

Economic and Social Council

Stabilization of Food Security in Conflict Zones

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Forum: Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

Issue: Stabilization of Food Security in Conflict zones

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Introduction

The stabilization of food security is crucial when it comes to the safety and nourishment of citizens in conflict zones. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) defines food security as people having economic and physical access to safe and nutritious food at all times that fit their dietary needs in order to continue their lifestyle. It is important to specifically focus on food security in conflict zones since conflict zones are notorious for not providing citizens with proper care and nourishment. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) oversees all issues related to peace building and human rights issues thus making the issue at hand directly related to ECOSOC. Many countries in the past with either major or minor conflict zones have taken measures to make sure each citizen in the conflict zone gets the nourishment they need. Though many countries have had previous issues with food security in the context of conflict, South Sudan and Syria are most know for their past in food insecurity. While the conflict in Syria has led to many agricultural practices being destroyed, the issue in South Sudan is far worse since it is the armed forces specifically targetting markets making it so citizens have no access to food. The issue of food insecurity in SI is crucial to think of creative solutions for problems such as the stabilization of food security in conflict zones since the absence of food security has the potential to worsen the preexisting conflict.

Definition of Key Terms

Conflict Zone: Conflict zones are areas with disagreement between two or more parties such as a government of a country and other armed forces. The conflict zone is the center specifically where the fighting happens and where most civilians are harmed.

Food security: Food security is a term used to describe the availability of food that can be distributed to all citizens equally without any fear of the food running out or not being enough for each citizen.

Malnourishment: Malnourishment is the lack of proper nutrition, in other words it is the event in which the individual has not eaten thus leading to many symptoms such as organ failure and fatigue.

Famine: Scarcity of food.

General Overview

The restricted access to food that citizens endure due to the poor job most governments do in distributing food during times of crises can be categorized under the second United Nations Sustainable Development goal: “Zero Hunger”. With the uprise in the number of conflicts - large or small - many citizens have not had equal access to food for a number of reasons such as but not limited to; low to none at all income of citizens stuck in conflict zones, the shortage of supplies being sent to aid citizens in conflict zones and the agricultural practices of the countries in question being stopped or slowed. As well as some armed forces in conflict zones ruining agricultural areas and taking over markets that sell supplies and food. It is important to note that in many cases of food insecurity caused by conflict, there are countries and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO’s) willing to send supplies and food to aid the innocent civilians caught in the conflict with no access to food/supplies. An important part of the issue regarding the stabilization of food security in conflict zones has the governments and other major parties involved in the conflict to blame. In most cases where there is the absence of food security in a conflict zone it has been strategically done as a military tactic.

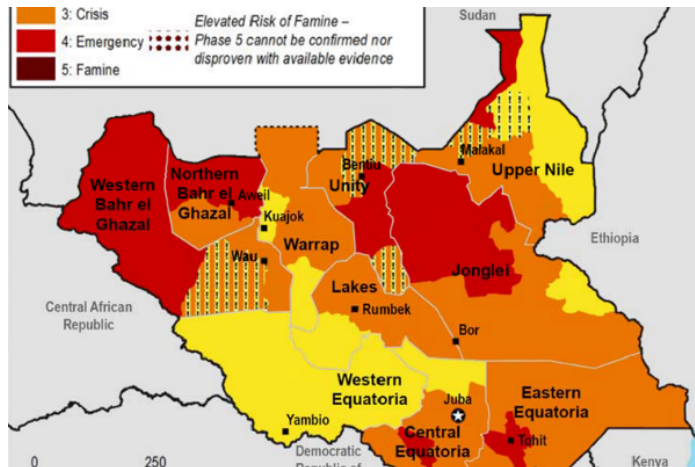


The Situation in Ukraine

With the outbreak of Covid-19 as well as preexisting conflicts, the occurrence of the Ukraine-Russia war has put a large dent in the global economy and food security. This not only shows how the Ukraine-Russia war is harmful to the food security of both sides in the conflict but also the entire worlds food security.

The Situation in Syria

The Syrian civil war began in 2011 leaving over 14 million civilians homeless making it the largest amount of civilians displaced since the end of World War II. The devastating state in which the refugees have to live in since departing from their homes has gained media recognition in the recent years with humanitarian aid teams being sent to aid with supplies and food however the conflict and the displacement of humans from their homes is ongoing. Though many Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO’s) have aided Syrian people stuck in the middle of the conflict with the spread of Covid-19 supply chains have been negativeley effected making it harder for NGO’s to access good supplies and food to send to Syria.



