

In partial fulfillment of
The requirements for the
Professional Master's degree of
Political and Administrative Sciences
Major in International Organizations



The UNESCO-Academia Interface

Challenges and Opportunities

Internship in the
Social and Human Sciences Programme

Internship Report



UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States
Beirut, Lebanon

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PREFACE

The objective of this internship report is to serve as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Professional Master's degree, major in International Organizations within the Political and Administrative Sciences studies. This major is initiated as a pilot specialization programme at the Faculty of Law, Political and Administrative Sciences of the Lebanese University in the second branch at Jal el-Dib. Accordingly, two steps are required, a vocational qualification by following an internship with any of the United Nations Organization, followed by an internship report paper to submit and defend as a Master's dissertation, which will describe, discuss, analyze and assess the particular internship learning experience. The successful outcome of these final requirements of the curriculum will determine the acquirement of the Professional Masters' degree.

My name is Dzovinar Harkian and I am a student following this Professional Master's degree programme for the years 2015-2017. I have fulfilled an internship period of four months, from October 4, 2016 to February 3, 2017 on a full-time work basis and five days a week. Eventually I have completed nearly 700 hours of working experience at the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education at the Arab States, as well known as the UNESCO Office of Beirut, in Bir Hassan area. Hence, this internship report focuses on the description, progress and achievements related to my UNESCO internship. It also provides a reciting summary of my tasks and duties performed within UNESCO's Social and Human Sciences (SHS) programme thematic activities and contributions.

My internship supervisor at UNESCO was Dr. Seiko Sugita, the Programme Specialist of the Social and Human Sciences programme (SHS) of UNESCO's global mandate and role. Her duties focus on implementing the thematic programmes and activities in the region of Arab States and MENA.

My academic supervisor of this internship was Dr. Amal Saad, to whom I furnish my gratitude for her support and guidance throughout my internship period and beyond, until submitting this report to the Lebanese University, represented by Prof. Kamil Habib, Dean of the Faculty of Law and Political & Administrative Sciences.

This report follows a combination of methodologies of internship report writing, between that stated by the Lebanese University and that of the international academic rules of report writing in English language. This report also follows APA style wherever it applies and more likely, the international methodology and style of writing internship reports.

To this regard, I wish you an enjoyable read and a harvest of best benefit from my experience.

Dedication

I dedicate this report paper and the success of my Professional Master's degree to:

First: Praise God for the opportunities and the empowerment He blessed me with, to be able to reach this far, despite the numerous obstacles that I have faced.

Second: The loving memory of my late father, who had enlightened the survival spirit and courage in me to keep on going no matter what.

A special moment to share, is when I realized that after the long months of writing, this report came out to be complete exactly on the ninth anniversary of my late father's passing, and with a number of pages identical to his age at the time.

May his soul rest in peace.

Acknowledgment

First of all, I would like to thank and praise God for every chance and support He granted me with to make this Master's degree, internship and report writing possible.

My gratitude is furnished also to the Lebanese University, represented by Prof. Camille Habib, Dean of the Faculty of Law, Political and Administrative Sciences, for making this invaluable opportunity indeed possible at my hand. This gave me the chance to tangibly explore and learn so much about the United Nations, not only academically, but also experientially. Without this pilot program studies of International Organizations, I would have never had the chance to fulfill my dream of working at the UN, even for an internship. Further gratitude is furnished to my academic supervisor of this internship report Dr. Amal Saad, the professor in the higher education of Masters Studies at the Lebanese University, faculty of Political and Administrative Sciences and my instructor of the "Humanitarian Intervention" course. It was indeed a pleasure and a pride to enjoy her restless and tender guidance and instructions throughout this assignment. Moreover, I thank also the head of administration and professors of the Lebanese University, especially Dr. Eugenie Tannoury, as the former director of our faculty, who endorsed my internship and helped me with her valuable advice to make this experience a successful one. Nevertheless, I will always appreciate all my professors, who had shown their sincere dedication throughout the semesters of my major course studies for this Master's degree.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the UNESCO Office of Beirut, represented by its regional director Dr. Hamad el Hammami, for his kind acceptance of my application to this UN internship and placing his invaluable trust in me to perform the duties and tasks I was assigned to deliver in an international level of manner and responsibility. And above all, for the endorsement I enjoyed during my internship period of four months in full, to participate, to learn and to grow in the career of United Nations administrative work. I would like to furnish my appreciation also to Dr. Seiko Sugita, the Social and Human Sciences Programme Specialist at the UNESCO office of Beirut/UBO, as my supervisor at UBO for receiving my application, entrusting me with the assignments that she needed to be executed, and in general, for providing me with this opportunity of a lifetime. The tasks which she allocated me with, have enriched my knowledge of the UN working modalities and enhanced my professional skills to an international level of awareness and experience. Many thanks also to every colleague I had at the UNESCO Office of Beirut, especially to Dr. Mona el Zoghby and Mrs. Carol Jbeily Donabedian. Their much valuable trust, cooperation, understanding, instructions and every possible support they provided me with, fully endorsed my learning experiences of the basics of the UNESCO administrative work, communication skills and professional adaptation, all of which I needed in times while at duty. This also contributed to establishing many friendly relationships with several UN staff, through building a highly regarded network of connections, and in some cases, friendships for a lifetime.

My final complements are placed to every person, whether my family, kids, friends or my colleagues at the UNESCO office, who gave me much of best possible support, assistance and facilitation, or contributed to some information included in this report, all those who were beside me at the times of my internship period and beyond, also at writing this report, as such they have contributed highly to my success. I wish everyone all the best.

Executive Summary

An internship, which has to be carried out outside the university, is part of the Professional Master's curriculum of International Organizations. For me, this was a great opportunity to get inside a UNITED NATIONS agency, apply my knowledge in a practical environment and increase my specific UN competences. An important consideration for me, when I was looking for an internship, was an agency that has projects in the community.

“Inspira” is the name of the online job portal for the United Nations recruitment opportunities and job application means. I filled out a long and very detailed profile on Inspira UN website to subscribe and have an online profile ready to be linked to any UN job opportunity. And one day I found an internship link to UNESCO website and I applied to that opportunity. Few months later I received a reply offering me the opportunity of internship at UNESCO Office of Beirut.

At first, my assignment was to review and proofread the Arabic translations done for some English written documents, like concept notes and reports. After few days, it turned out that more involving clerical work had to be done, before I could develop a clear understanding of the thematic activities of the SHS regional programme. I was assigned to some tasks for each of the areas of action that Social and Human Sciences Regional Programme modes of implementations and working modalities and activities. Some of my tasks turned out to be quite interesting for me. I will discuss the difficulties and challenges I went through to keep up, grasp the meanings of and understand the terminologies and abbreviations used within the meetings, to write down their minutes as in points of discussion, agreements, action plans and other.

In my first few weeks of internship work, it was not really clear in what direction I wanted to go and which results I wanted to obtain, but during the following weeks and work process, this became clearer. My colleagues have helped me a lot while getting lost in terminologies and working modalities of my post. Prof. Saad, my supervisor at the University, guided me as well into the approach and writing of this report, which contributed to structuring the results I have obtained.

Looking back now to my internship, I can say that it has been a valuable and truly amazing experience. The working environment and the people at the UNESCO are really great, which made all the difference. I learned a lot during my internship and also, the experience of working within the UN and UNESCO administration will remain forever special.

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List of Abbreviations

UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
ACSS	Arab Center for Social Sciences
AIUNIP	Administration Instructions of United Nations Internship Programme (Document)
CI	Communication and Information
CISH	International Center for Social and Human Sciences-Byblos, Lebanon
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DG	Director-General (of UNESCO)
EFA	Education for All
ETTC	Ethical Teaching Teacher Course
GoL	Government of Lebanon
HQ	Headquarters of United Nations agencies / UNESCO
HRM	Human Resources management
ICCAR	International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
MOST	Management of Social Transformation Programme
Natcom	The Lebanese National Commission for UNESCO - اللجنة الوطنية اللبنانية لليونسكو
NET-MED Youth	Networks of Mediterranean Youth Project
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ODG	Office of Director-General of UNESCO
PHP	Personal History Profile (on Inspira)
RES.	Resolution
r-IATTTYP	Regional Inter-Agency Technical Task Team on Young People
SC	Security Council of the United Nations
SHS	Social and Human Sciences
STU	UNESCO Staff Union
SV	Social Venture
UBO	UNESCO Beirut Office/ Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States
UN	United Nations
UNDSS	United Nations Department for Safety and Security, at UN Headquarters, New York
YPS	Youth, Peace and Security

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I: Introduction

In today's increasingly diverse societies, with regional and intercultural challenges, and with the aim to build and maintain lasting peace and sustainable development, UNESCO asserts that it continues to try accomplishing its fundamental UN mandate and humanist mission. One of its purposes is to help in enabling people to create and use knowledge for just and inclusive societies. This is the focus and mission of the "Learning to Live Together" Programme, a broad theme of the Social and Human Sciences sector of UNESCO, through the implementation of various thematic activities and projects in Lebanon. The UNESCO Office in Beirut (UBO) acts as the UNESCO Regional Office for Education in the Arab States and Cluster Office for Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq and the Palestinian Territories in the Middle East Cluster. All activities are implemented in line with the strategies of the UNESCO 37C/5 Programme 2014-2017 and biennial budget as well as national and regional humanitarian and development plans. In addition, as a member of the United Nations Family, UNESCO actively contributes to the overall efforts of the UN by joint strategic planning. UNESCO proactively seeks out UN joint partnerships in implementation of programmes and policy-level support to Arab Member States.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, was established on 16 November 1945, and celebrated its 70th anniversary in 2015. It is a United Nations Specialized Agency that promotes international co-operation among its 190 Member States in the fields of Education, Science, Social Sciences, Culture, Communication and Information. The Preamble to the Constitution of UNESCO declares that "*Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed*" and as defined by the Constitution, the purpose of the Organization is "to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science and culture..."

Irina Bokova the Director-General (DG) of UNESCO have said: "*It is not enough to be connected to each other. We also share our solutions, our experiences and dreams in one great community supported by human rights and fundamental freedoms.*" Would an internship experience at UNESCO though, find this saying as complementary? Could an intern also be identified as included in that "one great community" with regard to sharing solutions, experiences and dreams? And to what extent an intern is truly supported within the UN administration by the rules, human rights and fundamental freedoms?

The UN internship programme can be considered as an interface between an academic student and the UN as an organization. Although the UN internship has been most often perceived as a rewarding career opportunity, however, many have criticized its practice within the UN Organizations. This report not only measures Bokova's saying, as an identified example, with respect to UNESCO practice vs. "preach", but also tackles the implementation aspect of the UN internship programme itself within the UN administration through its rules vs. the manifested UNESCO internship experience. To what extent the programme rules are truly implemented and what is its true purpose? And why the UN is reluctant to pay interns? The report also attempts to evaluate the internship as a value added rewarding pillar, while finding the gaps that need a vision of reform and can be put forth for recommendation. This report presents also the lessons learned, skills and knowledge developed through the challenges faced during the internship period. It attempts to answer if there are new opportunities of reform and exchange of knowledge and sharing solutions, fostering a new era of UN-Academia interface that would endorse the intern's learning experiences and prospects of career opportunities in the UN career arena?

Chapter A introduces UNESCO as an UN Organization in description of history, role and mission and the UBO building floors, departments and offices. It also presents the UN internship programme rules and regulations, and the TOR of interns.

Chapter B tackles and measures the experience with respect to the tasks and duties performed during the internship period at UBO. It describes the challenges and difficulties faced, lessons learned, particular UN administration knowledge, skills and competencies developed, and finally evaluates the expectations vs. disappointments and opens a new horizon of curriculum enhancement for the Master's programme and for the UN internship programme as well.

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Chapter A

A- UNESCO and UN Internship Programme: Specifications and Description

UNESCO uses the Slogan: “Building Peace in the minds of men and women”. Article I-1 of the Constitution of UNESCO states the organization’s purposes and functions as to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations. This chapter gives an overview about the Organization in specification and description of both the UNESCO Office of Beirut in the first section and the UN Internship Programme in the second section.

A1 Specifications of the UNESCO Office in Beirut (UBO)

Since 2002, The UNESCO Office in Beirut has assumed two new regional mandates and roles within a global network of UNESCO offices and clusters. This section identifies its particular characteristics in two dimensions, the working specifications and the description of this office.

1.1 Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States

At a time when Arab countries have been witnessing dramatic instability along with political and social changes, and while the world is looking for new ways to build peace and sustainable development, millions of lives are severely affected. Regional challenges have dangerously immersed, like, the access to education has become a daily struggle, the societies are becoming more vulnerable, the region’s cultural heritage faces unprecedented threats, the basis required for scientific progress and sustainable development is hampered. UNESCO addresses these setbacks which closely relate to its global mission. Hence, it works closely with Arab citizens, promotes a diverse points of action derived from its international programmes, through its regional UNESCO Office of Beirut (UBO) and at the same time, as the cluster office for several Arab States as explained further in the next part.

1.1.1 Regional Mandate and Mission

The webpage of the UNESCO Office of Beirut describes its scope and mission. It states that the mission of this Regional Office is to adjust UNESCO’s biennial program implementation to the specific characteristics of the region and to ensure the Organization’s active presence in its Member States. It also explains that since 2002, UNESCO Office in Beirut has assumed two new roles within a global network of offices and bureaus, they are as follows:

- i. As a Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States, the UNESCO Office in Beirut is a center of expertise in the field of Education for the Arab world serving 19 Arab countries in the region in the field of Education.
- ii. As a Cluster office for Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq and the Palestinian Territories in the Middle East Cluster, its role is to implement UNESCO’s Biennial Programme. It fulfills this role by adapting the implementation of programs in its fields of competence to the specific

characteristics of the Cluster countries, namely in the areas of Social and Human Sciences, Culture and Communication and Information.¹

1.1.2 Organizational Structure and Administration

UNESCO as an international organization has governance systems of other similar institutions of the United Nations system as in structures, composition, length and frequency. According to the Constitution of UNESCO² Article III, the three constitutional organs of UNESCO include a General Conference, an Executive Board and a Secretariat. Article IV-A1 states the Composition of the General Conference which consists of the representatives of the States Members of the Organization. Article V is about the Executive Board A1 (a) The Executive Board stated that it shall be elected by the General Conference and it shall consist of fifty-eight Member States.

And according to Article VI-2, a new Director-General of UNESCO is elected every four years (previously every six years) by the General Conference. Since 2009 and till present, Irina Bokova has been the Director-General of UNESCO. Under Bokova's authority, the Secretariat is expected to translate into reality the programmes approved by the General Conference.

UNESCO has a worldwide presence with 53 Field Offices and Institutes, with its Headquarters in Paris. More than 2000 employees of about 170 nationalities currently work for the Organization³. Through its field offices located around the globe, UNESCO develops strategies, programmes and activities in consultation with national authorities and other partners. UNESCO also operates a number of specialized institutes and centers on the national levels.

The UN Charter sets out the purposes and principles of the Organization. Under the Charter, UN staff are appointed on the basis of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity. The concept of integrity embraces all aspects of behavior of an international civil servant, including qualities such as honesty, truthfulness, impartiality, and incorruptibility. As UN staff, they are expected to exhibit and adhere to the highest standards of ethical conduct⁴. Regarding the HR portal of UBO, UNESCO and its field offices follow the UN Ethical office guide⁵ for rules and regulations. The UN staff are international civil employees. Moreover, staff categories in the portal are sectioned in levels and paid respectively.

The workforce of the United Nations and all its working organizations included, like UNESCO, is made up of different categories of staff. Within each category there are different levels, which reflect increasing levels of responsibilities and requirements. The information in this section will help applicants decide in which staff category, and at what level, they fit in. This will be useful when the applicants start searching and applying for jobs.

These are the different categories of staff at the United Nations:⁶

- Professional and higher categories (P and D) P2-P7 and D1 and D2
- General Service and related categories (G, TC, S, PIA, LT)
- National Professional Officers (NO)

¹ Source: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/beirut/about-this-office/> (accessed on July 28, 2017)

² http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=15244&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

³ <http://en.unesco.org/careers/>

⁴ http://www.un.org/en/ethics/pdf/putting_ethics_to_work_en.pdf

⁵ Ibid

⁶ <https://careers.un.org/lbw/home.aspx?viewtype=SC>

- Field Service (FS)
- Senior Appointments (SG, DSG, USG and ASG)

At the United Nations staff progress in a category through merit and qualifications. There are, however, restrictions on movement between the different categories.

Other than the above mentioned positions, UNESCO like all UN agencies employ also external employees as “Consultants” for specific projects and for a certain period of time. By the end of the project and if no further need of the services of the consultant, the employment and service will be terminated. Hence, consultants are recruited outside the UN portal by annual renewable contracts. Interns are considered temporary employees under the UN Internship Programme.

The Headquarters (HQ) of UNESCO is based in Paris. The HQ is always on day-to-day connections and coordination with all the regional offices and clusters around the globe. Emails and newsletters are circulated between the HQ and all the offices to keep updated and informed with any kind of changes and news. It is also true regarding the regional offices, UBO which works in a direct daily coordination with the UNESCO HQ in Paris.

All UNESCO offices implement the information circular emails by the Organization’s “unesco.org” email (cc: ...) to all the list of other UNESCO staff email accounts in the world, whether it be regular newsletters publishing their activities and action plans, findings of studies, publications, attention to changes in personnel with their new position and contact details, holiday greetings and closings, invitations and more.

1.1.3 Thematic Programme Sectors⁷

UNESCO Beirut covers the Organization's five main thematic areas of actions as sectors of programmes, which are education, Social and Human Sciences (SHS), Culture, Communication and Information and Natural Science. And each sector has its own thematic areas of actions and programmes. We will be tackling the SHS programme and its areas of action in this report, since it is the framework of my learning experience at UBO.

Here are in short the areas of action, which are mandated to the UNESCO Beirut Office to bring its service at the region, as in the sector of:

a) Education (ED)

The efforts of UNESCO Office of Beirut in education are considered to be an integral part of UNESCO’s general aim to improve education worldwide. As a Regional Office, it has a designed strategy in education to support the region as it aspires towards the achievement of the “SDG 4” Goal. This is done through coordinating and monitoring SDG 4- Education 2030 Agenda of “*Ensuring equitable quality and lifelong learning for all*”⁸ in the Arab States by 2030 and national education plans to respond to country-specific needs. UBO thrives to strengthen the capacities of the Arab States in delivering quality and relevant Education for All (EFA) at the national level, by providing expertise and technical support, through teaching, curriculum development, institutional management, and policy development. Access to education is an ultimate priority for this Office, achieving UNESCO’s global vision in education. This vision yearns to construct a sustainable world with just societies that value knowledge, promote a culture of peace, celebrate diversity and defend human rights.

⁷ Source: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/beirut/areas-of-action/> accessed on

⁸ Source: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg4> accessed on

b) Social & Human Sciences (SHS)

Human sciences for public policy-making, youth-led action for peace, intercultural dialogue, bioethics and social transformation, are the topics and thematic areas of action of the Social and Human Sciences sector of UNESCO Office of Beirut. It supports the development of knowledge, standards and intellectual cooperation to facilitate social methodologies of inclusion, cohesion and transformative responses. This sector thrives alongside links between research and practical change, based on the universal values of justice, freedom and human dignity, for a global citizenship.

c) Culture (CLT)



The role of UBO in Lebanon and Syria is a crucial one considering the richness and uniqueness of this region's cultural history and heritage, and the threats that this heritage is facing due to armed conflict. Preserving heritage sites is one of UNESCO's key goals, and a very challenging one in this region. The Culture Sector of UNESCO Office of Beirut supports Arab States

Figure 1

Through the protection, the safeguard and promotion of all forms of the country's heritage, whether it is built, movable or intangible. It has also scaled-up its interventions by mobilizing its partners to raise the awareness of the international community on one hand, and to mitigate the various immersed threats to cultural heritage sites in Syria on the other." Unite 4 Heritage" slogan of the campaign (*Fig. 1*) is the title of UNESCO's new campaign for heritage and the slogan says it aims "to halt attacks on culture and identities", mainly in the Arab region where dramatic dangers have emerged during the past few years. Through its diverse programme in Lebanon, UBO focuses particularly on placing culture also in the heart of social reconciliation and sustainable development.

d) Communication & Information (CI)

UNESCO is the only United Nations agency with specific mandate to protect freedom of expression and information. UNESCO Beirut's work in the field of Communication and Information in cooperation with national and international NGOs and civil society organizations, promotes advancements in CI by supporting legislation for the freedom of expression and by putting it into practice. Its objectives are supporting universal access to information, safety of journalists, and media awareness. As youth in the Arab states are calling for more involvement in legislations and government process, UBO creates events to promote greater practice for youth in national planning and policy-making.

e) Natural Science (SC)

Within the framework of UNESCO's Major Programme on Natural Sciences, UNESCO Beirut is working on promoting science for the benefit of society in the Arab region. It focuses on promoting principles and ethical norms and enhancing human and institutional capacities, to guide scientific and technological development, and social transformation. Its purpose lies in improving the management of the environment, and allowing wider participation in the knowledge societies, and adapting science policy to social needs. UNESCO puts efforts to

achieve this goal by working on the development, transfer, and sharing of scientific knowledge through teaching, research, and cooperation and applying them to sustainable development and technology benefits.

In addition to its main five thematic areas of action, UNESCO also acts within a range of interdisciplinary, crosscutting, and mainstreaming priority focused themes. UNESCO Beirut's activities within these special areas are as follows: Gender mainstreaming.

1.1.4 Social and Human Sciences Programme (SHS)

According to the UBO flyer⁹, the social and ethical dimensions are central to UNESCO's mandate in the Social and Human Science Programme. It also explains that this programme strives to reach out to the most vulnerable segments of society and to contribute to peace, human rights and poverty eradication, through a human rights-based approach in all its fields of competence. It also tries to combat the negative effects of globalization, global environmental change and economic and financial crises in order to create a culture of inclusion and acceptance. UNESCO claims that **an inclusive society is able to resist poverty and inequality, thus creating opportunities for sustainable development**. Under a global and broad theme named "Learning to Live Together", SHS programme has several thematic activities to implement in order to accomplish its mission and mandate. So what is the significance of this theme and the SHS programme globally, yet, also regionally in particular?

