



Reviving Communities



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**SURVEY ON THE IMPACT OF COVID 19
PANDEMIC AMONG REFUGEE COMMUNITY
IN ANKARA
LINK PROJECT
APRIL 2020**

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WATAN Foundation expresses its deepest appreciation to all -Turan Fırıncıoğulları, Ahmed Alkhalifa, Alaa Abukaood and Abdulcebbar Dadu who reached out to the refugee community and made it possible to complete this report under the outbreak of COVID 19 worldwide.

It is also crucial to underline the difficulty of applying the survey during the serious outbreak due to the fact that private companies suspended their activities in order to prevent the spread of the virus, there is not much opportunity anymore for refugees to make a living. Therefore, survey took much more time than expected since a bigger amount of time is given to the discussion on unemployment after the pandemic.

List of Abbreviations

ECHO: European Union Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection

IPA: Individual Protection Assistance

COVID 19: Corona Virus Disease 19

AR: Awareness Raising

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Executive Summary

Overall objective

The survey has been conducted to have an analysis of the impact of Corona Virus pandemic on the refugee population in the area that WATAN Foundation has been offering services.

Key findings

The survey is conducted with 60 beneficiaries of WATAN Foundation previously supported based in Altındağ district of Ankara with gender sensitive approach targeting 30 females and 30 males at the end of March and beginning of April 2020 based on sampling method. The survey has the following key findings: measures taken by the state officials and Ministry of Health in general due to the Corona virus outbreak in Turkey since March 11 have limited not only the refugee community's but also the host community's access to the state services including education and health. With the limitation of the access in receiving the Temporary ID, private companies' suspension of work or decreasing the number of their staff resulting with financial restrictions on meeting the basic needs, travelling and shift in the school based education system to the online system at home and children without the necessary technological equipment, hospitals not accepting patients without Corona disease, information flow in Turkish limiting continuously changing news to reach out to the Arabic speaking community have had serious results which has already emerged in the short term and not difficult to imagine the long term impact such as violence against women and children.

Recommendations:

In order to prevent the spread of the disease, staying home has been compulsory. Accordingly, there are barriers on physical intervention to meet the needs of the clients. A monitoring mechanism might be designed to determine urgent needs of the clients. Emergency fund to be raised in order to meet the basic needs of the people in need caused by the pandemic for a period of three or four months.

1 Introduction and Background

WATAN Foundation is a leading Civil Society Organization delivering emergency relief support and committed to helping people.

WATAN Foundation was established formally in Turkey in 2012 building on an extensive voluntary-base community development work going back to 2006.

The Current Situation in Turkey

Turkey just like rest of the world is going through an extraordinary period. Because of Corona pandemic, “Stay at home” warnings have been the initial action in order to defeat the pandemic.

There have been extraordinary changes in daily life in this period: Staying at home is recommended to avoid the spread of the virus and initially make the health system to work properly. Many workplaces are closed. Some of them went bankrupt resulting with unemployment. Restrictions are shared with the public through circulars published by the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Health and updated information is shared on daily basis by the Ministry of Health.

Refugees have already been under difficult conditions and the current situation does not seem encouraging for them.

This survey is conducted to reveal to what extent refugees are affected by the extraordinary conditions caused by the Corona pandemic.

2 Objectives of the survey

2.1 Overall objective of the survey

The survey has been conducted to have an analysis of the impact of Corona Virus pandemic on the refugee population in the area that WATAN Foundation has been offering services and take preventive and protective measures during the new circumstances under COVID 19.

2.2 Specific objectives

With the collected information, WATAN Foundation targets to understand the current situation of refugees under the pandemic and plan the supportive mechanism to meet their needs given the physically restricted working environment.

Besides, WATAN Foundation would like the problems faced by the refugee community to be visible and share the results with the respective authorities.

3 Methodology

3.1 Sampling procedure and sample size

Beneficiaries are selected for the survey from data in IPA and in AR sessions. All of them received support from WATAN before by the IPA activities or the AR sessions. Random Sampling Selection Technique is used.

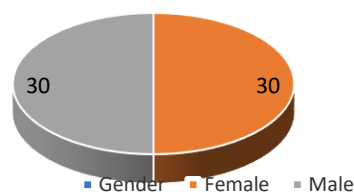
This report is compiled with the result of a survey conducted with 60 people. Special attention was paid to ensure that the number of male and female beneficiaries are equal. Based on this, 30 female and 30 male beneficiaries are selected. Three age ranges are determined for the beneficiaries. Categorization was made according to the age range of 1-17, 18-49 and 49+. Selected 60 people are the residents of the Altındağ district.

