



## **Background Paper**

Committee: WHO

Topic A: Addressing Mental Health in Protracted Humanitarian Crises

Chairs: Natalie de la Peña Sánchez and Oscar Iñaki Rodríguez Díaz

Worldwide, many nations find themselves in difficult economic and social crises; consequently these situations have effects on innocent citizens all around the world, such as hunger, slavery, and death. However, one outcome in all humanitarian crises is the detrimental effect on mental health in these affected areas, and according to the International Medical Corps, there is no such thing as good health without mental stability. Psychological traumas suffered in crisis in people's daily lives, as well as their relationships with other people, frequently impact on people's physical health; positive mental health is crucial to humanity, and these crises make positive mental health almost impossible; moreover, these problems will continue to affect the local population long after the crises have ended, leaving many with life-long mental damage. The World Health Organisation must find solutions to this issue, since mental health is a serious problem that torments people on a daily basis, and mental health problems are more evident in these critical areas of the world. The issue here is that when mental health issues occur in nations and communities that are in complete crisis it is hard to support these people because of the inaccessibility of these areas, there are lots of innocent citizens that need mental help, and furthermore these mental issues never really go away, sufferers need treatment and long term strategies to help them cope with the effects..

The reasons for the existence of this problem are that in these crises many people suffer in war, for example, hunger, violence, loss of their homes, loss of their families, causing psychological trauma. This is because in these circumstances many people suffer from stressful experiences, and these result in fear and depression, which with time can detrimentally affect people's mental health. With the status of wars and terrorist attacks that are happening nowadays, humanitarian crises have been increasing all around the world, and consequently the immediate need to address this issue.

As a committee we must solve this problem, as there are approximately 87 million people affected by mental health issues which need humanitarian aid. With the instability of mental health in such areas, nations are concerned that these areas will probably not thrive in the future, since mental health causes a decrease in the economic productivity of the population. Additionally, citizens are missing out on the opportunity to prosper as humans because of a political or social issue out of their hands, it is not their fault they are ill, and as an international organization we must get to work to rectify this situation.

Many organizations, such as International Medical Corps, give help to communities and nations in need of mental health support, for example in D. R. of Congo, Jordan, Syria, Yemen, Ukraine, Iraq, Israel, and even Japan after many earthquakes in the zone. In many nations in the northern area of Africa and the Middle East, where humanitarian crises occur more frequently, more mental health issues are evident. Fortunately, there are countries that are relatively stable in their general health, and are economically and socially stable so they are in a position to help, for example France, Sweden, Germany, the UK, Australia, New Zealand, and the USA .

The UN has thoroughly investigated the issue, according to data, about 27 countries throughout the world are suffering humanitarian crises, which is even more frightening considering that about 90 million people in total populate these places. Also, the UN and the committee of WHO have concluded that, without mental health there is no physical health, as well as more violence, and less economic production. This concern has prompted the creation of many UN programs through the world, for example tackling suicide, improving maternal and children's health, and combatting neurological and mental disorders. Also many NGOs, for example International Medical Corps, have given help to many people from lots of countries, since its creation in 1984. The UN is giving a high level of priority to the topic, also the G20 are committed to solving the problem in the affected countries.

In conclusion, the topic is tough, since it is hard to treat mental disorders, and even harder to treat them in protracted humanitarian crises, since these are areas that are hard to access because of their political, social, and economic situations. Without positive mental health, countries and people all around the world will not develop correctly, because this causes problems in their day-to-day relationships and interactions with people. This issue needs the help of powerful and prepared countries to save innocent citizens from the vulnerability of mental disorders, mainly because the nations with the problem are poor and isolated and are putting their inhabitants in dangerous situations.

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