1.1.4.1 Significance of the "Learning to Live Together" Theme

Learning to live together among all members of the global community becomes more topical than ever before as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO explains, because of increasing global challenges and threats, such as inequality, exclusion, violence and sectarianism worsened by local tensions and conflicts, which undermine society's and, in general, humanity's cohesion.

As UNESCO website identifies the global social challenges, it also advocates potential solutions: "Individuals become interculturally competent through learning and life experience for successful living in the modern complexity of our heterogeneous world and consequently they become prepared to appreciate diversity as well as to manage conflicts in accordance with the values of pluralism and mutual understanding."¹⁰

At a time when most of the UN organizations measure what is true in global societies, as being also true for the Arab countries and MENA region, hence implicitly, UNESCO also justifies its practical intervention in the region through the UBO and by the thematic activities. It disseminates globally its goal and explains its efforts to accompany its Member States and all its partners to better understand and address the challenges of these more and more diversified societies, particularly through its global themes: intergovernmental Programme for Management of Social Transformation (MOST) as well the Culture of Peace and Non-Violence Programme which include, inter alia, initiatives for democracy and global citizenship, intercultural dialogue, education for peace and human rights and peace-building, Sports and anti-doping, Education for health and well-being. It is nevertheless important to mention that

⁹ "Fostering, Sustainable Peace & Development in the Arab Region", flyer by UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States- Beirut

¹⁰ <http://en.unesco.org/themes/learning-live-together> ; accessed on August 8, 2017

any of these themes have built their cross-cutting activities and action plans in a way that they foster also each other's methodologies, interests, final results and goals.

Furthering the significance of these global themes, how do the role and mission of the regional field offices and clusters of UNESCO, UBO in particular, complement and implement those themes and their relevant global programmes, at their respective regional and national levels?

1.1.4.2 Mission and Role

In the Social and Human Sciences sector, the mission of UNESCO Beirut Office, whether regionally and/or nationally, lies mainly in the global UNESCO intergovernmental program, Management of Social Transformation (MOST).

UNESCO-Beirut advocates the development and use of social science knowledge that contribute to better understanding and management of social transformations, especially with the late social challenges immersed at the region. Moreover, enhancing the linkage between research and policy-making is its main focus, including the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of development actions and processes, the dissemination of research results, best practices and capacity building. UNESCO Beirut Office also provides support for the thematic activities in the region implemented by UNESCO Headquarters, whether in the field of Social Transformation or Ethics, through the UNESCO Rabat, concerning Human Rights, and by the International Center for Human Sciences in Byblos-Lebanon (CISH) concerning Social Sciences, democracy and culture.

UBO website asserts that its role lies also in providing training, where it holds training workshops and summer schools in partnership with national institutions and other United Nations agencies, and that, this is done in the aim of strengthening the institutional and scientific capacity in developing countries. However, UBO's SHS programme staff role and responsibilities are not limited to the MOST programme as a thematic area of action. They thrive also to support several inter-related thematic activities and projects in their strategy plans and programmes.

1.1.4.3 SHS Thematic Areas of Action

MOST Schools, ETTC, NET-MED Youth, YPS, WHC, Social Ventures, Social Science as a Career, and Coalition of Cities are the abbreviated names of the thematic projects and activities, whether they are in meetings, workshops, seminars, regional projects and/or programmes. These are done within the SHS programme at UBO, as its working modalities and in its modes of implementation.

The basic areas of action in the SHS Programme are as follows:

- Human Sciences for Public Policy-making, Youth-led action for peace, Intercultural dialogue, Bioethics and Social transformations.

We will have a deeper look to these themes and concepts. To some extent, we will relate to the crosscutting challenges that face SHS programme implementation, along with the learning experiences that I had in each of them via their corresponding activities, all in the second section of this report.

To draw a general overview though, we can say that these thematic areas of action of the SHS programme are all interconnected and inter-related. We will see how also collaborating with other in-line UN agencies, and international activities and representations, would help serve the main purpose, under one big umbrella, which is the SHS programme, and mainly to achieve, regionally and nationally, the purpose of one of the broad global themes of SHS, "Learning to Live Together".

Obviously that programmes, actions, plans, activities and others, all need a good funding and mobilizing the sources of these funds is always a challenge to all UN Organizations to keep progressing while allocating those funds into successful returns and results. It is a serious responsibility for the programme specialists to perform that good practice of decision making to spend the budgets wisely, while harnessing the perceived results against the expenditure incurred.

In the next part, some examples of sources and respective allocations of the funds are demonstrated in table lists as received by UNESCO from donors.

1.1.4.4 Sources and Allocation of Funds

The UNESCO Transparency Portal webpage allows us to explore some examples of the UNESCO financial flows, allocation of funds, donation sources, financial distribution of resources, budgets for global programmes, regional projects and measure the help to certain regions and states in financial terms. It also shows the timeline of certain projects for how much time passed and left to finish, also the original amount of budget in USD dollars and the amounts of expenditure to last updated date of the page.

The following tables and screenshot photos of charts and tables are collected from the UNESCO Transparency Portal and Funding webpage as it promotes a slogan, which says: “*A better world through UNESCO's projects and activities*”. Having a general look at these numbers help us relate also specifically to the financial measures and aspect of the SHS programme involvement in the UBO regional working agenda.

Table 1: List of the funding sources of UNESCO

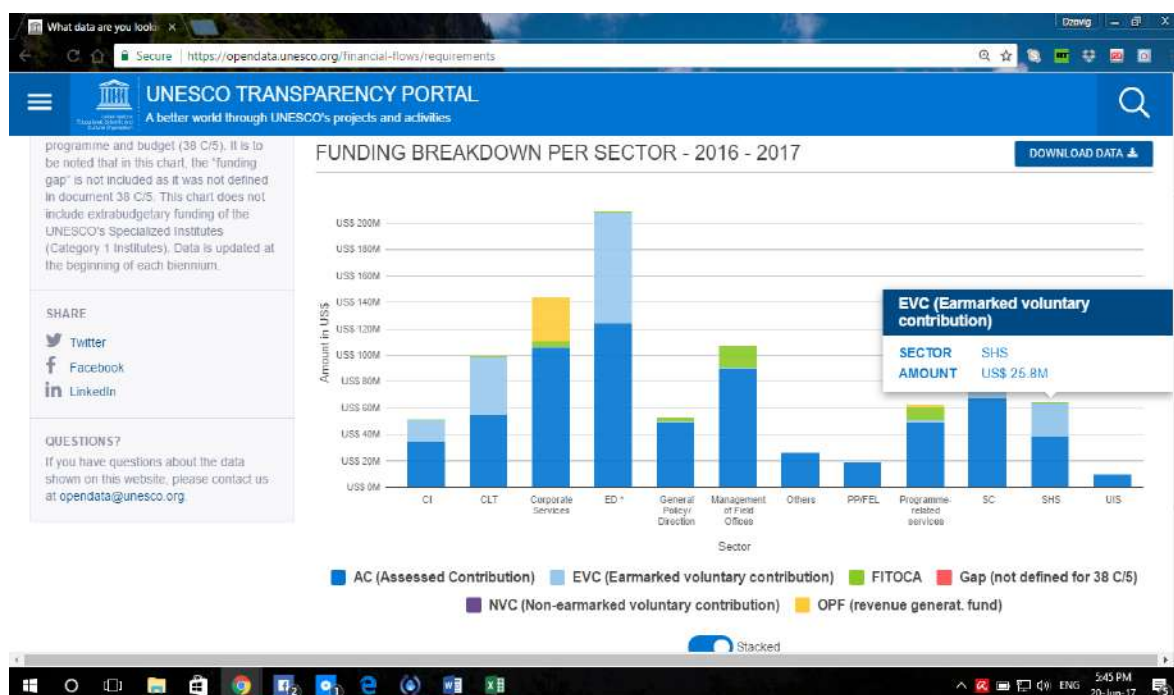
CATEGORY	BUDGET
Contributions to the Regular Programme	US\$ 360,492,264
Government (Voluntary Contributions)	US\$ 151,648,031
Multi-donor special account	US\$ 68,961,188
Multilateral	US\$ 29,249,231
Private Sector	US\$ 22,523,615
United Nations	US\$ 14,709,554

Source: UNESCO Transparency Portal webpage, <https://opendata.unesco.org/financial-flows/funding>

Table 1 shows all the funding sources of UNESCO in general, while we notice that the contribution of the UN which is US\$ 14,709,554 is the least among the other sources.

The Transparency Portal and Funding states that the amounts shown correspond to the annual funding authorized/released for incurring expenditure during the current year 2017, including the amount corresponding of the commitments carried forward from the previous financial period. It also notes that data is updated every 6 months (June and December) and does not include UNESCO’s Specialized Institutes (Category 1 Institutes) and Revenue generating accounts.

Screenshot Figure 1: Chart of Funding Breakdown per Sector in UNESCO for 2016-2017



Source: UNESCO Transparency Portal webpage, <https://opendata.unesco.org/financial-flows/funding>

In the screenshot figure 1 of a chart that shows the breakdown of the funding received by UNESCO per sector for the years 2016-2017. Here we can notice that the amount of US\$ 60+ million was allocated to the SHS sector of UNESCO received as a global expenditure for its programmes. While in comparison to the education sector which reached the amount US\$ 210+ million, we can assume that education sector is a priority framework for UNESCO after all.

Table 2: List of Funding Recipient Regions

↑ RECIPIENT REGION	EXPENDITURE
AFRICA	US\$ 37,114,578
ARAB STATES	US\$ 29,371,822
ASIA & THE PACIFIC	US\$ 30,780,263
EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA	US\$ 4,181,982
Global	US\$ 80,141,197
Institutional	US\$ 220,481,171
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN	US\$ 51,588,887

Table 2 (on the left) shows a list of the funding allocated to regions as expenditure of programmes. We are concerned here with the expenditure for the Arab States US\$ 29,371,822 as this lies within the framework and jurisdiction of the UNESCO Beirut Office, and the funding of the programmes for this region. Should we compare with the other regions' funding, this does not seem a large amount regarding that this region is witnessing the most dramatic political, economic and social challenges of all in the world.

Table 2, source: UNESCO Transparency Portal webpage, <https://opendata.unesco.org/financial-flows/funding>

Table 3: List of Arab States Projects Financial Details

Last updated: June 2016 Beneficiary region: ARAB STATES					
PROJECTS	2016 BUDGET		2016 EXPENDITURE		
73	US\$ 41,129,600		US\$ 29,371,822		
CHANGE TO LIST VIEW			DOWNLOAD DATA		
↑ PROJECT TITLE	TOT. BUDGET	TOT. EXPENDITURE	START DATE	END DATE	STATUS
Connecting the Arab Youth Together and Promoting...	US\$ 175,000	US\$ 86,584	2014-09-30	2017-06-30	Implementation
Develop capacity of Arab member states in addressi...	US\$ 120,000	US\$ 51,602	2016-01-01	2017-12-31	Implementation
Learning to live Together -Media Campaign	US\$ 150,000	US\$ 102,506	2014-09-30	2017-06-30	Implementation
Networks of Mediterranean Youth - NET-MED Youth...	US\$ 11,034,483	US\$ 5,034,652	2014-02-01	2017-12-31	Implementation
Promoting the public perceptions of migrants and ref...	US\$ 33,200	US\$ 14,122	2016-01-01	2017-12-31	Implementation
Promotion of Social and Educational Inclusion amon...	US\$ 500,000	US\$ 322,283	2014-09-30	2017-06-30	Implementation
Regional approach to strengthen social science rese...	US\$ 50,000	US\$ 27,807	2016-01-01	2017-12-31	Implementation
Regional networking of youth leaders in peacebuildi...	US\$ 36,650	US\$ 27,800	2016-01-01	2017-12-31	Implementation
Regional standards for youth policies and youth civic...	US\$ 60,000	US\$ 29,395	2016-01-01	2017-12-31	Implementation
UNESCO-Sharjah Prize for Arab culture	US\$ 1,426,402	US\$ 1,210,714	2008-07-09	2017-12-31	Implementation

Source: UNESCO Transparency Portal webpage, <https://opendata.unesco.org/financial-flows/funding>

Table 3 shows the total and part of the list of allocated budget amounts and details of start and end date expected, along with the status of the 73 projects implemented by the UBO for the Arab States during the year 2016. We must note that only some of these projects are implemented by the SHS sector, for example, the SHS NET-MED Youth project holds the highest budget according to this list. A total budget of US\$ 11,034,486 is allocated for it and only the amount of US\$ 5,034,652 has been spent so far as the date of this list shows June 2016. Yet we must keep in mind that the EU is funding this project via the UNESCO.

While Table 4 (next page) shows the list of the funding to the regional recipient Arab countries, it states the amounts of expenditure allocated to each Arab state in the region where UNESCO is implementing its projects and activities. We can see that Lebanon's share of expenditure \$278,547 and compared to the highest allocated expenditure as Iraq's funding amounts up to \$9,910,749.

After getting introduced to the UBO as a Regional Office and having a general overview of its role, mandate and funding in the region, we will draw in the following parts, a more tangible description to its regional field facility and establishment in the Arab countries.

Table 4: List of expenditure of funding as allocated to the regional recipient Arab countries

SHOW ALL REGIONS	SHOW ALL COUNTRIES
↑ RECIPIENT COUNTRY	EXPENDITURE
Algeria	US\$ 77,000
Egypt	US\$ 427,045
Iraq	US\$ 9,910,749
Jordan	US\$ 6,195,869
Kuwait	US\$ 231,956
Lebanon	US\$ 278,547
Libya	US\$ 673,593
Mauritania	US\$ 131,000
Morocco	US\$ 453,800
Oman	US\$ 11,636
Palestine	US\$ 2,094,276
Qatar	US\$ 903,498
Syrian Arab Republic	US\$ 776,757
Yemen	US\$ 12,796

Table 4, Source: UNESCO Transparency Portal webpage, <https://opendata.unesco.org/region/66>


1.2 Introducing the UNESCO Office in Beirut

The UNESCO office of Beirut is one of the UNESCO's worldwide Cluster offices and regional bureaus. It is referred to by "UBO" as the initials of UNESCO Beirut Office for its practical daily use.

1.2.1 The Official Contact Address

The following table 5 shows the official form of Logo and address of the UBO used by the staff in their daily communications, mainly as the formality of office staff email signature.

Table 5: Official Contract Address and Logo of the UBO

 <p>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</p> <p>Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture</p>	<p>Beirut Office Bureau de Beyrouth</p>	<p>UNESCO Regional Bureau For Education in the Arab States - Beirut, Lebanon</p> <p>Sports City Avenue, Bir Hassan P.O. Box: 11-5244 • Beirut-Lebanon Tel: +961 1 850013/4/5 Fax: +961 1 824854 Mobile: 961 76 649576 E-Mail: beirut@unesco.org www.unesco.org/beirut</p>
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1.2.2 Establishment History

The UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States in Beirut the Office has been serving the Arab region and the member states of UNESCO since its establishment in 1961.

Having the aim of training educational personnel within the Arab States in management and planning of Arab educational systems, The Arab States Center for Administration and Training of Education Personnel (ASCATEP) was founded in 1961 in Beirut (Resolution 1233 of the UNESCO General Conference)

In 1972, within the framework of the decentralization policy, ASCATEP became UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States (UNEDBAS). During the war years in Lebanon, the Office was temporarily relocated to Cairo, Paris and Amman (1975-1991). It gradually re-opened in Beirut in 1992, where it is now officially located.¹¹

1.2.3 The Location and Building

The UBO is located in an area called Jnah in Beirut. The three floors building is built on a corner of a crossroad of two main avenues, between the Camille Chamoun Sports City Stadium and Bir Hassan, which is a district of Beirut. On its left side is located the Bir Hassan Educational Complex with a large facility buildings and school yards, which continue to cover the whole back area of the UBO building.

UBO building is relatively an old building with dark reddish tile exterior and wide large windows for every room on every floor. Windows cover all around its three facades. (See Fig. 2)

UNESCO of Beirut building



Figure 2; Source: UBO website

UBO entrance hall and glass frontage office



Figure 3(a)

On the opposite side and across the road of the building, a large open area parking space is made available for the UBO employees and visitors with an entrance monitored by the security staff of UBO who also guard the entrance of the its building. The open area right after the outdoor entrance of the building serves as a parking for the use of UBO, the DG and the senior staff and their cars.

¹¹ Source: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/beirut/about-this-office/>

1.2.3.1 The Entrance and Ground Floor

To describe the public area and entrance of the building, I would start with the ground floor. Like most of this kind of facilities, it has a wide entrance where a security guard checks the IDs and registers the names of visitors. After passing through an electronic detector and right at the end of the long entrance, two large glass doors are built in.

The large glass door on the right is the main door which is locked and secured. It is not possible to enter the building through this door unless a UBO personnel ID card with an electronic code is swiped over the scanner to identify the personnel and unlock it. This door also provides the main entrance to the inside ground floor of the building as to the elevator door and stairs, and to the office of the UBO drivers. This office is in between the downwards going stairs on its right and the backdoor to the garage on its left. On the right side wall of the elevator door there is a kind of rusty old golden plate with a list of names of the former directors of the UBO, chronologically listed according to the years of their service since the date of the office was founded.



Figure 3(b)

This office also serves as an entrance reception area to an “L” shaped large meeting room or Orientation Room as it says on its door. The following photos show the difference, while it is empty and during a workshop (see Fig.4(a) & 4 (b)).

Ground floor Orientation Room



Figure 4 (a)

Orientation Room at the ETTC 1st day Workshop



Figure 4 (b)

The other glass door is the entrance to a glass frontage office (see Fig.3 (a) prev. page), but it does not serve as a reception to the building (a) (Fig. 3(b) on the left). It is an office that has a book shelf library on its left exhibiting many of the UNESCO’s publications. This is for the public visitors use as to explore, read and/or acquire the publications free of any charge. There is also a desk made of glass with a printer/scanner on the side for the orientation room to use with three blue armchairs. The IT employee usually uses this office especially when there is a meeting, and he is around in case his logistical and technical services are needed.

It has a silver plate on the wall beside the door which says “Orientation Room”. It is a very well technologically equipped and very well-lightened, with large and wide windows overlooking the corner of the two crossed avenues. It is used as a meeting room for the purposes of hosting workshops, meetings and projection of projects, presentations and more, but never for any orientation purposes.

The three upper floors of the building are connected by a twisted half a circle and long stairs at each floor. The stairs bisect the floor, along with the elevator door in front of it, right in the center, into two long corridors on each side. These hold the doors to the multiple offices of each side respectfully. The two ends of the two corridors are connected by a side small hallway, which have the doors into the toilets.

All this area is open for public. Meaning that any person visiting the UNESCO Office either for a workshop or a work meeting, can freely navigate these offices and floors. Hence, the visitor would always feel like in a friendly welcoming environment.

1.2.3.2 First Floor and Conference Room

The first floor contains the administration of UN-Habitat as an independent agency from UNESCO. It has been renting several offices of the first floor as its regional office in Beirut. Its employees had their working department, rules and regulations independent from the UBO administration. However, they were eligible to use many internal facilities of the building, like the library, meeting rooms, conference rooms and their logistics, cafeteria, kitchen and other daily used facilities. Yet, this situation has come to an end by the end of January and right at the end of my internship as well. UN Habitat have moved their offices from this building to downtown area and the first floor was evacuated for the purpose of future UBO staff additions.

On the first floor two offices are found for UNESCO IT support staff. One is for the graphic designer and the other is for the use of logistic support and maintenance employees. This is where the badges, nametags, notebooks, folders and handouts are prepared, then printed and provided to be at the ease use for the participants of workshops and seminars, or visitors for meetings and conferences at the UBO and many times for conferences in other Arab countries which the UBO covers and supports. The relevant materials of seminars are prepared in this office to be shipped by DHL, according to the time schedule, to the destination country where the conference is set to be held, like Cairo, Morocco, Tunisia and Amman.

Each of these two IT offices are located beside two separate wooden entrance doors of a very large rectangular space, which is referred to as the Conference Room. This is where most of the workshops, seminars, large meetings and conferences of UBO are held and hosted. It is an extra-large auditorium and very well furnished by contemporary technological equipment, logistics, lights, microphones and very comfortable office armchairs with wheels, distributed behind and all around the conference’s long wooden table set in a rectangle, reaching all across the room. In front of each chair there is a long and bendable microphone with a switch set, placed on the table. This auditorium/conference room has also a remote large screen, usually placed at front, on the north-west side, right beside the panel table which in turn can host four speakers or panelists. Flags of the UN, UNESCO, Lebanon and other Arab countries stand on the background of this panel area. A room of several rectangular glass windows, overlooking the conference room, is equipped on the west side for translators, while a one step-up open bench area with a wooden

counter panel for the UNESCO employees and the press, if present, is placed on the east side of the conference room. (See figures 5(a) & 5(b))

The Conference Room at the Opening of ETTC &



Figure 5(a)

At “Social Ventures Idea Generation” workshop



Figure 5(b)

1.2.3.3 The Second Floor and the Library

The second floor of UBO building also has the same division of two corridors/hallways which also hold, along their length, several offices of UBO Education sector’s working departments of their corresponding projects. Yet the offices are scattered in their use. No certain sections for particular sector. Many employees of same sector are distributed in several offices with other sector’s employees. However, others also can be found in the same office working on the same project.