Overall questions included: in the current situation, to what extent the beneficiaries are able to have an access in the support services, and what difficulties have been faced across Altındağ district of Ankara.

Table1: Age Distribution of Participants

Age Range	1-17	18-49	49+
Number of People	0	48	12

Figure 1: Gender Distribution of Participants



3.2 Selection of households and children

Since Random Sampling Selection Technique is used, some beneficiaries don't have children.

3.3 Training

All interviewers have previously attended the protection training and that included interviewing skills.

3.4 Steps taken to minimise bias

In order to minimise bias that may occur, male and female beneficiaries are equally selected.

3.5 Data collection

Survey method is used to collect the data.

3.6 Survey implementation

The interview questions were prepared by MEAL Department of GOAL International. Four people were selected from the IPA Department as interviewers. Interviews were conducted via the phone due to the physical limitation during Corona pandemic. Interviews started on 30 March 2020 and ended on 1 April 2020.

3.7 Data analysis

The survey consists of 82 questions, under five main topics. The five main topics are as follows:

1. Health and Everyday Life
2. Information and Awareness

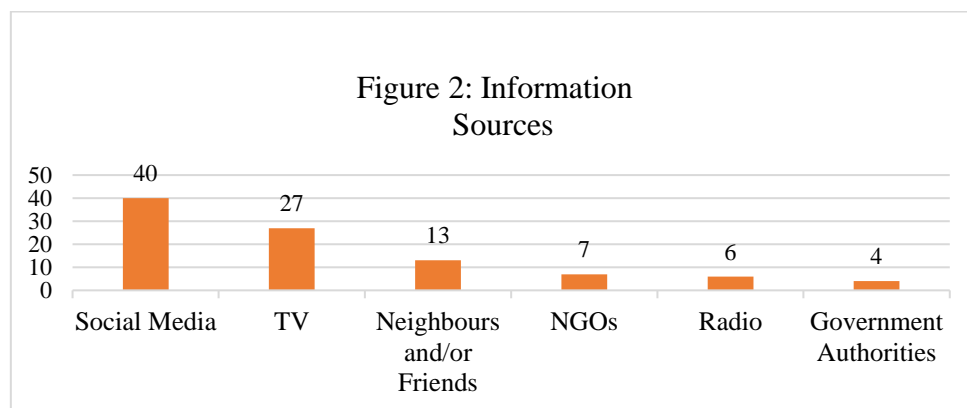
- 3. Income
- 4. Education
- 5. Access to Services

1. Health and Everyday Life

Basically, in the questions under this topic, it has been tried to find out what difficulties beneficiaries have faced and what kind of needs are emerged due to the Corona pandemic.

%76 of the beneficiaries has enough information on the symptoms of the Corona pandemic and enough information on how to protect themselves from the disease and have received enough information on the Corona pandemic in their own language.

The vastly used source of information by the beneficiaries is social media. 40 out of 60 people state that they have been informed through the social media. The order of priority is as follows: TV, Neighbours and/or Friends, NGOs, Radio, and the last one is governmental authorities.



38 % of beneficiaries responded not going out at all to protect themselves from the virus, 51 % responded going outside as rarely as possible, 51 % washing hands frequently, 13 % using disinfectant and 30 % of beneficiaries responded using cologne.

66 % of beneficiaries stated that the measures taken within the scope of the Corona virus have affected their daily lives. More than half of the participants (51 %) stated that they lost

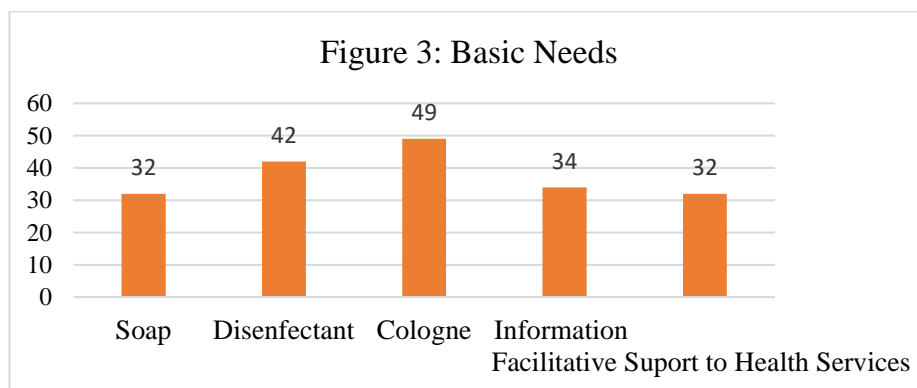
their jobs, have economic difficulties and could not shop and the others said that they were stressed and afraid of going out.

