

HISAR SCHOOL

JUNIOR MODEL UNITED NATIONS 2019

“Protecting Freedom in the Global Age ”

Economic & Social Council

*Strengthening the Coordination of Emergency
Humanitarian Assistance*



**RESEARCH
REPORT**

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Forum: Economic & Social Council

Issue: Strengthening the Coordination of Emergency Humanitarian Assistance

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Introduction

In 2017, hazards and conflicts left about 201 million people in need of the ‘last resort’ of international humanitarian assistance in order to cope and survive (Development Initiatives). In countries such as Yemen, Syria, and South Sudan the population struggles with civil wars and external conflicts that lead to forced immigrants, however, in regions such as the Caribbean and the Horn of Africa the population struggles with disasters, droughts, and food insecurities. Although these 201 million people from 134 countries awaited humanitarian assistance, $\frac{1}{5}$ of total are in just 3 countries which are Syria, Yemen, and Turkey.

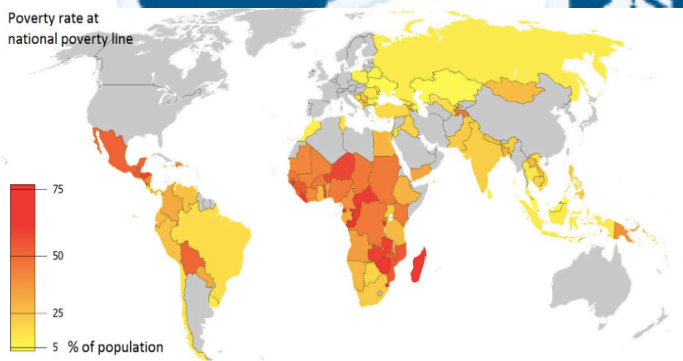


Figure 1: Poverty Rate in World According to Nations' Population

Humanitarian assistance is a need that increases day by day every year. Multiple factors affect the need for humanitarian assistance. The relation between poverty, environmental vulnerability, and fragility of a country determines the number of citizens living in extreme poverty. Multidimensional poverty is an extreme contributor to humanitarian need alongside conflicts, natural hazards, and diseases. Since 1991, United Nations tries to establish new foundations, resolutions, and campaigns in order

to provide as much humanitarian aid as possible. In 1999, when the world population hit 6 billion, the facts have become shockingly worse. The emergency humanitarian assistance provided was not enough to deal with the urgent situations all around the world. Just 12 years later, in 2011, world population hit 7 billion. The slowly growing world population suddenly had a spike never seen in world history, which made everything harder for nations to cope with. It can be seen that not only the world population but also the nature has not been so easy to cope with after those years, which brought more and more problems.

The Economic and Social Council then named a new issue to be discussed in meetings: “Strengthening the Coordination of Emergency Humanitarian Assistance”. As soon as new solutions were

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formed and the nations started to adapt to this larger world population state, the new projects started to form. “Protecting Freedom in Global Age”, the theme of Hisar JMUN’19, is the ultimate goal of this issue since by supporting people with emergency humanitarian assistances the UN itself and UN agencies are aiming to give these people their freedom back.

Definition of Key Terms

Environmental Vulnerability: The tendency of the environment to respond to changes in human affected and climatic conditions either positively or negatively.

Fragile Country / State: A common term used for developing countries that have weak state capacities and/or weak state legitimacies leaving its citizens vulnerable to a range of conflicts. These countries are found to be eligible for humanitarian assistance.

Food Insecurity: Lack of access to enough amount of good, healthy, and culturally appropriate food.

Forced Displacement: Generally experienced by “forced immigrants”, forced displacement is the coerced movement of a person or a group of people away from their home region, usually including acts of violence.

Last Resort: A final course of action, used only when all other options have failed.

Multidimensional Poverty: A term that refers to people who are poor will suffer multiple disadvantages at the same time such as poor health, malnutrition, and lack of clean water.

Official Development Assistance (ODA): A type of government aid provided for developing countries to promote their economic development and welfare.

Protracted Crisis: According to Food and Agriculture Organization’s (FAO) definition, protracted crises are environments in which a significant proportion of the population is acutely vulnerable to death, disease, and disruption of livelihoods over a prolonged period of time.