When out of the elevator into this floor, there is a square space which provides a runway to the two sides of these long corridors across the building. I chose to number them as hallway (A) and hallway (B) for the convenience of this report. It is where the staff might come across each other for a quick socialization and a brief update about each other. Each corridor starts from a glass door of each side of a large Library room, and ends by a respective building corner office at its edge. (See Figure 6 & 8)

Library door 1 & Hallway (A)



Figure 6

Library Entrance Plate



Figure 7

Library door 2 & Hallway (B)



Figure 8

i. The Library

The Library has been renovated and equipped by the donation of the “Al Waleed Bin Talal Humanitarian Foundation” in May 2014. There is a glass and wood plate right beside the entrance door that acknowledges this donation. (See figure 7)

The Library is divided into four open sections, each has its own furniture and mode of use (see fig. 9(a) & 9 (b)). Three sections of the library have their own separate sets of meeting tables and chairs and wall shelves made of wood. One section serves as a lounge with white leather couches (See fig. 9 (b)) facing the entrance glass door which sets the beginning to the left side corridor. The Library has also a small glass room as a section for the blind persons or those with visual disability. It is equipped with the logistics to be used during meetings in case there is any need. The library also has long and connected book shelves which showcase several books, magazines and other variety of old and new publications of UNESCO.

Main meeting table at the Library



Figure 9(a)

General view of the Library's open sections



Figure 9(b)

This library serves as a daily internal meeting venue for the UBO staff, Un-Habitat staff and for hosting meetings with partners and stakeholders of the outsourcing UNESCO projects. There is a schedule of meeting time set to reserve the Library each day by the procurement and logistics officer, to organize and ensure privacy and space for each meeting and sometimes catering of coffee break for longer meetings. During my internship period, I noticed very active use of this library which demonstrated and reflected the crosscutting very busy working modalities of the UBO in general.

Continuing our overview of the second floor, we come at doors with The Education department offices. The Programme Specialists have their offices along the left side corridor and their two assistants as well. The last office is always on the corner and has two sided wide windows which overlook the crossroad avenues. It is sectioned into three parts for three officers of the education sector, providing them each with their respective working privacy.

Between the right and left corridors there is a short runway, which also holds the toilet doors as each floor in the building. Across the right corridor the National Programme and Project offices are located. One is for the communication and information officer and the others are mixed offices of education department employees, for its different projects and programmes. One might say that UBO is truly the Bureau of Education for this department occupies most of the offices of the building. One Office though is provided for the NetMed Youth Project Coordinator. This project is associated under the Social and Human Sciences Regional Programme.

ii. The Office for Interns



Figure 10

At the end of the right hallway B (Fig. 8) lies a large corner office (Fig 10). It has a white plate on the wooden door that says “Consultants Room”. Not sure if relevant, but this was the office that all the interns of UBO have occupied during their time of internship work. It is rectangular and wide enough to have four large desks alongside of two cupboards with glass covers. Right after I left the UNESCO, this room was converted into a large meeting room with one large meeting table and Chairs.

All the office furniture in this office room is now all moved down to the first floor where the staff of UN-Habitat have been operating their work before they moved their offices from the building. This office also has its windows reaching all from corner to corners, and overlooking the Sporting city wide avenue from one side and the playground of the Bir Hassan school complex from the other. The windows are made in double, as in separate two aluminum windows holding two separate glasses which do excellent job in isolating out the disturbing noise of the traffic on the avenue.

1.2.3.4 The Third Floor and Administration Offices

The third and last floor has the same partitions as the others underneath it. This floor is characterized as the UBO administration department, yet not limited to it. The UBO director’s office along with his secretary’s office, the phone operator’s office and the Social and Human Sciences (SHS) Programme Specialist Dr. My Supervisor’s office are side by side (Figure...). The deputy Director and Senior Director of Education Sector Dr. Yayoy is also located on this floor. Also there is the Cultural sector Programme Specialists and their assistants have offices on this floor also. The office of the procurement and logistics officer Ms. Dina is right beside the Administrative HR and Recruitment officer Ms. Elise’s office. There is also a large meeting room right at the second corner end of the floor overlooking the cross roads of the avenue

1.2.3.5 The Underground Floor

The underground basement serves as a large area of cafeteria with round tables and chairs for serving food and beverages. This is where the participants of the workshops or meetings are hosted for coffee and lunch breaks at UBO. It is as large as a restaurant and almost every week there will be a certain food catering company staff to serve the food on an open buffet basis for the guests. These might be coffee breaks refreshments, sweets, lunch, fruits and beverages (See next page, Fig 11).

UBO always makes sure that hospitality is served as requested for its guests. This is a time and opportunity for all, UBO staff, visitors and participants of activities, to mingle and connect with each other around the tables while having a bite. This is the place where discussions of variety of topics and socializing occur at their best. So ironically, despite the fact that, at this underground

floor, the connections via mobile phones are totally out of reach, yet the established public relation's connections in person on this floor are always totally at peak.

The restaurant hall where the caterings for the coffee and lunch breaks are hosted



Figure 11

There is also a large but old furnished kitchen, where the employees and staff of the UBO use it on daily basis to have their lunch, and sometimes socialize with other employees.

On the opposite side there are several rooms where maintenance and cleaning materials are kept for the cleaning staff to use, and other large rooms, which are used for storage to office supplies and old books and publications of UNESCO.

1.2.4 Internal Rules and Regulations

The Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM) acts as a strategic partner by developing and implementing Human Resources Strategies, policies, tools to support the Organization's in meeting its mandate and objectives. HRM also manages services such as recruitment, training, entitlements, and staff relations necessary for the efficient delivery of programmes and staff well-being.¹²

Although specific HR personnel in UBO do not exist, however, important up-to-date regulations and any related changes are circulated by email to the list of all the 32 employees of the UBO for announcements, attention to personnel changes, holidays and working from home notices, and more, all in coordination with the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris.

Moreover, regulations for safety and security measures are very well established at the entrance of the building, so that no person can get inside, unless his or her name is registered and by showing their Identity card to prove their registration on the list of names with the internal security guard. These are anyways the common usual measures to any governmental entity. Participants of workshops reach the entrance and show their participation clearance which they have previously received by email, after registering their names and contact details online for activities announced to the public.

As for UBO staff and interns, they all hold their magnetic security card that opens the entrance door for them to enter. They slide it over the scanner while reaching to office in the morning and while leaving for checking in and out.

Otherwise, there are no certain rules and regulations set out for office day-to-day activities or For behavior in situations and places of the building.

¹² <http://en.unesco.org/careers/>

1.2.5 Working Hours and Discipline

The working hours of the office are from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and the working days of the week are from Monday to Friday. Saturdays and Sundays are off-duty days at the office, however, for many projects, workshops and trainings could be held on Saturdays as set appropriate to ensure that more chances of participation are provided.

Sometimes and in case of major country manifestations, for example a major protest, that might have a provision of political mainstreaming and probable escalation of events, an email by the name of the UBO director is circulated and accounted to all staff of UBO, announcing one day discharge of work duty at the office for security reasons. Yet, nevertheless, the staff is urged to continue a normal duty of work from home as due needed for that particular day.

Major Lebanese national and religious holidays are held off duty at the UBO, but staff always have to refer to their emails for specific announcements of details. Moreover, not all of the Lebanese holidays are considered legit for UBO to close its doors, because they always have to refer to the HQ for closing and holiday policies.

A2. UN Internship Programme in Concept and Practice

The Administrative Instructions of United Nations Internship Programme¹³ (AIUNIP) is the document prepared by the UN Secretariat and signed by the Under-Secretary-General for Management on 14 January 2014. It states in its introductory part that “pursuant to section 4.2 of the Secretary-General’s bulletin ST/SGB/2009/4 and for the purpose of establishing conditions and procedures for the selection and engagement of interns at the United Nations”, this document was disseminated. I found this document to be the source and basic reference for the UN Internship programme specifications and conditions, from which all the UN websites derive their contents of rules and regulation published statements.

Section 1 of this AIUNIP document states the purpose of this programme as twofold, one, to provide framework by which students gain exposure to the UN through assignments in order to “enhance their educational experience and gain experience in the work” of the UN. The other, is to provide the UN offices “with assistance of qualified students specialized in various professional fields”. And in Section 5- 5.1 says that “Interns are considered type I gratis personnel. They are not staff members”.

On the other hand, according to the Young Professionals UN website, “the United Nations Internship Programme is usually the easiest way for young professionals to start a career in the United Nations System.” It is stated here that the purpose of the UN internship is to expose young people to the work of the United Nations and other UN System organizations, deepening their knowledge and understanding of the organization’s goals, principles and activities, and to provide them an opportunity to gain real experience within the organization and develop their professional competencies in the relevant area.¹⁴

Internship at the United Nations and its organizations has specific rules, regulations, and conceptual considerations to be aware of, before taking the step into applying for it. This part will tackle some of these UN internship programme rules and regulations, in concept as first, and then next, it will demonstrate my experience as a practice, through my internship application process.

¹³ Administrative instruction, United nations internship programme, UN Secretariat, ST/AI/2014/1

https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/page_attachments/n1420634.pdf

¹⁴ <http://ypun.org/un-internships/what-is-un-internship/>

2.1 UN Internship Programme Rules and Regulations

The United Nations various websites state and encourage application for internship at any of the UN organizations. It also has several links to this internship specifications as in United Nations considerations with regard to either employment basic rules and regulations, or methods of application and assessment processes as well.

This part explains this notion in short through the UN considerations, application rules and regulations in the UN Internship programme.

2.1.1 United Nations Considerations

According to article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, the paramount consideration in the employment of the staff, and interns also for that matter, is the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity, including but not limited to, respect for international human rights and humanitarian law. All UN employment announcements specify that “candidates may be subject to screening against these standards, including but not limited to, whether they have committed or are alleged to have committed criminal offences or violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law.” Hence, due regard is paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible and that the UN places no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity. This is due regard to conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs. The United Nations Secretariat notes also that it is a non-smoking environment. However, UN interns are not UN staff, yet basic required considerations are same to become an UN intern as to become a UN staff. Screening the above mentioned considerations, the following table 6 shows an example of inadequacy to what is in UN concept compared to practice.

Table 6: Distribution of interns per category of country in 2007

<i>Developing status</i>	<i>Interns</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Developed	2,048	59
Developing	1,079	31
Transition	132	4
LDC	168	5
Not provided **	15	1
Stateless	1	0
Total	3,443	100

(*) Based on geographical groups as per the United Nations Statistics Division groups

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods.htm>

(**) WIPO did not provide the country of origin of their interns

Source: Wynes, M. Deborah; Posta, Istfan; “Internships in the United nations System”, JIU/NOTE/2009/2 https://www.unjiu.org/en/reports-notes/JIU%20Products/JIU_NOTE_2009_2_English.pdf

According to table 6 about the distribution of interns per category of country in 2007, we can deduce that during 2007 the interns from developing countries amounted only 1,079 interns and 31% of the global UN internships, compared to the number of interns who were from developed countries, with a number 2,048 and percentage of 59%. This means their number could only reach half of the later interns. Accordingly, this table shows the inadequate measures of the UN

internship system with regard to equal opportunities and inclusion on basis of geographical and economic considerations, leaning towards supporting developed countries for UN learning experiences more than those from developing. Above all, it is a quite ironic fact that almost all of the UN organizations work is mostly concentrated in the developing countries to begin with.

This is a large matter regarding also the geographical make-up of UN staff. The states that belong to the UN want to increase their influence by maximizing their own citizens' presence among staff and vetoing measures that reduce it. Many developing countries regard paying interns, who are disproportionately from the wealthiest countries, as perpetuating injustice rather than correcting it (developed countries accounted for 59% of UN interns in 2007, despite having just 15% of the world's population). To fix that they may propose a geographical quota system for interns, which developed countries would oppose.

Hence, this requires a recommendation for an adequate review and new executive measures of reform in selection criteria and candidate opportunities for a transparent implementation of UN equality rights, values and principles.

2.1.2 Creating UN Account and Application

To apply for the UN internship, one should register in the Inspira System¹⁵, the United Nations Human Resources gateway and prepare the application form called the Personal History Profile (PHP) for the specific internship job opening. Available UN internship vacancies are listed in the Inspira system or on the UN official website.¹⁶

To apply for an Internship at any organization of the United Nations it is required to complete the Inspira online registration process, which is same as the online UN Career Portal. The application is composed of a Cover Note and a Personal History Profile (PHP), filled on the Inspira account homepage of the applicant. There is also a note on the referred page that says: "incomplete applications will not be reviewed".

In the applicant's online PHP must be sure to include all details of past work experiences, IT skills, and three references.

While the Cover Note must include applicant's information as answers to the following points:

- Degree Programme: What is the applicant currently studying? ;
- Graduation Date: When will/did the applicant graduate from the programme? ;
- List the IT skills and programmes that the applicant is proficient in
- List the applicant's top three areas of interest;
- Explain why the applicant is the best candidate for this specific internship;
- Explain the applicant's interest in the United Nations Internship Programme.

Applicants are urged to follow carefully all instructions available on the online recruitment platform, Inspira. For more detailed guidance, applicants may refer to the At-a-Glance on "The Application Process" and the Instructional Manual for the Applicants, which can be accessed by clicking on "Manuals" hyper-link on the upper right side of the Inspira account-holder homepage. Regarding assessment, potential candidates are contacted by hiring manager directly for further consideration. The webpage announcement also asserts that "Due to a high volume of applications received, ONLY successful candidates are contacted."

¹⁵ <https://inspira.un.org/>

¹⁶ <https://careers.un.org/lbw/Home.aspx>

2.1.3 Basic Regulations and Enrollment Process

According to section 4 as the Terms of the Internship programme¹⁷, the duration of an internship is two months on a full time basis - this may be exceptionally extended for a maximum period of six months. Interns are not paid and are responsible for all expenses related to the internship. UN Organizations accept no responsibility for costs arising from accidents and/or illness incurred during an internship. Therefore, upon awarding an internship, candidates are required to sign a statement confirming their understanding and acceptance of the conditions of service. Interns work five days per week (35 hours) under the supervision of a staff member in the department or office to which they are assigned and the intern reports directly to the supervisor.

The Inspira or the UN career portal website explains that the screening and evaluation of applicants will be conducted on the basis of the information submitted in the application. It also asserts that according to the evaluation criteria of the job opening and the applicable internal legislations of the United Nations (including the Charter of the United Nations, resolutions of the General Assembly, the Staff Regulations and Rules, administrative issuances and guidelines) the outcome selection is made. And in section 5.2 “Interns shall not be sought or accepted as substitutes for staff to be recruited against posts authorized for the implementation of mandated programmes and activities. Interns shall not represent the United Nations in any official capacity, do not perform supervisory functions and must not exercise certifying or approving authority.”¹⁸

Applicants must provide complete and accurate information pertaining to their personal profile and qualifications, including but not limited to, their education, work experience, and language skills, according to the instructions provided on Inspira. Referring to section 11.2 of the Administration document, “Applications must be submitted in accordance with the instructions set out in the opening, including use of the electronic platform provided for this purpose”. Applicants will be disqualified from consideration if they do not demonstrate in their application that they meet the evaluation criteria of the job opening and the applicable internal legislations of the United Nations. Also it is stated that applicants are solely responsible for providing complete and accurate information at the time of application: “no amendment, addition, deletion, revision or modification shall be made to applications that have been submitted”. Candidates under serious consideration for selection will be subject to a reference-checking process to verify the information provided in the application.

A notice in capital letters and red color is placed in the end of any internship announcement and says the following: “THE UNITED NATIONS DOES NOT CHARGE A FEE AT ANY STAGE OF THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS (APPLICATION, INTERVIEW MEETING, PROCESSING, OR TRAINING)”.

2.1.4 Qualifications to United Nations Internship

To qualify for an internship with the United Nations Internship Programme, and as Inspira web site states several conditions to be met in order to become eligible for the admission to the UN internship programme. These eligibility conditions as in education, work experience and languages.

¹⁷ Ibid, Administrative instruction, United nations internship programme, UN Secretariat, ST/AI/2014/1
https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/page_attachments/n1420634.pdf

¹⁸ Ibid

I. In education:

1. Applicants must meet one of the following requirements : (a) be enrolled in a graduate school programme (second university degree or equivalent, or higher); (b) be enrolled in the final academic year of a first university degree programme (minimum Bachelor's level or equivalent); or (c) have graduated with a university degree (as defined above) and, if selected, must commence the internship within a one year period of graduation;
2. Be computer literate in standard software applications;
3. Have a demonstrated keen interest in the work of the United Nations and have a personal commitment to the ideals of the Charter; and
4. Have a demonstrated ability to successfully interact with individuals of different cultural backgrounds and beliefs, which include willingness to try and understand and be tolerant of differing opinions and views.

II. In work experience:

Applicants are not required to have professional work experience for participation in the programme.

III. In Languages:

English and French are the working languages of the United Nations. Arabic is also a working language of regional offices. For most posts, fluency in written and spoken English and Arabic is required. Knowledge of French is desirable.

The above set eligibility rules are set in the Administration Instructions document in more details.

2.1.5 Responsibilities and Obligations

Whether it is for the receiving offices or departments and Supervisors of the interns, or the interns, with these certain rules stated, and provided a basic statuesque for both, they quite ensure a minimum of professional working benefit and respect for both.

In my opinion, this part should be the most important grounds of the UN internship, because basically these rules specify the nature, scope, expectations and limitations for both sides as interns and supervisors. It is what frames the working relationship and activities during the period of the internship, but not necessarily shape them. It depends mostly on the characters and communication skills of both sides.

Section 6 of the AIUNIP document¹⁹ is an official reference document that states these responsibilities and obligations of both sides involved in the internship process. It is worth mentioning that while I had researched this topic, not one UN website had them stated for the receiving departments and supervisors, yet the obligations of the interns were thoroughly disseminated. Nevertheless, the UN work ethics standards²⁰ are essential to be respected as well.

¹⁹ Administrative instruction, United nations internship programme, UN Secretariat, ST/AI/2014/1, 14-20634 (E) 170114 https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/page_attachments/n1420634.pdf

²⁰ Putting Ethics to work, A Guide for UN staff, UN Ethics Office & the UN Office of Human Resource Management, Sept. 2012

2.1.5.1 Receiving departments/offices and Supervisors

Section 6.1 states that the receiving departments/offices and supervisors “shall seek to create a working environment conducive to interns’ substantive learning and professional development”.

(a) Seek to ensure that an intern’s assignment(s) is at the appropriate level of complexity and variety; (b) Prepare terms of reference describing the tasks of interns in the departments/offices; (c) Provide constructive feedback to an intern regarding his or her performance; (d) Ensure that an intern does not undertake official travel on behalf of the United Nations in the performance of the internship. In consideration of (d) also the section 5.2 states that “Interns shall not be sought or accepted as substitutes for staff to be recruited against posts authorized for the implementation of mandated programmes and activities. Interns shall not represent the United Nations in any official capacity...”

2.1.5.2 Interns

In the Section 6.2 the obligations and responsibilities are quite longer than the counter part’s obligations. Yet to summarize the main points:

(a) Observe all applicable rules, regulations, instructions, procedures and directives of the Organization notwithstanding their status as described in section 5 of the present instruction; (b) Provide the receiving departments/offices with a copy of all materials prepared by them during the internship...; (c) Respect the impartiality and independence required of the United Nations ... shall not seek or accept instructions ... from any Government or from any authority external to the Organization; (d) Unless otherwise authorized... they may not communicate at any time to ... any other external party any information that has become known to them by reason of their association with the United Nations or the receiving department/office that they know or ought to have known has not been made public. They may not use any such information without the written authorization of the appropriate official, and such information may never be used for personal gain. These obligations also apply after the end of the internship with the United Nation. We will return to these rules in the discussion later to tackle some of them and inspect to what extent they are respected and implemented by both sides.

2.2 UNESCO Internship Application and Enrollment

“If you are planning to embark on a career in the field of education, science, or culture, then an internship at UNESCO will be ideal for you”²¹. This is what UNESCO’s internship Programme page states. It also provides that the UNESCO Internship Programme offers the interns practical work in one of UNESCO’s priority areas. Aside from helping them understand the Organization’s mandate, programmes, and main thrusts, it also claims that it enhances their academic knowledge with relevant work assignments that can help them prepare for their future career.

Internship in the United Nations system is duly considered a temporary recruitment. It requires the same adequate and meticulous recruitment process as any other regular UN staff employment.

²¹ <https://en.unesco.org/careers/internships>

Hence, this recruitment process is composed of several action steps to be completed. Each step will be further processed if the outcome is found successful in the previous step. It starts with an online application through opening an account and filling out the required fields, then an interview meeting, further processing the application paper work, and finally, training or interning for skills and UN competences if required for a specific task and duty. This part will manifest this process via my recruitment experience.

2.2.1 Applying for UNESCO Internship

Following detailed instructions on Inspira, I opened my online account as a webpage and filled all the required fields of the internship online application process, writing a Cover Note and a Personal History Profile. It took me two days to complete filling out the long and very detailed profile account with several pages on Inspira. The webpage provides step by step instructions to make sure the input covers the requirements. This profile account is used as a tool ready to be linked to any UN agency employment opportunity that my qualifications might be found to be eligible to. After few months of setting up my profile on Inspira, an internship opportunity at the UNESCO caught my eye while surfing the UN several websites. So I applied to this internship by linking my ready set profile on Inspira to the UNESCO's online internship application.

It was after a couple of months that I came across a contact with the UNESCO office of Beirut via an email from Dr. My Supervisor Sugita. Seeing her signature in the email, The SHS Programme Specialist, Dr. My Supervisor Sugita, I quickly understood that this internship opportunity is within the Social and Human Sciences Programme. As later, it turned out to be true, in addition it was in the division of administrative services of the UNESCO Office of Beirut.

I was indeed attracted by the work and concept on Social and Human Sciences, yet indeed more attracted and excited by the notion of working with a lady from Japan. So I was really glad she offered me an intern position. Yet, this is only the beginning. There was a long process also for enrollment and admission to the internship. It is important to note that Inspira, as a UN career portal, has gone lately through many web changes since the day I sat-up my account on and applied through it.

