

Ethically Augmenting Access to Appropriate Mental Health and Psychosocial Services (MHPS) for Adolescent Syrian Refugees in Jordan

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POLICY PROPOSAL

ABSTRACT: The issue of limited access to appropriate mental health and psychosocial services is exacerbated in the developing world. According to the World Health Organization, "75% of those suffering from mental disorders in developing countries receive no medical attention at all" (WHO). This issue is apparent in areas of the world affected by rampant violence, such as the Middle East, with Syria as a poignant example (UNHCR). Since 2011, Syrian citizens have fled to the neighboring countries of Iraq, Lebanon, Turkey, and Jordan. More than a quarter of externally displaced Syrians have fled to Jordan (UNHCR). This flight represents a unique challenge for mental health assessment, monitoring, and treatment of adolescent Syrian refugees in Jordan. This proposal will draw upon Alex London's Human Development Approach to humanitarian intervention in the developing world. London emphasizes equitable, directed, and "thoughtful distribution of scarce resources" and investment in "community social programs" (London). Given this ethical framework, the overall goal of this project is: to strengthen access to appropriate mental health services for adolescent Syrian refugees in Jordan. The specific objective is to build on existing mobile health services by integrating general and psychological healthcare, through mobile healthcare units termed Mobile Integrative Medical and Health Clinics (MIMHCs), in order to expand access to MHPS services, thereby: a. Increase communication between stakeholders b. Coordinate care c. Equitably allocate scarce resources (Minimization of healthcare and medical personnel resource waste) d. Strengthen capacity of community support programs e. Decrease stigmatization surrounding MHPS conditions f. Decrease tensions between adolescent Jordanians and Syrian refugees g. Improve early detection screening and diagnostics for MHPS and general conditions The services integration pilot project will be carried out in Mrajeeb Al-Fhood, Jordan's smallest refugee camp, and Ar Ramtha, a smaller northern Jordanian city, thereby serving people in both camp and noncamp settings.

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