publication-building-resettlement-network-european-cities-and-regions%E2%80%999>.

10 AIDA Turkey Country Report, 21.

11 Urban Refugees from “Detachment” to “Harmonisation” Syrian Refugees and Process Management of Municipalities: The Case of Istanbul, 2017, Marmara Municipalities Union Migration Policy Workshop (MAGA)

BACKGROUND:

In the light of realisation that Syrian communities in Turkey are there to stay, in December 2015, IOM (International Organization for Migration) Turkey launched a 15-month project to support the Turkish government to develop a holistic integration (harmonisation) policy for migrants in Turkey. This promising project will address the need for a comprehensive and effective approach to integration in light of Turkey's current role as a major migratory hub and in line with Turkey's recent adoption of the Law on Foreigners and International Protection. The project, entitled "Supporting Turkey in Development of National Harmonisation Policy" and funded by the UK and Switzerland, will work with DGMM to develop a Strategy Document and a National Action Plan.

1.3 THE ROLE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THEIR SPECIFIC CHALLENGES

Policy towards refugees in Turkey has developed in response to a crisis; a sort of emergency management scheme envisaged as being temporary. It was, therefore, by definition highly centralised. From mid-2012, when Syrian refugees began to settle not in camps but in urban settings, large numbers of refugees have affected local governments heavily. The *de facto* permanent status of Syrians under temporary protection means that municipalities, in cooperation with local civil society actors, will need to receive authority and resources to do more. Syrians are very much present and a visible part of local community life and integration happens locally. Civil society actors and volunteering are critical components of a successful integration programme at the local level.

The Turkish government is organised through Ministries in Ankara with Director Generals at the centre. Provinces are the largest administrative units and are managed by governors appointed by the government. Provincial organisations report to the governorships and are governed by the “Law on Provincial Administration.”¹² Thus provinces and their governments are essentially local offshoots of a central government and central legal framework.¹³ There are also elected governments at more local levels such as at the municipal, neighbourhood and village level. Currently, Turkey has 1397 municipalities which largely carry out municipal services such as transit, sewage, drinking water, and housing. However, Provincial Administrations carry out public services in rural areas. There are inconsistent levels of services provided by different municipalities. Certain duties are mandatory for municipalities but others, such as vocational training, social services and education infrastructure, are optional.¹⁴ Municipalities will or will not provide such services depending on their resources.

Law-making and taxes are also highly centralised with policy decided at a central level. Duties of local governments are defined by the central government. The central government has many powers it can exercise to influence local authorities whether at the provincial level or even at the elected municipal level.¹⁵ Local officials interviewed for a study led by the Marmara Municipalities Union Migration Policies Workshop (MAGA) stated that lack of financial resources to adequately address refugee needs constituted a major obstacle. Turkish municipalities have two sources of income: self-generated income and transfers from general budget tax revenues. The latter, distributed according to district population size, is the major source of income. Because refugees and foreigners are not counted within this allocation, the issue of spending these funds on refugees becomes problematic, especially when considering the vast needs of many local residents with respect to service provision. District municipalities provide special services for refugee health and education needs, which further depletes their already limited resources.¹⁶

12 Law on special provincial administration entered into force on 4 March 2005. The purpose of this law is to lay down the establishment, organs, administration, duties, powers, responsibilities and working procedures and principles of special provincial administration.

13 Ferhat Emil and Prof. Dr. H. Hakan Yilmaz, “General Evaluation Report for the Workshop on the Role of Municipalities in the Development of Turkey’s Integration Policies”, *IOM: UN Migration Agency*, published September 1, 2016, 13.

14 Murat Erdogan, “Urban Refugees from “Detachment” to “Harmonisation” Syrian Refugees and Process Management of Municipalities: The Case of Istanbul”, 2017, Marmara Municipalities Union Migration Policy Workshop (MAGA).

15 IOM, 14.

16 Marmara Municipalities Union Migration Policy Workshop (MAGA)

A considerable problem faced by municipalities with a high number of refugees when planning service provision is the lack of information and data on the beneficiaries they intend to serve. In his study on urban refugees and the role of the municipalities in Istanbul, Murat Erdoğan argues that it is of utmost importance that local governments have access to valid data in the process management and recommends that data collection of various actors is streamlined and shared amongst relevant stakeholders to enable municipalities to adequately plan refugee service provision.¹⁷

Local authorities involved in refugee protection in Turkey are the Governorship, District Governorship, Provincial Directorate of Migration Management, Provincial Security Directorate, Provincial Directorate of National Education, Provincial Health Directorate, AFAD and Ministry of Family and Social Policies. However, stakeholder cooperation between different departments, their local NGO partners or among district municipalities with each other on the issue of refugees remains extremely limited. One of the problems that local actors most often identified within the framework of the Refugee Service Delivery project is the lack of coordination. In European municipalities, the SHARE project has shown that planning and coordinating reception is more effective when undertaken by a **core partnership of local actors** responsible for specific elements of reception and orientation such as housing, healthcare, education and registration for welfare benefits. Partnerships can enhance reception services through the agreement of mutual roles and responsibilities; allocating resources and monitoring the implementation of planned tasks; and providing a mechanism for joint problem-solving and a forum for local actors to jointly evaluate and improve their practices.

Municipalities are at the bottom of the management chain when it comes to the variety and volume of services they can and do provide. Their role lacks definition and they are facing a host of challenges. Yet, they are at the front line when it comes to providing for refugees. Defining their roles and sources of funding in relation to integration will be a first step in a long-term integration plan. Municipalities will be better able to collaborate with civil society actors and civil society will be better able to support municipalities once an integration plan with defined roles is implemented.

DGMM, with support from IOM, is working on a strategy document and National Action Plan on Harmonisation. This plan may clarify how municipalities can be incorporated into harmonisation policies as, currently, municipalities face many challenges in terms of meeting the needs of refugees in their communities.

Municipalities are facing a host of issues surrounding refugee integration. There are many needs to be addressed and issues to be clarified. However, civil society and volunteering can fill some of the gaps in important areas in order to support refugees but also to promote social cohesion. Volunteers in Turkey are active and have the capacity to support local authorities in many areas such as language support, job mentoring, psychosocial support, recreational activities, in kind aid, etc. There are huge gains to be made in the integration offer with better role definition for and increased cooperation between municipalities, provinces, civil society actors and ultimately volunteers.

17 Murat Erdogan, 61

POLICY REFLECTION & OBSERVATIONS

Strengthen the role of local authorities and foster multi-stakeholder cooperation in integration

The scale of the refugee crisis in Turkey is enormous with municipalities struggling to provide for basic needs. Municipalities feel the immediate effect of refugees at their front doors in need of food, housing and medical care. ICMC Europe, through the SHARE project, has seen an invaluable role for local governments and non-government actors in migration policy and particularly with regard to integration and advocates for an increased role of such actors in Turkey. Turkey's Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM), despite its centralised structure, is increasingly cooperating with civil society actors and local governments and other stakeholders such as UNHCR and IOM which is a much welcomed development.

Improved communication between the provincial units and the municipal authorities would improve service provision for and integration of refugees. **Data collection of various actors should be streamlined and shared amongst relevant stakeholders to enable municipalities to better plan and provide adequate services.**

The framework for collaboration between municipalities and for civil society should be clarified as currently all actors are functioning in a somewhat ad hoc fashion. **Clear divisions of responsibility between central and local governments and non-governmental organisations would improve the cooperation between all actors and ultimately help integration prospects.** Defining their roles and sources of funding in relation to integration will be a first step in a long-term integration plan. Municipalities will be better able to collaborate with civil society actors and civil society will be better able to support municipalities once an integration plan with defined roles is implemented.



GOOD PRACTICE

The grass-roots volunteering foundation *Derviş Baba* complements local social services and strengthens local capacity in humanitarian responses by providing help to local citizens in need, including Turkish nationals, refugees and asylum-seekers. *Derviş Baba* cooperates with local authorities but is entirely funded by members' donations and run by volunteers who coordinate local groups of hundreds of volunteers through its branches (three in Istanbul, five others in Edirne, Bursa, Eskişehir, İzmir and Ankara). Depending on the local volunteer group, activities range from collecting in-kind donations, organising creative/recreational activities, helping furnish houses for families in need, teaching Turkish as a foreign language, providing tutoring to refugees who intend to take university entrance exams and organising awareness-raising initiatives.



