Iranian Homes: Outreach and Relief Centers

In Iranian Homes, volunteers strive to become the source of joy and security in the hearts and minds of helpless women and children.

Imam Ali’s Popular Students Relief Society (IAPRS) is an international non-governmental organization which has been following its activities with official record of Ministry of the Interior of Islamic Republic of Iran since 1999. IAPRS has consultative status from ECOSOC since 2010.

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Introduction

As a popular organization supporting children and women suffering from or exposed to social injustice and hardships, Imam Ali’s Popular Students Relief Society has established 35 relief and outreach centers known as “Iranian Homes” in marginalized and afflicted neighborhoods of the country Iran. The interior design and spatial setup of these houses are arranged to resemble a home in which a joyful life is taking place, rather than a relief center. These houses serve as shelters and comforting spaces for the women and children under supported by IAPSR. Iranian Homes are considered spaces in which members strive to become the source of joy and security in the hearts and minds of helpless women and children. We believe that all humans are members of the same family and must affectionately work to help each other. Iranian homes not only belong to the relief workers but to every benevolent who strives to give a hand to others.
Establishment of Iranian Homes

First, an inspection team of IAPRSRS scouts out a marginalized neighborhood. They identify issues of socially disadvantaged vulnerable groups: consisting of drug addiction of children or their families, child labor, children deprived of education, children deprived of identifications, women’s social issues, and self-supporting single women. After that, relief works are planned accordingly within the Iranian Homes to address these issues. The target community of IAPRSRS is children and mothers, as they are the most vulnerable members of society. The limits of the marginalized people combined with a low-income class culture and inappropriate ethnic and tribal traditions alongside being disregarded by the general population are the main causes of social issues in these regions which helpless women and children are their main victims. The immense potential talents and abilities of these women and children are obscured by a façade of overwhelming difficulties in which they are powerless to overcome. The majority of residents of these neighborhoods suffer from multiple mental illnesses and psychological disorders.

Iranian Homes are situated within these neighborhoods in order to closely monitor these issues. Accordingly, plan strategies tailored to the culture and beliefs of each specific community. The presence of Iranian Homes has gradually influenced the community culture of its residents; causing parents who used to compel their kids to work on the streets and intersections, now requesting and insisting on their children’s attendance and education in these centers. Children who used to grapple with knives, drugs and syringes now are playing with soccer balls and have pens in hands and have realized new identities for themselves as soccer players and students who encourage other kids to join and enroll at the Iranian Homes. Single mothers who could barely afford to feed their children are now empowered, passing along their expertise. On January 2016, there were a total of 35 Iranian Home centers in Iran, which provide daily services to women and children under support. The number of children under IAPRSRS support in these centers was 39000.
The executive committee and teachers of “Iranian homes” are all volunteers who dedicate their time to help vulnerable mothers and their children. The majority of these volunteers are students or alumni of different universities across Iran.

Currently, more than 12,000 volunteers across the country have volunteered to participate in IAPSRS outreach programs.

The followings are the provided services for children in “Iranian homes”:

- Free main meal and snack per day
- Clothes, shoes, and school accessories
- Dental and medical services
- Providing school courses for children who are deprived of education
- Tutoring extracurricular courses for children who receive formal education in school
- Tutoring courses on different foreign languages
- Tutoring life skills using game therapy, play therapy, and painting therapy designed to help the children with control and discharge of their excitements, alleviating aggressive behavior, and relaxation
- Providing science courses such as astronomy, robotics, biology, laboratory experiments, and so forth
- Providing literary courses such as storytelling, writing, and classic literature in the library of “Iranian homes”
- Providing sports classes including Soccer, Volleyball, Handball, Wrestling, Rugby, Karate, Darts throwing, Yoga, Crickets, Swimming, and Chess.
- Providing courses for skill acquisition, and professional development
- Providing individual/group psychological therapies

The followings are the provided facilities in “Iranian homes” for mothers:

- Entrepreneurship, providing job opportunities and making income
- Lending loans to families for improving the quality of life and job development
- Individual/group therapies to solve the psychological problems and family-related issues
- Providing basic school courses for illiterate mothers