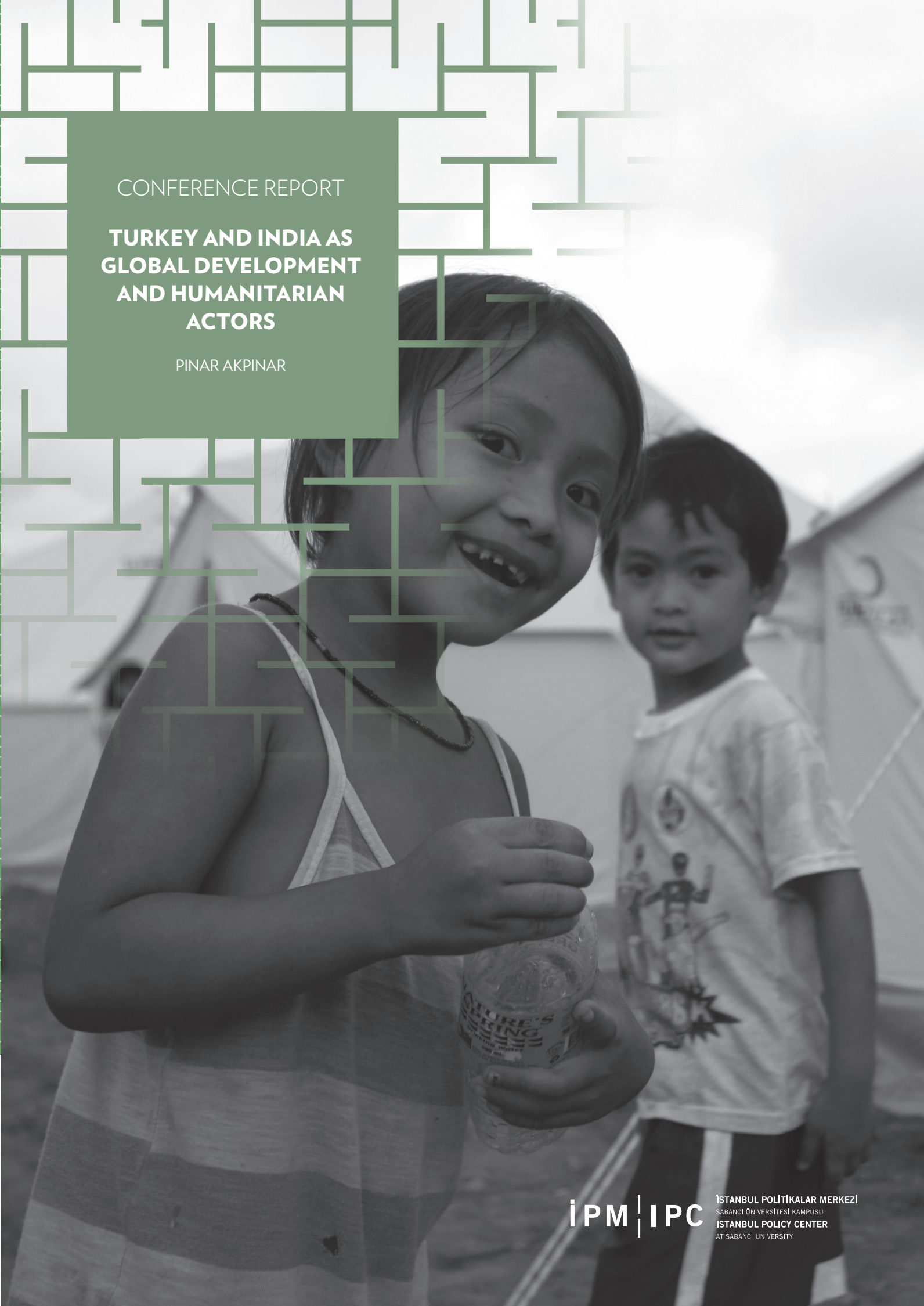
CONFERENCE REPORT

TURKEY AND INDIA AS GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AND HUMANITARIAN ACTORS

PINAR AKPINAR



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İSTANBUL POLİTİKALAR MERKEZİ
SABANCI ÜNİVERSİTESİ KAMPUSU
ISTANBUL POLICY CENTER
AT SABANCI UNIVERSITY