Derviş Baba café Eskişehir, roundtable participants

(July 2016)



GOOD PRACTICE

Keçiören municipality district, being the second biggest district in Ankara, hosts 9,500 out of 12,000 of the total number of foreigners currently registered in Ankara. Keçiören municipality in collaboration with IOM, ECHO and other solidarity organisations, established the **Keçiören migrant and refugee centre** to serve newcomers, especially Syrian and Iraqi refugees in the district, in collaboration with both local government and NGOs. The centre runs a one-stop shop for multiple services including supporting newcomers' access public services and referrals to other institutions. This first municipality-led migrant centre also organises social and educational activities, awareness-raising events, Turkish language courses, training on women's health and family planning and intercultural mediation in collaboration with interpreters. The centre has only recently started to engage local volunteers in their service provision for refugees and migrants.

PART 2

VOLUNTEERING IN TURKEY: THE STATE OF PLAY

Ninety-two percent of the 3.5 million Syrian refugees in Turkey live in urban areas. Cities represent the front line when it comes to providing humanitarian assistance and responding to wider challenges of building welcoming and inclusive communities at the local level. Turkish municipalities have succeeded by many measures in meeting the immediate protection needs of vast numbers of refugees over a very short period despite facing multi-level governance challenges and a lack of resources. However, what once was been perceived as a short-term and temporary issue, is now recognised as a longer-term one. A large Syrian refugee community will be staying in Turkey considerably longer if not their entire lives. The situation calls for a comprehensive long-term strategy which will require attention and contributions from various actors in society, including civil society and citizens.

Given the limited financial resources available, engaging citizens as volunteers can increase local capacities in both humanitarian assistance as well as longer-term integration of refugees. Volunteers can significantly expand the 'integration offer' for refugees in their new neighbourhoods, building a welcoming local environment and providing refugees and local residents with opportunities to meet one another.

In Europe, citizens have been formally engaged as volunteers for welcoming and integrating refugees for many years, giving their time and expertise in support of activities as varied as local orientation, employment mentoring and language-learning. They often act as a bridge between the refugee and the host society, raising awareness amongst co-citizens about the need for refugee protection and creating safe spaces for dialogue and debate. Volunteers are therefore vital in addressing community concerns with respect to social cohesion, fear of loss of cultural identity and xenophobia, which need to be discussed in a constructive and open manner.

Considering the many misconceptions about refugees, and Syrians in particular, among the general Turkish public, volunteers could play a significant role in improving attitudes toward newcomers. Volunteering enables refugees and other local residents to meet with one another, engage in joint activities and build mutual understanding. Refugees are supported to access new social networks outside of mainstream services, and local volunteers can use their experiences to raise awareness within their own communities and contacts. The net result is improved levels of social cohesion.

Refugees themselves can benefit from opportunities to volunteer within a wide range of organisational settings. Refugee assisting organisations can act as intermediaries to support both refugees and hosting organisations to ensure successful refugee engagement in a wide range of volunteering opportunities.

***The European Solidarity Corps** is a new initiative by the European Union that has the potential to a foster volunteering culture in Europe, Turkey and beyond. The initiative creates opportunities for young people to volunteer or work from two to twelve months in projects in their own country or abroad that benefit local communities. The European Solidarity Corps is the pool of young people (between 18-30) that, after completing a simple registration process and upon agreeing to the Mission and Principles, can be selected and invited to join a wide range of projects, such as helping to prevent natural disasters or rebuilding afterwards, assisting in centres for asylum seekers, or addressing different social issues in communities.*

Volunteerism in Turkey while strong, is differently understood than volunteer engagement in Europe. Turkey has no clear definition of a volunteer and no legal framework for volunteers. Likewise, there is no public institution that determines volunteering policies or oversees volunteers. Rather, 'helping others' such as neighbours, acquaintances or people in need in the district, is simply common practice in Turkish society. Assistance to Syrians is very often offered informally by Turkish locals unlike in Europe where assistance is provided by social workers and volunteers within a more formalised structure. Turkey's level of volunteering at formal organisations is considerably lower than that of most other countries in the region. Thus while formal volunteering within Turkish society is still undeveloped, there is great potential to harness the culture of 'helping others' and ultimately professionalising volunteering in Turkey.

The main objective of the Refugee Service Delivery Project, is to strengthen capacities in refugee service provision in Turkey through targeted exchange between Turkish and European experts on 1) professionalising the engagement of volunteers in refugee service provision and 2) raising awareness among Turkish and European stakeholders on the needs of Syrian refugees.

The following chapters shall shed light on the culture of volunteering in Turkey, especially within the refugee service context; report on exchange, tools and strategies developed to support volunteering for refugees in Turkey and end with ten final conclusions and recommendations derived from 19 months of EU-Turkey exchange on citizen engagement in local refugee service provision within the Refugee Service Delivery Project.

2.1. VOLUNTEERING CULTURE

Turkey's official level of volunteering at 5% is lower than that of Greece, Armenia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Iran, Cyprus and Iraq, to name a few.¹⁸ Thus, it is clear that there are obstacles to formal volunteering in Turkey. However, there is also great potential to harness in terms of developing a more professionalised volunteering culture. In order to understand how to unleash the great potential for volunteering in Turkey one must better understand why volunteering levels in Turkey lag behind volunteering levels in other countries. The answers are complex and are largely rooted in historical factors and the relationship with the state. In addition, individual factors come into play. Charity as such is a key component of Islam and is rooted in the concepts of *sadaka* (charitable donations given voluntarily) and *zekat* (obligatory alms). National surveys have shown that the main motivation for charitable giving and volunteering is to meet religious duties (32.5%), followed by traditions and customs (26.3%), and followed by an obligation to serve society (8.8%).¹⁹ It is clear that the religious and cultural impetus to give and volunteer are strong factors in Turkish society.

However, as a result of developments in the 20th century and the state's changing attitudes towards civil society organisations, Turkish people have not come to regard such organisations as a positive outlet for their charitable giving and volunteering. In the period of the Ottoman empire, *vakifs*, religious establishments created under Islamic laws for humanitarian purposes flourished. These provided an outlet for Muslims to fulfil their religious obligation to provide charity. The *vakifs* functioned independently of the state and fulfilled many social welfare functions in the absence of state provided social welfare services. In the 19th century, the Ottoman state began to exert more and more control over *vakifs*, eventually collecting revenues from the *vakifs*. With the establishment of the Republic in 1923, *vakifs* but also other civil society organisations become further suspect and under greater control as the state sought to consolidate power and secularise. In the 20th century with the changing regimes and constitutions in Turkey, civil society organisations have come in and out of favour with regimes alternatively supporting and banning organisations. In her research, "Current State of Volunteering in Turkey", Akboga argues that the history of government control of civil society organisations significantly impacted their state of development and the general level of participation and volunteering in Turkey.

A high level of distrust generally also contributes to the low level of volunteering in Turkey. A World Values Survey found that Turkish citizens interpersonal trust rates rank at the bottom of those in 43 countries with 90% of voting age Turks reporting that they do not trust people.²⁰ In this environment, it is no wonder that Turkish citizens favour direct giving rather than giving through organisations. When

18 The actual number of informal volunteering efforts may be higher but just not able to be tallied.

19 Akboga, Sema. 2016. "Current State of Volunteering in Turkey." In *Perspectives on Volunteering: Voices from the South*, by Jacqueline Butcher and Christopher J. Einolf, 245-261. Springer International Publishing.

20 Akboga, 249.

asked whether they preferred to give directly²¹ to those in need or through an organisation, 88% of individuals reported that they preferred to give directly and many prefer to make material in-kind donations.

Individual factors also come into play in terms of levels of volunteering. Research shows that one of the main reasons why individuals do not volunteer is quite simply a lack of time, resources and lifestyle incompatible with volunteering.²² In this regard, responses are probably quite similar in countries other than Turkey. On a positive note, according to Charities Aid Foundation report in 2013, most volunteers in Turkey are between the ages of 15 and 24.²³ Twenty-seven point one percent of youth age 18-14 are either a member of a civil society organisation or volunteering, which is a higher level of participation than the general population. With relatively strong interest in civil society organisations and volunteering on the part of Turkey's youth, there would appear to be good potential to stimulate volunteering.

