

Syrian refugees in Turkey and governance of refugee camps

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Abstract

From Syria, in which the domestic quagmire erupted in 2011 migrated more than three million people in the late five years according to formal statistics. After emergence of migrant influx, Turkey embraced open door policy and built sheltering centers in the neighboring cities right after the appearance of migration wave. There are 253.748 refugees in 10 provinces at 24 different according to data on September 2016.

Firstly, this study aims at investigating the various camps located on the different parts of the world built due to migration waves and whether they met the foundation targets of not. Secondly, the governance of refugee camps in Turkey and the position of these camps in refugee crisis is to be concerned and compared in compliance with the similar instance in the world and Turkey from a multidimensional perspective.

Keywords: Syrian refugees, governance, refugee camps.

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1. Introduction

There have been instances of the phenomena of migration all across the world due to the reasons such as war, security and economic problems. Thus, recently thousands of people from Palestine, Sudan, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Iraq and Syria took refuge in relatively safe neighboring countries fleeing from the conflict zones. While, some of the destination countries were prepared for the influx of the migrants, most of them were unprepared and attempted to determine the policies later what policies must be promulgated towards refugees and where to settle them. Therefore, the response of countries towards influx of refugees differs. Particularly, there emerge the problems over where to settle the refugees, whether they must be settled in the camps and they must be allowed to enter to the country or not. Besides, the importance of governing the refugee camps uttered intensively in the academic studies.

From Syria, in which the domestic quagmire erupted in 2011 migrated more than three million people in the late five years according to formal statistics. After emergence of migrant influx, Turkey embraced open door policy and built sheltering centers in the neighboring cities right after the appearance of migration wave. There are 253.748 refugees in 10 provinces at 24 different according to data on September 2016. As of October 2016, the number of Syrian refugees with a temporary status in Turkey is 2.753.696 (www.goc.gov.tr/, 2016). In the meantime, since beginning of first refugee arrival, it is known that Turkey got much more experienced on refugee camps, even though it still has some deficiencies. Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency under the authority of Prime Ministry accredited to manage the camps and governed the camps at present. The position of Turkey both as a transit and target country prompted the change in the migration policies of Turkey. Hence, the governance methods related to “accommodation centers” built for Syrians are regarded above the world standards in terms of the expectations of the global actors.

Governance, in lieu of government which was based on a sole-subject on a hierarchical perspective, consists of an approach with a multidimensional, multi-subjected, based on local networks in line with the rational methods, directive for the other actors and be directed the sources (Parlak & Sobaci, 2005; Ozer, 2006). Moreover, governance is embodied through the interaction of traditional and non-traditional actors from diverse backgrounds. For example, nation-states are the most important actors in terms of global governance. However they are not the only ones. NGO's, corporations, diverse networks along with the society also play a significant role.

The planning of aids towards the refugees and the migrants is a part of disaster management. Thus, as in the case of Syrian refugees, any single institution or state is never enough to manage the whole aspects of the crisis. Furthermore, UNCHR and the other organizations along with other institutions, third parties and the NGO's are regarded as the stakeholders of such circumstances (Yavuz, 2015).

The role of NGO's in the governance of migration is an unavoidable truth. At this point, cooperation with the public actors, national and international organization is needed to improve the capabilities. According to Betts, the lack of an efficient and systematical mechanism to manage the flux of refugees on a global scale renders the multidimensional and sophisticated international cooperation mandatory (Betts, 2012).

Firstly, this study aims at investigating the various camps located on the different parts of the world built due to migration waves and whether they met the foundation targets of not. Secondly, the governance of refugee camps in Turkey and the position of these camps in refugee crisis are to be concerned and compared in compliance with the similar instance in the world and Turkey from a multidimensional perspective. In this study, AFAD which played a significant role in dealing with the camps in Turkey is also important for the governance. In this respect, AFAD is one the most remarkable subjects in the study. Besides, the Reports of Turkish Parliament over the refugee camps are investigated in compliance with the content analysis method.

2. Refugee Camps in the World and the Governance of the Camps

The countries that host the refugees and migrants attempted to control the migrant crisis by building different camp zones. On the other hand, the physical conditions of the camps, capacities and the governing methods gave rise to the claims that these are the open-air prisons particularly in the recent publications. Besides, the establishment of the camps in purpose to be used in short, middle and long term with emergent and temporary targets, the type of the settlement over the organization and disorganization, the prospects of international law on the security of camp areas and infrastructure in the camp zone and the multi-dimensional procurement of services are the other problems.