2.2.2. Proceeding the Application

It was an enchanting moment for my eyes to read the email (*7 Table 7, Email #1*) that said the following:

Table 7: Email #1

Dear Harkian,

Hope this mail finds you well.
I found your application/ CV for an internship at UNESCO.
If you are always interested, I suggest that we meet and discuss the content of your assignment.

Best regards,
My Supervisor
.....
Seiko SUGITA Ph.D. (Ms)
Programme Specialist
Social and Human Sciences (SHS)
UNESCO Beirut, Lebanon

On the 8th of September, 2016, I received the following email from Dr. My Supervisor Sugita, which marked the first contact I received from UNESCO. The email was notifying me that my online application and profile on Inspira was proceeded.

My reply was prompt and welcoming by the following email (*Table 8, Email #2*):

Table 8: Email #2

Dear Ms. Sugita,

It is indeed a pleasure to hear from you.
I am very well interested in the opportunity of an internship at UNESCO and amply appreciate it.
Following your kind suggestion, I invite you to set up an appointment to meet at your convenience.
In the meantime, I thank you for your consideration and look forward to meeting you.

Best regards,
Dzovinar Harkian

This was the beginning of my extraordinary learning experience of working for the United Nations. Dr. My Supervisor replied to my email suggesting the date to meet and she provided me with the address of her office at the UNESCO. In the meantime, I read the website and tried to get prepared for the interview by collecting information and stating my inquiries if any.

2.2.2.1 The Interview

On September 14, 2017, I reached the UBO at 3:15 p.m. earlier than my appointment time that was at 3:30 p.m. Once I told the external security guard that I have a meeting with My Supervisor, I noticed at once the change in his attitude, from ordinary to seriousness, and so I was invited indoors with a delicate respect. I knew at that moment that she must have a great deal of respect due to her important position at this office.

The moment I set foot in the UNESCO building was unforgettable. It was a special occasion. I am “officially” invited to a recruitment meeting at a United Nations organization. This was huge. For me it was a dream come true after a decade long of hope and since the day I decided to follow a BA degree in Political Science at the Lebanese University in the fall of 2005.

Waiting in the lobby for my appointment, I had this thinking with a smile of satisfaction and gratitude to God. I sat on a bench where the glass frontage office is and in front of the public library shelves, watching the publications and exploring some of them. It felt a mere pleasure for me, even though it seemed like eternity to pass the time waiting to head upstairs for my interview with My Supervisor. I had many thoughts immersing to my mind. Many inquiries and negative expectations in my head, for example, what if I won’t win this hardly cultivated opportunity, and this thought almost hindered my contentment of this moment. Yet I kept my feet on the ground and thought this might be my one-and-only opportunity to be in this UNESCO building, so I might as well set this moment right.

The security officer finally came near, opened for me the secured locked glass door of the building and invited me in. Then he gave me some instructions to take the elevator up to the third floor and find My Supervisor’s office on my right side as I walk out of the elevator. I thanked him and got my steps to the moment of truth.

The moment My Supervisor laid her eyes on me, she said: “Ah!! Lifelong learning?!!” Assuming she was expecting a much younger person, considering I am a student following a Masters’ degree, I nodded my head vertically with a positive smile. This did nurture my fears though for a while of decreasing my chances in winning this internship opportunity. I greeted her, presented myself and took a step inside.

Then she kindly showed me to sit at a round table, right under a wide window overlooking the school complex, which was placed behind her L shaped desk.

2.2.2.2 The Practical Introduction

Here I am in a practical setting to introduce myself and receive a general overview of the possible UNESCO working opportunity at hand. My Supervisor sat on the other side of the table, represented herself and gave me a general overview of what tasks she will need and expect from an intern to do, regarding assisting her in her daily responsibilities. While she was talking with a smile on her face, I hardly understood her English with a, twittering like, Japanese accent. Yet, I was thinking, what a lovely cultural and professional experience this will be for me, while working with a person from Japan! I felt fortunate to be learning from a national of a worldwide known country of having best innovative and meticulous work approach, which in turn, I consider myself a person with very much similar competencies and dedicated interest.

My Supervisor first asked about my English and Arabic language proficiency and explained in brief how she needed assistance in translating in both languages for official documents, and that having an assistance in Arabic language proficiency to rely on is essential to her work. She stated also that other important tasks will be expected from me, like taking notes during meetings and workshops and drafting parts of reports. In my turn, I explained that this internship is a requirement for my Master’s degree and that I will be entitled to write an Internship report about this experience. But when I told her that my professor at the university should be contacting her in person, to follow up on my internship process as a student, and that she might need to grade my performance at UNESCO, she kept quiet. I reckoned at that moment, that this issue might hinder her concentration and well allocated time only for her duties of workflow. By time, later, this instant impression of mine turned out to be a true fact after all.

My Supervisor noted that she will need my intern services for a period of four months. She explained her point of view that by the time the intern starts to grasp the notion and practice of the daily SHS operating modalities in full, two months will be already passed. She added that she learned from her previous experiences with interns, that sufficient service results from any intern will be most possible after the two months of learning is over. Hence, I agreed on the period of four months of internship as of the beginning of October 2016. I felt confident though, that she will be surprised with my fast learning skills and competences before the end of the first two months.

She then made sure that I am fully aware and willing to work for four months with no any payment expectation whatsoever and that the UN internship is an unpaid work experience. So I have asserted that I was fully aware of this fact, since I have read all the UN internship regulations and conditions online, before I had applied.

Then, I told her how excited I am about this coming opportunity, and that I tend to find my career in the UN humanitarian based works, she replied nodding her head sideways, which made her square cut short hair tap over her cheeks and eyeglasses, and said: “if you are looking for

humanitarian, here we are not.” She then explained that they deal with social and Human Sciences as a programme implementing projects and studies. She noted further that their work basically has a lot to do with paperwork, workshops or similar, and coordination with local and international partners to fulfill global schedules and results expected, and she continued: “as you will see for yourself, in case your application is further progressed.”

Hearing this cutting edge reply did give me a shock for an instant. I felt those thin strings that I was about to hitch between my enthusiasm and any UN future job, represented by her as we speak, became completely tangled. Yet, my excitement to learn and get involved in the UN work, made it not of much concern for that moment. One thing prevailed on my thinking, is the hope that she would accept me as her intern. I had the confidence that once I get this chance, I will impress her by my always well-appreciated meticulous dedication at work.

Finally, she told me that she will refer my application with the interview outcome to her boss, the UNESCO regional director at UBO, in order to complete the procedure with his approval, and send me the final outcome. So I thanked her, greeted and left.

2.2.2.3 The Approval

On September 22, 2016 I received an email from My Supervisor which stated the confirmation to the approval of my internship at the UNESCO Office of Beirut. The email said the following (Table 9, Email # 3)

Table 9: Email # 3

Dear Dzovig,

I am very happy to confirm you that your internship is approved.
Can we agree that you start on 2 October? I shall send you a contract in a week or so.

Let us meet at my office at 9am. Please bring with you a medical report (mentioning "fit to work").

Thank you
Seiko SUGITA

October 2, 2016 turned out to be a Sunday, and Monday was a holiday. So we have agreed later on the work start date as of Tuesday on 4 October, 2016. I didn't receive the contract as mentioned in the email though, but instead she handed it to me on my arrival the first day to sign on the spot.

2.2.3 Orientation of First Day

Tuesday, October 4, 2016, marked the first day of my internship at the UNESCO. I arrived as instructed with my medical report at hand. As instructed, the report had a statement of a doctor that confirmed that I am healthy and “fit to work “I headed straight to Dr. My Supervisor’s office on the third floor at 9 a.m. sharp, ready to receive my instructions from her for the job required. My Supervisor greeted me, and noted that no need to use her title Dr. and addressing her by her first name “My Supervisor” only, as no one uses their Dr. Title except the Office Director. She then asked me to wait by the same table, which we had our interview meeting last time.

2.2.3.1 Recruitment Contract and Admission

Proceeding my admission, My Supervisor opened my medical report that I gave her as I entered her office. She then printed out the previously filled out Inspira online internship application and my CV which I had sent her by email. She gave me also a schedule of workshops and meetings, for the year 2017 as a copy for me to keep. She then highlighted several dates on the schedule, marking the meetings and workshops, that I should be expected to be prepared for. She tried to explain with her Japanese accent and tiny voice, what are the assignments she expects to be done during these workshops and meetings, like to be present with a pen and a notebook in order to take notes or minutes of what is being said and done. She then told me that meanwhile I can visit the UNESCO website and read about the SHS Living Together programme to have a clear view of what is the work at UBO is done for. Also she mentioned an online UNDSS safety and security course with tests that she said it is a requirement for all employees to complete. And finally, she asked me to get a document from Tony, her other intern, to review its Arabic translation and make any corrections if needed.

Then she gave me the contract to sign (see Appendix A for a copy of the Contract and Appendix H the Annex). It holds a statement confirming my understanding and acceptance of the conditions of internship service. I tried to read it, but the letters were considerably very small. I had a quick overview to grasp its main points though. It stated that my internship at UNESCO will cover a period of four months from October 4, 2016 till February 3, 2017.

Willing to sign the contract, I had in mind that this is a unified form of document of the international UN internship programme and recruitment system as this basic contract, which the similar UN organizations also use for the UN policy of internship. And this does not give anyways much of an option for any possible regrets about its content. I saw a section of TOR of the intern, but could not read that in full either. At that moment, she was standing over my head impatiently waiting for my signature, so I stood up, handed her the contract after I have signed it. So far, and since the first interview, I had a sense that my UN work experience will depend largely on the character and management skills of my supervisor, and both are likely to be poor, showing a seasoned mood in the way she communicated with others and with me in particular.

She then clipped my medical report, along with my CV and my internship application all together with the contract and asked me to join her while she walked out of her office. I was kind of surprised, because I thought since these are HR procedures, most probably an HR staff member should have carried out the responsibility of this recruitment process.

Incumbently, My Supervisor led the way from her office in hallway B to the hallway A across the same floor, where the UBO admin officer is. My Supervisor handed her all my papers while introducing us to each other. She is Elise Nasr, a very nice welcoming young lady. She greeted me and then she wrote down my name in English for its right spelling, date of birth and my mobile number. She then told me that I will be given an electronic security card for the entrance door, sometime that afternoon and an email account of “unesco.org” will be available in my name also for the office use. She explained that these will be available for me as an intern to use during the time period that I am working at UNESCO and should be terminated with the end of contract once the internship is complete.

2.2.3.2 Colleagues and Interns

After finishing the admission process, My Supervisor led me down the stairs to the second floor in hallway B where she introduced me to Mona el-Zoghby, PhD, who has the position of NET MED Youth project coordinator at UBO. Mona is a very nice and friendly young lady with a beautiful big smile that brings immense positivity to the person looking at her. Mrs. Carol Jbeily Donabedian has the position at UBO as My Supervisor's assistant and her office is across the floor in hallway A. My Supervisor said to never take any task from anyone other than herself, no matter who is the person, she said this while she was introducing me to Carol. My Supervisor then said: "you are not here to do any favors to anyone". And if anyone does insist on me for favors, she asserted that I should excuse myself and invite them to refer to her for getting the permission of completing such a favor. She then explained that I will be working with Mona and Carol to assist as may be required. They both work within the SHS Programme and their duties are very much associated with My Supervisor's responsibilities. After greeting several other colleagues, she finally took me to the interns' office. (See Fig. 12)

Colleague Interns at Duty



Figure 12

An office located at the very end of the hallway B with a plate on its door stating "Consultants Room". It is the widest office room at UBO. A corner room with four large desks and wide windows which promote immense sunlight to enlighten the room. The wide windows overlook the avenue of Sporting City from one side and the school complex of Bir Hassan from other. There is a printing, scanning and photocopying machine in this room, which is connected to several computers in the other offices as well.

My Supervisor greeted three interns who were working in this office. My Supervisor then introduced me to them as her new intern. She showed me an empty desk, so I can have a seat behind and use the computer placed on it for my upcoming work. She said that the IT personnel will come and set up the PC as needed and show me how to use the work email and passwords for internal communications, sometime that same day. She also noted that if I needed any help or had any inquiry, Timmy, as her other intern, will help me through. He had been, at that time, an intern since four months and has just renewed his contract for another two months with My Supervisor, which makes him interning for six months at the UBO. I took my new desk and put my bag on the seat. She then wished us all a pleasant day and left.

On early morning of October 5, 2016, my second day at UBO, I started reviewing the assignment Seiko gave me to review and Arabic translation of a report. By noon a computer was set up on my desk and the necessary connections were handled by the IT staff Walid and Mahmoud. Walid later was kind enough to show me how I can use my new work-email account at UNESCO. He instructed me to set up a password and showed me the steps on how to access and use this email using specific IT instructions. Then he opened my email account “d.harkian@unesco.org”, which showed a blank page on “outlook.com”. Every time I would be sending an email, my signature was to be accompanied with the logo and contact address of UNESCO (Fig. 13). This is the email signature form used by UNESCO Staff worldwide. It was an amazing feeling for that moment to see my name tagged officially with the “@unesco.org”. It instantly turned a dream into an official visual reality of belonging. At that moment I felt all the months and years of studies and the long troubled times I incurred for exams and fulfilling assignments at university, became all worth it! No regrets whatsoever.

My UNESCO email account and signature

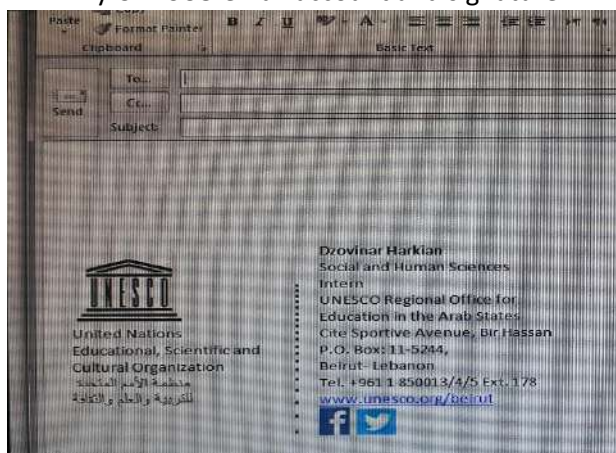


Figure 13

Once the IT staff left, I got instantly to work feeling so eager and enthusiastic with my new endeavor. The desk I was given had its back towards the window, so I made some changes and put my desk to the corner right under the window. (Fig. 14 and 15)

My Desk at UNESCO Office of Beirut



Figure 14

Duty Time at my UBO desk



Figure 15

Chapter B

B. Interface of Opportunities: UN Skills and Knowledge Development

It is a fact that most often the access of hands-on UN working knowledge and developing that knowledge is a reality and privilege quite denied to many. Yet, on all UN websites, the international opportunity of internship, at any UN organization and UN administration is declared as “open for all”, hence, it is not necessarily quite impossible. These websites also assert that showing a keen interest to serve in the works of the UN and commitment to the principles and values of the charter, and the ability to interact with people of diverse backgrounds, are essential competence measures to be accepted at the UN employment, and for interns as well. I wonder though, how would it be possible to measure exactly these considerations to those of the candidate.

This chapter B is about my internship learning experiences, difficulties faced, evaluation and realization of the UN internship programme and of new opportunities between theory and practice via tackling my work interface with UNESCO academically and experientially.

B1- Tackling the Modes of the SHS Thematic Action Knowledge

NET-MED Youth project, the Social Ventures, Social Science as a career, MOST, ETTC, YPS, Coalition of Cities and the R-UNIATTTYP are meetings and workshops in which I have participated by work, in a certain way or another. As an intern assisting with my duties and tasks performed, obviously, these modes of action were quite tackling learning experiences for me. In this part I will present a demonstration framework and description of this learning experience as my skills and knowledge advancement, through the modes of the SHS thematic actions framework of knowledge and implementations at the UBO and throughout my internship period of working there.

1.1 Office Mood and Environment

It is very well known and believed that the work environment has a very important impact on the output work of staffs. It can motivate and release the work pressure and stress if there is a positive atmosphere and friendly exchanges of office time. At UBO we had this positive environment thanks to the perfect combination of people working together, being colleagues in the same office or on the same floor. Not necessarily having the same task to do, yet we shared each other’s task to help one another. I was lucky enough to enjoy the chance of working with this kind of people, as the next parts will tell the story.

1.1.1 Daily Activities Description and Observation

A usual working day at UBO starts at 8:30 a.m. But some staff reach their office starting 8:00 a.m. They make their coffee and socialize with other staff between offices and exchange information in general, before the long and serious working day kicks its start. Others like Mona and Carol, often come earlier at 7:00 a.m. make their coffee and close the door of their office, isolate themselves for an hour or two, in order to concentrate on some tasks they need to carry out if they are due deadline. This period helps progressing, before the early morning silence is broken with staff arriving and their salutations sound traveling through the hallway and into the various offices.

During the day, many staff move around to coordinate with others about work. Some of them though, never leave their office, from the moment they reach and sit behind their desk, until the end of the working day. Every time I have passed in front their office, they are very busy with their eyes concentrated on the PC screen, and sometimes busy typing all the time. One of them was, in particular, an Eastern European looking lady in her fifties. She wore headset and was constantly talking to someone “skype-ing” all the time, or she would be on the phone. Other colleagues usually overheard her loud voice pass into the hallway and into their offices, while talking in several languages that many hustled to identify exactly what language it was that they were hearing. I hardly had an eye contact with her in the hallway once, and we just smiled to each other, before we went in our ways. Some staff are hardly seen to be socializing with anyone and rarely another colleague would be seen entering their door for any reason. They are seen to be so very busy and nearly isolated, some others would be because of their personal character and preferences of not mingling with anyone.

All in all, it is usually at the end of the day, when staff leave, that most of the building staff run into each other on the stairs or elevator, in case they have not met during lunch break. So many of them do not mingle and can never be seen anywhere but at the entrance. They are very nice though, salute with a smile and find their way out to leave

1.1.2 Interface with UBO Colleagues

We were four interns working in the interns’ office. I will use fake names in reference to them or as my intern colleagues, otherwise the remaining as all information related to them, I declare as totally true.

Arsen is Dutch and came from the Netherlands, and he was an intern in social media information and communication sector for six months. Alaa from Lebanon, who had just graduated BA in Political Science and he was asked to work three months of internship, under the supervision of Dr. Higazi, the Education Programme Specialist at UBO. Theo is also from Lebanon and he was a senior BA student in Political science at USEK University. Theo was an intern in the SHS sector and My Supervisor was his supervisor too.

So our office became the working place of interns, Arsen, Theo, Alaa and me. They were very polite, kind, considerate, helpful and friendly young men. There was also a very nice Jordanian girl, Sarah. Being born and educated in the USA, her Arabic language correspondence was to some extent weak for the tasks she was asked to complete. Yet very eager to practice better her Arabic language skills. To share solutions for her Arabic tasks, more often she brought her work to our office. This opportunity, and more, brought us all interns in close friendly relationship with each other.

A very positive example of a UN staff whom I had closely worked on daily basis, is Mrs. Carol Jbeily Donabedian (fig.16). She is staff member on the GS level and in the post of administrative assistant of three programme specialists; My Supervisor is one of them. Carol has been very helpful to me. She has been a sweet, understanding and a brave support to me whenever I needed her. She’s an energetic, responsible, dependable and dedicated UBO staff. She is the right person at the right job. She is indeed the right hand of My Supervisor in her everyday tasks and assists her in preparing all the SHS programme activities, as in networking, coordinating, and preparing lists; she is always ready to be engaged at duty. She has been working at UBO and in this position for more than eight years now and not yet enrolled as a permanent UN staff member. Some refer this situation to UNESCO HR budget constraints, while others say, it is an issue of lack of human

resource management and specific HR policy in UNESCO globally, which is not a secret that it needs a serious reform.

Mona El-Zoghby (left), Carol J. Donabedian (right) UN Staff frequent mingling at Interns' Office



Figure 16



Figure 17

Another very positive example of UN staff is Dr. Mona el-Zoghby (Fig.16). She is the project coordinator of the NET-MED Youth project within the SHS programme, and her office was right next to the interns' office. We had close working opportunities together, since she works also directly with My Supervisor. She was extremely dedicated to her tasks and duties to meet deadlines. We always saw her on the PC busy typing, reading, calculating, coordinating, and more. Many days, afraid not to bother her, we could almost say a quick good morning to her from the door step and wave to her a goodbye leaving, while she was never seen empty handed in between. Yet, if anyone ever needed her, her door was open to any advice and her friendly smile. She would give priority to anyone, with her humble and very positive attitude. She could also sometimes steal moments to visit us and just ask how we are doing, and get back quickly to her office. Many of her duties required meetings and out of office responsibilities. Many days I used to read on her face extreme frustration assuming for obvious reasons similar to what I went through. Yet, on many levels, she is the most pleasant person at the UBO to talk to and to work with. I was pleased with the opportunity of her support in many textual and conceptual aspects of my duties. On many instances, she discharged my frustration at work, sensually and intellectually, on my very hard days at UBO and made me smile, I was lucky enough to have done the same for her too in return. We could understand each other well, since we both had to overcome similar issues and tackle with some of the same complicated correspondence. Her contract of employment at UBO has an end date when the NET-MED project is complete, unless the project will be renewed and continued, then along will be her duties back in charge.

1.1.3 Friends at the Office

Our office of interns was filled with life (fig.17). Any staff member would easily enter and have friendly chats with every one of us. We had a closet with glass cover on which a colleague has placed a printed paper that said: "UNESCO Supermarket", just for fun. We kept the "UNESCO Supermarket" full with beverages and nuts, Nescafé, several kinds of tea, biscuits, chocolate, sugar and kinds of confectionaries. Anyone was welcome to share and to refill the "supermarket" closet. Our office became like the center for socializing and exchanging of general information of some staff. I was blessed with this office experience that truly lifted my spirit whenever I had work pressure and various kinds of difficulties and stress. We had a lot of friendly exchanges of ideas and bonding on many friendly levels.