One final obstacle to volunteering in Turkey which is ripe for improvement is the structure and systems in place for volunteers. Turkey has no clear definition of a volunteer and no legal framework for volunteers. This leads to ambiguity and even concerns of legal action on the part of organisations and volunteers. There is no public institution that determines volunteering policies or oversees volunteers. Furthermore, research has shown that certain management practices relating to volunteers improve volunteer satisfaction and retention rates. Such management practices include recognition, training, screening, events for volunteers, appropriate support, etc. While many civil society organisations report providing training and orientation to volunteers and hosting recognition activities, other areas such as provision of liability coverage and insurance to volunteers are lacking.

In sum, in spite of the challenges and level of societal distrust, with a strong cultural and religious tradition of charity, an engaged youth inclined towards volunteering and potential for reforming and professionalising volunteering culture in Turkey, there is good potential to develop volunteering in Turkey as a pathway for improving refugee integration in Turkey.

21 Çarkoglu and Aytaç, 14.

22 Akboga, 257.

23 Akboga, 254.

GOOD PRACTICE

**One-on-one volunteer mentoring**

Mentoring and coaching is an established practice in corporate multinational firms. Recent years have seen a steep rise in the number of volunteer mentoring programmes for newcomers across Europe and few examples have been initiated in Turkey. For children with a foreign background, who are disproportionately among those who underperform in the classroom, mentoring programmes can provide specific and personalised support. Mentors act as role models and can help improve the cognitive gains, self-esteem, and self-reliance of their mentees. The intense and individualised guidance provided via mentoring can motivate students more deeply and personally, as can learning in an informal setting rather than a classroom. Additionally, mentors can tackle emotional, cognitive, and social problems in a more holistic manner—for example, by reaching out to a student's parents—than teachers are able to realise within the constraints of the school environment. Employment mentoring has developed at a small-scale across Europe, often targeting young adults and focusing on their motivation and professional contacts and 'soft skills'.

Types of mentoring:

- ▶ Language learning
- ▶ Shared hobbies / leisure
- ▶ Psycho-social / guidance
- ▶ Child / Youth tutoring
- ▶ Job counselling / Skills development
- ▶ Budgeting / Administrative support
- ▶ Orientation / Welcoming to the city
- ▶ Computer/ IT skills

GOOD PRACTICE

**Employment mentoring at universities in Turkey**

Community Volunteers Foundation (TOG) contributes to the personal development of young people by encouraging them to participate in social responsibility projects as volunteers. In doing so, it increases young people's community involvement on a voluntary basis. Every year the Foundation supports the realisation of over 980 projects and activities implemented by about 40,000 young people in over 120 university clubs. TOG

participated in *MentorPower* - a strategic partnership project for the social and professional empowerment of young refugees through volunteer mentoring. The project is implemented in cooperation with five organisations from France, Spain, Greece, Norway, and Turkey. TOG participated in the European Exchange visit to Milan within the *Refugee Service Delivery* project. The organisation reported challenges with regard to recruiting Turkish volunteers to mentor refugee youth on a regular basis (bi weekly meetings) over the project course of 8 months. TOG is new to working with refugees but is currently looking into ways of expanding to engage refugee volunteers in their charity activities at Turkish universities.



2.2 REFUGEE SERVICE DELIVERY PROJECT: EXPERT EXCHANGE AND PILOTING PROGRAMME AT THE HRDF SYRIAN REFUGEE CENTRE IN ISTANBUL

Following activities in the field of volunteering for refugees, ICMC Europe and project partner HRDF are partnering in the project entitled **Refugee Protection and Service Delivery Dialogue – Strengthening Partnerships to Respond to Syrian Refugee Needs** (referred to herein as the “**Refugee Service Delivery Project**”). The project is part of the EU-Turkey Civil Society Dialogue programme, bringing together civil society organisations from Turkey and the EU, to exchange knowledge and experience, and to facilitate an ongoing dialogue between organisations.

The main objective of the Refugee Service Delivery Project, was to strengthen capacities in refugee service provision in Turkey. The project achieved this objective through facilitating 1. Targeted exchange between Turkish and European experts on professionalising the engagement of volunteers in refugee service provision and 2. The piloting of a volunteering programme at the Psycho-social Support Centre for Syrian Refugees in Istanbul. With the help of tools and methodologies for volunteering developed during SHARE and inputs from the SHARE Volunteer Expert Group, ICMC Europe supported HRDF in this venture by jointly developing tools and coordinating expert exchange.

Through SHARE and the ERN, ICMC Europe has been working consistently with leading volunteering organisations, such as the Dutch and Danish Refugee Councils, which together have a network of around 10.000 volunteers and mainstream social services organisations such as the Red Cross and Caritas. In 2014, ICMC Europe developed the ‘**SHARING through Mentoring**’ programme to gather expertise on volunteering for refugee resettlement and integration from across Europe, develop tools to guide the development of practice and programming, and pilot these tools with the **SHARE Implementing City** of Tampere in Finland. The ‘**SHARING through Mentoring**’ programme began with the **SHARE Network Expert Seminar on Volunteering** held in Maastricht in October 2014, continued with an intensive exchange in Limburg during the first city visit, and concluded with a visit by a city-civil society delegation from Limburg to Tampere to support planning for new volunteering initiatives for refugee reception in the city. This extensive exchange addressed questions like: 1) Is volunteering culture specific, or can all societies engage active citizens in volunteering? 2) How to define boundaries and adequate division between paid workers and volunteering staff? 3) How to ensure that governments support active citizenship? It ultimately resulted in a **volunteering benchmarking report**. Based on its developed expertise on volunteering for refugee integration in Europe, ICMC Europe is well placed to successfully increase and professionalise service provision in the area of volunteering within refugee reception as well as to facilitate expert exchange on the topic.

Project partner HRDF is one of the two main partners of UNHCR in the “Implementing Partnership” programme consisting of refugee support offices in satellite cities with social workers, translators and psychologists which provide psycho-social support for the target group, deal with protection problems and advocate for the rights of refugees. HRDF has been working with the refugees/asylum seekers since 1991 and is the first NGO that started psychological counselling services for asylum seeker and refugee

groups in Istanbul in 2002. HRDF has been providing services through refugee support offices in 7 cities (namely Istanbul, Ankara, Eskisehir, Kutahya, Bilecik, Agri and Van) within the framework of the implementing partnership programme of UNHCR since 2007. Social workers in the provinces informed the persons of concern on their rights and promote rights-based approach, implemented early identification and prevention mechanisms for the beneficiaries, established a civil society network in the cities and also worked on awareness raising among the local authorities on the rights of the persons of concern and establishing community based approach in the cities. In 2014 HRDF provided support for 32,022 people of concern and the number of individuals applying to HRDF's offices was 44,687. With HRDF's expertise in serving refugees and established collaboration with civil society, this partnership is well placed to successfully increase dialogue between CSOs, from Turkey and the EU, and to professionalize service provision through the structured engagement of volunteers.

Between March 2011 and December 2014, HRDF's Istanbul Refugee Office in Elmadağ provided psycho-social support and counseling to 9,124 Syrian refugees living in Istanbul. Due to limited staff and office space in Elmadağ, UNHCR and HRDF agreed to establish a new office to provide a more effective and sufficient psycho-social counseling service to the beneficiary group. HRDF's Psycho-social Support Centre for Syrian Refugees Living in Istanbul was opened on 26th of December 2014 in Esenler. For the project period 2015-2016, the Esenler Office aimed to improve legal, social and health conditions and strengthen protection capacities of Syrian refugees living in Istanbul. HRDF designated a Project coordinator to develop new reception services and straighten existing ones at the Psycho-social Support Centre for Syrian Refugees through recruitment and training of volunteers in the different work areas including (1) registration (2) identification (3) referral (4) psycho-social and legal counseling (5) Awareness raising among the local authorities on the rights of the Syrian refugees (6) Awareness raising at local universities on refugee assistance and protection and volunteering opportunities for university students (7) fundraising.