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About Istanbul Policy Center

Istanbul Policy Center is an independent policy research institute with global outreach. Our mission is to foster academic research in social sciences and its application to policy making. We are firmly committed to providing decision makers, opinion leaders, academics, and the general public with innovative and objective analyses in key domestic and foreign policy issues. IPC has expertise in a wide range of areas, including—but not exhaustive to—Turkey-EU-U.S. relations, education, climate change, current trends of political and social transformation in Turkey, as well as the impact of civil society and local governance on this metamorphosis.

Cover photograph Kızılay

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CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Venue: Mezzanine Hall, South Asian University, New Delhi
Date: October 8, 2015

14:00-14:20 Welcome Note – Dr. Kavita A. Sharma, President, South Asian University

14:20-14:40 H.E. Dr. Burak Akçapar, Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to India, Nepal and Maldives – "Turkey's International Development Prospective: Principles and Policies"

14:40-15:00 Prof. C.S.R. Murthy, Jawaharlal Nehru University - "India as an Emergent Power in International Humanitarian Dynamics: Principles and Practice"

15:00-15:20 Prof. Bülent Aras, Coordinator of Program on Conflict Resolution and Mediation at Istanbul Policy Center and Professor at Sabancı University - "Turkey's Africa Policy and Development Perspective"

15:20-15:40 Dr. Nivedita Ray, India Council for World Affairs - "India's Engagement in Africa's Development"

Coffee Break

16:00-16:20 Assoc. Prof. Şebnem Köşer Akçapar, South Asian University - "Turkey's Humanitarian Policy and the Syrian Refugee Situation in Turkey and Beyond"

16:20-16:40 Assoc. Prof. Urvashi Aneja, OP Jindal Global University - "India: A Humanitarian Donor?"

16:40-17:00 Dr. Pınar Akpınar, Scholar, Program on Conflict Resolution and Mediation at Istanbul Policy Center - "Humanitarian NGOs and Peacebuilding: The Case of Turkey"

17:00 -17:20 Closing Remarks – Prof. Sasanka Perera, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, South Asian University

CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

Recent years, particularly the past decades, has witnessed the emergence of new actors as humanitarian agents in the international arena. Their activities have brought a new pulse into the humanitarian scene which had been dominated by traditional actors until recently. Furthermore, the shift from the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015 within the United Nations system has put forth a need for more action to be taken vis-à-vis the increasing number of human-made and natural humanitarian crisis.

The conference *Turkey and India as Global Development and Humanitarian Actors* was held on October 8, 2015 in New Delhi under the auspices of *Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences at South Asian University*, *Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA)*, and *Istanbul Policy Center* against this backdrop. It was part of a series of workshops organized as part of the *Project on Turkey's International Humanitarian NGOs and Peacebuilding*.

The conference aimed to investigate the roles of Turkey and India as emerging agents of global development and humanitarian assistance. A series of two panels were convened to discuss the development and humanitarian approaches of the two countries. The panels also focused on different case studies such as the engagement of these actors with Africa as well as Turkey's response to the Syrian crisis. This report attempts to summarize the highlights of the conference.

EMERGING POWERS AS AGENTS OF HUMANITARIANISM

Humanitarian assistance is providing assistance to address someone else's suffering based on solidarity, empathy and community. Every year, around 330 natural disasters occur in different parts of the world. As also underlined by Dr. Kavita A. Sharma, President of South Asian University, there has been a change in international humanitarian responses. While traditional actors continue to dominate the provision of international humanitarian response, new players have also stepped in such as China, Brazil, India and Turkey, among others. The increasing number of humanitarian crisis such as the tornedos in the United States, the earthquakes and tsunamis in Asia or the man-made disasters such as the Syrian humanitarian crisis necessitate the participation of every actor, including the individuals, the civil society, states and the multilateral fora.