Friendly Intern Atmosphere



Figure 18

Staff – Intern Friendly Interface



Figure 19

We all gave a hand to each other when any one of us had a difficulty to finish the task on hand. We asked for advice and shared opinion on many issues, not only between us, but with other staff members who frequently used to visit our office several times a day, just to refill their spirit with the extremely positive atmosphere and energy we had spread out within the office framework. Even the Director of the UBO has visited us several times, having friendly conversation with us and asking if we do need anything. He humbly and kindly invited us to visit his office whenever we would have any topic to share with him.

My Supervisor never visited our office though, since her one and only visit that was on my first day at the office, when she accompanied me to this room.

During the month of December, the whole office was engaged in Secret Santa game, and it was a fantastic opportunity of mingling through the positive holiday interactions between the staff. We all had our shares of participating in placing daily presents and receiving them with the delightful smiles of sharing experiences and wondering about secret Santa-s of each.

On the final working day of 2016 and just before the holiday starts, all the UBO staff gathered around the Christmas tree that was set at the indoor entrance of UBO, to share greetings and final presents. Later that day UNESCO hosted us as all the UBO staff to a Christmas Lunch at the

1.1.4 Catering Breaks and Mingling

Lunch time was interesting. It is an opportunity place to mingle with most people possible at the UBO. A certain catering company hosts the guests and staff of UBO, three to four days per week, according to the frequency of workshops, meetings or seminars hosted at the UBO. Tables for food display are along the front width of the hall and the eating tables are round that can accommodate ten people.

Food was a variety of cold dishes, salads, warm dishes of meat and chicken, rice and the like. Fruits and some desert cakes also were catered on the table. Since my first day at UBO, my co-worker interns told me that all staffs of UBO are allowed to join these lunch caterings. So when they went down together they encouraged me to join them. I hesitated to join them on my first week, but then joking together about how we are unpaid workers, and working pretty hard as much as any staff, gave me the sense of legitimacy to make the attempt of enjoying the caterings offered by the UBO whenever possible. Yet, the procurement old lady officer didn't seem to tolerate interns to have a have some share off the catering, so she frequently told the group to leave in a rude and unpleasant way and even asserted not to sit to eat over the tables unless the food catered is finished and all guests have completely left.

I heard many UN staff noting that she well deserved some several nicknames used to refer to her around the office, least of them was “food police woman” and “B lady”. Some interns were not affected by her and despite her unwelcoming and arrogant attitude and kept joining the catering, since, they said, there are no specific official rules prohibit them from sharing food which already UNESCO has paid for and a lot of it is going to be left over to be thrown away in plastic bags. Yet she always had her eyes monitoring everyone’s moves and the food they have on their plates, checking if it is the person’s home food or not. It was like cat and mouse stressful “eye-chase” when she was around, not to mention, completely disrespectful. The guide for UN staff, “Putting Ethics to Work”²² and on page 34, 35 states that “From the Standards of Conduct, tolerance and understanding are basic human values and we must respect all persons equally” and adhere to the ethical standards of non-discrimination and respect. Are these standards respected by such UN staff through this kind of conduct and attitude?

By all means the figure below (fig. 20), shows that we all interns have been respecting the notion of waiting for the guests to leave so we have our lunch together.

Colleague Interns at Lunch Break



Figure 20

However, for us interns, basically, lunch breaks were the pleasant and very unique opportunity we needed to mingle with some important personalities who happened to visit the UBO for only once. Despite the fact that we/interns used to sit together on one table, but whenever was possible, we took the opportunity to mingle with other tables in order to meet new people, and have conversations with them to widen our network of connections while having the chance for a bite.

1.2 UNDSS Safety and Security Courses

UNDSS is an abbreviation for the United Nations Department for Safety and Security, which is located at the headquarters of the UN in New York. This department provides the UN staff members with two online course for learning about the UN safety and security risk management (SRM,) which is a structured tool prepared by security professionals²³.

It was an invaluable opportunity to use my internship period and my unesco.org email account to access these courses and register as I was noted by My Supervisor to follow them. Accordingly,

²² http://www.un.org/en/ethics/pdf/putting_ethics_to_work_en.pdf

²³ <https://training.dss.un.org/course>

I have registered and followed the two online courses Basic Safety in the Field / BSITF II and Advanced Safety in the Field / ASITF.

Basic Security in the Field II (BSITF II) contains vital security information for personnel, family members and others covered by the UN Security Management System (UNSMS). BSITF is mandatory for all individuals covered by the UN Security Management System, regardless of grade or function. These are to help UN Staff learn specifically about security risk assessment and management for their safety and the safety of each of their families, colleagues, premises and assets of the UN organizations, throughout the countries, UN offices or designated areas of field operations. The ASITF course is the second in a series that helped me learn how to avoid or minimize dangers and risks. It builds on the concepts I have learned in Basic Security in the Field - Staff Safety, Health, and Welfare.

The goal of SRM is to identify threats that could inhibit programme success and to implement measures that could analyse and lower risks to an acceptable level. It draws all the information for the UN staff members to identify the UN security structure, designated official, the security management teams, area security coordinators and warden nationals as in duties and responsibilities and more.

I learned from these courses and according to their given description that every UN staff member, including interns who are opt to operate within the UN framework and facilities, have the responsibility, in concept and in practice, to follow and learn these courses. They are strongly encouraged to undergo these two online courses to acquire the knowledge of the UN SRM and to act in responsible manners that might save their and their colleagues' lives. Some examples of initial topics are: Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS) (Fig. 21)) which has its *special operating measures* as it can be read in the screenshot photo, that I took as a sample, during the course of my study.

Sample of a module: MOSS Page of the ASITF course

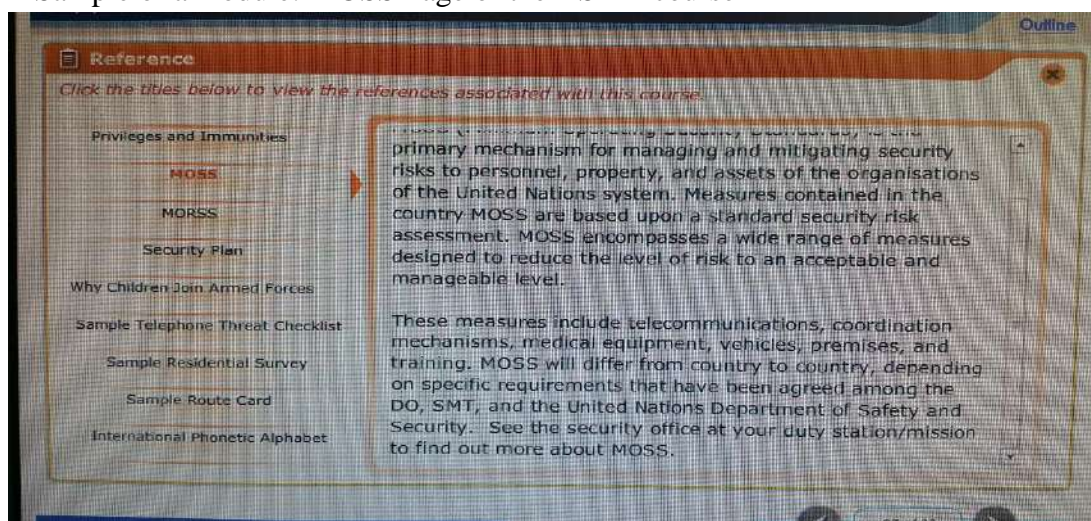


Figure 21

I took each of the two online courses with its own learning modules (Fig.21), read them carefully and learned their details, in terminology and abbreviations as well. When I moved forward with the learning and the modules process were complete, I undertook correspondent tests, by choosing the right answers. Some of the tests suggested case studies and provided life-threatening examples and posed challenging solutions to how to behave in the best possible safety measures to minimize the probability of any threats and risks. The correct answers were calculated instantly

and my grade results were shown on the webpage as successful. I was able to collect 9/10 and 10/10 for most of the tests. I had a success in both courses and received two online certificates on January 2 and the other on January 24, 2017 respectively for each course. The two certificates were named after the UNDSS online courses BSITF II and ASITF (see Appendices B and C for copies of the certificates). I received them online via my registered account “d.harkian@unesco.org” email. I printed them out in colored hard copy at the IT office on the first floor. Then I sent My Supervisor and Elise forward the certificates to notify them with the completion of the courses and to include them to my file at UNESCO. These certificates are valid for three years, after which I will need to re-take the courses again in case I want to renew their validation.

1.3 Modes of Implementation vs. Working Modalities

This part introduces what I have learned about and through the SHS thematic activities, and how I have learned them.

First things first, let’s state that the terms used like, modes of implementation and working modalities, do not mean the same thing, even when they might sound so similar. They both are implementations though, either on the regional or national levels, regarding the UBO and this report.

The modes of implementation are strategies of approach, like initiation, studies, support, involvement, and many more of practical intervention. They produce and result in points of action plan. Obviously, the approach and results might vary from a thematic project to another, even with the same theme and goals. Like the NET MED Youth and the MOST projects. We will demonstrate this example later in the next part.

Yet here, networking, exchange of knowledge, and collaboration remain the basic strategies to start with in all. On the next phase of modes of implementation, usually, solutions and partnerships are adopted to overcome the challenges that lie against implementing the programme activities as parts of those points of action plan. Nevertheless, for example, empowering and educating youth in the Arab region “to be full participants in building their communities and to be agents of positive transformations”²⁴ are also basic compounds. And according to UNESCO’s SHS programme, either globally, regionally, or nationally, this notion of youth empowerment is considered essential for the countries perceived as growing and developing, while considering also those which are facing contemporary regional threats and challenges. Hence, the strategies of UNESCO moderated as the modes of implementation, for example support and advocate policy based research and dialogue which in its turn, promotes social cohesion, inclusion, engagement, empowerment and participation, specifically of young men and women. And this is implemented and advocated in partnership with many national and international stakeholders via thematic projects, actions and activities, which are translated by the daily working activities or modalities of work.

On the other hand, the working modalities of the Social and Human Sciences programme (SHS) at UBO, as I have experienced, are the strategies of actions implemented by the team and staff of UBO. They mainly evolve around exchanges of knowledge on major contemporary social transformations, via regional research networks, expert groups, meetings, conferences,

²⁴ NET MED Youth brochure

workshops, publications and discussion forums. This strategy of action also measures and assesses the impact of research on policy, conducts policy-relevant case studies, provides expertise in development initiatives to promote research, and shares information and advice on how to design research-anchored policy.

These strategies of action are advanced by thematic activities of projects and sometimes referred to as programmes implemented by the SHS regular working modalities and modes of implementation at the UBO.

1.3.1 Operation Methods and Communication

The Operation Modalities Performed within the global SHS Programme are some sequenced modalities similar to all performed through various UN agencies and they are referred to as modes of implementation and working modalities in the UN practical language, along with the UN shared principles, values and policies.

When I first started reading these terms in the documents on hand, I thought they hold the same meaning. Then after real involvement in work, and some critical analysis to my experience, I found out that although they are closely related, yet very much different. No staff member has a spare time to explain any inquiries or questions I had to understand UN terms and their significance. How that was then manifested to me? The next part is about what I have learned about these terms, which they are also global UN operation modalities, and the way they are practiced within the UN framework in general, but particularly understanding the UBO's SHS programme working operations will come later in the proceeding chapters through my work and tasks performed.

The method of communication that My Supervisor used in order to circulate, contact and notify co-workers about assignments, tasks and any updates, was by means of email. She sent me assignments with some instructions to what is needed to be done. The emails most often held attachments of documents with relevant information to use in order to complete the tasks that I must complete. Other times they just held a list of names and specific topics in order to research biographies and compile the data collected. Many times she sent emails in the morning to ask me to join a meeting for taking notes and help in registering the names of participants with their contact details for reference on a list of paper. Sometimes she allocated assignments between Carol and me, including us all in the "cc:..." part. Mona as well would be included if the assignment would be concerned with the NET-MED Youth project and this way everyone would have details of what is going on with every activity related tasks.

On the other hand, we all reply to her and include them all via cc:..., in order that everyone will have accessibility to the updated information in their email list and the tasks which were completed. Most often we would send and receive tens of emails for the same assignment that we have to number the documents after each time they are updated, and renamed as V2, V3, etc. and V stands for version. The first draft would be named as V1, while the finalized document would be named as Final Version of.... Yet many times I have received assignments as ad hoc tasks during a meeting or a workshop. And at many instances she used the phone to follow up on tasks and other times to ask us meet her at her office.

1.3.2 SHS Modes of Implementation

Most of the UN organizational work is the administrative kind that deals with written documentations and correspondence. To this respect, most of the Social and Human Science sector modes of implementation of thematic activities start with formulating documents. What are these modes of UN administrative documents?

The following sections analyze and compare and enhance the learning of these UN documentation modalities.

1.3.2.1 Concept Note, Report and Action Plan

- **Concept Note:**

The first of a kind international document I sat my eyes on, was of several pages with a title of Concept Note (CN). While working on these documents, I have analyzed and compared documents to each other to be able to understand what I am working on exactly. After few days of struggle with several kinds of UN and SHS formal documents, with no specific guiding explanations, I have learned the difference between the CN, reports and Action Plans, both in their format, context and content.

Hence, I learned that the Concept Note is a method of documenting the concept and notion as the motto and reason for certain thematic activities, like meetings or workshops, scheduled on the working agenda of the Programme action plans. The CN is an official document composed of several parts and the abbreviated mode CN is used to refer to it in the daily correspondences.

The front page heading will always have the logos of UNESCO and all the partners involved in that particular meeting or workshop which is the CN prepared for. It holds the title of the project and the date that the meeting is scheduled on, then it says Concept Note in the middle.

Its several sections, start with the Context and background, the CN states the principles, the issues addressed, the reason for the conference, and the thematic concept for the initiation, the situation, the purpose of the meeting, the expected participants, the proposed implementing strategy, in table lists the Role of partners and the plan of action and timeline, TOR of the steering committee, list of names of the members and their country and finally the budget list which shows the details of allocation of costs between UNESCO and its partners. The CN is considered the information circular to all partners and participants during a period before the meeting occurs and insures clear understanding and relevant details to the specific activity. It allows also participants to send their review and provide suggestions of changes if any.

- **Report:**

On the other hand, I worked on preparing reports and I drafted some parts of them. I learned that they are documents which are written after the conference or meeting has taken place. A report states the details of that meeting and its outcome. The front page has the logos of UNESCO on the upright with the name of the project, and logos of the partners in this particular project. The meeting's title, place and date, and the word "Report" in the middle. Second page will have a table of contents. An example of the content of a report is stated as follows:

- i) Background that states the global and regional issues to which this meeting is addressed, the programme themes and overall relation to other issues and thematic solutions.
- ii) Meeting with... this part demonstrates the details of the meeting with whom, the participants, organization of UNESCO and the aim of it.
- iii) Summary of Discussions documents, by sessions if it was a long meeting, speakers and a summary of main points discussed and /or stated by each speaker. Next is the key points over all the meeting and the Follow up and next steps agreed on during the meeting.

- iv) Appendices are included to the end of the report as the documents prepared and used during and for the meeting, as in 1. Agenda of the meeting, 2. List of participants which holds the names, title, city and contact details in its columns. 3. About the International Initiation of the programme, 4- The points of action (agreed upon), 5- Banner roll up used during the meeting, 6- photo gallery of the meeting.

1.3.2.2 Mobilizing Partnerships

In September 2013, UNESCO issued a Comprehensive Partnership Strategy to ensure a professional and sound approach to working with partners and donors. UNESCO notably outreaches to strengthen the partnership approach with governments, private sector, NGO's, international, national and regional organizations, and sister UN agencies. UNESCO has a long history of successful partnerships which has proven to be very effective and meaningful for the implementation of the activities especially with the increasing work load resulting from the Syrian crisis. A hundred and four names of different partners and donors, who have collaborated with the office during the 2014-2015 period, are listed in the Biennial Report of UNESCO Office of Beirut.²⁵

Under this topic, many examples can be provided of how UBO SHS programme and the thematic activities identify a common agenda and network interface embodied by mobilizing partnerships. This term is used in the UN language and administration to indicate the partnership interface between UNESCO and outsourced partners as modes of implementation to its international and regional thematic projects and programmes, within the organizational goals in general.

Here are examples of few thematic activities that are part of UNESCO's modes of implementation through mobilizing partnerships. I have contributed to them with my duties and assignments, nevertheless, there will be other examples though later in the proceeding sections.

1. In partnership with the Arab Council for Social Sciences (ACSS), a consultation meeting on **“Social Sciences as a Career”** with the aim of encouraging high school students in the Arab region to choose university specializations in Social Sciences took place on 17 October, 2016. This meeting was attended also by principals and social sciences teachers and representatives of the parents' committees in eight high schools in Beirut. The mobilized partners as in parties of interest in this activity with UNESCO were the Lebanese National Commission for UNESCO (NATCOM), Arab Council of Social Sciences (ACSS), and National Schools associated with UNESCO. Key remarks were made by each participant. To summarize, a needs assessment was introduced to be conducted by ACSS, between high school students and their parents to promote the social sciences as a career choice. The participants exchanged their knowledge and fields of possibilities to Social Sciences as a career, others expressed the challenge in finding jobs with such specializations. The meeting shared ideas on finding innovative ways to engage youth into social sciences.
2. Two sets of Workshops with the title **“Art and Cultural heritage Social Ventures Idea Generation Workshop”**. I have learned later to refer to it as SV (Social Ventures) in our office correspondence. UNESCO Office in Beirut has organized this 5 days and two sets of workshop²⁶ on **“Syrian Shapers- Innovative approach for social cohesion through culture, creativity and social venture”**. UNESCO provided through the NET MED Youth project and its partners, the

²⁵ UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States, Biennial Activity Report, 2014/2015
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002448/244807e.pdf>

²⁶ Initially this project had three sets of workshops, the first was held before I have started working at UBO.

knowledge in youth skills development and in entrepreneurship education. Forty five Lebanese and Syrian youth involved in artistic and cultural fields were introduced on the key concepts and approaches on entrepreneurship and brainstormed on creating revenue-generating social ventures. This was to be based on artistic creations or profit generating business that promotes cultural heritage. Following this first training, a second workshop of three days was held on 3, 4 and 5 November 2016 where the participants divided in 10 mixed groups (Syrian and Lebanese) further participated in the 3 day workshop on Business plan. Two trainers gave interactive learning sessions to develop business plans. On the final day, the groups presented their proposal to a jury consisting of 4 NGOs (Afaq, YMCA, Zoomal and Beyond R&D), leaders in promoting and supporting social entrepreneurship training and community development. 2 best proposals won the grants and they were selected based on a set criteria which are: a. cultural and heritage; b: social innovation and c: business modality.

3. UNESCO initiated the Ethics Education Programme in 2004. The **Ethics Teachers' Training Courses**²⁷ (ETTC) are one of the main components of UNESCO's bioethics professional capacity-building programme, targeting bioethics or ethics of science educators. The Courses are based on a few-day training sessions developed by UNESCO in collaboration with global experts in ethics and bioethics education.

The regional Ethics Teachers Training Course (ETTC) was organized and held at UBO from 30 November till 03 December 2016. The ETTC is designed as a master class for confirmed and future teachers to enhance their teaching abilities within the field of ethics and bioethics. The participants came from abroad to Beirut for this workshop. They were all of medical biotechnology and bioethics teaching specializations. They came from Morocco, Algeria, Tunis, Paris and Syria. The facilitators were three professors of Universities. One from Medical University of Sorbonne Paris, a Madame from Senegal chief of Immunology Unit institute, and a professor of Social sciences in University of Namibia. This course was conducted mostly in French language for the convenience of most of north-African participants.

4. Lebanese **MOST School** on "SDGs as Framework for Sustainable Development in Lebanon. It aims for enhanced policy and research linkage to address emerging social transformation issues. MOST schools are capacity-building activities and part of UNESCO's Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme.²⁸ MOST is an intergovernmental science programme on the management of social transformations.²⁹ They are focused on strengthening the competencies for evidence-informed decision-making in Member States.

They aim to help develop the capacity of researchers and decision-makers to translate knowledge into action. Their primary goal is to support long-term sustainable development in contexts where capacity gaps may be a major constraint to translating research into action.

Hence, MOST Schools contribute to enlarge the pool of qualified young professionals from different backgrounds (academia, government and civil society). In other words, this is another means by which MOST helps to strengthen the research-policy interface in the context of the challenges of implementation of the 2030 international development agenda.

UBO has mobilized partnerships with educational and research institutions like the ACSS (July 2016) as well into this thematic programme activity in the Arab countries and worldwide like in

²⁷ http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/SHS/pdf/ETTC_Description.pdf

²⁸ <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/most-programme/>

²⁹ <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0025/002501/250120E.pdf>

Moscow 2015, and Havana 2016. The themes in short are about UNESCO's Living Together thematic focus of the region, Partnerships between universities and UN agencies and Social Transformation by promoting diversity and multi-disciplinary of participants.

1.3.3 SHS Working Modalities

This part helps to draw a sample of some working modalities inside the UN administration in general, but also exchange of ideas and modes of implementation and partnership tools as well.

1.3.3.1 Workshops, Seminars, Consortiums and Meetings

My assignments in the SHS working modalities, as in workshops, seminars, consortiums and meetings, were indeed very exciting to me. They were not only real opportunities to get involved in the activities of the SHS programme and learn about many aspects of the SHS working activities, but also get to know many other UN agencies' staff members, trainers, partners of UNESCO and regular participants.

In meetings, after everyone get themselves introduced, my job was to take notes/minutes of the meeting discussions. It may sound similar to taking notes at my class in the university. Yet, these assignments at UBO were quite more serious, because I am entrusted with the responsibility to write down sensitive and critical, not to mention confidential various discussions that are brought out concerning the topic on hand, during these meetings. I knew I should be very meticulous to the terms and information used to make sound judgment of how to put them down in words that sustain the right meaning of what is being said. I will discuss this difficulty that I have faced later in the relevant upcoming parts with given examples.

