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Course

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Refugee Health Crisis in Turkey

Introduction

The Syrian crisis has not only created political problems for the world, but it has resulted in health concerns to Turkey. As a result of Turkey's geographical position, it has become the ideal haven for Syrians running away from the war in Syria. Apart from the typical refugee problems, the influx of refugees in Syria has created sensitive healthcare concerns for international organizations and the Turkish government. Agencies such as the World Health Organization have been instrumental in helping to handle the issue. However, the problem arises because of the presence of unregistered refugees who pose a threat to the healthcare sector in Turkey. Considerably, these unofficial refugees evade the camp settings and opt to work in farms. Although the decision to seek employment in Turkey is essential for their livelihood, their presence in the country jeopardizes the efforts of international organizations and the Turkish government in managing the health risks posed by Syrian refugees.

The current status of the situation of the Turkey case

Turkey is one of the countries that have been hospitable to the Syrian refugees (World Bank Group 4). However, one of the issues is that there has been an uncontrolled influx of Syrians who decide to join the labor force in Turkey rather than stay in the camps. One of the issues here is that these refugees who decide to get employed are a threat to the health of the Turkey population. It is apparent that because of the increased tension in Syria medical services have

been paralyzed. As such, some of these people have not been in a position to access basic health attention such as immunization. When these refugees go to the recognized camps, the international organizations get the opportunity to administer the required immunization measures (Sahloul et al. 25). However, for those who enter the Turkish society for employment purposes they rarely get immunized. Kirişci argues that as a result of this uncontrolled entry, Turkey is at a high risk of having increased cases of malaria (27). Therefore, when they mingle with the Turkish citizens, this presents a high risk concerning the management of the healthcare sector in the country. Another issue is that those people who employ these refugees benefit from cheap labor. As such, these employers deny these refugees time to seek medical attention. In most cases, the fear of these employers emanates from the fact that when they seek medical attention, the citizenship of these illegal refugees could be noticed and as such, it would deny them the opportunity to benefit from cheap labor. With such a case, vulnerable persons such as mothers and children are put at a high risk.

The Turkish population appears to be ignorant of the danger they are exposing themselves by interacting with unimmunized refugees. In most cases, the employers perceive this situation as an opportunity to mistreat the refugees and gain financially. Mostly, the employers are the ones who abhor the immunization activity for the refugees. Inadequate awareness of the risk makes some of these Turkish families to stay in the same houses with these unimmunized refugees.

Approaches being used to solve the issue

Initially, the Turkish government was adamant and very hostile to the refugees that had joined its population without the proper method. However, with assurance from the United Nations, the government decided to attend to the medical needs of these illegal refugees (Karaman & Richard

320). The United Nations committed itself towards providing the financial resources that are required by this target group (World Health Organization 4). On the part of the Turkish government, some of its medical staff was diverted towards the program that caters for these unregistered refugees. However, from this arrangement, there are those issues that make it not be highly effective.

One of the challenges is that the right to attend medical sessions is a prerogative of the employer. In this case, it is the employer that decides if his or her worker should see the doctor. Most of these farm owners dwell on the desperation of refugees to deny them their right to medical attention. Another challenge is that some of the refugees are not willing for the program as they still have a fear of being arrested because of their inappropriate citizen status. Apart from employer interference and the fear by refugees, the program cannot monitor the progress of this target group after some of the patients have received medical attention. In some rare cases, the employers still subject refugees undergoing treatment to hard labor, and this interferes with the healing process. Still, under the issue of inability to take care of the patients, after treatment, some of them get re-infected by mixing with those that have refused treatment. With such experiences, the program of taking care of refugees that is in Turkish labor industry remains a challenge.

Recommendations

Before, identifying what should be done in addressing this challenge. It is significant to note that one of the target populations that can lessen these challenges are the employers. As a result of their hindrance, some of the refugees are unable to visit the designated health care facilities. Second, the employers provide squalid conditions that trigger either re-infection or slow the

healing process for these illegal refugees working in Turkish farms. With the recognition of this, stakeholders should devise mechanisms of handling the employers.

One of the recommendations is that the Turkish government should focus on sensitization programs to the employers. The employers should be made to understand that the welfare of the refugees is the responsibility of everyone. Another approach that should be directed to the employers is that they should be directed to give records of the number of people they are employing in their farms. Further, employers should be advised about the need to immunize their families against diseases because of the contact they normally have with the refugees. Apart from this engagement approach, authorities should devise programs that comprise of stern actions against any employer that will demonstrate cases of hindering refugees from getting the desired medical attention.

Another target population is the refugees. Under this program, the government should take strict measures of taking vulnerable members such as the mothers and the children to the camps where there can attain proper medical attention. As such, this is a preventive measure as it will ensure that they are under the care of international medical personnel. Separately, for those people who appear to withstand the environment provided by the employers, they should also be subjected to some degree of check-ups. The assigned medical staff should ensure that these people have a regular program where their health is evaluated.

Future situation of the case

Considerably, this is an issue that may become recurrent. One of the contributing factors is the tedious process that one goes through before being admitted into the U.N camps. As a result of this long process, some of the frustrated Syrians decide to consider the alternative of working in farms as a source of their livelihood. As such, in attending to this issue, the relevant agencies

should ensure that the welfare of refugees is handled in their countries of origin rather than at the point where they are seeking refuge. Considerably, this is vital in the planning process.

Another concern is the need for the Turkish government to devise mechanisms of securing its borders. Some of these unregistered refugees find their way through the porous borders. However, when there is enough security at the borders of Turkey, all the refugees will be taken to the designated camps. Apart from securing the borders, security agencies in Turkey should ensure that they carry out surveillance programs that focus on preventing cases where some Turkish residents exploit refugee status by subjecting them to unsafe employment conditions.

Another concern for this situation is that the Syrian instability appears to be continuous. The ramification of this case is that the camps might be overwhelmed. Consequently, the number of unregistered and unimmunized Syrians will escalate. Many people will run away from the congested camps and find their way into the Turkish society. Further, with population pressure, the donor community might get overwhelmed. When they get besieged by the camp's situation, the donors may fail to consider special attention that is directed towards these unregistered refugees within the Turkish community. Therefore, with such dangers, it is upon the Turkish government to ensure that are reduced cases of refugee employment in the farms.

Works Cited

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