As also underlined by H.E. Dr. Burak Akçapar, Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to India, global humanitarian action involves a complex web of commitments and agencies and requires concrete funding. Strong and effective development assistance comprising humanitarian relief and long term development aid forms the fundamental basis on which such global action can proceed and yield results. Recent years have seen the ascendancy of the profile of a number of developing states in the realm of development and humanitarian assistance. While the diversification of actors may be an advantage in certain aspects, as argued by Assoc. Prof. Urvashi Aneja from OP Jindal Global University, there is also the danger of humanitarianism of being used as a hegemonic tool for exerting the interests of influential actors in vulnerable settings. She further posits that humanitarianism manipulates the language of human rights to justify the use of force and addresses human suffering through a neoliberal package.

INDIA AS A HUMANITARIAN ACTOR

India has become a major donor country despite being a significant recipient until recent years. In fact, India's humanitarian activities go back for several decades. For instance, the Indian National Congress was providing humanitarian aid to China and Europe before India's independence. Since the liberalization of its economy in 1991, India has been following a process of economic growth which had implication inter alia on its role as a humanitarian actor. There has been a significant increase in India's humanitarian aid particularly in the last decade making it an emerging humanitarian power.

As also underlined by C.S.R. Murthy, professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University, today, India ranks as the thirty fourth top humanitarian aid provider in the global scenario. In 2014 it was the fifth largest contributor to the Ebola emergency fund. Furthermore, India was among the first to respond to major humanitarian emergencies such 2004 tsunami in Indonesia or the Nepal earthquake in May 2015. The increase in its capacity to respond rapidly is rooted in the strength it has developed over the course of two decades. In 2000, the quantum of India's humanitarian aid stood on US$200.000. Five years later it went up to US$25 million and in 2010 it reached up to US$36.5 million. As of today, India is the top donor of wheat and rice to the World Food Program.

Despite the fact that 78 percent of its humanitarian aid is targeted to the countries in South East Asia, such as the Philippines, Nepal and Indonesia, there is no continent that has not received Indian humanitarian aid except Australia. India has provided humanitarian assistance even to Libya, Jordan, Bosnia, Burundi, and Somalia, countries that are far beyond its immediate periphery. The diversity of the recipient countries is a clear indication that the geographic imagination of India has expanded visibly in the last decades.

For instance, Africa as the second fastest uprising market has been one of the regions where Indian humanitarian assistance has increased tremendously in the past ten years. In 2005, Indian-African cooperation expanded significantly when India became a full member of Africa Capacity Building Foundation. In 2008, India started the India-Africa Forum Summit, which was a milestone in transforming the relationship into an institutional partnership. As a result of the forum, India was able to build political, economic, security partnerships.

India's humanitarian assistance in Africa has been marked with areas of capacity building, cooperation in high-tech, and health aid, particularly by supplying pharmaceuticals – an important industry in India. In terms of capacity building, India invests significantly on training programs and providing scholarships for African people. In 2013 India gave grants to 47 countries in Africa. Furthermore, India also gives lines of credit to African countries. Of the 187 lines of credit that India provides to other countries, 133 go to 48 countries of Africa itself.

There are several guiding principles of India's humanitarian aid. One of the visible characteristics is that the Indian aid is bilateral, targeting states rather than directly targeting people or NGOs. Murthy argued that multilateralism is not a very preferred term in Indian foreign policy mainly on the grounds of suspicion that the existent dominant multilateral system is dominated by western countries. He further argued during the conference that importance is not given to emerging countries such as India in the framework of international humanitarian assistance. For instance, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) never came to visit New Delhi whereas they pay regular visits to Western countries.

Another important aspect is that India follows a policy of non-negotiability as far as the state sovereignty in contrast to western approach which can sometimes bypass the state authority. As such, it follows a policy of non-intervention and is critical that humanitarian aid cannot be used to intervene in the domestic affairs of a country. There is no doubt that India owes this policy to its historical experiences and its anti-colonial stance. Furthermore, in this view, aid could also never be used as a tool of regime change.