The usual schedule of such meetings and workshops start at 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. depending on the distance that the participants will be covering to reach the UBO, then the time schedule is set to have with a coffee break at 11:20 a.m. for 15 minutes, then a lunch break at 1:00 p.m. for 30 minutes, then presume the workshop/meeting and finish around 4:00 p.m. Although it is the IT department's duty, but in many incidents when they are overwhelmed with other duties, I have provided my help in the logistics of setting the conference room, orientation room, meeting room, and the outsourced BDD auditorium for that matter. One of the examples of the logistics needed would be the UNESCO hard cover folders for the convenience of the users/participants, whenever there was a workshop, seminar, consortium or meeting at UBO related to SHS programme thematic activities. These folders come in the colors of light grey and blue. The design of the cover holds the logo of UBO and the slogan of UNESCO in Arabic and English languages. The folders should be placed early in the morning on the table in front of each seat and by the number of participants before the consequent meeting starts. This required to have the list of names of the participants ahead of time, confirmed to presence and all contact details updated. Each folder contains a small notebook that has a blue hard cover, designed by logos and promotes the NET MED Youth project, while on the inside the full contact address of UBO is printed on the bottom of each blank page. The folder usually contains also some handouts related to the topic of the meeting in concern. Finally, a dark blue pen designed by the UNESCO logo and slogan is also provided for the use of the holder of the folder.

Alongside each folder, each participant received also a badge sealed by a transparent plastic cover and a tong that holds it to a dark blue cord. The cord allows the holder to hang it around their neck for that day as an identification means for their presence at UBO. It is not mandatory to submit it back when the holder leaves UBO. These badges are prepared days earlier from the

meeting date by the IT personnel. The badges hold the logos of UNESCO and its partners in this workshop, the title and dates of the workshop, and the name of per se the participant.

My duties continue with the arrival of the participants. I would be sitting in a reception area and placed several copies of attendance sheets which contain the list of the names of the expected participants in the workshop or seminar. When a participant arrives I asked them kindly to fill in the list on the row corresponding to their names. The columns include, name, gender, nationality, City, profession/Experience, Tel/Mobile, Email. In other cases like meetings with pother partners, the list would be name, agency/organization, tel/mobile, email, and signature. This procedure has helped me easily update and correct any information and name spelling of many names on the list, while the person in concern is present with me. This attendance sheet is also significant to keep reference in the filing of this workshop or meeting documents and helped us detect those who could not participate as expected and keep pace with those names who have attended.

1.4 UN Internship Role, Purpose and Responsibilities

The role I was assigned to perform and the scope of my duties as an intern was in concept to submit the service of administrative assistance as may be required to the work of my supervisor of internship, the Programme Specialist of the Social and Human Sciences Programme of UNESCO at the office of Beirut.

Although I was not provided with an orientation, but my supervisor introduced me to some colleagues on the way to appointing me at my working office. Neither was I given any specific manual or instructions as a description for my job, administrative guidance or any work rules of the office. The only document I set eyes on with regard to this point, was the contract which I have signed for my internship period. It had a section which specified the duties and TOR in short points of description, but I couldn't have enough time to read them in full at the time.

1.4.1 Terms of Reference for Interns

To this regard, the contract of agreement that I signed for my internship at UNESCO Office of Beirut had a section which had the title "Terms of Reference" (See Appendix A for TOR). It has small part of some details of the duty station as Arab States, bureau of Beirut, Supervisor's name, and starting/end dates of the internship. Then comes a part for "Assignment" which said the following:

"Under the overall authority of the director and the direct supervision of the programme specialist (SHS), the incumbent shall assist in organization of activities in the area of bioethics, intercultural dialogue, social inclusion, policy research and youth empowerment regionally and nationally and perform specifically the following tasks:

- To translate working document related to activities,
- To provide basic research,
- To take part in relevant meetings as a note taker,
- To assist in the smooth organization of meetings and workshops."

So far and according to this contract, the above points are the tasks I was expected to perform as an intern.

However, the TOR in this contract resemble general duties of administrative assistance given for any intern, with no regards to the specification of the job required by each intern. While in

practice, my duties and tasks were much more diverse, intense and not limited at all to these sole TOR points written down in the contract.

The AIUNIP document does not specify the TOR or the tasks and duties of interns. Maybe this is due to each position has its own needs and particularities of duties and tasks. Yet I found, after researching this topic, that it is stated on the UN job portal website that the intern in the general administration services will be responsible for carrying out assistance duties specified by the supervisors within each UN organization.

For the purpose of documenting my UN work experience in this report, and in comparison of the contact's TOR four points as in concept, with respect to my duties and tasks in practice, performed within the SHS Programme thematic activities, I have put them into the following points of description as Terms of Reference practiced during my internship.

- Translate from and to English and Arabic and review other translations of, working documents covering a broad range of subjects and related activities by the Social and human Science programme at the UBO;
- Conduct the necessary research using all available information sources; compare evidence, analyze results and compile the data as may be required;
- Maintain a reference filing system on various subjects, programmes/projects, evaluation reports, documents and correspondence. Keep relevant data and files on activities and general information.
- Produce reliable and acceptable draft translations that accurately reflect the substance of the original language text along with accurate and faithful summary records of meetings;
- Attend meetings and workshops as part of a team, take note either directly from statements delivered and subsequently use the notes to produce draft summary records, subject to revision;
- Preparing and editing many kinds of lists with meticulous details and references collected;
- Editing, merging, updating and translating information, documents, questionnaires and evaluation forms. One page of a 12 pages form of questionnaire as an example is added to the appendix (See Appendix D for one page example).
- Ensure all actions assigned by my supervisor are carried out within the deadline target established, alerting her to any potential delays and difficulties;
- Provide logistic and administrative support to conferences, workshops and meetings;
- Follow-up with invitees and participants of conferences for the confirmation of attendance and related assignments for post workshops;
- Place long-distance phone calls in coordination for the attendance confirmation of invitees, and updating their relevant contact details;
- Accompanied North-African participants of workshops from their hotel to UNESCO building conference room to ensure timely attendance;
- Take part and ensure that the ETTC North-African guests of UNESCO are well hosted at dinner;
- Assigned to work from home during the holidays of Christmas and New Year, in research of relevant data as data for activities by four institutions and during the past three years and compile the evidence collected in web page links, documents, summary of activities, dates and photographs. Summarize and translate the collected Arabic data into English.
- Perform other related duties as required.

Some of these tasks were just for a certain meeting performed once. Yet, it is important to mention that with regard to the other tasks, I have been assigned to submit them simultaneously and

frequently perceived as priority tasks to meet deadlines. The means that my Supervisor used to communicate and inform me with the assignments was by sending me frequent daily emails, and sometimes I was informed about some other tasks as in ad-hoc assignments, while we are at a meeting or a workshop together.

1.4.2 Management of Working Time

Since there is no HRM at UBO, no one is in charge specifically of monitoring staff members and hold them accountable for any possible unauthorized leave of work day or reward them for best practice if any. It would be a word of mouth to know who left, when and why. The leave is usually for a reason of duty outside the office. According to some staff members, the electronic card can dictate the daily in and out of office staff movements and can help tracking them for each and every month. And that Elise as admin officer is responsible of this task, might after the IT personnel hand her the data from the electronic software of the card device, in order to detect and include it in each staff's evaluation file. However, and by fact, the pressure of work deadlines does not give much opportunity for most staffs to misuse the freedom of leaving. Not to mention, most of them do not want to risk their job at the UBO in case someone is indeed monitoring their unauthorized movements. Although in many cases, leaves could be already authorized by senior officers.

On my first month, I used to reach the office at 8:00 a.m. But starting from the first of November, I have reached the Office at 7:00 a.m. and sometimes at 6:45 a.m. I had several reasons to do so. One reason is the pressure that started to escalate by the end of my first two weeks, to keep up with the deadline of the assignments given to me, which made me so eager to reach the office, finish the tasks on hand and submit them as soon as possible. I did feel the pressure that the UBO staffs are going through with deadlines and responsibilities. There were many days that I could forget to have lunch or even drink water. In one instance, I had to come to office late at noon, because I had to register at the Lebanese University, and on another day, I left work for two hours because I was a panel speaker at a press conference about my participation and advocacy in a "citizenship" campaign project for an NGO. For both incidents, I had notified my supervisor My Supervisor and had a clearance for the time and reason of being absent from work.

However, for most of my internship working days, I couldn't leave at 4:00 p.m. as end of the office hours. I have stayed working overtime to finish tasks on hand. My Supervisor never asked me to do so, except one time, to escort guests from Africa, which we will discuss as extraordinary task and out of office work, in another chapter.

For several weeks, I stayed at work till 7:30 p.m. being the last to leave the building and come back 7:00 a.m. in the morning being also the first staff to get in the building. I am not sure if My Supervisor knew about these overtime work hours of mine. Yet, this was truly rewarding for me, not in terms of any payment of course, because I was not paid anything. But a remuneration in terms of concentrating and progressing, when the office was silent and empty, as it paid off in work and meeting deadlines.

These were the days when I was the one who turned off the lights of my office floor and the lights of hallway B, for I was the last person to leave, and I was the one to turn them back on in the very early morning as I was the first staff to step back inside of the building. Considering that it has been the winter season and it gets dark early, I used to leave when it was evening dark and come back when it was dawn dark. However, this was hardly to be a reason of complaint for me, but

indeed a pleasure and a privilege to do so. I enjoyed every second of it. It provided me with a sense of peace, confidence, and complementary momentum of that fulfilling involvement. It was also a sense of tranquil with my sole presence in the UNESCO Office building and my self-integrity prevailing. It enriched my senses of belonging and inclusion indeed, into that international UN entity. This had me to immensely respect and treasure the trust that I was given in that privilege of responsibility with offices empty of workers and vulnerable to any intruding. I will never forget this particular sensual experience of duty that I have undertaken, of course in an indirect way.

Regarding counting the hours and days of my internship work at UNESCO, they amounted to 82 full-time working days, as from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. regardless of the fact that I have always been hours early to reach office and hours late to leave, due to pressure of the work and deadlines required to meet. Interns are not obliged to do so in any way. It was my own decision, appreciated or not, to commit and dedicate my time to meeting the expectations and responsibilities.

1.4.3 UN Reluctance of Pay and Employ Interns

Why the UN does not pay its interns? This is a frequently asked question. Section 7.1 of the Administration Instructions for the UN Internship programme, states clearly that “Interns are not financially remunerated by the United Nations.” and Section 7.2 states that: “The United Nations accepts no responsibility for the medical insurance of the intern or costs of injury...during the internship...” But what makes the UN reluctant to pay its interns?

An attempt of a young UN intern from New Zealand into drawing attention to this issue, marked and stirred up public outrage as well as sympathy. It provoked a protest which did not make the UN look good back in 14 of August 2015. He set up camp on the banks of Lake Geneva because he claimed he could not afford the Swiss city’s expensive rents while working without pay. A cluster of “interns’ rights” groups penned an open letter to the UN’s secretary-general, Ban Ki-moon, pointing out that the practice of not paying interns sits awkwardly with Article 23 of the organization’s own Universal Declaration of Human Rights which says: “Everyone who works has the right to just and favorable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity”. So why the UN does not pay its interns?

The UN says that it would like to pay interns, but claims its hands are tied by a resolution passed in 1997 that forbids the payment of non-staff. Yet unpaid internships existed for decades before. The resolution in fact simply acknowledged an old, ad hoc practice. UN departments, unable to expand budgets and recruit staff, increasingly turn to an army of young graduates willing to work for free, for two to six months at a stretch. Though interns may protest, they clearly see value in the connections, experience and sense of purpose that UN internships provide, not to mention having its brand on their CVs. If it wanted to pay its interns, the UN would struggle to find the money to do so, but the fact that the US owed \$1.3 billion in unpaid dues during 2010 hardly helps. Internal resistance from clerical UN staff and their unions is another problem. They fear that paid internships may become a back door for recruitment and increase competition, considering a biennial budget in 2015 included a 2 percent staffing cut, and a one year freeze in staff compensation. Others worry that a system of paid internships would be susceptible to nepotism: interns go through a much less rigorous—and less transparent—hiring process than that for official staff, which is governed by the UN Charter.

Those at the UN who push for change can take solace in the knowledge that the International Labor Organization (ILO), a related body, began paying its interns a decade ago, after one of them was discovered living in the office basement. Others looking for paid work could note that there are plenty of International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) out there that offer interns a decent wage.

Another question frequently asked is “What are the chances of employment at the United Nations after the internship?” JIU note section II/A/10 states that: “An internship is to be understood as a milestone within the academic path of an intern, not as a synonym for actual employment or as a shortcut to it.” (See Appendix E for the document). Accordingly, the Internship Programme is not related to employment in the United Nations and there should be no expectation of employment within the UN after an internship. Interns shall not be eligible to apply for, or be appointed to, positions at the professional level and above carrying international recruitment status in the Secretariat for a period of six months following the end of their internship.³⁰

The entry-level professional posts reserved for external recruitment are filled through national competitive examinations only.

This issue also is wide open for discussion and reforming possibilities of the rules related, because it is seen unfair to interns to not be allowed to benefit the opportunity of starting their career, where they have brought their unpaid service to and developed their knowledge and competence for.

Whether these setbacks in the UN internship programme are because of certain budget constraint, political pressure, geographical quota imbalance, staff concerns, or missing out on the best young talents for the UN administration, these issues remain very important to discuss and raise attention to. With an organization that thrives to provide the humanitarian value and principles up in its work and mandate, internal injustice of its working rules and obligations should be firstly resolved, before reaching out to resolve injustice in the external world.

³⁰ <http://www.unescap.org/jobs/internships-faq>

B2- Identifying Best Practices and Lessons Learned

To be able to identify the best practices and the lessons learned during my internship, it is necessary to present examples of the various kinds of assignments that I have performed within the UBO works of the SHS programme thematic activities. The development of my skills, the shared potentials and the new opportunities and relevance to my studies, also will be demonstrated and explained.

The following examples will illustrate many, but not all, of my assignments, chores, duties and tasks performed through my internship period.

2.1 Best Practice of Assignments Performed

The examples provided in this section will allow some clear understanding of best practices of assignments and responsibilities I have performed at UNESCO, also draw the impact of my work and comments I received on my performance. They cannot exclusively manifest all of my versatile duties and tasks though, which I have performed within the various SHS thematic activities. This is due to each work assignment had its particular difficulties and requirements on its own. Yet, not to prolong this report with all the details, I chose some important examples that would embody the whole experience somehow.

2.1.1 Social Ventures Workshop Assignments

The Social Venture workshop ³¹ on 6 and 7 October 2016, I was on duty set and ready for my first day workshop assignments. I prepared my notebook to take the minutes and wondered if there should be any specific instructions needed or a certain form in order to write down those minutes. Thought about certain key points that I should be attentive to capture on paper. Since I was new at this experience, I was confused to what to expect and in terms of what should I be ready for to support with. I checked the table settings and after a while, Carol brought five identical sheets of blank attendance lists and she explained to me that participants should register their names and complete the list with their contact details, and then receive their badges and have a seat with the workshop folders ready to use on the desk. So once the participants arrived, I started my tasks by orienting them and ask them kindly to fill in the sheets by their details and signature, at the reception area of the conference room. Then invited them to have a seat in preparation for the workshop. The notes I took in Arabic rounded to full 19 pages during the two days of this second set of SV workshop³².

For the final day, the agenda was set to host the SV workshop outsourced in Beirut Digital District (BDD). On this day, participants were expected to submit social venture plans to a jury panel headed by UNESCO, as two selected plans, later that day, succeeded to benefit from an initial grant for a start-up, and a continuous 4 to 6 months mentoring. Considering this final day workshop in BDD was a Saturday, and it was an exception for the regular working days of UNESCO. My Supervisor asked me if I would mind to join for a full day work to assist her in this outsourcing activity, because other UNESCO staff do not work on Saturdays. Kindly, I have expressed my pleasure to be at duty with no problems at all.

I would assert the fact that the administrative support and conference services that I have provided for this SV workshop all in all, were of a unique opportunity for me to experience some out of

³¹ http://www.unesco.org/new/en/beirut/single-view/news/fifty_lebanese_and_syrian_youth_meet_at_unesco_office_in_bei/

³² Refer to the Social Ventures workshop details on page 51 of this report.

office duty and to put my competences at work. Nevertheless, I have put a lot of learning effort from these trainings as well, and collected information for any future prospects. It was interesting to benefit in both ways, do the task and enhance my skill in it, while listening to the training and compiling entrepreneurship learning information at the same time. Regarding my duties and tasks that I have performed through this workshop, they are as follows:

- Placing calls to the participants in order to confirm their presence earlier in preparation for their transportation payments which are due by UNESCO for the participants, on each day they are present at UBO for the workshop.
- Solving the issues aroused in the attempt to help the participants fulfill the conditions mandatory to participate in the workshop, by teaming up in three, as groups to propose a social business project.
- Providing orientation for the participants and helping them with their various inquiries.
- Completing the attendance sheets and handing the participants their badges and make sure they take a seat.
- Following up to update their names, gender, nationality, profession, city, mobile number, email and signature on a special contact list,
- Logistical and technical support whenever needed at UBO and at BDD I handled it all by myself. I setup the tables in a big U shape, with the name tags, folders and badges on the table. Checked the technical support for the microphone, the screen projector for the presentations, the sound and the lights. I set up also the UNESCO banners for this workshop in the background, three paper boards with several markers to be used by the participants, and got ready to make sure every participant will register in the attendance sheet as usual.
- Providing the payments of transportation for each participant sealed in envelopes with their names, all of which they signed and received before they left.
- Taking photographs of the workshop while the teams are completing their assignments.
- Motivating and providing positive interaction with the participants for their ideas and preparation details of their projects.
- Escorting the participants to coffee breaks and lunch breaks.
- Solving a private room/venue issues with the BDD manager for the jury and presentation agenda fulfillment.
- Providing precise and easy direction to the Driver of the lunch catering to reach the BDD after he couldn't find the place with the initial directions he was provided with from his company.
- Organizing the distribution of the catering lunch boxes to the participants.
- Taking notes in Arabic during all the days of the workshop.
- Completing administrative paper process. Preparing the Name Tags for the table and the badges on word document and editing them.
- Calculating the total points/results of the six jury panel evaluation sheets for the participants' proposals.
- Ranking the 10 team's presentation results, and preparing the total information lists relevant to this workshop.
- Translating the Arabic notes to English on the following days after the workshop ended.
- Formulating the minutes, the list of participants, relevant documents and information into a draft document in preparation to be set as the report of the workshop.

During the Social Venture Workshop at BDD on 5 November 2016



Collective Figures 22

The comments and feedback I received on my performance of Social Venture workshop assignments were very positive from the jury members, the trainer, My Supervisor and the participants. They all left, on the final day, satisfied with my management skills that they have subsequently enjoyed, even those who did not win the grant as well. My Supervisor expressed her huge relief by the end of this day. She placed many smiles on her face and for the first time I saw her laughing. I reckoned how stressful her job would be. I was very pleased myself as well, because everything went very well.

My Supervisor expressed her worries of how this day will turn out to be, yet, she said that she was very pleased with my prompt support. She acknowledged only for this time my competence in resource mobilization, in how I provided and managed the issues aroused on that day especially that we are outsourcing services. This was the only time during my whole internship period that she explicitly thanked me for my assistance. This positive impact of my work lifted my self-esteem and gave me the satisfaction, even after the hard work, and proved that I have the necessary competencies for the UNESCO work modalities given the proper chances of the alike working activities.

2.1.2 Ethics Teacher Training Course Workshop Assignments

For three days of the Ethics Teacher Training Course³³ ETTC workshop, the participants came from abroad. All expenses of travel, accommodation, food and workshop courses were covered by UNESCO and through the UNESCO Office of Beirut. The ETTC for bioethics curriculum was held in the Auditorium on the ground floor (fig.23 & fig.24). During this workshop, I had many unusual chores to perform as an intern. On the first day of the workshop, participants were late to arrive from their hotel. Therefore, My Supervisor asked me to go next morning to their nearby hotel and make sure they all ascend on the bus with no delay, to help them reach UBO on time

³³ http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/SHS/pdf/ETTC_Description.pdf

for their workshop. This was perceived by my colleagues as an unusual request for an intern to handle as an out-of-office duty.

First day of ETTC Workshop



Figure 23

Second day of ETTC Workshop



Figure 24

In regard to this workshop my duties and tasks were as follows:

- For two consequent mornings at 8:00 a.m. the UBO driver drove me to meet the participants at their hotel and left back. I greeted the three speakers and the twelve participants at the hotel reception and accompanied them to the bus that was waiting with a driver, to drive us back to UBO for the workshop;
- I checked the list of attendance once in the bus, and another in the auditorium when we arrived;
- One of the participants had a hotel room issue, I coordinated with the hotel manager to solve it as soon as possible;
- Another participant had her ear infected and caused her discomfort, I called a doctor to have her checkup and prescribe her a medicine;
- On the final day, My Supervisor asked me to join the dinner that is provided by UBO for the participants as UNESCO's guests in Abd-ElWahab Ashrafieh Lebanese restaurant. Carol had done all the necessary arrangements earlier. Later she told me that it will be an assignment more or less, other than a social event;
- I reached the restaurant in the evening and made sure all the guests of the UBO are well seated and hosted at the restaurant (fig.25 & 26). My Supervisor arrived later and we joined the dinner. She gave me several instructions to handle the service details between the restaurant manager and the guests. By the end of the dinner, I requested the bill, received it and gave it to My Supervisor to sign to be paid later by the office accounting department. I kept a copy also for the office accounts and filing.
- I contacted the bus driver to come collect the guests. One of the guest speakers informed me looking surprised, that he saw My Supervisor get in a car and leave. Subsequently, I waited for the bus to approach and accompanied the guests out of the restaurant and in to their seats in the bus. Provided with the appropriate respect and client services, they all greeted me warm goodbye and expressed their deep appreciation for UNESCO's kind hospitality and for my support and assistance. Thereafter, I stepped down from the bus and they left to the hotel for their final night in Beirut.