Building on the success of the [SHARE City Exchange Visit Programme](#) and its [9 SHARE City Exchange visits](#) developed with the City of Sheffield and the UK resettlement partnership under the current SHARE project, ICMC Europe facilitated a programme of 2 x 2.5-day **European Exchange Visits** for mixed delegations from municipalities and their civil society partners, NGOs and relevant actors delivering refugee reception services, national governments and international organisations from Turkey and European Member States. Organised at different stages of the project, the first visit by a European delegation took place in Istanbul and the second facilitated the visit of a Turkish delegation to *Consorzio Communitas* and *Consorzio Farsi Prossimo* in Milan. European Exchange Visits within the project allowed for (1) the identification of good practices, specific gaps in refugee services, areas of expertise to be strengthened, and (2) facilitation of peer-exchange based learning opportunities. Concretely, these meetings provided workshops and a discussion platform for stakeholders to provide inputs to the **volunteer strategy, the e-learning tool and the final publication**.

The visit to Istanbul on April 4-6 2016, brought together 30 participants, including 7 European experts in volunteering, NGOs and local authorities, and 23 Turkish representatives from civil society, local authorities, central government, universities and UNHCR. This first of two European Exchange Visit aid to develop a tailor-made Volunteer Strategy for HRDF in collaboration with European Volunteer Expert.



*Participants of the European Exchange visit to Istanbul
(May 2016)*

At the same meeting, HRDF was introduced to the e-CPR **online-training portal**, an e-learning programme open to the general public that informs participants about the organisation's objectives, refugee situations in countries of origin, resettlement programme, integration and ends with a module on volunteering, informing participants about opportunities to support refugee integration at the organisation. The e-CPR **online-training portal** inspired the development of HRDF's own e-learning programme to train Turkish volunteers on the refugee situation in their own national context.

Following two intensive days of discussions and best practice sharing, conference participants spent the third day of the **European Exchange meeting** visiting HRDF's Syrian Refugee Service Centre in the Istanbul Esenler district. European and Turkish participants were introduced to HRDF's work in the areas of psycho-social support, legal advice and referral at site.

The **second European Exchange** visit was hosted by ICMC Europe and the Italian Caritas branches **Consorzio Communitas** and **Consorzio Farsi Prossimo** in Milan on 23-25 November bringing together 30 participants, including 11 Turkish civil society and local authority actors, as well as 19 European stakeholders from NGOs, local authorities, central government, the European Commission, the Council of Europe, universities and UNHCR. The meeting allowed for an in-depth discussion on developing creative solutions to **boost reception and integration capacity at local level**, namely the use of **volunteers and cultural mediators**. During the conference in Milan, project partner HRDF presented their new strategy of engaging volunteers in their service provision while Turkish and European experts provided advice and feedback. In addition, participants examined how to address the needs of refugees in accessing mainstream health and education, and how to ensure integration in host communities, particularly in

the areas of language, employment and housing. Italy has an established tradition of Cultural Mediation, and frontline actors rely on Cultural Mediators to welcome and assist newly-arrived migrants from the moment they step off the boat. Recognised scholars and experts from the University of Milan, UNHCR and Council of Europe introduced the concept and profession of Cultural Mediation to Turkish actors and added to the reflection on its use within refugee service provision.

The Council of Europe has developed a toolkit (available online in seven languages) to support member states in their efforts to respond to the challenges posed by unprecedented migration flows. It has been produced as part of the project Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants (LIAM) of the Council of Europe's major programme on language policy.

The toolkit is designed to assist organisations, and especially volunteers, providing language support for adult refugees with curriculum materials, intercultural communication tips and relevant tutoring techniques. The toolkit comprises the 57 tools and other resources contained in the various sections of this website. Tools can be downloaded and adapted to meet the needs of different contexts.

At the project's European Exchange visit to Milan, Dr. Lorenzo Rocca (LIAM) introduced participants to the toolkit which was, at the time, piloted in Italy.

HRDF, after being introduced to different practices and approaches to volunteering for refugee service provision by European experts at the initial European Exchange visit in Istanbul, piloted a volunteering programme within service provision at their Syrian Refugee Service Centre supervised by a designated Volunteer Coordinator. Over the course of the project, the centre accommodated changing numbers of volunteers, depending on the time of the year and other contextual circumstances, but kept an average of 35-45 volunteers actively engaged at any time in different phases of service provision. These regular



*HRDF staff and volunteers
(October 2016)*

volunteers were often university or post graduate students mainly in the departments of psychology and social work of different universities in Istanbul, but they also included a few post graduate medical students. Musicians, art teachers, and psychologists were among the volunteers and most of the volunteers were female.

Depending on the type of volunteer work, the hours and the schedules changed. For example, some volunteers were responsible for organising the donation room. The group could coordinate the volunteer work freely according to their own schedules as the task did not require direct contact with the beneficiaries. The duration of their commitment depended on the volume of donations received during the specific week. On the other hand, the volunteers who organised courses for beneficiaries had to adhere to a strict schedule. HRDF started delivering one health session each week, which meant a commitment of approximately three hours each week for the volunteers involved (including preparation, attendance and follow-up). As the number of health seminars increased up to four seminars per week, the organisation started engaging two different groups of volunteers visiting the centre for six hours each week.



Other activities run by volunteers included: Art classes for children; Art therapy for children and adults; Turkish classes for children and adults; health seminars; IT classes; Handcraft classes; Music/choir classes for adults.

A major challenge HRDF noticed during the course of the project was that not all volunteers could handle working with very vulnerable people. Some volunteer agreements were terminated because the volunteer did not feel able to face the challenge and did underestimate the impact on oneself while working with vulnerable people in need. It is important for supervisors or volunteer coordinators to notice if a case is too overwhelming and volunteers are unable to handle the situation. This is crucial in order to prevent volunteers from developing empathy fatigue or secondary traumatic stress symptoms.

Another challenge faced was that several volunteers were knowledgeable about the background of the target client group and possessed the necessary skills but expected remuneration in light of their

education and skill set. HRDF further noticed that although there has been an improvement in recent years, the notion of volunteering is not very well understood by the Turkish public. Volunteers do not always understand that working with vulnerable people should be taken as seriously as any paid job.



*HRDF Women's choir
(May 2016)*

Some of the volunteers who started to work at the centre introduced new activities to the centre and its staff. For example, a musician who worked as a volunteer established a woman's choir of Syrian women. The choir has already given three well-attended concerts in Istanbul and is currently working on producing an album. The organisation also started to collaborate with the other NGOs sharing information about volunteering experiences and opportunities.

Besides strengthening HRDF's reception activities and direct work with volunteers for beneficiaries of international protection, the project aimed at strengthening capacities and volunteer expertise by building national platforms to ensure that different strategies can be pursued and collaboration between relevant actors supported. HRDF and ICMC Europe organised and hosted a 1-day Roundtable meeting in Eskisehir on 14-15 July 2016 inviting representatives from NGOs, central government authorities (DGMM), UNHCR and local service providers (including local governments). The meeting was followed by a one-day site visit offered by the Red Crescent's Eskisehir branch and the HRDF Eskisehir refugee service centre to introduce European and Turkish participants to HRDF's work in the areas of psycho-social support, legal advice and referral at site. The roundtable and site visit offered an opportunity to **raise awareness** on refugee protection and durable solutions for refugees at local levels as well as to further **define volunteering** within the Turkish context including the roles and responsibilities of local, regional and national actors.

A Final project conference was hosted by ICMC Europe and HRDF on 9 May 2017 in Ankara, where more than 40 local and regional actors from local government, international organisations, service providers and European and Turkish NGOs attended. The one-day meeting programme included a series of expert presentations and panels, break-out discussions with the objective of 1) strengthening **cooperation and**

exchange of practices between Turkish and European stakeholders on the topic of increasing the quantity and quality of services and assistance to refugees to ensure protection and promote integration in Turkey; and 2) formulating final conclusions & recommendations with regard to engaging volunteers in refugee service provision in Turkey.

The last chapter of this publication will outline these conclusions & recommendations gathered during 19 months of EU-Turkey exchange and mutual learning about volunteering in local refugee service provision within the Refugee Service Delivery Project.