General Overview

The United Nations, since its establishment in 1945 always was a union where states discussed worldwide issues and found solutions to them. Until 1990s, the Member States were trying to help each other out if any small crises happened without any need for treaties, framework, unions etc. However, in 1997-98,

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one of the most powerful oscillation events in the history was recorded with the El-Niño Event. This oscillation caused more damage than ever expected. The air temperature warmed temporarily by 1.5°C, whereas usually as a result of an El-Niño Event the air warmed up only 0.25°C (Scott). It led to severe outbreak of the Rift Valley as well as causing droughts and floods worldwide. As a result of this natural disaster, United Nations wanted to get an emergent decision in order to help those affected from the oscillation. So in 1999, as the world population hit 6 billion, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) has been established and quickly the office started to form emergency action plans in order to coordinate with people in need as fast as possible. Following that, positive responses from DR Congo, South-Eastern Europe, and DPRK has been received and DR Congo appealed that the assistance has definitely scaled up with the formation of UNDRR.

In 2001, Gujarat Earthquake in India occurred. India was in a really difficult situation however; this was the last time India requested international assistance. As the Member States were trying to cope with the enlarging population and natural disasters, in 2003 the World Health Organization (WHO) alerts the world for SARS virus. As a result, in 2004, the UN founded the Emergency Capacity Building (ECB) Project. This project continued until 2013 but the UN parties have decided to not extend the operation time of the project. After a stagnant 3-year period, in 2007, the Global Financial Crisis occurred, which brought the World Food Price Crisis alongside it. The extreme poverty rates have extremely increased and the effects of the multidimensional poverty were observed clearly. People experienced many disadvantages at the same time, including malnutrition and poor health conditions. In 2007-08, the UN took action in order to solve the financial crises, so Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) was found and it started to operate. The fund was a huge help to strengthen the financial state of Member States in emergencies.

The humanitarian assistance topic cannot be discussed as a single issue because it consists of many other sub-issues such as refugees, healthcare, food insecurities, and lack of clean water. In 2009 and 2010 the Gaza Crisis occurred. As the UN tried to interfere and send emergency humanitarian assistance the Haiti Earthquake and floods in Pakistan happened, which left thousands of people vulnerable. 2011 was a dynamic year consisting of many civil wars, conflicts, and forced displacements. In 2011, South Sudan has declared its independence that brought many more crises with the Sudanese government. The armed conflict left many people in struggles for their lives. A very similar situation in Syria, the civil war forced the citizens to leave their homeland for their own security and their family's security and wellbeing. Turkey, as a neighbor country to Syria and as the number one choice of the immigrants because of the proximity between 2 countries, opened refugee camps. These refugee camps provided food, clean water, security, and healthcare for the forced immigrants that were victimized for coerced acts during forced displacement.

As the actions in Europe, Arab region, and Asia were taken under control, the African Union established a convention for the African region specifically. The Kampala Convention addresses internal displacement caused by large-scale development projects in Africa, conflicts, and natural hazards. In 2013,

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this time WHO announced the Ebola virus. The virus emerged from DR Congo and South Sudan and has become a pandemic virus alerting the whole world population. Meanwhile, as the governments were taking safety and health precautions, in 2015, over 1 million refugee arrived Europe, which left the European countries in a struggle. Many states shut their borders for these refugees and forced Turkey to have a migrant deal with the European Union in order to accept these forced immigrants that came from the Arab region. In 2016, 1st World Humanitarian Summit took place in Istanbul, Turkey. The summit was organized by the UN agency called UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA). The summit aimed to share knowledge and establish common best practices among the wide spectrum of organizations involved in humanitarian action. After the summit, the “UN Children’s Fund announced the establishment of an air corridor in Malawi to explore the use of drones for humanitarian purposes” (NMUN).