ETTC Participants / guests of UNESCO



Figure 25

at the Lebanese restaurant



Figure 26

2.2 Career Skills and Knowledge Development

Between knowledge, skills and competences of assignments needed to be performed within this UN framework, I have used some and developed some other, of relevant skills of mine, exchanged knowledge and enhanced my competencies to the level of international spectrum. The following examples and sets of points will illustrate my learning experiences.

2.2.1 UN Language Skills Developed

In translation assignments, I have translated various kinds of documents, like, Reports, Concept Notes, Correspondence, Biographies, long and complicated questionnaires, evaluation sheets, webpage texts and table lists, etc. I have developed a knowledge to the style of UN official language and correspondence. Although I am fluent in both English and Arabic languages, yet the UN administration official language uses a strong form of linguistics and special vocabulary (see Appendix F for the Vocabulary list) , that require to build experience in order to be acquainted with.

Taking notes of meetings and workshops



Figure 27

Setting-up the Logistics for conference & meetings



Figure 28

To give an example, the Arabic translation of the Report about the meeting on “*Coalition of Cities in Lebanon against Racism, Discrimination, Xenophobia and Intolerance*” was one complicated assignment. It was an exception in the fact that it was already done, but my job was to review and correct the Arabic wherever needed .The report was 14 pages long in English and the corresponding translation in Arabic was almost same matching pages. This was my first experience with translation duties of an international document. I could not finish the 14 pages review in one day, because I found the translation done to be very bad and need a large amount of corrections. Nevertheless, the vocabulary used in Arabic were not at their best to express the

precise meaning of the English text and I spotted many Arabic grammatical mistakes as well. This task took a lot of concentration and effort to correct. I preferred if I had done the translation myself from scratch better than correcting it word by word this way. Yet, it was an opportunity to practice and develop my knowledge of the UN language, both in Arabic and English, through the translation. However, the remaining tasks of translations which I was assigned to do, helped me learn and use other daily office correspondence later on.

Closing back on my first translation assignment the lessons learned were as follows:

- The language form of the UN administration system is not an easy one, nevertheless, translating it as well. Many terms and vocabulary used in the document, I was unfamiliar with, thus it was difficult to grasp their meaning. I had to research for their possible meanings and choose the nearest possible word that would reflect the precise meaning of the text.
- The structure and order of the parts which construct a “Report” form. (Refer to page Of this report or Part A-1.3.2.1 for details;
- Being aware of the serious responsibility and the privilege of being entrusted with certain sensitive details and a document of an international work value, as referring to UNESCO and the SHS programme, and also in terms of dependency on my Arabic language skills to set this document official and ready for public dissemination.
- The content of the report also was so interesting. It reported all information related to the SHS thematic activity meeting on the International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities (ICCAR). I learned that the meeting was with several Lebanese municipalities over several sessions and the points of discussions through ICCAR and UNESCO promoted cooperation between cities to strengthen advocacy of inclusive urban development free from all forms of discrimination, by sharing good practices, knowledge and expertise of other cities, and by advancing joint action in youth engagement, social cohesion, intercultural dialogue and the development of city-level policy making and initiatives. This seemed a very interesting topic to me. Yet, this meeting happened before I have entered the UBO. Working on this report made me regret not being present at it.

2.2.2 Working Skills and Competencies Developed

Four months is a long time to practice a variety of skills and develop competencies relevant to the job required. Here are the following working UN skills and competencies that I developed or acquired:

- Development of adequate listening and simultaneous and quick shorthand writing skills;
- Comprehend the UN terminology , abbreviations and their meanings ;
- Enhanced translation skills of UN terminology and sentence formation;
- Drafting skills of reports and concept notes; analyze their form, use and structure;
- Writing minutes of meetings and workshops and summarizing key points of the minutes(Fig. 27);
- Public speaking essentials and modalities;
- Research and compile data found into a filing system;
- Investigating and compiling evidence found in documents, photos and relevant published announcements;
- Prepare and formulate specific lists that contain all relevant details and references according to each activity;
- Working on various UN documents and their formalities;
- Summarizing and translating biographies ;

- Ability to work in a team and to maintain effective working relationships in a multicultural environment;
- Very good oral and written communication skills;
- Courtesy of coordination with foreign embassies and UN agencies;
- Correspondence with VIP invitees in order to confirm their presence;
- IT skills in specific software; faster typing and research techniques;
- Basic information and communication technology of the UN system;
- Conference services, preparing logistics and escorting participants (Fig.28);
- Preparing for meetings and workshops in terms of coordination and initiation to solve obstacles;
- Strong sensitivity and adaptability in cultural, gender, religion, race and nationality;
- Excellent organizational and interpersonal skills.

2.3 Opportunities of Practice

Whether at the organization level or on academic level, through the interface opportunities there have been several experiences in which I have gained more knowledge and learned about team work. I would consider all the above written parts and sections also opportunities of practice, yet, what did I gain and learn through many? That I would specify here with few other opportunities of practice in terms of the organizational and academic interface and then through identifying the difficulties, boundaries and solution approaches, to be tackled in this part.

2.3.1 Organizational and Academic Interface

UNESCO as an international organization, and like any other, fosters, cultivates and facilitates all possible opportunities of interface with academia and other institutions. On the other hand, I would consider my internship opportunity as an interface of UNESCO as a student representing academia as well. Accordingly, this whole report is to be considered with regard to this fact.

Likely, but on another level, the following example will demonstrate how UNESCO's mandate involves in mobilizing its partnerships in order to implement its organizational goals, through the regional programmes and their thematic activities. We are concerned with the SHS programme them of Living Together which is the relevant to my work experience in particular.

The MOST School consultation meeting at USJ on 14 Nov. 2016



Figure 29

The consultation meeting of MOST School programme (Fig.29) was held outsourced at the University Of Saint Joseph (USJ) in Beirut on 14 November 2016, and it was organized through

collaborative efforts among UNESCO, Natcom and USJ. The theme was "SDGs agenda as a framework for sustainable development in Lebanon".

UNESCO was represented by My Supervisor and Dr. Mona as the NET MED Youth project coordinator and very much involved in the MOST School implementations, and me as the meeting assistant by taking minutes of UNESCO. Several other representatives of UN ESCWA, ILO, educational institutions and local universities were present as well to discuss the possibilities of joining and supporting this thematic activity within the MOST School³⁴ programme initiated by UNESCO.

MOST School in Lebanon and the "*National MOST Committee*" aim to host multiple academic debates on SDGs in the region, which provide a foundation for a multi-stakeholder dialogue on SDGs in Lebanon and to propose a research agenda for SDGs in Lebanon. And finally initiate activities like academic group work, discussions and debate in consortium of universities and in high-quality discussion papers, while disseminating the "Culture of MOST".

The chair of this meeting and president of the "*National MOST Committee*" Dr. Fadia Kiwan, and under the topic "*Consortium of Universities*" for consultation, presented the MOST school to the participant representatives, as it aims to enhance research policy linkages on emerging policy issues in Lebanon and support national dialogue and ownership of the SDG process in Lebanon. She added that the group of participants will include 40-45 students including young professionals of key ministries, Master/ PhD students and young activists from civil society organizations (CSO) in Lebanon. A team of 10-15 trainers will include academics, policy makers, CSO activists and UN experts. Finally, she invited them each to speak as in consultation process for their engagement opportunities.

As a result of this meeting, initial interests were collected for a launching of a Consortium of Universities (USJ, LAU, NDU, Jinane), and the launching proposed on 7-9 March 2017, meanwhile raising awareness of youth on SDGs through the NET MED Youth Project.

Although my presence during this meeting was merely to practice my assignment of taking notes in order to formulate a draft report of this meeting later, yet, I have gained the opportunity to participate somehow in basing the MOST Schools in Lebanon. It also provided me with a clear view of what each of the academic institutions presented and perceived out of this programme for their future development. They exchanged knowledge and some of their good practice as reference to the MOST School model proposed, along with their expectations and the possibilities of each of them towards such partnership interfaces with the UN and supporting the SDGs in Lebanon. This opportunity gave me the enhanced hand of perception towards the educational administrations and curriculum development models and their possibilities.

Deepening my knowledge in such an inter-institutional environment was not only an opportunity of UN organization partnering interface, but also an academic advantage. It promoted a better understanding of international problems, and introduced me to the unique and multinational work environment of the UNESCO organization and UN in general. On the other hand, the UNDSS UN Safety and Security management courses I took online are regarded to be a great value added as an organizational interface with my internship experience and my learning opportunities.

2.3.2 Identifying Difficulties, Boundaries and Solution

Some examples of the working difficulties of the tasks I have passed through, and mostly did overcome them alone, are as follows:

³⁴ <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/most-programme/>

- Research and compile Arab names of researchers, scholars, social scientists, professors, head of educational departments, within the Arab countries who were recommended by UBO partners to participate in the SHS activities. My research was for information about their résumés and biography. It was an almost impossible chore to do. First because many Arab full names are so identical, second, their relative details are so similar, that I had to read and go through their very long resumes and sometimes speculate the most probable name. Other times, I could not choose one of them, so I included the similarities together, to let My Supervisor choose the one recommended. Third, between the English written name and Arabic name, with any one letter different, for example Hassan, could be (حسن / حسان) made it almost impossible to know which name is the one to be concerned, especially that they both exist as relevant scholars. For other names, many of them were not found anywhere on the internet; I had to dig deeper, time and effort lost for nothing.
- My Supervisor assigned me to place calls to confirm the presence of a long list of invitees, to the conference of “*Youth, Peace and Security in the Arab States Region: A Consultative and High-Level Dialogue*”, which was going to be held in Amman, Jordan on 4, 5 and 6 December 2016. Upon My Supervisor’s instructions, Carol provided me with the necessary list (4 pages) of the invitees with their name, organization, position, and contact email and telephone numbers. Some of them had the telephone numbers included, but others did not, so I had to research and find them. She also noted that the yellow highlighted names are the ones I should be calling and no need for the rest of names as they have already confirmed. The telephone calls had to be placed long distance to Ambassadors, representatives of high profile invitees, Consuls, Ministers, Regional Directors, International Coordinators, and the similar, residing in Amman. One would say:” How hard dialing some telephone numbers could be?” Well to draw the right picture of those challenges and difficulties which I have encountered in this process of dialing these calls, and during three full days (Nov. 30, Dec. 1 & 2), I would engage you in the following:
 - I have encountered technical issues, like buttons and the hearing amplifier of the telephone device I had on hand, were not functioning as they should. I had to switch the device three times with my intern colleagues, but still I faced very hard times with it. Not only my voice was not clearly heard by the other persons, but also I hardly could hear and understand what they were saying on the other side of the line. And every time I change the device, I had to figure out which buttons of this device are not working properly.
 - The weather conditions were very bad, stormy and raining so hard that even the heavy sound of the rain pounding on the windows around me was preventing me from hearing the persons on the other side of the line properly.
 - I had to dial each and every time I had to call or attempt a call, long digit codes of several numbers, then wait few seconds to get the confirmation line for each of the four separate codes and symbols, BEFORE finally dialing the designated telephone number. The codes were in order the following: UBO internal, UBO outreach, codes for internet, Jordan, Amman, and finally to the person’s telephone number, they were 18 characters in digits and symbols before the targeted number of the person is pressed. Pressing (1*234511 #872 00962 6 XXXXXXXX)³⁵ I had to press 25 digit characters each and every time I had to place a call. On the final hour of the third day and for the time constraints, My Supervisor provided me with her office personal short code of four characters to cut short the long process of dialing abroad.
 - Most of the calls I placed went unsuccessful, so I had to call again and again. The reasons varied: the non-functioning buttons missed a character or a digit, No sound and no ringing, computer says: not a working number, no answer for tens of times, call me back in few, please

³⁵ These numbers are for a random example and they do not represent the real code numbers.

wait and then the line is cut, can't understand a word, and the similar. For each and every one of these cases I had to follow-up, research, update, correct, coordinate, try to call again and again, and be at my desk at all times, alert for any call-backs.

- For three consequent days and full working day, never taking a break, almost screaming to make my voice heard by the person on the line with me, forgot to eat, drink and even look at the face of anyone in the room, to the extent that my intern colleagues were so kind to bring me water, coffee and some snacks, feeling sorry for what I am going through just to place these phone calls and obtain the needed attendance confirmation.

- The calls were only for abroad to Jordan, England, New York, etc. With consideration to the time difference and constraints, of closing days of embassies, consulates, institutions, that I had to search on the internet for all the relative information, update the phone numbers, and coordinate closely with Carol in a fast paced tasks to confirm sending the invitation letters again and again by email.

- Many high-level invitees could not be reached by their assistants, either because they had meetings, in travel, or took a long weekend off duty.

- Some invitees were very rude and I had to have the courtesy of diplomatic conversation, tone, voice, use of terms and words, patient, respectful and polite in my responses to them.

- For some names or numbers provided on the list were outdated. Some numbers were not answered at all times, other numbers were rejected for being wrong number or not a working number. So I had to research for these details in vigorous attempts to reach a working telephone number, simultaneously while placing the calls and waiting for answers.

- Some assistants were very rude and non-cooperative, some were very careless and had me explaining the whole conference purposes on a very difficult hearing device.

- While I was put on this duty, the *ETTC workshop* (30 November, 1 and 2 December 2016) was already going on simultaneously, at the ground floor orientation room. I had to perform those tasks of the ETTC workshop which I was assigned to do, whether to accompany them from hotel to UBO in the morning, or joining their evening dinner to ensure the proper service is provided³⁶ So once the calls for Amman reached to a dead end for the day, I ran up and down to be at duty for the ETTC and keep My Supervisor informed with my calling updates and obstacles.

- Communication difficulties with My Supervisor when she became upset of me for calling one of the names on the list that she said there was no need to call. To ease the situation, I kindly regretted the misunderstanding by showing her the highlight over the name of that person, as in terms of distinguishing those who I should call and those who I should not. Although I have only done what I was instructed to do, but surprisingly, she got even more upset when she saw the highlights and asked me about who did them. I replied that I have no idea, I was given this list as it is. This did not leverage or mitigate her anger as I was hoping for. She then told me to tell Carol to check and review the highlighted names and then I continue placing the calls.

On the other hand, I had specific difficulties in the cooperation of my supervisor. I realized that I could best present those difficulties and identify the boundaries through a consistency of questions I had to thrive with, during my daily work and all through the internship period. Here the following questions I had in mind, which can draw more or less a picture of those setbacks:

- During UBO several meetings, I have faced technical difficulties and asking myself: What are they talking about? ; What do they mean by this abbreviation?;
- How should I write this now to reflect the precise meaning of what I did not fully understand?
- How should I differentiate what is important and what is not relevant to note about?

³⁶ Refer to 2.1.1.2- Ethical Teacher Training Course, p.60

- In what form should it be best to be written and documented?
- Why doesn't she provide me with an example to learn from and formulate the same for the task?
- Should I approach and ask my supervisor about some issues, or is it not a good time now?
- When is the adequate time to talk to my supervisor since she is constantly busy and irritated, and maybe ask her for some help and get some answers?
- Could she be this time any friendlier than the previous times?
- Am I doing anything wrong? Why doesn't she tell me if I am?
- How come she never asks me if I need any help, or if I am having any kind of trouble?
- What does this blur assignment email mean? (I go refer to Carol and Mona for help).
- Why she is always annoyed and irritated whenever I visit her office for more instructions?
- Why does she assume that I can read her mind with her usual unfinished sentences and Japanese accent of English in our conversations?
- Why doesn't she take into consideration with her attitude towards me, that I am here to learn and be guided towards my knowledge development, and not merely qualified to perform her tasks in perfection?
- What makes it so urgent and important that she assigns me with several and long tasks to perform at home, during the period of Christmas holidays, and submit them all on our day back to office work, considering that she is having her vacation in Japan?

I am confident that any other intern will have similar questions and will seek the least explanation and guidance as needed, because logically questions do emerge by the daily work situations in such a new, comprehensive and sensitive environment.

It is not only that these situations that forced out the above mentioned questions, formed the daily consistent difficulties and obstacles I have faced, but also added to that, the fact that I have never obtained any clear answers to them, all throughout my internship period.

Utterly, it was a situation that I had to accept and cope with, and keep reminding myself that this is not permanent and it will end by the end of my internship.

2.4 Relevance of Practice to Theory

As the proper means for deepening my knowledge in International organizations framework, my working experiences constituted many solid relevancy to my studies and university learning approaches. Not only the tasks I performed at the UNESCO regional Office and the activities I was involved in, but also the lectures I attended at the university and my courses and textbooks I read, together made a strong linkage that supported my learning approach of this internship working experience. No doubt at all that the major of study specialization in the International Organizations at the Lebanese University was at core of relevance with regard to my work experiences at the UNESCO Beirut Office, both academically and experientially. How was this manifested? The answer is in the following two explanatory parts.

2.4.1 Academic Relevance

We have learned at University through our courses all the relevant information about the United Nations and its Organizations through theoretical approaches of multilateral organizations and to the study of humanitarian intervention international debate with regard to their true humanitarian value, purposes and results. We have studied the UN Charter in its Articles and amendments in details, also the history, mandate, values, principles, challenges and the emerged regional political, social, economic development challenges. All of which I have found to be crucial to my

understanding of the working modes and implementations at UBO. I was privileged to be somehow distinguished within many UBO staff members by the notion that I have learned and specialized my studies in the organization that although they belong to but maybe did not actually learn much about. I felt like belonging and the right to belong, in terms of my background studies that match in line with UNESCO as an international organization and mandate of the UN. Each time anyone asked me about my major, I was so proud to announce that my major and specialization is in International Organizations a pilot programme at the Lebanese University. Accordingly, every time the questioners expressed their admiration and commented with very positive notions of encouragement to the programme and to my specialization, noting also that I am the right person in the right place! It was indeed a true pleasure for me each time to talk about my studies at the Lebanese University and promoting this unique topic of major for the Professional Master's degree.

2.4.2 Experiential Relevance

In this context, and as part of the regional strategic action framework (2016-2017) for the *UN Regional Inter-Agency Technical Task Team on Young People (r-IATTTYP)* in the Arab states and MENA, a consultation meeting (fig.30) was held for two consequent full working days in the aim of presenting their challenges and opportunities, proposing areas of joint action and deciding for future cooperation and mandates in specific areas with each of the 12 UN agencies represented. I was present during the full of two days of the meeting taking notes and documenting the conversations. I had tremendous difficulty in coping with their language pace, terminology, abbreviations and names of projects and references, which I could never know what they stand for exactly. Moreover, the load of grasping such intensity of information in such a short time caused me such a heavy pressure in head. The Chairwoman of the meeting, who is a Regional Advisor of a leading UN agency as well, took lead of the conversations and the language she used was too UN formal and heavy, like she was reading a formal report for two full days. There were many presentations, discussions, consultations, proposals, initiatives, relating to UN internal problems and issues, diffusing difficulties, mobilizing and allocating funds, etc. and finally executive decisions of next steps and action plans to be raised as recommendation topics to a senior level at each UN agency, in the process of preparation for the general conference on the headquarters level for final approval and decision making.

Regional Inter-Agency Technical task Team Meeting



Figure 30

This was not out of the expected context of such meetings, regarding that I have learned all these in concept within my university courses. However, to be present in such process of decision making and building the UN platform for regional future joint action, was amazingly rewarding experience for me. Although my task was only to provide support in taking notes for the two days of this joint inter-agency meeting, but for me as an intern, I was the only non-UN staff member among all the twelve UN agencies' professional senior staff members. Not only, I have realized during my presence, that I was indeed very privileged to have the opportunity of joining in this meeting, but also it felt exactly like witnessing one of "backstage" preparation for an international UN Security council meeting decisions. Such an unusual and rewarding feeling. I could swear that the ambiance resembled the UN Security Council meetings, or at least I did feel that way. Not only in their content and sensitive topics discussed, but mainly also for the interaction between all the UN representatives present and the way they had their dialogue and exchanged ideas, knowledge and solutions of international and regional problems, programmes and working modalities and other UN internal issues. A thrilling thought crossed my mind for a moment that I don't need to go to the Security Council to experience its work, it all just have come here to me and at my convenience.

We have been lectured, studied and read a lot through our courses about this kind of meetings and their achievements in theory, but to be present and witness one in due real practice, was very much core of my contentment, also relevant in terms of constituting an embodiment of those theories and concepts that I have studied. Eventually, I asked myself for a moment, "Am I dreaming, or what? What am I doing in an engagement of this level? How did I get this far and privilege? Would I have one day the chance to reach further and actually become in the shoes of one of these participants?" I truly thanked God and appreciated the Lebanese University, for without either of each, I couldn't have reached this far.

This learning experience for me was the ultimate learning opportunity that I had throughout my internship period at UBO. Nevertheless, it was the most exciting and interesting one. How could it not be, when it was indeed the core of my university studies and specialization. I felt that I am in the right place, in the right time and with the right people, and that this is where I should fit in with my background and specialization. This particular knowledge development and UN working experience will always remain with me as special and unforgettable.

2.4.3 Relative Lessons Learned

Through much of opportunities I learned so many relative prospects and lessons as the following:

- Value the responsibility of the confidential aspect of my internship;
- Courtesy of diplomatic conversations and the use of language level during the meetings;
- Enhance my perception of international working modalities and the thematic actions;
- Determination to challenge my capabilities and try to initiate solutions to problems;
- Not all that shines is gold; some of UN staff I found to be very rude and discriminative. This deteriorated my motivation and morale , but I did not let it affect the productivity of my assignments;
- Take initiatives and provide help in team work spirit, and appreciate the modesty and kind cooperation of my colleagues as UN staff;

- Harvest invaluable professional and ethical values and principles in the UN work environment whenever it was manifested;
- Inspect and critically analyze for prospects of reform and enhancements ;

2.5 Realizing Shared Potentials and New Opportunities

Does UNESCO practice what it preaches? Inclusion, engagement, participation and empowerment, are the words used in every opportunity and on each level. It would be quite informative to measure these with some realities of interrelations perceived on common basis.