The Indian approach focuses more on South-South cooperation and disaster management. As argued by Dr. Nivedita Ray from India Council for World Affairs, India regards economic and technical assistance as an obligation rather than charity. She notes that India deliberately rejects the donor recipient paradigm and prefers development cooperation. Affirmation of mutually beneficial interdependence and the rejection of conditionality that is attached to western paradigm represent the main tenets of the Indian approach.

As argued by Aneja, India has rejected the idea of humanitarianism in the liberal sense. She further

suggested that Indian policy makers reject the framework of humanitarianism precisely because of the bitter memory attached to the colonial history. India does not see humanitarianism as a form of governance. Therefore, there is lack of rhetoric of democracy or human rights coming out of India.

In this regard, the Indian approach to humanitarian assistance is based on the idea of sovereignty, mutual benefit, partnership, and non-political conditionality. However, despite the fact that there is no political conditionality, there is nevertheless economic conditionality. For instance, India gave twenty one million dollars of aid to Bangladesh which was tied to the recruitment of goods from India. This was a clear indication of the pragmatic twist in India's humanitarian approach. Murthy indicates that the concepts of humanitarian assistance and development aid are often intermingled when scholars speak about India's humanitarian assistance which should be separated.

As put forth by Murthy, another difference of India's humanitarian approach is that, unlike the traditional donors, India pays attention to the requirements of the recipient country particularly with respect to the culture and traditions of the local people. Furthermore, the Indian approach emphasizes the importance of sustainable development.

TURKEY AS A HUMANITARIAN ACTOR

Similar to India, Turkey has also followed a rapid transition from being a recipient of humanitarian assistance, to becoming a major donor country. As also highlighted by Burak Akçapar, Turkey's official development assistance has risen nearly 53 fold in the last eleven years. In 2014 Turkey disbursed a total of 6.403 billion USD of net development assistance. What is perhaps more striking is that Turkey has become the top humanitarian donor in the world in terms of humanitarian aid to GNI ratio which was 0.21% in 2013. With per capita income and productivity more than twice that of China and eight times of India, Turkey is already at the high end of the middle income countries.

While the Syrian crisis has had a significant role in the rapid increase of Turkey's humanitarian assistance in the last three to four years, several other developments had been influential in the emergence of this role. The end of the Cold War, the Bosnian and Kosovar Wars and the earthquake of 1999 which resulted in a massive catastrophe in Turkey were some of the events that triggered this role. Furthermore, as argued by Bülent Aras, Coordinator of Program on Conflict Resolution and Mediation at Istanbul Policy Center and Professor at Sabancı University the change in Turkey's foreign policy in the last decade towards a more proactive and cooperative one coupled with its growing economy has also resulted in Turkey's rise as a humanitarian actor in the international arena. Since 2005, there has been a growing trend in Turkish foreign policy towards opening up to regions that were once considered faraway territories including Africa or Asia. As such, this new model of engagement has been built around diplomatic relations, trade and investment, development assistance, humanitarian aid, and the activities of non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Turkey's growing role as a donor country has been in line with the Millennium Development Goals with projects on education, strengthening of administrative and civil infrastructure, health, water and sanitation. According to Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA), approximately 53 per cent of the funds allocated by Turkey for projects were devoted to the sector of social infrastructure and services. In 2013, the Middle East countries such as Syria, Egypt, Palestine and Tunisia received the highest assistance with 55.9 per cent of the total budget. The Middle East was followed by Africa which received 24.7%, with a particular focus on Somalia. While 15.3 per cent was received by countries in South Asia such as Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, 3.1 per cent was received by the Balkan and Eastern European countries. A relatively smaller amount of assistance was also provided to the Americas with 484 million USD and the Far East with 18 million USD in 2013.