The UN and the Member States individually has done and are doing so much to strengthen the coordination of the emergency humanitarian assistance, however because the issue covers many broad topics that are problematic all around the world a definite solution is hard to achieve. Also, it should be kept in mind that “poverty, vulnerability and crisis are inseparably linked. Poor people (living on under US\$3.20 a day) and extremely poor people (living on under US\$1.90) are more vulnerable to shocks. Many also live in countries at high risk of such shocks. Nearly 59% of the world’s extremely poor and almost half of the world’s poor people live in countries identified as fragile, environmentally vulnerable or both” (Development Initiatives).

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

Syria

Syria was the largest recipient of international humanitarian assistance in 2016 by receiving 14% of all the humanitarian assistance given. Syrian population is one of the biggest victims of the worldwide lack of coordination of humanitarian assistance. Food insecurity is one of the catastrophes that have resulted from the conflicts in the area, which leaves the population vulnerable to hunger and poverty.

Turkey

In 2016, Turkey was one of the 10 largest recipients of international humanitarian assistance. However, according to UN reports, just a year later, in 2017, Turkey has been chosen as the largest donor



Figure 2: 20 Contributors of the Largest Amounts of Humanitarian Assistance, 2017

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country of humanitarian assistance with a donation of about 8 million US dollars. As a country who has experienced both donating and receiving humanitarian assistance, Turkey plays a major role in the issue.

South Sudan

The ongoing civil war in South Sudan has made the population destitute for any and all emergency assistance. Before the civil war, the war between Sudan and South Sudan was a major conflict, which made the citizens even more vulnerable to any upcoming shocks. In 2016, South Sudan was also in the list of top 10 aid receivers. Transportation of food, water, and health aids has become harder every year, making it worse for the welfare of the population, especially children.

United States of America (USA)

With a donation of 6.6 million US dollars for humanitarian assistance, USA is the second largest donor country after Turkey. USA is a permanent donor for humanitarian assistance throughout the years. Although the country itself isn't included in many major conflicts, the USA has a stance in nearly every conflict worldwide. USA by itself provides almost a third (32%) of all the assistance made by government contributions.

Yemen

Yemen has received 8.2% of the total country-allocated humanitarian assistance, which made it become the 2nd largest recipient in 2016. Since March 2015, there is an ongoing civil war in Yemen, which causes the citizens to become indigent; as well as the country itself being named as one of the poorest countries of the Arab world.

Germany

In 2017, Germany has been named as the 3rd largest donor for humanitarian assistance after Turkey and USA with a donation of nearly 3 million US dollars. Previously, Germany has always been included in the top 20 list of donors, however, 2017 was a year Germany has given more value for worldwide issues and world citizens, which makes the nation itself one of the major parties in the issue.

Japan

In 2017, like many other nations in this list, Japan is also one of the biggest donors in 2017. Japan is a major party in conventions and summits about humanitarian assistance. Japan is a country open to many natural hazards such as earthquakes and tsunamis so the government is very enterprising for solutions to strengthen the coordination of humanitarian assistance.

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Timeline of Events

1997-98	<i>El-Niño Event – One of the most powerful oscillation events recorded in history, which resulted in widespread droughts, flooding, and other natural hazards across the world.</i>
1999	<i>United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR, formerly) has been established by the United Nations in order to form emergency action plans for risk reduction.</i>
2001	<i>Gujarat Earthquake, India. This was the last time India requested international humanitarian assistance.</i>
2003	<i>World Health Organization (WHO) issues global alert for SARS virus.</i>
2004	<i>The Emergency Capacity Building (ECB) Project is initiated with the aims of improving the speed, effectiveness, and delivery of humanitarian response programs.</i>
2007	<i>Global Financial Crisis commences and thus, the World Food Price Crisis takes place: Food insecurity increases globally.</i>
2007-08	<i>Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) that was launched in 2006 starts to use its aids for countries in need.</i>
2009	<i>Gaza Crisis</i>
2010	<i>Haiti earthquake and Pakistan floods happen.</i>
2011	<i>First camps for Syrian refugees open in Turkey.</i>
2012	<i>Kampala Convention comes into force, as well as the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20) takes place.</i>
2013	<i>WHO declares Ebola as a pandemic virus.</i>
2013	<i>Civil War breaks out in South Sudan.</i>
2015	<i>Over 1 million refugees and migrants arrive in Europe.</i>
2016	<i>1st World Humanitarian Summit takes place.</i>

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Treaties and Events

Kampala Convention (2012) - This treaty was adopted in October 2009, however it came into force after the 15th states ratification, which was in December 2012. The convention's formal name is "African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa". African Union addresses internal displacement caused by natural hazards, armed conflicts, and large-scale development projects in Africa.