70 % of the beneficiaries who could not go out stated that their family relationships were also affected by this situation. The vast majority of beneficiaries (96 %) said that relations with their neighbours are not affected. The majority of people over 65 years old in the households expressed their feeling as boredom.

All the beneficiaries have regular access to clear washing and bathing water in the neighbourhood they live in. They stated that they did not have any problem about this issue.

70 % of beneficiaries have adequate soap to wash their hands frequently in order to get protected from the virus. 53 of the 60 beneficiaries who participated in the study stated that they needed help to get protected against the virus. The most lacking basic needs are gloves, mask, cologne, food, hygiene kits, disinfectants.

32 of the 60 beneficiaries who participated in the study stated that they need soap; 42 of them need disinfectant, 49 need cologne, 34 need information and 32 need facilitative support to health services.



2. Information and Awareness.

The interviewees are asked whether they have been provided with a brochure about the corona virus; only 28 % of them affirmed that they had been provided with an informative

document. The majority of the interviewees who have been provided with such a document stated that the provider is the WATAN Foundation.

Almost 70 % percent of interviewees declared that they have been informed in person (face to face); again, the informed majority has been informed mostly by the WATAN Foundation.

3. Income

Almost 80 % of interviewees stated that their employment or income status have been affected by the measures taken after Corona outbreak. Most of whom expressed that their employment or income status have been negatively affected by the corona virus and pointed out that they or their relatives have stopped working.

4. Education

35 of 60 interviewees have children. Nearly 70 % of them affirm that their children's accession to education has been negatively affected with the measures taken against the corona virus. Two highlighted problems caused by the online education have been stated as the lack of information to use the education applications and accession to the internet. Because of the virus, the organized education has been performed from some TV channels; the interviewees are asked whether their children could benefit from this facility. Only one third (32.3 %) of the interviewees answered the question affirmatively. Some declared that their children do not speak Turkish, some other declared that they could not follow their homework and yet some remarked the lack of access in educational services.

5. Access to Services

The interviewees are also asked about their accession to basic services such as health, education, legal aid, social assistance, etc. Three fourths of the interviewees expressed that their accession to basic services have been negatively affected. For the majority of negatively affected interviewees, the main factor that limits their accession to basic services is the high prices that weaken their financial status.

As for the accession to food, almost half of the interviewees remarked that their accession has been limited by the measures against the corona virus. The lack of income and high prices appear to be the main reason that is asserted by the interviewees.

The interviewees informed about the closed down offices of the WATAN are asked whether they would like to receive phone calls from WATAN for information delivery about social assistance application procedures, ID application and verification procedures, child labor, gender based violence, how to seek legal aid, stress management, positive parenting etc. Almost all of them indicated that they would like to be informed.

When they are asked for anything to add, nearly 40 % of interviewees mainly stated their concerns about the financial aids, supports and their needs.

4. Results

The refugees are acknowledged to be one of the most vulnerable groups throughout the Corona outbreak. The conditions are easily becoming harder in this period. The survey results are in line with this anticipation. The beneficiaries, with a rate of 70 % on average, declared that their accession to basic services and their daily life have been negatively affected by the pandemic. The most important problem they have faced with is that of unemployment and the change in income status. Their children have had difficulties in online education performed after the pandemic.

5. Limitations of Survey

Since the interviews could not have been conducted face to face, some bias is expected.

6 Discussion and conclusions

Such a survey to understand the circumstances that the refugees are under just after a short time that the public measures are taken in Turkey is crucial. It's crucial, because the solution to the prospective problems caused by the pandemic can only be suggested through a diagnostic process. So, the data collected from the survey acknowledges the fact that even in regard to reaching out to the very basic needs, refugees are the most deprived community of the society.

7 Recommendations

In order to stop the fast spread of the virus and defeat the possible burden in the health system, staying at home is strictly recommended. The needs of the refugee community can be regularly checked. Due to the physical barriers in the working environment, a new working mechanism is crucial to be designed to determine urgent needs of the clients.

An emergency fund must be raised to cover the basic needs of the people in need affected seriously after the pandemic for a period of three or four months.

An emergency plan for the cases of endemics and pandemics that could deeply affect the refugees must be studied on. Such an emergency plan should be accepted as obligatory in the light of recent events.