Burak Akçapar underlined that one of Turkey's strengths as a humanitarian actor is its dual identity as Western/Eastern and Northern/Southern. It is a founding member of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and an observer in OECD's Development Assistance Committee by choice since 1991. While being a part and parcel of the European and indeed Western political and institutional fabric, Turkey has also been a supporter of the South-South development cooperation paradigm. Akçapar further argues that, having been a recipient country itself, Turkey has a direct experience and understanding of dynamics of development, development assistance, donor-recipient relationship and its challenges.

TURKEY'S HUMANITARIAN POLICY AND THE SYRIAN CRISIS

The Syrian crisis which began in 2011 has turned into the biggest humanitarian disaster in the recorded history with around 8 to 10 million internally displaced persons (IDPs). Assoc. Prof. Şebnem Köşer Akçapar from South Asian University underlined during the conference that despite its portrayal mainly with respect to the "migration crisis facing Europe", the bulk of the burden is shared by Turkey as the world's largest refugee hosting country with more than 2 million Syrians, Lebanon with 1.2 million and Jordan with 650 thousand refugees.[1] As argued by Dr. Pınar Akpınar, Scholar at the Program on Conflict Resolution and Mediation at Istanbul Policy Center despite Turkey's previous experiences with refugees, the Syrian crisis has been completely different from all other experiences. The large number of people who have sought refuge in Turkey, the inability of the international community to come up with a comprehensive humanitarian plan, the fact that the crisis is likely to continue for much longer than the initial expectations, and its complex nature makes the conflict difficult to manage.

As such the initial enthusiasm of the Turkish government as well as the HNGOs to welcome the refugees left its place to exhaustion and despair. The declining trend in the amount of private donations made by Turkish donors to the Syrian refugees also demonstrates a similar attitude amongst Turkish public. As underlined by Şebnem Akçapar, Turkey instituted an "open door policy" and extended temporary protection to the refugees. The policy makers assumed that the refugees would be able to return to Syria in a very short time and Turkey would in the meantime have earned a lot of goodwill—if not also influence—in a reformed Syria. Nevertheless, the government continued its "open door" policy and had to introduce new measures to address the problems of refugees.

While the refugees were initially placed in schools, sports halls, unused warehouses and factories, as the number of refugees increased, Turkey has to implement new measures to cope with the enfolding crisis. As a result, the Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (AFAD) of Turkey began constructing camps for refugees and is now the responsible body for running the camps. Currently there are around 25 camps in 10 cities across Turkey. In April 2014, the Turkish Directorate-General for Migration Management (DGMM) to implement the newly-adopted Law on Foreigners and International Protection (Law no. 6458, adopted on April 11, 2013) was established which included general provisions for the management of the mass influx of refugees. Despite the initial reluctance of the Turkish government to seek international assistance, there is now a visible improvement in coordination between the Turkish government and international agencies such as IOM, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP and WHO as well as OCHA when it comes to cross-border assistance issues. In sharp contrast to the earlier version, the newly-instituted UN Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) 2015-16 is very extensive and provides a growing list of areas of cooperation and projects focusing on refugees, as well as on host communities. However, despite coordination on some fronts, Turkey still has to shoulder the main burden of the crisis. For instance, it has spent around 6 billion USD on the refugees so far and the amount of international support that Turkey has received is only around 400 million USD.

Syrian refugees are faced with a number of problems in Turkey such as adaptation in urban settings and the language barrier. There is also the serious problem of women being forced into marriage or prostitution. There is also a growing tendency to perceive Syrians as beggars or criminals. Şebnem Akçapar further argued that these attitudes contrast with local authorities' and security officials' observations that in reality, criminality is surprisingly low. Leaders of the Syrian refugee community are reported to be very effective in preventing crime and defusing tensions be- tween refugees and locals.

Another problem is the increased rate of unemployment among the Syrians as well as the local Turks as a result of cheap labor offered by Syrians. There are cases of Syrians being exploited by local employers as cheap labor and forced to work without insurance. One of the major problems is the fact that Syrians cannot enjoy a refugee status in Turkey and hosted as "guests" as a result of the Geneva Convention signed in 1951which places a geographic limitation on refugees. Turkey grants refugee status only to people coming from Europe. As a result, Syrians cannot enjoy many of the rights they could have otherwise enjoyed as refugees. This is one of the main reasons why particularly the educated and skilled middle class Syrians prefer to embark on a risky journey into Europe rather than stay in Turkey with low prospects.