The approach of states in the world towards the refugees differs due to difference in the political motives. For example, the rise of racism in Europe, the ethnic difference in Africa and the sectarian conflicts in the Middle East, and religious conflict and poverty in Myanmar boost the migration movements. Besides while Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon embraced positive policies towards the Syrian refugees, European countries such as Denmark and Sweden preferred to deport the refugees in accordance with the “anti-immigrant” policies. Apart from that, the central government of Sudan in Hartoum remained silent considering the camps in Darfur. Given all these complexities, it is impossible to manage the demands regarding the refugees which demonstrate the low-governance in the camps.

The leading actors of migration in the world are UNHCR and International Organization for Migration (IOM). Apart from these institutional organizations, many international organizations are also effective in the fieldwork. For instance, OXFAM which is comprised of 18 organizations related to poverty is launched the building of infrastructure and water system of Za’atari refugee camp for the future of children. In the camp which is considered to be the third largest city in Jordan, OXFAM promoted the construction of drinkable water system to prevent the spread of diseases by easing the procurement of water to refugees. In this respect, it is in cooperation with the UNICEF and other international actors (www.oxfam.org/, 2016).

2.1. France: Calais Refugee Camp

Sangatte Camp with a capacity of 200 people was established in 1999 to compensate the refugees fleeing from countries such as Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan, Eritrea, and Kosovo and aiming to reach to United Kingdom. The camp which became ungovernable after the immense refugee influx is closed by France in 2002 as response to British pressure. Besides, according to the treaty of Touquet between UK and France signed in February of 2003, a new camp was launched in Calais, France to halt the migration movements towards a non-Schengen country with a capacity of 700 people at first as a check point (tr.euronews.com/, 2016).

Though, the Calais Camp was suspended by the French government in the September of 2009, it is reopened with the advent of Syrian refugee crisis in 2015. The camp which is named as “New Jungle” in the public hosts 10 thousand migrants. The most known problems of the camps are inadequate infrastructure, unregistered migrants, poor sanitation, and the indifference of the state and the existence of non-trustee children along with the desire of inhabitant to cross the channel as soon as possible to arrive the UK (www.bbc.com/, 2016).

The conditions in the camp are frequently critiqued by international organizations led by the UN. The reason of France’s late response to demolish the camp is due to the fact that French government regarded the issue as a matter of British responsibility and the over-capacity of other camps in the country. Besides, the process to destroy the camp is abused by the far-right parties in France as a part of the domestic politics (Wesel, 2015).

Calais Camp is demolished in October of 2016 despite the opposition of the migrants and the French migrant associations. NGO’s claimed that refugees are evacuated regardless of their needs and profiles while the French government insisted that the refugees must be distributed all across the country on an equal basis. The most discussed problem about the camp, the issue of children without

formal parents is solved by the UK through accepting 300 of them while the rest was to be distributed the migration centers in France (www.reuters.com/, 2016).

2.2. Jordan: Za'atari Refugee Camp

Za'atari camp is the most crowded refugee camp of the Middle East with a population over 80 thousand (www.unhcr.org/, 2016). Though most of the camp was comprised of containers, there is no regularity. The routes in the camp are mostly unpaved and cause severe problems in winter and during the rainy seasons (AFAD, 2014).

Za'atari Camp shares many similarities with refugee camps in Turkey. For instance, the camp deployed the card system to conduct the transactions in the two markets within the camp as of Turkey's. Moreover, refugee teachers are employed with support of global actors such as UNICEF (www.alarabiya.net/, 2016).

Unlike the camps in Turkey, Za'atari Camp is highly developed in regard to shops within the camp. The entrepreneurship of the refugees is promoted and guaranteed through laws. The number of shops only in the Za'atari camp is above three thousand (www.telegraph.co.uk/, 2016). Some of the shops are subsidized by the UN. Hence, the aids of international actors are used more efficiently and effectively along with including the refugees in the production process.

Health services are one of the most crucial needs of Za'atari Camp. There are instances of cooperation with non-state partners in line with governance Dynamics. One of them is the hospital which was established by the Moroccan government. In the hospital with a capacity of 60 beds, a hundred personnel were employed including 32 doctors in 20 branches (www.alarabiya.net/, 2016).

UNCHR plays a significant role in the governance of refugee camps in Jordan. UNCHR applies the bio-metric identity management through its offices in the country. The system includes registration and settlement data of the refugees. So far, 350 thousand refugees are registered to the system and distributed to the camps all over the country (www.onedio.com/, 2016).

2.3. Sudan: Darfur Refugee Camps

In Sudan, many people began to live in camps around Darfur since 2003 due to domestic turmoil. The camps lack necessities such as electricity. Basic foods such as flour and sugar are delivered by World Food Program (WFP). The education is conducted without proper infrastructure in Darfur. Sudanese government has no Project regarding the status of the camps due to political motives (www.bbc.com/, 2014).