2.5.1 Evaluation of Opportunities

From my perspective as an intern, I would like to measure the DG Irina Bokova's saying through my own internship experience, and evaluate if these are mere thematic words and announcements or real opportunities, which UNESCO thrives to promote and implement. It is after all UNESCO's mandate: the inclusion, engagement, participation and empowerment for everyone. Should I suppose "everyone" would include interns at UNESCO as well? Indeed I do. Here is a prompt evaluation that measures to what extent my experience as an intern and non-UN staff at UNESCO enjoyed the following privileges of "Living Together" theme:

- Inclusion: to some extent yes. Because I was truly welcomed by the majority of the UBO staff and I had a very interesting friendly interpersonal experiences. Otherwise at work, I had the inclusive chance only by being present, but not the inclusive value to make it a chance for my voice to be heard, my expectations to be respected, or my difficulties to be diffused, towards a total cohesion (as preached by the SHS programme) for my presence.
- Engagement: to some extent yes. I had the chance to be engaged and participate socially and experientially. However, to some extent my engagement did not accede the limitations of my work and assignments.
- Participation: within my internship learning opportunity, I consider that I indeed had the opportunity to participate in many aspects of the UNESCO office work and social life as well.
- Empowerment: Except for the encouragement and support of my colleagues, professional empowerment was never on my plate to enjoy during my work experience at UBO.

However, to make a positive review, I would gladly mention that on my final day of internship, I had a brief friendly meeting at the office of the Regional Director of the UNESCO Beirut Office Dr. Hamad Al Hammami. He congratulated me for the excellent work duties which I have fulfilled at UBO. He explained that the vital services and the turnover of work environment that interns, like myself, provide to the organization, boost and enrich indeed the value of the work which UBO strives to provide in the region. Interns, he concluded, bring an added value to the UNESCO organization and to the Regional Office as well.

He expressed his appreciation for all my efforts and time that I have allocated and tailored to meet the organizational goals and hoped that I have in return enjoyed my time and learning experiences at UNESCO Beirut Office. He also encouraged me to keep contact with the UBO staff and asserted that I apply whenever there will be a job opening at UNESCO. He kindly shook my hand and assured me that I will always be welcomed at UBO, as to consider that I have a home and family there. I have in return, placed my deep gratitude for the invaluable opportunity that UNESCO has provided me through his kind acceptance, to enrich, learn and develop my knowledge and competences in due of the UN organizational work system. Then he provided me

with an encouraging recommendation letter (see Appendix G for a copy of the Director's letter of recommendation) with his signature and the seal of UNESCO Regional Office of Beirut.

On my final day, I have visited all the colleagues at UBO to reveal my appreciation for their kind support and cooperation at work, and then I exchanged contact details with those who I didn't work with for further networking. Dr. Mona was very kind to organize a farewell meeting for me later that day with the UN staff and colleagues. We enjoyed smiles and photos to remember. They placed their kind and well wishes for the future and nice comments about my dedication at work and how they enjoyed the day-to-day friendly interactions with my presence. They also wished I would come back soon to the office as a UN employee.

Looking back in the present, the office of interns was emptied right after all of us, five interns, completed our internship and left, to become a new meeting room. Two of my colleague interns traveled abroad and were employed right after their internship in non-UN institutions. One new intern came from Far East for the education sector; he is a Chinese young man who just finished his BA degree. He was provided with a desk within the education department offices.

I had several feedbacks from UBO staff thereafter, that after we interns left, the office work environment became so dull and empty, since we did provide kind of a vital atmosphere of friendly office interactions within our room, that helped in soothing the daily work stress and pressure for all of us.

2.5.2 Expectations and Disappointments

The official statement "From the Standards of Conduct Managers and supervisors are in positions of leadership and it is their responsibility to ensure a harmonious workplace based on mutual respect. Continuing dialogue between staff and management is indispensable"³⁷ pretty much draws the picture of what I had in mind in terms of my expectations during the internship.

However, I learned that the style of leadership of supervisors depends mainly on, not only their character and management skills, but also particularly, on their own priorities and the measure of their interest or willingness to engage, in the first place, in the provision of leading skills and spirit towards their interns. Be this engagement through mere basics of leadership skills, like the positive influence, encouragement, motivation, guidance, follow-up and proper feedback that aims for constructive criticism. I do admit that this particular leadership was the core of my expectation from day one in which I joined this internship opportunity. Explicitly I would ask, why else then should any intern go through a four months of unpaid full-time job ³⁸experience, perform regular core functions, incur expenses of daily transportation and food, abide by the rules and regulations, provide full duties, take on the stressful work pressure, tasks and assistance as to support the organizational goals and mandate and that of the supervisor's, if not for the benefit of win-win situation, through harvesting the remuneration of best practice and learning experiences through the best possible leadership supervision and its mutual rights, duties and obligations?

How would this comply with the UN internship programme aims and rules which we find in the UN secretariat official document of administration instructions of the UN internship programme (see Appendix H for Administration Instruction document)? If the internship is characterized as

³⁷ UN Ethics Office, "Putting Ethics to Work", Sept.2012, p. 34

http://www.un.org/en/ethics/pdf/putting_ethics_to_work_en.pdf

³⁸ AIUNIP document Section 7.1: "Interns are not financially remunerated by the United Nations"

https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/page_attachments/n1420634.pdf

a win-win situation³⁹ by the official document of the Joint Inspection Unit on the Internship in the United Nations System, then it must be practiced as such with regard to all stakeholders involved.

I totally understood my supervisor's sensitive responsibilities and how it is so important to not make mistakes and share with her those responsibilities as well, however, I also consider that it is as much important, in all situations, as "... supervisors are in positions of leadership and it is their responsibility to ensure a harmonious workplace ..."⁴⁰ by keeping those UN high standards of work ethics and communication and seeking to be objective at all times. This is where the management skills, priorities and character would define the level of professional and leadership skills that people at executive positions leverage for the mandated responsibilities they have as UN staff members.

On my final day of internship, I visited my supervisor at her office to greet her farewell and place my appreciation for the trust and opportunity she have facilitated for me. She handed me a recommendation letter in an UNESCO envelope, prepared and signed by her (see Appendix I for my supervisor's Letter of Recommendation). She required an assurance about the confidentiality issue with respect to writing about unpublished details of specific meetings in my internship report. She asserted that I could only use information which is out to public and on the internet. Nevertheless, I assured her not to worry and that I am aware of the sensitivity of my responsibilities, and that I do adhere to the work ethics I hold and learned within this organization. Accordingly, when considered writing about my experiences during these meetings, I was selective and considerate of this issue in the sense of not including any unpublished details that would be also perceived as confidential. Honestly, I was kind of disappointed, but not devastated, for not being allowed to refer explicitly to those unique UN work opportunities that I have experiences and provided best practice.

Finally, she placed her thanks in general for the total services I have provided in assisting her and noted that she always has a lot of crucial responsibilities on her plate. I thanked her in return for the opportunity she has provided me with, to learn and develop my knowledge in the UN system in general and the UNESCO in particular. We wished each other well and then I left.

I am not sure if I have disappointed my supervisor in her expectations, but I am sure I did not require her special attention in order to provide her with my best. I can confidently state that I have met in full, each and all of her requests and assignments. However, I was disappointed in the sense of not meeting my needs as an intern for a leading UN supervisor, in terms of receiving the least encouragement, guidance and interest for feedback to the services I have sincerely and enthusiastically provided. I always had to assume and speculate her feedback and possible opinion of my work done.

2.5.3 Comprehensive Recommendations

2.5.3.1 Cross-Cutting Concerns

As an intern I have experiences gaps and observed and conducted objective review of some HRM aspects, and then analyzed several aspects of the UN internship programme, both in rules and in practice. Evaluating both, I have found some recommendations to be considered for best practice of this system. On the other hand, academically, there I have some suggestions not only

³⁹ Wynes and Posta, *Internships at the United Nations System, Joint Inspection Unit, JIU/NOTE/2009/2, UN Geneva, 2009*. 'Satisfaction of major stakeholders' D, 26, p. 6 and page iii
https://www.unjiu.org/en/corporate-information/AR%20%20PoW/A_66_34_JIU%20Annual%20Report_AR.pdf

⁴⁰ Ibid, UN Ethics Office, "Putting Ethics to Work", Sept.2012, p. 34
http://www.un.org/en/ethics/pdf/putting_ethics_to_work_en.pdf

methodological and conceptual, but also technical and in terms of networking with new opportunities and solutions. These would aim to enhance the actual operational reality both in the UN practice and the academic exchange of knowledge and experiences. I stress out the notion of building new bridges with new mobilizing partnership between the university and the UN Organizations and INGOs, considering we are living in a new fast-paced era of communication and information freedom and networking. This is in order to outreach the UN own practice which is in perfect alignment with the academic basis of the curriculum (apart from the internship) and promote the modes of partnerships to build a Youth-led initiatives of academic and IO interface. This would foster the environment and platform essential towards building a mutual interest for both to work together. There are gaps and there must be attempts to build bridges of knowledge and engagement opportunities and seek participatory plans and processes merged within the curriculum and courses for better theory learning possibilities, before engaging the students in the internship professional experience.

It is very important to consider Section 10 of the AIUNIP which states that: *“Departments and offices of the United Nations shall not enter into formal partnerships or conclude memorandums of understanding or similar agreements with academic institutions with respect to interns unless it is with the explicit written approval of the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management”*⁴¹. Although no doubt that this rule should be respected, however, it cannot prevent the suggested formal partnership, given the fact that the potential intern students of the university are not yet enrolled in the UN internship program, neither to the UN system, which makes this rule irrelevant when the case suggested. Accordingly, universities can engage in the context of building bridges of educational capacity development and networking between their academic studies and students on one hand, and the UN System on the other. Finding the strongest common denominator with the UN for long-term and results-based achievements will remark the success of this programme and the management of the University as well.

Moreover, my suggestions for enhancement do outreach the UN internship programme itself as well, due regard of many HR gaps I have observed and lived through, in my internship learning experience. Nevertheless, the contract that I have signed stated only the section 6.2 of the document of Administration Instructions for the UN Internship programme by the UN Secretariat dated 13 January 2014⁴² which points out the Obligation and responsibilities of the interns (See Appendix H for page 3/7). Yet the obligations of the receiving departments/supervisors in the same document section 6.1 was not included in the contract. Shouldn't any legally binding contract, between two parties in concern, include and explicitly state all the mutual binding conditions of agreement, in this case the obligation and rights of both sides? If UBO is just following the format of the UN human resource management office documents and rules per se considering this issue, then how can an intern refer to these 6.1 section rules whenever they are not respected and/or not implemented by the UN organization staff member or department? Could the reason be that because the UNHRM reserves the right to keep a safe margin for UN staff to be unaccountable and unbounded by a contract? Or should they, as UN staff, be perceived as superior international authority to be just obeyed by rules? How is this issue acceptable or even legal?

⁴¹ Ibid, Administrative Instruction, United nations internship programme, UN Secretariat, ST/AI/2014/1, 14-20634 (E) 170114; p.4/7; https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/page_attachments/n1420634.pdf

⁴² https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/page_attachments/n1420634.pdf

Considering all of the above mentioned cross-cutting concerns that relate to both the UN and to the University, I have put down my suggestions and recommendations in two sections for the enhancement of the gaps in each of the UN Internship programme and the University academic curriculum of the “International Organizations” Studies, and foster a better understanding to UN-Academia future interface on many levels.

2.5.3.2 UN Internship Programme Recommendations

There must be a decision and action based reform, by the executive bodies of United Nations in general and UNESCO’s in particular. Some of these recommendations I found to be included also in the JIU note, but I must insist that before I found that document, all of these were, nevertheless, precisely my personally noted experiential based suggestions after I have suffered their consequences. To make the notions more notable, I have merged few of them with mine technically, considering the context of the descriptions I have provided.

1. UN System executives should provide qualified candidates from developing countries with more opportunities equal to those from developed countries to be an intern in the United Nations system organizations.⁴³
2. Due to lack of HRM personnel at UBO to manage my internship inquiries and complaints and no formulized reference either, as in a proper legislative and administrative framework for internship issues. Accordingly I assert that UNESCO should formalize a specific internship programme and provide the necessary resources for their HR management and administration.
3. Since I received no proper orientation and was left by myself to learn and speculate answers to my inquiries, I would recommend the UN internship programme to formulate new rules that provide detailed information guides for new interns (administrative issues and day to day living) well in advance of their entry on duty. And should ensure that an inclusive orientation program is provided to interns upon arrival.
4. The mandatory rule that excludes the right of interns to apply for positions in various internship agreements should be eliminated, so interns can compete on an equal basis for positions for which they may qualify, and UN should respect relevant equality principles and rights.
5. Since we interns were, for many times, very rudely prevented by a UN staff member from joining the catering services that UBO provides open for all, and considering the fact that interns do provide unpaid full time services, then I would assert that the United Nations system executives should consider providing a daily meal ticket, a transportation pass, and/or any contribution towards costs for interns lacking financial sponsoring. Even if the remuneration would be a lump sum amount for the whole internship period, that would at least provide some financial support.
6. Some UN staff members should be monitored and held accountable for their discriminating and insulting attitudes towards interns. Approaches which do not match the expectations of adherence to the highest ethical standards by United Nations staff within the UN work environment, even if they have a close family member working at the HQs, for instance.
7. The Christmas and New Year holidays came across the time period of my internship. For interns to not be eligible for a holiday rewarding financial bonus like all the UN staff members, is unfavorable enough in my opinion, however to be assigned and eligible to submit a lot of tasks and perform work from home during the whole holiday period, when the UBO and all its staff is considered officially off duty, should be strictly considered an abuse of interns and a discriminative act. This was my experience during the Christmas and New Year holidays. I was entitled by my supervisor to submit work during the holidays through working from home, and

⁴³ Refer to table 6 on page 32 for the relevant issue

the remaining by the day we are back to office work. I would highly recommend that the executives of the UN internship programme formulate persistent rules to this regard, strictly forbidding work abuse and discrimination of interns and not providing any room for “work from home on holidays and off-duty days” excuses. Apart from that, also realizing a small budget for interns, if their working time come across holiday periods, would be a nice holiday gesture, considering that such a gift will not deteriorate the UN budgets, but only boost the morale and appreciation of interns and promote the social inclusion and cohesion within the UN administration.

2.5.3.3 Academic Recommendations

That is on one side due regard to the UN internship. On the other side, and with regard to academic recommendations and as a student specialized in international organizations studies, I would highly recommend initiating a comprehensive programme of UN-University interface, for the support of more basic and substantive results for this pilot programme in the Lebanese University.

Having that in mind, my academic recommendations are as follows:

1. Although, the internship itself does provide an important exposure to the international civil work system, but it does not support alone the operational mechanisms of this study specialization. Hence, a curriculum enhancement is recommended, which would measure and reconsider the topics of the degree studied, according to the relevancy of the UN working modalities and modes of implementations, and well considering the fact that the professional Master’s degree is more involved in practical learning than in mere theoretical approaches, albeit the latter is duly vital as core background of IO learning.
2. Engage students in critical thinking and analysis of research topics through UN documents, like reports, internship announcements, UN needs and requirements of certain positions, levels of assignments, presenting critical analysis of results, etc.
3. A curriculum that tackles the barriers, gaps, strength and weaknesses of existing mechanisms of international organizations and build more knowledge-based, participatory, comprehensive, and evidence-informed topics, with special attention to the UN operational mechanisms, as in action and monitoring plans, TORs, UN human resource management, organograms of entrusted bodies for implementation and monitoring projects.
4. Mandate the students to participate in workshops and meetings by the UN and practice formulating a full structure of report about the events, prepare a simulation of the same workshop they have attended; have a UN- university interface in engaging students in volunteer work;
5. Initiate rights-based policies and standards that rise to the international humanitarian values and principals embodied in the UN charter and simulate the real UN documents with their point of view and critical analysis;
6. Discuss and tackle the UN new Sustainable Development Goals for 2030, the reasons of millennium goals failure and the possibilities and obstacles of the new goals within the contemporary regional challenges;
7. The programme of International organization Master’s degree should have a committee to mobilize partnership with the UN organizations project oriented bodies, in order to leverage support to their students in outreach bridges of UN inclusive, comprehensive and integrated programme with the UN agencies as a pillar that mobilizes the career learning;
8. Organize the student internship coordination process on a higher level than Student-UN mode of engagement, organize meetings and;

9. I recommend that fellow students of the international organizations to study and get exposure to the UN documents, reports, concept notes, communication standards and language use of vocabulary and terminology. I have compiled and prepared a reference table list of the most used vocabulary within the UN system that I have also learned and used during my internship. It is provided as an annex to this report, for anyone interested to study and research their meanings in the UN documents and use them more frequently. This will help obtain the necessary language used by the contemporary international organizations and their means of international level of communication.
10. It would provide a great help if the list of UN used language and vocabulary is added the students' curriculum as in development of UN language skills and language formalities.
11. Fellow students do not try so hard to impress your supervisors so you won't be at risk of being devastated, because if they are positive and kind, they will appreciate and guide you no matter what, and if they are not, you will prevent yourself a possible morale setback.

2.5.4 Future Prospects



I am optimistic about the future career prospects and endeavors with my specialization and experience. My future career plan is to be a Social Development Specialist with advanced knowledge in both theory and practice of relevant themes.

My mission is to implement the universal humanitarian values and principles through the education of civil engagement and best practice of citizenship in general. I would like to work for international development organizations such as; UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, World Bank and UN Women in the fields of empowerment, development, social education planning, training and instructional design for humanitarian needs and capacity building, and civil society policy formulations and implementations.

Hence, contribute to the global development through better educational policies that guarantee and support quality education, social dialogue, capacity building, and gender equity, reduce income inequality, identify social risk management, promote social accountability, and promote socio-economic development and sustainability in such developing countries as my beloved country Lebanon.

Conclusion

In conclusion, although my internship experience at UNESCO was quite an intense, stressful and at many times somewhat complicated, but rewarding, diverse and amazing in many other ways. I can assure the fact that it was not an easy experience on many levels, but it is a value added to my personal achievements. Especially with some experiences like the inter-agency meeting, it is an experience that I will certainly never forget. The chance to interact and network with people at this level, providing an insight into the workings of United Nations delegations and other development partners was an unparalleled opportunity and a stepping stone to my future career. The 82 days and 700+ hours of UN internship work experience provided me with an opportunity to familiarize myself with a variety of issues.

For me, this UNESCO internship is considered the forefront and milestone of my lifetime career learning experiences and the tool that boosted my UN knowledge from theory to an international level of engagement. This report is a document about how I tackled, via the interning tool, the modes of UN administration sequences for my knowledge and competence development. Nevertheless, that through this internship work in the UNESCO's SHS thematic activities and operation modalities, I could set out some realizations of opportunities, even though they were through challenges and difficulties I have faced. After all, this is an invaluable career and personal advancement means to any intern, as it was for me too. In every opportunity of work, in meetings, workshops, and documentations, I have developed a learning advantage not only in performing the tasks and obtaining UN skills enhancement, but also on the level of best knowledge development. I have been an active listener and enthusiastic information collector. I took every advantage to put down in notes and in my work diary, day-to-day, many cross-cutting concerns for my future prospects and career possibilities.

Hence, these gained practical skills and knowledge, gave me enough background to contribute to the achievement of UN vision and mandates in future if given the chance, and the quality of collaboration and exchange of knowledge and experiences in developing countries, which definitely made me enjoy my work every hour. I do recommend my fellow students to consider an internship opportunity at UNESCO; for sure though quite challenging, yet, it is rewarding and a doorstep for many future career advancement. Bokova's saying has proven some truth in sharing experiences, but not necessarily true with regard to respecting the interns' rights and freedom.

What remains is the awareness of some issues tackled and faced during my working period as an UN intern. I would place inquiries to those in executive levels for regarding those issues and try to benefit from such reports and experiences as mine, to make sound reviews and judgments for reformation of what needs to be improved and/or supported.

Questions still are due open for answers like, to what extent will the Lebanese University take into consideration the modification and enhancement needed for its curriculum in the professional Masters' programme of International Organizations? And to what extent will the United Nations reform the UN internship programme within its organizations, in the hope of modifying the current approach and formulize rules that protect the intern's learning experience in terms of dignity, rights and prospects of employment within the UN system. Not only should we ask if it is possible to reform UNESCO and its human resource management, but also is it possible to seek formally the reform of the United Nations itself as well, as quite also needed?

Appendices

- Appendix A:** Contract / Internship agreement with UNESCO
- Appendix B:** UNDSS Certificate of Achievement of Basic Security in the Field II
- Appendix C:** UNDSS Certificate of Achievement of Advanced Security in the Field
- Appendix D:** Sample of one page to a 12 pages Questionnaire Form
- Appendix E:** Report of Joint Inspection Unit, JIU/NOTE/2009/2, UN Geneva, 2009
- Appendix F:** UN Administration Frequently Used Vocabulary List
- Appendix G:** Letter of Recommendation by the Regional Director of UNESCO
- Appendix H:** Administration Instruction for UN Internship Programme + Annex
- Appendix I:** Letter of Recommendation by Seiko SUGITA

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UNESCO Internship Photos Gallery

Christmas Lunch with Interns and Colleagues



Christmas Lunch with UNESCO Staff at the Hospitality Management Academy-Bir Hassan



Friendly Times with Colleagues



Christmas Greetings with my "Secret Santa" Dr. Sugita and her "Secret" present



Samples of the badges I used during the workshops