Food Assistance Convention (2013) - Food Aid Committee members agreed to not extend the old Food Aid Convention, which ended in 2012. Accordingly, Food Assistance Convention came into force in 2013. Parties who have established the treaty aim to reduce hunger and malnutrition, decrease food insecurity, improve the nutritional status of the most vulnerable populations, and as a result, save lives.

European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid (2007) - It is the overall policy framework of the European Union (EU) about external humanitarian aid, which was signed and ratified by 3 main EU Institutions in 2007. The Consensus includes objectives about international humanitarian cooperation, donorship, civil-military relations, and risk reduction in emergencies.

UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/46/182 (1991) - Although this is not a treaty, it is the most important resolution of UN in relation with this issue. The resolution sets the principles and framework for humanitarian assistance. The resolution also highlights that humanitarian aid is of cardinal importance for the victims of natural hazards or other emergencies.

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue



The Emergency Capacity Building (ECB) Project was one of the greatest achievements of the UN. However, just like everything that was suggested as a solution, this project also had some achievements and failures. The main goal of the project was to "strengthen the humanitarian community's capacity to save lives and protect the welfare and rights of people in emergency" (UN OCHA). In order to accomplish this goal, some of the aims were to enhance resources for field set-up rapidly, contribute to improving the sector's emergency preparedness, and improve field-level capacity to prepare for and respond to emergencies in hazard-prone

countries. However, there were some very critical points to this project that were neglected all along the procedure and was never operated on. The examples can be given as surge capacity (as a part of the

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emergency response), insecure settings, security issues, and the infrastructure & facilities including a greater knowledge of the military in humanitarian actions. In order to restart this project that has expired in 2013, the UN and the UN OCHA have to find innovative ways to address these critical competencies.

The second attempt to resolve the issue particularly in Syria has also failed. Kofi Annan (the former Secretary-General of the UN) had plan called the “Six-point plan” that included an observer mission in Syria, the push for humanitarian access, and the establishment of a joint-mission in Syria. Instead, when the UNSC has failed a solution for the issue, “over 400 thousand people have been killed, over 5 million have immigrated, and around 6.3 million people were internally displaced” (United Nations). Although the six-point plan was created with good intentions, the Security Council did not much. The UNSC has remained largely on the sidelines, and formed a handful of resolutions, which many remained as only papers. Although this plan is an attempt about Syria specifically, there are many similar events of the failures of the UNSC. So if a plan is going to be established, delegates should make sure that there are enough supporters for this project to actually operate and solve regional issues.

Possible Solutions



Figure 4: Food Storage Warehouse Example

Humanitarian assistance is a very broad subject, which includes more than one field of work. Delegates should be reminded to include clauses that would address every type of humanitarian assistance and its coordination. One type of solution that would address food insecurity and clean water problems is that the Member States can rent or establish warehouses especially designed for food and water storage. These warehouses would be transportable such as large trailers. For the beginning, there would be around 5-10 portable warehouses and those would be placed in the regions that need the most humanitarian assistance or regions in the middle of multiple recipient regions. The money that is being donated by different governments and private donors can be used for the installment of technical instruments inside the vans and for the purchase of food & water. If used efficiently, emergency assistances also can be primarily sent from these vans.

Another major field of work of UN on the topic of providing humanitarian aid is the issue of health. Especially in regions struggling with internal conflicts, governments are not able to provide for their citizens. Afghanistan is a huge example of this problem. At this point, UN has to step in. Although NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) such as Doctors Without Borders try to provide healthcare for urgent citizens, the NGOs are not enough for such an extensive work. UN should send hospital devices or the money to get them to a number of hospitals chosen in each Member State. Also UN inspectors should be sent to these

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hospitals biannually to check the usage of the money or the devices. Afterwards, reports about health level of the population and the effect of the improved hospitals should be prepared and discussed in UN sessions.

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