NGO's from Turkey are in operation on the camps. One of these NGO's, Rida International Aid Organization for Orphans and Needy, distributes aid to 4.630 orphans and needy children through its mobile system established in the region. 600 waterproof tents and 315 dairy goats are distributed just in the February of 2014. Besides, the organization opened itinerary courses encompassing diverse ranges. Moreover, after the request of Darfur Governorate, daily foods of 6 thousand students are provided during the university exams spanning ten days (www.ridader.org.tr/, 2016). Furthermore, there were two health clinics in Otash Camp established in 16 May 2004 around the city of Nyala of which one was built by Red Cross (www.tbmm.gov.tr/, 2004). In 2006, Turkish Red Crescent and the Ministry of Health built a hospital with a capacity of 150 people and Turkish Red Crescent opened an orphanage.

Khor Omer Refugee Camp in the South Sudan whose dry climate is well-known with a capacity of 20 thousand people is supported by few organizations such as World Food Program (WFP) and International Organization for Migration (IOM), while claims of women abuse is frequently reported (Kumbetoglu, 2012)

3. Refugee Camps in Turkey and the Governance of Camps

Since the beginning of first migration wave, though Turkey lacked the some characteristic of an ideal migration governance model, it gained crucial experiences during the crisis in context of governance of refugee camps. AFAD, an institution under the authority of Prime Ministry, was put in charge and managed the governance of the camps. Turkey has spent more than 12 billion USD for the Syrian refugees. International actors just spent 512 million USD for the Syrian refugees. Moreover, according to the Global Humanitarian Aid Reports of Development Initiations Institution at UN Geneva Office, Turkey was the most generous country in 2013, 2014 and, 2015 in a row considering the GDP per capita levels (AFAD, 2015a).

The most important issue in the camps, without doubt, is the provision of basic needs. Of them, the procurement of food is vital. Though, Turkey provided aid partly in cash during the early years of the crisis and meals per daily (Parliament Investigation Report 24/2, 2012, p. 7), the exponential rise in the expenditure made it compulsory to share the burden. In this respect AFAD demands international organizations to supply higher amounts of funds (AFAD, 2015a).

In the July of 2012, after the request of Turkey, a new program was initiated by UN World Food Program to save from hot-meal expenditures in economic terms. Within the prospects of the given program, the feasibility process was held and Electronical Food Card Program was launched. E-Food Program was started by the offices of WFP in Turkey in cooperation with the Turkish Red Crescent and AFAD. The program provided a card of Turkish Liras (TL) 60 loaded though the amount provided by UN decreased to TL 50 due to financial shortages, it is balanced with the rise in the amount provided by AFAD from TL 25 to TL 35. Another significant feature of the program is that WFP firstly implemented the e-food aid system in Turkey (www.unicankara.org.tr/, 2016).

It can be claimed that the organizations under the authority of UN played a crucial role in the governance of refugee crisis in Turkey. For example, as a sample for the local prospects, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), distributed brochures in cooperation with Ministry of Family and Social Policies and AFAD disclosing the directives in case of violence within the family, judicial rights and where to apply in Gaziantep those living within the camps and without the camps. UNICEF established child-friendly zones in all of the camps in Turkey and 43 youth-workers were employed by Turkish Red Crescent since September of 2104 for this project and, 3 personnel was also put in charge of managing the coordination process (UNICEF, 2014).

Furthermore, a project was launched for the procurement of the Syrian refugee children by the AFAD, Ministry of National Education, and, Turkish Red Crescent funded by EU and managed by UNICEF. Within in prospects of the project, the number Syrian teaching personnel is to be increased, the foundation of libraries in the camps and the YOBİS, the information management system for the Syrian students and teachers were completed (<http://avrupa.info.tr/tr/>, 2016). The similar samples are much more than, it is told here.

The conditions for the acceptance and the administration of Syrian refugees changed with the continuation of refugee influx. By the early 2013, Syrian refugees in Turkey are accommodated mostly in camps supported and governed by the Government and the NGO's. As of 24 October 2016, there were 18.900 people in six camps at Hatay, 42.763 people in five camps at Gaziantep, 109.672 people in five camps at Şanlıurfa, 33.290 people in two camps at Kilis and 55.309 people in 6 camps at Adana, Diyarbakır, Malatya, Mardin, Kahramanmaraş and Osmaniye and in total there were 253.748 refugees in 24 different camps at 10 cities (www.afad.gov.tr/tr/, 2016).