GOOD PRACTICE



Employment mentoring in the Netherlands

The Dutch Council for Refugees (DCR) coordinates the **Project VIP** (abbreviation for Refugees Invest in Participating) with the aim to help refugees find a job and integrate sustainably into Dutch society. In 2016, the project supported 1.500 beneficiaries to find a job with the support of volunteers and the staff of the DCR. The VIP training programme comprises two components: group training and individual guidance. Participants receive about eight sessions of group training under the guidance of a professional trainer and a couple of job coaches (volunteers), where they learn about the Dutch labour market and how to find a job. They also partake in organised visits to companies and employers. After the group trainings, participants start a two month traineeship in the private sector, at schools or in volunteer organisations. Job coaches help the participants individually to find suitable trainee or employment positions, and to navigate the Dutch labour market and cultural differences. The project is run by one national project manager, five regional managers, five coordinators, five trainers and 400 job coaches. The project is run by one national project manager, five regional managers, five coordinators, five trainers and 400 job coaches. In its second phase in 2017, the project continued to engage Dutch municipalities (50) and companies (180) who are opening their doors to refugees who are seeking work experience in the Dutch labour market. Project VIP was presented at the HYPERLINK '<http://resettlement.eu/page/local-roundtable-meeting-%E2%80%98volunteering-refugee-protection-eskisehir-turkey-14-15-july-2016>' roundtable meeting in Eskisehir, Turkey, that took place within the framework of the Refugee Service Delivery project.

2.2.1 Developing an organisational strategy on engaging volunteers in refugee service provision

Volunteer involvement within the civil society sector in both the EU and Turkey has been idiosyncratic at best. Remarkably few civil society organisations have engaged volunteers strategically to maximise their involvement. In Turkey, few CSOs understand the basic constructs of volunteer engagement. Many organisations do not know what they can expect from an engaged volunteer workforce, nor are they aware of the critical importance of a volunteer infrastructure designed to facilitate and support community engagement. Informed top-level support is critical to maximising volunteer participation; managing diverse volunteer community interests and resources; facilitating productive relations among staff, volunteers, and beneficiaries; protecting against volunteer-related liabilities; and ensuring that voluntary labour connects with the organisation's strategic goals.



.Refugee at work in the Netherlands, Dutch Council for Refugees

Within the context of the SHARE Network, ICMC Europe has worked on developing expert exchange and tools to professionalise volunteer involvement NGOs in refugee integration in European cities. The peer-exchange programme SHARING Through Mentoring was developed by ICMC Europe in collaboration with the Dutch Council for Refugees (DCR) to gather expertise on volunteering for refugee resettlement and integration from across Europe. The DCR consists of 5 regional offices supported by a national office in Amsterdam, with over 13,000 volunteers and 600 paid employees across the country. The system of volunteering developed and encouraged by the DCR has been very successful and may serve as an excellent model for countries such as Turkey looking to expand volunteerism in the area of refugee reception and integration.

In a trend towards professionalising volunteering, the DCR has implemented policies to safeguard and support both refugees and volunteers. To this end, the DCR has developed elaborate training methods and has also sought to limit unreasonable project demands on volunteers. A variety of tools have been developed to ensure a good working system, such as a “*job description book*” to demarcate responsibilities



*HRDF volunteer and beneficiaries during
community centre activities (2016)*

of paid employees and volunteers and a “*policy book*” which serves as a manual for volunteers. The most important regulations are the Charter, a privacy policy, a code of conduct and protocols on how to handle sensitive situations such as domestic violence.

Inspired by the success of these tools, the Refugee Service Delivery project facilitated the development of a **tailor-made Volunteer Strategy** to support and structure volunteer engagement at the project partner HRDF in Turkey. HRDF worked towards an organisational strategy to formalise the engagement of volunteers in refugee reception services at their Syrian Refugee Centre in Istanbul that has the potential to function as a strategic framework and guidance for non-profit and public sector leaders open to exploring the ramifications and implications of engaging volunteers in refugee service provision.

The HRDF Volunteer Strategy summarises the organisation’s internal policies on the role and function of volunteers, recruitment and selection procedures, training and monitoring, financial reimbursements and liabilities and termination of volunteer agreements. **To download** the Volunteer Strategy visit www.resettlement.eu or read the full strategy in Annex III.



© Goedele Monnens

Refugee at work in the Netherlands, Dutch Council for Refugees

2.2.2 Training for volunteers online: E-learning platform on refugee protection in Turkey

Volunteers, like paid staff, require an understanding of the nature and limitations of their role, and support to develop the skills and to access the information and resources they need to perform. Regular training for volunteers can help them to understand more about the requirements of the organisational framework within which they are working, and the people their role may involve working with. Working with refugees can be challenging. Receiving targeted training on refugees' specific needs as well as legal frameworks on asylum and migration can ensure early problem-solving and help to safeguard volunteers' and beneficiaries' wellbeing.

With limited public funds and a strong need to train volunteers engaged in refugee service provision and thereby increase reception capacity both at national and local levels, an efficient use of available resources was required. Therefore, and within the frame of the Refugee Service Delivery project, HRDF and ICMC Europe created an **online-training portal** to train local volunteers of the HRDF Syrian Refugee Centre in Istanbul. The online portal <https://e-multeci-ikgv.org/> was inspired by the **e-learning programme e-CPR** developed by the Portuguese Refugee Council (CPR). HRDF's e-learning course E-Multicere-IKGV (translated 'E-Refugee-HRDF') is a free 20-hour training programme tailored to groups of up to 40 participants, which takes place over a period of four weeks, following a fixed schedule. A curriculum has been created including learning material to be covered during the four weeks and articles to be read and studied. Each week addresses a different topic: learning materials (PowerPoint slides, PDF articles and videos) are uploaded by HRDF's educators and remain available to students to read and download during the course of that week. The tool includes a forum to submit questions and have open discussions between students and educators; a glossary that explains terms and abbreviations related to refugee protection in Turkey; and facilitates interactive communication between educators and students through chats and messaging. At the end of week three, students have to pass the short multiple-choice questionnaire "Who can be a refugee?" to test participants knowledge on status determination.

The online course is targeted to volunteers but also open to the general public and informs participants about:

- The organisation's work and objectives;
- International refugee protection, different types of statuses;
- Terminology: Internally Displaced Persons, Statelessness, forced migration vs. economic migration;
- Different asylum systems in the EU and Turkey;
- Vulnerable cases such as children, women, victims of trafficking, victims of torture and abuse;
- Refugee situations in countries of origin;
- Reception, social support and integration in Turkey, including access to benefits and services, access to language courses and the labour market; and
- Volunteering opportunities to support refugee integration.

HRDF's volunteers may learn about the opportunity to attend the e-Learning course with HRDF through the organisation's website and/or social media channels. In addition, HRDF's Volunteer Coordinator encourages volunteers already engaged at the organisation and those who would like to become a volunteer to sign up for the course. Interested participants can register themselves for the course (on

the e-learning portal), the organisation then reviews their expression of interest and finally accepts 40 participants for each course.

The Turkish HRDF online training course has the potential to function as a strategic tool for other non-profit organisations and the public sector in Turkey which may want to offer additional support and information to their volunteers and professionalise their volunteer engagement in refugee service provision. To see the HRDF e-learning portal live, access <https://e-multeci-ikgv.org/>.



GOOD PRACTICE



Matching refugees and employers online

Refugee job matching portals exist in several European countries (Germany: **Migranthire**, France: **Action Emploi Réfugiés**, Austria: **RefugeesWork**, The Netherlands: **Refugee Talents Hub**). These platforms are often coordinated by new start-up teams that very often include refugees themselves. Refugee job matching portals give employers the opportunity to post vacancies and find talented newcomers whose professional profiles match current vacancies. Refugees can create a profile, upload their CV and information on their skills and experiences. Refugees can find and respond to job vacancies posted by local employers who can then view the online profiles of the applicants. Besides offering the opportunity for matching, website users also find all relevant information about the national labour market: links to job vacancy search engines, information about the current labour force, specific gaps in the labour market and the different work sectors across the country. In addition, and to address refugees' specific needs, these websites include links to pages where refugees can find further information: government agencies, associations, NGOs, training institutions, etc. Many of these start-ups also offer language and vocational training courses (live and/or online) to make the waiting periods until finding a job more productive.

