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Topic: Protecting the Rights of Syrian Women Refugees Turkey as a Case Study

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Notification Date: 14/06/2024

Notification No: COE/PhD/(Notification)560/2024

FINDINGS

The Syrian crisis, starting in 2011, is one of the most disastrous post-World War II conflicts, involving non-state, international, and regional players. Syrian women refugees face heightened gender-based violence, poverty, and caregiving burdens. Most hospitals in Syria have been destroyed, creating urgent needs for reproductive and sexual health services, driving many women to flee. The crisis highlights global interdependence and the need to reexamine refugee laws and protections. The 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol guide current refugee law but have gaps, particularly in addressing the specific needs of female refugees.

Syrian women often face more severe exploitation and require specific protections against sexual violence. Existing treaties like the 1951 Convention and CEDAW provide some safeguards, but implementation and enforcement face challenges. In Turkey, where many Syrian refugees reside, legal protections are limited. Turkey, while generous in offering temporary protection and services like healthcare and education, does not recognize Syrians as refugees under the 1951 Convention due to geographical limitations. Syrian women face numerous challenges, including gender-based violence, child marriage, and barriers to employment and justice.

Efforts by the Turkish government and international organizations are ongoing but insufficient. More coordination is needed to address gaps in education, healthcare, child marriage prevention, and gender-based violence. Community support systems and trauma-informed mental health services are crucial. Strengthening international refugee law to incorporate gender-sensitive approaches and robust monitoring mechanisms is essential. Addressing these issues requires collaboration among host countries, humanitarian organizations, and the international community to ensure Syrian women refugees receive the protection and assistance they need.