Turkey has launched an initiation, "Disease Temporary City Management System" (AFKEN), to control the refugee camps more properly and efficiently. The given system has the chief features given below: (AFAD, 2015a)

- Entire administrative works and actions are monitored and controlled by AFAD Geographical Information System infrastructure.

- There is instant access to reports and statistics such as of camp capacity and camp efficiency.
- Aid, storage and personnel management are executed more efficiently.
- It paves the way for the more rapid administrative responses and the implementation of a more standard execution system all over the camps.
- The program which enables to control the camps electronically is the first of its kind.

Moreover, United Nations (UN) conducts UN Public Service Program to adjust the public services and promote change. The given program is comprised of three elimination levels. The first stage is held by UN Public Administration and Development Management Agency and UN Woman Organization (UN-WOMEN) and the second stage is organized by UN Public Services Rewards Evaluation Reviewers (UNSPA-ER) and the last phase by UN Public Administration Experts Committee (CEPA). Turkey was rewarded as the first within the scope of the program at “Development of Public Services Demonstration” category after completing the all three stages successfully with the AKFEN project in the West Asia (whsturkey.org/, 2016).

The AKFEN project which became the first by leaving behind the projects of 193 countries aims the ultimate coordination and cooperation between institutions in case of a crisis (AFAD, 2015a, p. 32). Besides, these kinds of projects promote the Turkey’s and AFAD’s transition from disease management to crisis management through institutional development and experimentation. (AFAD, 2015b). In this respect, it facilitates the management of crises within the prospects of governance. For example, Turkey as a precaution to refugee influx towards its territories established a refugee camp in Iraq as the first to do so (AFAD, 2015b).

This part of the study analysis the five camps in Hatay, Şanlıurfa and Kilis compared to 24 camps in Turkey regarding their size.

3.1. Refugee Camps in Hatay

Hatay is the first location towards which the refugee movements are directed. A group of 252 people took refuge in Hatay in 29 April 2011 for the first time (AFAD, 2014). A closed sports complex was provided for the sheltering of the refugees and basic necessities were procured. What is more, with the continuation of mass migration, Syrian migrants were registered after body scanning, identity check and verbal testimony (Parliament Investigation Report 24/2, 2012).

The first tent-city in Hatay towards the refugees was established in central of Yayladagi. After some developments over the infrastructure, a public building was assigned for the use of refugees and first transfers are conducted (Parliament Investigation Report 24/2, 2012). Further refugee influx made the foundation Altınözü and Boynuyogun tent-cities imperative and the number reached five within a short period of time.

The chief implementations at five tent-cities in Hatay since the arrival of first Syrian refugee groups within the first 18 months after April 2011 as follows: (Parliament Investigation Report 24/2, 2012; Parliament Investigation Report 24/3, 2012)

- More than 180 thousand patients were examined and almost an 1800 of them were operated surgery.
- The vaccination dates of refugee children are updated and they are vaccinated.
- Itinerary courses were opened for the adults in the tent cities.
- Sports complexes were built on a wide range of sport branches.
- The refugees were allowed to go out of the camps in groups within a specific period of time.

- After the request of refugees those who have a proper passport in the tent cities, they were permitted to connect and move to countries such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and, Jordan.
- The refugees in the tent cities are allowed to visit their relatives in the zones founded outside of the tent city.
- The Red Crescent provided hot meal three times per day. Coffee and tea machines were established servicing for 24 hours in a day.
- The examination of bacterial and chlorine level of the tap water for the disinfection is implemented.
- A tap-water system of 7100 meters and a sewage system of 4476 meters were constructed to ensure the provision water within the tent city.
- The routes within the city are asphalted and some parts are parqueted.
- An electrical heater was provided for each tent.
- 15 cleaning personnel were employed along with spraying and cleaning materials.
- Female security personnel were employed.
- Fully equipped health vehicles are provided in addition to helicopter ambulance.

The investigations about the tent cities by the Assembly Council ascertained that the complaints over the camps are related to the management or facilities of the camps but the life out of the camp. In this respect, the permission of work and refuge are the chief issues. Additionally, the request such as providing hot meal three times in a day, access to the internet, the permission to visit the relatives in other camps are delivered to authorities (Parliament Investigation Report 24/2, 2012; Koyuncu, 2014).