2.3 Conclusions and Recommendations for Volunteering for Refugees in Turkey

This chapter offers final conclusions and concrete recommendations on how to strengthen volunteering for refugees in Turkey based on 19 months of EU-Turkey exchange and mutual learning about volunteering in local refugee service provision within the framework of the Refugee Service Delivery Project.

1

Volunteering programmes should be adapted to Turkish culture by tapping into the strong informal culture in Turkey of helping neighbors and acquaintances. Non-hierarchical and horizontally coordinated citizen-led initiatives like Dervis Baba are clear examples of the potential success and positive impact of informal volunteering in Turkey. Involving grassroots, citizen-led initiatives in refugee integration promotes welcome, builds trust and leads to more sustainable local programmes. National authorities and civil society organisations can play an important role in disseminating best practices, training and linking grassroots initiatives in different locations.

2

According to Turkish CSOs, most citizens lack reliable information about refugees in Turkey, the organisations that help them and opportunities to volunteer. NGO led volunteer programmes should seek to raise awareness of the importance of refugee protection and integration in Turkey; and the vital role volunteers play in this process whether by assisting and guiding refugees to integrate, providing a personal link with the host society and/or supporting refugees towards gaining independence.

3

High unemployment rates and the lack of a general minimum income is an important factor that impedes a volunteering culture in Turkey. Young people are often preoccupied with university entrance exams and military duty and thus less likely to be interested in volunteering. Research shows that one of the main reasons why individuals in Turkey do not volunteer is quite simply a lack of time, resources and a lifestyle incompatible with volunteering.²⁴ Volunteer work should be well planned, time-limited and structured in advance. CSOs should communicate that their volunteer work provides a worth-while experience through which individuals can acquire important work and life skills and can potentially be the first step towards paid employment.

24 Akboga, 257.

4

In the recent past, the retirement age in Turkey was relatively low compared to European countries. In particular, many women who started to work before 1999 leave their jobs after 25 years to either work part-time or retire. In addition, the labor force participation of women in Turkey is considerably lower than in most European countries.²⁵ **Early retirement age and low unemployment rates for females leave room and opportunities for women and the elderly to actively engage in civic life as volunteers.** CSOs should target these groups when communicating about their work, values and opportunities to engage in their cause as a volunteer.

5

To maximise outreach, volunteering programmes in Turkey should focus on activities that do not touch on sensitive issues such as politics, religion, etc. Such activities might include, for example, sport matches, cultural activities such as concerts and food festivals to familiarise Turkish society with foreign cultures. **Volunteering can thereby enable refugees and local residents to meet with each other, engage in joint activities and foster mutual understanding.**

6

Turkey is geographically and culturally wide and diverse. One type of volunteering programme will not work in the entirety of Turkey due to many regional differences. Rather than implementing a top-down and one-size-fits-all approach, local volunteering programmes should be tailor-made by the respective communities to match provincial culture and structures.

7

The lack of knowledge of Syrian culture among NGO staff, leads to an absence of cultural sensitivity in refugee service provision. In addition, due to a general lack of qualified and affordable interpreters, Turkish practitioners struggle to communicate with clients, which subsequently impacts service provision in the areas of health, psychological support, access to services and legal advice. **Service providers in Turkey may consider the use of refugee volunteers to provide translation services and help to explain cultural norms and concepts to other newcomers as an innovative solution to bridge cultural differences.**

25 The World Bank 2015: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.CACT.FE.ZS?locations=TR>

8

Empirical research has shown that Turkish volunteers are more likely to be young and highly educated. With a relatively strong interest in civil society organisations and volunteering on the part of Turkey's youth, there would appear to be good platform from which to stimulate volunteering. **Students from social work, Middle-Eastern or Arabic studies are more likely to already affiliate with the beneficiaries. Likewise, these groups might be better capable of understanding refugees' specific needs and cultural backgrounds. In addition, these youngsters may benefit from volunteer work for Syrian refugees by practicing language skills and acquiring valuable work experiences.**

9

While robust and comprehensive statistics including both formal and informal volunteering are lacking, it is difficult to identify which thematic issues attract Turkish citizens to volunteer the most. However, thematic distribution of civil society organisations may give some indication: sports organisations, religious groups and charities providing social services dominate the field, whereas right-based organisations and advocacy groups form a considerably smaller percentage of CSOs²⁶. **Volunteering for integration at the local level can be expanded and improved if a broad set of local stakeholders - such as sport clubs, religious groups, employers and universities – are able to make contributions each respecting their own roles and mandates. In addition, integration is much more successful if there is a multi-stakeholder engagement in refugee reception and welcome, and an innovative and creative approach to engaging new partners. Reaching out to other actors and their networks of volunteers may significantly expand the 'integration offer' for refugees in their new neighbourhoods, building a welcoming local environment and providing refugees and local residents with opportunities to meet one another.**

10

One final obstacle to volunteering in Turkey, which is ripe for improvement is the lack of a volunteer infrastructure. Turkey has no clear definition of a volunteer and no favourable policy nor legal framework for volunteers. This leads to ambiguity and even concerns of legal action on the part of organisations and volunteers. Likewise, there is no public institution that determines volunteering policies or oversees volunteers. **National authorities, educational institutions and civil society can play an important role in making professional training and qualifications in volunteering available, introducing quality standards, supporting institutionalised and continuous collaboration between different stakeholders, and providing capacity support to volunteer-based organisations to contribute to the improvement of a national volunteer infrastructure.**

26 <https://www.dernekler.gov.tr/en/default.aspx>

Exchange on volunteering between Turkish and EU civil society actors has shown that CSOs in Turkey perceive volunteering as an expression of solidarity with people in need that should be considered an obligation within the integral part of human relationships. At the May 2017 Final Conference of the Refugee Service Delivery project in Ankara, partners and stakeholders agreed on a common definition of volunteering for refugee service delivery - derived but adapted from its original version developed by European volunteer experts within the framework of the SHARING Through Mentoring programme, to fit the Turkish context.

DEFINING VOLUNTEERING...

Volunteers are individuals who carry out unpaid activities of their own free will, often in support of an organisation or initiative serving the general interest of their local community, and without replicating or substituting the work of paid staff. This definition includes volunteering by all members of the host community (including refugees themselves) who are committed to assist refugee reception, integration and participation.

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ANNEXES

Annex I: Overview of organisations engaging volunteers in refugee service provision in Turkey

Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants (SGDD-ASAM)- since its establishment in 1995, ASAM has been providing psycho-social support for asylum seekers and refugees. Its primary goal is to create solutions to the problems that refugees and asylum seekers encounter in Turkey, to help them to fulfil their basic needs and to support their access to fundamental rights and services. ASAM aims to raise awareness of public authorities and local communities on problems encountered by refugees and asylum seekers.

ASAM's work is carried out by its staff consisting of case workers, psychologists, social workers, health educators and translators in more than 41 provinces with 60 offices. Furthermore, ASAM contributes to academic research by analysing national and international crises for the purpose of forecasting national and international migration movements. The organisation is an implementing partner of UNHCR in Turkey and a member of both Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures and UNITED for Intercultural Action. ASAM engages volunteers in several activities and who may also organise their own initiatives under supervision of paid staff.

Association of Solidarity and Mutual Assistance to Migrants (ASEM)- is a diaspora organisation that assists migrants in Turkey. In partnership with the French NGO Médecins du Monde, ASEM provides health care to homeless migrants and refugees through its reception centre in Istanbul.

Association for Integration and Development (AID)- is a civil, nonprofit and nongovernmental organisation with the mission to ensure that all Syrians residing in Turkey have their rights fully respected and basic needs met (nutrition, health, protection and education). The organisation runs its operations in Turkey (Gaziantep) and inside Syria (Ghouta, Damascus). Volunteers can support protection, food security, health and education programmes, and are able to apply online by submitting their CV.

Community Volunteers Foundation (TOG)- contributes to the personal development of young people by encouraging them to participate in social responsibility projects as volunteers. In doing so, it increases young people's community involvement on a voluntary basis. Every year the Foundation supports the realisation of over 980 projects and activities implemented by about 40,000 young people in over 120 university clubs. TOG is new to working with refugees but is currently looking into ways of expanding to engage refugee volunteers in their charity activities at Turkish universities. Current refugee work includes providing social, psychological and basic health services, such as workshops on sexual and reproductive health, to youth from Turkey and Syria through its youth centers in Hatay and Diyarbakır. TOG also participated in MentorPower - a strategic partnership project for the social and professional empowerment of young refugees through volunteer mentoring in collaboration with partners from France, Spain, Greece, Norway, and Turkey.