1 The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "World at War," *Global Trends Forced Displacement in 2014*, 2015.

TURKISH INGOS AS HUMANITARIAN AGENTS

Turkish INGOs have become active agents of Turkish humanitarianism particularly in the last decades. Their emergence goes back to the Afghan resistance in 1980s as well as the Bosnian and Kosovar Wars in 1990s as a way of solidarity of Turkish people with their fellow "Muslim brothers", as defined by themselves. The 1999 earthquake and Turkey's EU accession process were other triggers that increased the number of HNGOs in Turkey as well as expanded their areas of activities. Currently, Turkish HNGOs are active in a number of countries across the world including regions such as Africa, Asia, Latin America, Balkans, Central Asia, the Middle East, and the like.

Turkish HNGOs pursue several activities such as emergency assistance, medical relief, building infrastructure and investing in capacity building. Some of their common features are flexibility, absence of conditionality, ensuring sustainability, relying on private donations and being independent, pursuing advocacy, using relational links through a sense of cultural and religious affinities, and representing and promoting Turkey abroad through a sense of patriotism.

In recent years, the Syrian crisis has become a "test-case" for the Turkish NGOs despite their experience in war-driven zones such as Chechnya, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Palestine. Previously, most of the Turkish NGOs such as the Turkish Red Crescent, the Humanitarian Relief Foundation (IHH), Kimse Yok Mu?, Helsinki Citizens Assembly-Turkey, Support to Life and International Blue Crescent focused on the provision of emergency assistance to urban refugees in the form of clothing, food, health services and some shelter support. More recently, in addition to the above NGOs, others such as the Association of Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants (ASAM), Anadolu Kültür, Human Resources Development Foundation (HRDF), IMPR Humanitarian, Association for Human Rights and Solidarity for the Oppressed (MazlumDer) as well as some smaller NGOs working on a voluntary basis have embarked on projects to improve the adaptation of refugees to their new environments. These projects range from teaching Turkish to running vocational courses for women as well as psychosocial support programs.

As underlined by Akpınar, one of the problems faced by NGOs during the Syrian crisis has been the lack of coordination as well as the lack of an effective network among NGOs. Although there is coordination between UNHCR and several foreign NGOs, Turkish NGOs tend to operate rather independently. There is also a need for further capacity building such as hiring more Arabic speaking personnel, among others. There is also a cumbersome process of paper work faced by foreign NGOs during their operations in Turkey that prevents them from delivering rapid and efficient response during crisis. These problems hamper the activities of NGOs and need to be tackled urgently.

CONCLUSION

There has been a lot of anxiety amongst the OECD countries with respect to the emergence of new donors such as India, Turkey, China or Brazil. The emergence of new donors is a sign that new frameworks and paradigms will be introduced. The conference *Turkey and India as Global Development and Humanitarian Actors* aimed to give a brief picture of Turkey and India as agents of global development and humanitarian assistance.

The participants of the conference recommended that both Turkey and India need to rethink changing regional realities and adjust their programs accordingly. They should also invest more in capacity-building programs and come up with sustainable development policies in their region and beyond. Participants also underlined that human development and human security should be at the heart of sustainable development goals in order to ensure accountability.

It was also suggested that NGOs play a vital role as humanitarian agents particularly since they are able to be much more flexible compare to the state as a result of their civilian face. Contrary to their Turkish counterparts, Indian NGOs are much less active in the international scene mainly as a result of the Indian government's restriction on their international activities. As such, states should open more room for NGO involvement.

The conference proceedings indicated that there is a rising role for emerging powers as agents of humanitarianism. Despite certain setbacks and possible improvements, these actors have the potential to offer alternative ways of engagement to the more traditional donors. In a world of growing humanitarian challenges, different actors bring in different assets and their roles should be welcomed as such.

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