3.2. Refugee Camps in Şanlıurfa

Harran and Suruç container cities in Şanlıurfa are of the biggest camps in terms of size. Harran container city was built between 19 October 2012 and 13 January 2013 within a time period shorter than 3 months. When the center was established for the first time, there were around 12 thousand refugees in 2000 containers sized m² 21. This accommodation center consisted of four neighborhoods; in the first two months two social facility, two worshipping places, two markets, two volleyball and one basketball fields along with three schools with a capacity of 64 students. 211 teachers were employed in these schools and 4747 students were enrolled. Apart from that 20 containers were used for health services. At the first stage, four family doctors and 21 health personnel were employed. Moreover, two firefighters were employed in case of a fire (Parliament Investigation Report 24/3, 2013).

Furthermore, according to the formal statistics, 190.874 asylum seekers entered from the Kobani province of Syria into Suruç of Turkey via Muşitpınar border just between September and October of 2014. Some of these asylum seekers are accommodated in Suruç Boarding School and its vicinity and the area hosted 5350 asylum seekers within 107 tents. Another accommodation center is the Suruç Municipality tent city which hosts 1600 asylum seekers (Parliament Investigation Report 24/5, 2014). Besides, Suruç Container City is the first ecological camp in the area. There established agricultural fields for the asylum seekers by building ultra-violet refinery infrastructure applied to sewage system.

Suruç Logistics Center by which the aid is distributed and collected regarding residents within and without the accommodation center have three warehouses storing the food, medicine, tent and basic necessities. Of them, two used by Red Crescent and three used by AFAD. The aids of Şanlıurfa Metropolitan Municipality, UNCHR, national and international organizations are compiled here. During the management of the center, AFAD chiefs coming from Ankara and Kayseri with their crew attended the studies towards the asylum seekers (Parliament Investigation Report 24/5, 2014).

3.3. Refugee Camps in Kilis

The close interest of deputy Governor who is charge of AFAD and Directorate General of Migration Management towards the Öncupinar Refugee Camp in Kilis accelerated the process in the camps (Kahraman, 2016). For instance, one of the early practices of Kilis Governorate towards camps is the arrangement of elections for the Syrians residing in the camps.

After the elections in Öncupinar Container-City which was held on 17 January 2013, the Syrians who are assigned to be neighborhood representatives are rewarded by the governor of Kilis (www.kilis.gov.tr/, 2013). The organization of elections by the Governorate of Kilis can be regarded as chief stimuli to keep the Syrians being alienated and be helpful in easing the integration process along with boosting the participation-governance relationship.

There are positive evaluations about the conditions of the camps in Kilis. Of these comments, UN General Secretary's Special Representative on Children and Armed Conflict, Leila Zerrougui visited Elbeyli Container-City and the Kilis Hospital in which the Syrian refugees are treated stated that *"Syrians who took refuge in Turkey are hosted above standards and i am witness to that."* (www.kilis.gov.tr/, 2013). Additionally, The New York Times author, Mac McLelland, commented on the Kilis Öncupinar Refugee camp after a visit and wrote an article, *"How to build a perfect refugee camp?"* (www.nytimes.com/, 2014).

First group of residences which was two-stored and constructed by the combination of 8 containers with a balcony were built in February for the refugees for the first time in the world. These residences are designed for the compensation of exponential demand around Öncupinar and pioneered by AFAD. During the emplacement of these containers, the NGO's played an active role. Thus, with the initiation of Humanitarian Aid Association (İHH), 1250 container to host a population of 10 thousand refugees were emplaced of which 900 were sponsored by International Islamic Aid Organization (İİOC) and the rest was supplied through the support of philanthropist and AFAD (www.ihh.org.tr/, 2016).

4. Conclusion

Turkey attempted to respond by building camps above the international standards in managing governance of Syrian refugee crisis. On the other hand, Jordan Ministry of Social Affairs decided to build refugee camps in September of 2014 after the over-population of camps in the country and have chosen Turkey as the role model. In this regard, Turkey can be viewed as a remarkable example in concern to responses against the refugee crisis.

When taken the infrastructure of the refugee camps, Turkey is highly successful compared to many camps in the world. For example, in the Şanlıurfa camp organized by AFAD, there is one tent per four people. The accommodation facilities in the camps are procured by AFAD, Governorates and Turkish Red Crescent while local, national and international NGO's are also in the back.

Though, in the studies on the governance of refugee camps, states are not the only actors anymore, Turkey as a state endeavors as much as NGO's and civil society. That Turkey since the early days of the crisis embraced "pro-migrant" policies was helpful in dealing with the formation of new camps. Besides, the governance of camps is taken from a deliberative perspective and the residents are able to have a word in the governing.

To put all in a nutshell, the governance of camps all across the world are mostly managed in cooperation with the global actors and aid organizations. On the other hand, the camps in the world are in struggle to govern properly. The refugee camps in Turkey initiates significant projects in cooperation with AFAD and other important actors.

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