Derviş Baba- is a grassroots movement that provides social support and services through its volunteer network and local cafés in six cities across Turkey. Derviş Baba cooperates with local authorities but is entirely funded by members' donations and run by volunteers who coordinate local groups of hundreds of volunteers through its branches (three in Istanbul, five others in Edirne, Bursa, Eskişehir, İzmir and Ankara). Depending on the local volunteer group, activities range from collecting in-kind donations, organising creative/recreational activities, helping furnish houses for families in need, teaching Turkish as foreign language, providing tutoring to refugees who intend to take university entrance exams and organising awareness-raising initiatives. The network consists of approx. 6.000 volunteers, about half are university students.

Main group of beneficiaries are children and youth in need, many of which are refugees but the movement does not limit its reach to a particular target group but lives up to the example "If I see, if I hear - I am responsible".

Eskişehir Bar Association Women's Commission- the local branch of the national Bar Association provides legal advice and supports refugee women during court trials with the help of volunteer lawyers.

Human Resource Development Foundation (IKGV - HRDF)- established in 1988 is a leading non-profit, non-governmental and autonomous organisation in Turkey, which seeks to assist vulnerable groups by finding solutions for problems stemming from irregular population movements, and eliminating the factors that hinder social development. HRDF has been one of the internationally accredited executing agencies of the United Nations Population Fund since 1997, and, since 2002, has had a special consultative NGO status with the UN Economic and Social Council. HRDF received tax exempt status in Turkey with the Cabinet Decree in 2001.

During the early years of HRDF, urbanisation in Turkey gained momentum, cities became industrial centres, and mass migration movements started to change the social structure. Reproductive health was one of the areas influenced by this new era of vast changes. In the following years, empowerment of women with a focus on gender equality was included in HRDF's priority areas. Global changes have affected all countries and one of the many results of these changes was increased migration movements. Turkey has been influenced by these changes and turned from a country of emigration into a country of immigration. HRDF developed and implemented programmes in the migration area, initially targeting regular migrants, then refugees and then foreign victims of human trafficking. In response to the Syrian crisis, HRDF has started implementing activities to provide support to Syrian refugees who have fled war.

Mercy Without Limits (MWL)- established in 2012, MWL is a Syrian diaspora organisation with the mission to address humanitarian needs for orphans, widows, and refugees regardless of age, gender, race, or religion. MWL initially specialized in aiding Syrian orphans and widows but expanded as a direct response to the increased demand for humanitarian relief in the region.

MWL provides individuals with a platform of adequate support to prosper within their communities and improve their living conditions. With several branches in Syria, Turkey, Jordan, Iraq, Sierra Leone and

Ghana, the organisation provides capacity building, protection, education, empowerment, rehabilitation programmes, psychological support, livelihood, family counseling and food security projects. MWL just started engaging volunteers in Turkey and has faced some struggles due to language barriers between volunteers, beneficiaries and paid staff but especially their orphan support programme benefitted from dedicated local volunteers in Gaziantep.

Refugee Rights Turkey- is an independent NGO based in Istanbul that provides legal information and assistance services to asylum seekers; organises trainings for lawyers and generates reference materials to strengthen the availability of quality legal information and representation for persons in need of international protection; works to nurture public ownership and positive attitudes towards asylum seekers; and advocates for improvements in Turkey's asylum legislation and policies in line with international standards. The organisation provides legal aid for asylum seekers; organizes legal counseling, know-your-rights workshops, trainings for lawyers and often engages local and international volunteers with a law background.

Small Projects Istanbul (SPI)- facilitates a community center in Istanbul, entirely by private donations. SPI is run by a dedicated team of volunteers from Syria, Turkey, Australasia, the Americas, Asia, the Middle East and Europe who deliver Turkish, English and German language classes for children and adults as well as a homework support club, music, art, sport and other cultural and (re-)creative activities. Volunteers also often help with communications, grant writing and other admin tasks, or even provide childcare while parents attend sessions at the centre. Their team also develops an [OpenStreetMap \(OSM\)](#) for urban refugees to map their communities and help them be aware of, and gain access to services and training. The organisation professionally manages their volunteer engagement: Volunteer Guidelines, Release and Waiver of Liability, Volunteer Information Form need to be read and accepted before entering services.

Support to Life- is a humanitarian aid agency providing emergency relief and protection to refugees in Turkey, Iran and Pakistan. Through its novel E-Voucher programme, the lives of the most vulnerable out-of-camp Syrian and Iraqi refugees in Diyarbakir and Batman are preserved and protected by providing them with financial and social assistance. The organisation started to engage local volunteers and private sector actors in their humanitarian response in the Eastern cities in Turkey.

Turkish Red Crescent Migration & Refugee Services (TRC)- The Red Crescent's Migration & Refugee Services Department was founded to run all migration-related programmes and activities in Turkey, in coordination with key ministries and institutions.

Spearheaded by its Head Quarters in Ankara, the Red Crescent is engaged in programmes including border relief activities, large scale food donations (in- and outside of refugee camps), providing financial assistance through the Red Crescent Card as part of the Emergency Social Safety Net programme, child protection programmes inside camps that involve refugee youth as volunteer community leaders, and finally, the Community Center project, coordinated with IFRC and UNICEF, that provides psycho-social support, education and referral services to Syrian adults and children residing in urban areas of Turkey. Most of these local Communities Centre have started to engage local volunteers in their services

for vulnerable refugees residing in urban settings. Turkish Red Crescent volunteers were honored in November 2017 by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) for their efforts to aid Syrian refugees in Turkey.

Women's Solidarity Foundation, KADAV- was founded in İstanbul after the 1999 Marmara Earthquake by a group of women, who got together to support other women after the disaster. The struggle for gender equality and the provision of psycho-social support has been at the core of KADAV's activities since the beginning, including in cases of domestic and gender-based violence. In analogy to its founding ideas, KADAV now actively advocates against violence against women, domestic violence and discrimination against migrant women and provides counselling to its victims; supports imprisoned women and LGBT People and promotes women labour and employment policies. Additionally, since some years, KADAV also mobilizes solidarity for women with migrant backgrounds.

Yuva- founded in 2010, the organisation provides education, protection, livelihoods to the most vulnerable members of society and advocates for their rights. In its six branches across the country, Yuva runs capacity building activities for adult learning institutions in order to increase the participation of the people in Turkey in non-formal adult education activities. Through their Community Centres, YUVA strengthens adult learning institutions, engages adults in employment, facilitates outreach, case management, counseling, awareness raising and psychosocial activities. To empower children and youngsters, the centres organize creative reading activities in Arabic and Turkish, handicrafts and painting workshops, theater classes, weekly educational film screenings. YUVA encourages Turkish employees and the society to learn Turkish and Arabic in order to contribute to social peace and solidarity.

Annex II: Overview of volunteering in Turkey

NGOs	Volunteers				Services						Administration		
	REFUGEES AS VOLUNTEERS	TRAINING FOR VOLUNTEERS	CODE OF CONDUCT	RECEPTION - LEGAL PROCESS	SHELTER	FOOD	COMMUNITY SUPPORT	LABOR MARKET INTEGRATION	CHILD PROTECTION	PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT	BENEFICIARIES	DURATION	
Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants (SGDD-ASAM)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	Vulnerable Refugees	since 1995	
Derviş Baba	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	local citizens, including asylum seekers and refugees	since 2008	
Eskisehir Bar Association Women's Commission				✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	asylum seekers and refugees		
HRDF - Human Resource Development Foundation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	asylum seekers and refugees	since 1988	
KADAV - Women's Solidarity Foundation, KADAV				✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	asylum seekers and refugees	since 1999	
Refugee Rights Turkey				✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	asylum seekers and refugees	since 2015	
Support to Life		✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	Vulnerable Refugees	since 2005	
TOG - Community Volunteers Foundation	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	varies; open to all	since 2002	
Turkish Red Crescent Migration & Refugee Services (TRC)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	asylum seekers and refugees		
Yuva Community Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	youth (age 18-30)		
Association for Integration and Development (AID)	✓	✓		✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	syrian vulnerable groups		
Mercy Without Limits (MWL)						✓		✓			local citizens, including asylum seekers and refugees	since 2015	
Small Projects Istanbul	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	adult and refugee children	since 2015	

Annex III: Paving the way for refugees in Turkey



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Refugee Protection and Service Delivery project

Volunteering Strategy

HRDF Support Office for Syrian Refugees
Esenler – İstanbul, Turkey

In collaboration with ICMC Europe, HRDF and the Dutch Council for Refugees





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1. INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the volunteer strategy: HRDF works with paid staff and volunteers jointly to achieve the objectives of the organization. Unlike paid staff, the working relationship between volunteers and the organization is not legally regulated. There is no question of wages or employment. Nevertheless, recruiting, training and developing expertise of its volunteers is of great interest for the organization which acknowledges the importance of defining official agreements and policies with respect to its volunteers.