The Situation in South Sudan

The situation in South Sudan is a prime example of how armed forces weaponize the starvation of innocent civilians. The civil war in South Sudan started in 2013 and was officially declared over in 2020 however the disagreement between the government and other armed forces has been ongoing which has led the citizens to suffer from food insecurity. With over 400 thousand people dead and over 4 million homeless this has been a devastation to the country and the areas nearby. The reason

there is food insecurity in South Sudan currently is because armed forces have been targeting markets and areas where agricultural practices to starve civilians in order to gain power. This war strategy is in direct defiance of the resolution adopted by the United Nation Human Rights Council (UNHRC) titled 'The Right To Food' 7/14.

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

Syria: With the rapid decline of agricultural practices and more importantly the government and opposing teams involved in the war using their power to withhold food from citizens as a form of warfare the country's citizens have suffered from malnutrition for an extended period of time. The World Food Programme (WFP) provides food for 5.6 million citizens each month however with the reduction in budget and disruption of food supply, the WFP has had to reduce the amount of supplies and food sent to Syrian refugees. Action Against Hunger has been working with Syria in order to stabilize food security in the conflict zone.



Yemen: With the capturing of the nation's capital, the country's economy was harmed greatly and most citizens received no income at all leaving many citizens without access to food. According to the UN, more than half of the population was in urgent need of food.

South Sudan: The civil war which led the country into an economic crisis resulted in supply and food prices to drastically increase. As well as armed forces taking over agricultural areas and markets so many people either couldn't afford food or didn't even have it available at a market. With the ceasefire agreement in September 2018 the war had slowed down however the United Nations reported that over half of the population did not have access to water and food.

Timeline of Events

October 16th, 1945	<i>The Food and Agriculture Organization was founded in the FAO conference held in Canada with the objective to establish food securities in areas of need through organizing civilian efforts.</i>
December 1961	<i>The United Nations World Food Programme was founded with the initiative to give humanitarian aid specifically in the food distribution area to places of conflict.</i>
May 24th, 2018	<i>The United Nations Security Council adopted a new resolution condemning the act of withholding food from citizens in conflict zones as a form of warfare and classified it as a war crime.</i>

Treaties and Events

- [Security Council Resolution S/RES/2417 \(2018\)](#)

The Resolution 2417 adopted by the Security Council condemns the act of starving citizens as a form of warfare. It contains clauses such as “Underlining that using starvation of civilians as a method of warfare may constitute a war crime,” stating how the act of withholding food from citizens as an act of warfare could be categorized as a war crime and shouldnt be permitted.

- [Human Right Council Resolution 7/14](#)

This Resolution 7/14 was adopted by the Human Rights Council in order to clearly define the rights humans in receiving nutritious and an equal amount of food. It also addresses the severity and urgency of the situation at hand regarding the stabilization of food security in conflict zones.

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

Many Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) and United Nations (UN) affiliated programmes have aided conflict zones by sending food, however not many concrete solutions for the stabilization of food security in conflict zones have been issued. Currently the best solution for the issue has been the NGOs and UN affiliates sending food to the areas by collecting donations from citizens. Some of these organizations are the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

These organizations in addition to sending food directly to areas with conflict also form resolutions to stop war crimes such as the withholding of food from citizens as a form of warfare from happening.

Possible Solutions

One of the possible solutions to the problem at hand would be for countries not involved to either send food and help regenerate agricultural practices for citizens involved or for the United Nations with the help of the countries government to assign conflict free zones where it is prohibited to fight or engage in any kind of aggravated assault between citizens and other armed forces. Many countries in the past have helped out neighboring countries by sending food and supplies however it has been proven time and time again that there is simply not enough food for everyone in the conflict zones. If the United Nations offered compensation for the amount of food and supplies sent by not involved countries, the countries may be more interested in aiding the conflict zone's citizens.

Creating conflict free zones is a harder solution to apply to real life, as though most governments and armed forces involved in the conflict would most likely not agree due to consumption of resources in order to create new buildings and accommodations for citizens, however with the intervention of the United Nations it may be a plausible solution. This solution in theory would be the most beneficial since the citizens in the conflict free zones would be able to continue their day to day lives pre-conflict and start new agricultural practices and husbandry practices for food.

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