The present draft volunteering strategy describes the rights and duties of volunteers and of those

HRDF with respect to these volunteers. As for other interns or trainees, often determined by an educational institution, arrangements fall not within the scope of this regulation. A separate internship agreement has been formulized.

The aim of this scheme is to contribute to a good relationship between volunteers and the organization and to clarify its form and content. By this means mutual expectations are managed and transparency is ensured for both sides.

HRDF's Organizational Information: HRDF is a non-profit organization working in the population and development area with special emphasis on supporting vulnerable groups. There are 2 main programs of HRDF.

- 1) Irregular Migration Program
 - a. Providing Support to Refugees
 - b. Providing Support to Syrian Refugees
 - c. Combating Human Trafficking
- 2) Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights Program

HRDF continues its implementation in 9 different locations. These locations are

1. HRDF HQ at Galatasaray / Istanbul
2. Syrian Refugees Community Center – Esenler/Istanbul
3. Refugee Program Coordination and Support Office - Elmadađ/Istanbul
4. Refugee Support Office (6 offices) – Ankara, Eskişehir, Bilecik, Kütahya, Van, Ađrı

2. ROLE AND FUNCTION OF VOLUNTEERS





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Functions of Volunteers

1. HRDF provides support to a large number of refugees. However, the number of paid staff is limited by the budget. Collaboration of the paid staff and volunteers is valuable to provide adequate response to HRDF's target population's needs.
2. By taking part in such programs, volunteers get to know the real life problems of different groups of people. This is valuable for both personal development of the volunteers at every age but it is also a good practice for young people for their future employments as they can experience functioning under various conditions.
3. It is a known fact that volunteers could act as agents of cultural mediation/harmony. Native volunteers break the ice between the refugee population and the native population
4. HRDF works with native and Syrian volunteers. Working with Syrian volunteers is meaningful in several ways. Besides acting as agents of cultural mediation; Syrian volunteers could also change the perception of the hierarchy where native population helps the refugee population.

Roles of Volunteers: Paid project staff is responsible for ensuring the continuity and quality of the work and the creation of conditions in which volunteers can do their work. Volunteers have their own roles depending on their skills, experience and choices. HRDF Syrian Support Center is the main unit where HRDF works with volunteers. Types of volunteers at the Center:

- 1- Volunteers with special skills/knowledge can open their own courses after consultation with the project coordinator and voluntary coordinator
- 2- Volunteers can assist ongoing courses by helping the course trainer
- 3- Volunteers who can speak Arabic functions as translators where appropriate
- 4- HRDF collaborates with volunteer organizations and the members of these organizations open their own courses, workshops. For example: Knitting course for Syrians were conducted by Lioness Clup.

3. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Recruitment: Recruiting volunteers is an ongoing activity; must be arranged so that at any time volunteers can enroll. Volunteers are recruited by:

- University seminars
- Hosting visits to offices
- Personal contacts
- Through Facebook or website advertising





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- Or collaborating with volunteer organizations

Selection committee: Selection committee consist of the program coordinator and one or two more staff from the same program preferably the persons who will directly work with the volunteer, for example if exists volunteer coordinator of the program.

Selection: The Selection Committee considers the suitability of candidate according to need, motivation and competencies.

Selection is done in two phases:

- 1) At the initial phase the nominee is requested to send a CV, her references, information about her/his availability time wise and a short note on motivations.
- 2) At the second phase, selected nominees are invited for an interview.

Volunteer is informed about committee's decision within one week after the interview. The volunteer is invited to the center to finalize below tasks:

- Confidentiality agreement is signed
- Volunteer contract is signed
- A voluntary registration form with contact information and other information is prepared
- Volunteer is provided with relevant organizational information
- Volunteer is provided with rules and regulations document
- Volunteer coordinator and new volunteer discusses tasks and timing

Volunteers Seminars: Volunteers should be provided with trainings that will help them to be successful with their tasks.

1. Volunteers are provided with an initial orientation seminar; and trainings and consultation on important topics such as confidentiality
2. Volunteers are encouraged to participate at the in service trainings that are regularly provided to the HRDF staff
3. Also volunteers are encouraged to participate at meetings/trainings/workshops that HRDF is invited.

Supervision and follow up: Volunteer coordinator closely monitors volunteers. S/he is keeps her-self available for questions and consultations requests coming from the volunteers.

Bi monthly meetings are organized with volunteers to assess their harmony with the volunteer team as well as staff, her/his interaction with the target groups, if s/he is satisfied with the work done and if there is need to change in the schedule, in the task etc. for improved service provision and satisfaction.





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Quitting: Volunteer is expected to inform the volunteer coordinator one week before her decision to terminate the task. S/he is expected to indicate reason for leaving, as well as her / his evaluation of the work, environment, relationships, degree of satisfaction etc.

4. ENTERING SERVICES

As explained in the role of volunteer section, volunteers can have different tasks. Depending on their experience and the type of responsibility they are provided with different types of supervision. The volunteer coordinator is the key person in this period. S/he keeps frequent contact with the new volunteer. This initial period gives the volunteer the opportunity to see if s/he is willing and capable to do the job. During this period the volunteer gets acquainted with the organization and gains insight into the duties and responsibilities of the work. Volunteer coordinator in coordination with the project coordinator can decide if the volunteer is suitable for the job, and where if additional support is needed.

The coordinator's tasks:

- Monitor the proper implementation of the work by the volunteer;
- The support of the volunteers;
- Supporting the volunteer of the learning process;
- Monitoring the work load and the prevention of overloading

Training of volunteers:

- HRDF and program objectives
- Introduction to cultural differences and deal with prejudice;
- Issues surrounding privacy /confidentiality

5. ARRANGEMENTS

Financial arrangements and fees

- The volunteer does not receive any remuneration or consideration for the work performed by him.
- On the other hand Syrian volunteers are provided with a small fee to cover their transportation etc. expenses.
- For the courses organized by volunteers, the financial requirement is discussed beforehand and necessary allocations are made. Volunteers cannot make the purchases but can make the list of equipment and consumables and procurement officer add them in the general procurement list of the center.

Contacts with media: Volunteers as well as the staff are not permitted to answer any question coming from media workers. If the media contacts staff /volunteers, they shall not comment and referral the journalist to the director.





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Liability for advice given: Volunteers are obliged to remain in the given boundaries in terms of their relations with the target group.

- Volunteers are obliged to report to their supervisors/coordinator in case they are asked for any assistance outside of their responsibilities.
- If the volunteer doesn't know how to solve a specific problem, s/he shall consult with an experienced volunteer within the discipline and / or coordinator.
- Volunteer never put signatures for or on behalf of a member of the target group.

6. TERMINATION OF THE CONTRACT

Termination could be initiated by the volunteer or the organization.

- Coordination is not happy with the performance and behavior of the volunteer
 - non-compliance with the agreements made in the contract
 - noncompliance with the confidentiality agreement
 - the crossing of the code
- Decrease or cessation of activities of the organization.

Coordinator makes an exit interview to gain insight into how they function, cooperation and the (assists) leadership has experienced, the reason for leaving and any issues for the organization.

Exit interviews help management in following the volunteer work, improvements, problems.

The volunteer is expected to announce one week/a month in advance, her decision to terminate the work

Final Provisions- Upon signing the contract, the volunteer endorses this scheme and all its attachment.





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