HISAR SCHOOL

JUNIOR MODEL UNITED NATIONS 2018

"Globalization: Creating a Common Language"

Humanitarian Committee

Protecting critical infrastructure in regards of delivering humanitarian aid to conflict-affected regions

HISAR SCHOOL JUNIOR MUN

RESEARCH REPORT

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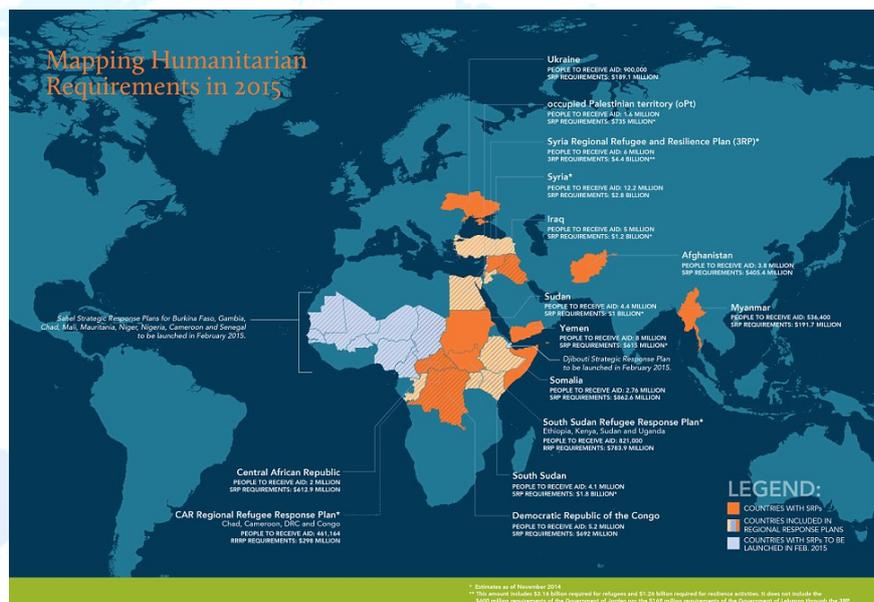
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RESEARCH REPORT

Forum: GA 4 – Humanitarian Committee

Issue: Protecting critical infrastructure in regards of delivering humanitarian aid to conflict-affected regions.

Student Officer: Ülgen Yıldırım

Introduction

Creating a common language is critical for humanitarian aid. There are countless communities in today's world, which desperately seek humanitarian help. Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Yemen, Palestine, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and the Central African Republic are only some from the long list of countries that have on-going humanitarian conflicts. The most devastating thing about this situation is not being able to deliver help to some communities despite all the funds raised, campaigns started and plans made. The initial step to be taken before planning on aiding communities, is making sure those communities have the foundations to be able to receive that humanitarian aid. These foundations are mostly infrastructure. Therefore,

Humanitarian Requirements Map (1)

working on the protection, development, and construction of critical infrastructure is an essential preliminary step to be taken in the process of aiding the countries in need.

Definition of Key Terms

Critical Infrastructure: Complex of networks and inter-connected systems that should be able to sustain a nation's and its people's basic requirements, resources and their development level

Humanitarian Aid: Physical, immaterial or logistical assistance delivered to the region and/or people affected by humanitarian crises

RESEARCH REPORT

General Overview

Critical infrastructures are divided into four sub-groups: communication, sanitation, water, and traffic. Communication infrastructures include phone services, and the Internet. They are significant for the delivery of humanitarian aid because if the conflict-affected region doesn't have sustainable communication infrastructure then it would be almost impossible for them to call for help, inform the aiders about the most recent updates, get socially aware of the conflict and keep up with the important news related to the on-going conflict.

Today, 1-1.5 billion people in the world lack access to reliable phone services. Sanitation and water infrastructure is critical for sustaining the health of the people living in conflict-affected regions. Even though the importance of access to clean sanitation facilities is quite often neglected, an estimate of 280,000 diarrheal deaths annually are caused by inadequate sanitation. And 2.5 billion people do not have any access to basic sanitation. Hundreds of millions of these people are located in the Sub Saharan Africa and South Asia, with Ethiopia having the least access to basic sanitation with 7.08% overall. Almost 800 million people lack access to water.

The last sub-group is the traffic infrastructure, and it is about how accessible transportation opportunities are. Transportation infrastructure is vital because it literally forms a basis for the delivery of humanitarian aid. It also connects urban and rural areas, unites the country internationally and expedites access to education and health services. Insufficient traffic infrastructure means that there isn't road access to where NGO's were planning to deliver humanitarian aid. In Africa, road access rate is 34%, while it is 50% in the other parts of the developing world. These statistics are just a summary of how poorly developed some parts of the world is, in terms of infrastructure. Plus, it is not a coincidence that they are the same as the parts of the world that have the most humanitarian requirements. That is because; the lack of infrastructural construction and protection is parallel with the need for humanitarian aid. This direct relationship is partially caused by the fact that the less economically developed countries neither have money to invest in infrastructure nor have money to supply the humanitarian needs of its people. But it is also caused by the fact that humanitarian aid cannot be delivered to areas with annihilated or deficient infrastructure.

Fortunately, it has been realized that sustainable growth, industrial progression, and improvements in health and education sectors require development and protection of infrastructure. In 2015, United Nations set seventeen goals for sustainable development, which are to be accomplished before 2030. They are called the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At the special ECOSOC meeting on "Innovations for Infrastructure Development and Promoting Sustainable Industrialization," the Council's President Frederick Shava said that the SDGs recognize the significance of investment in infrastructure for expanding the opportunities for people in need. He also added that prioritizing the achievement of SDG 9 (on infrastructure, industrialization, and innovation) in national, regional and global policymaking was vital. "Making progress on SDG 9 will have positive ripple effects on other SDGs, such as SDG 1 to end poverty; SDG 2 on zero hunger; SDG 3 on health, SDG 4 on education, SDG 6 on water and sanitation, SDG 7 on affordable and clean energy, SDG 8 on decent work and economic

growth; and SDG 11 for sustainable cities and communities, among others," he said. As the UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Wu Hongbo also said, addressing the special meeting, the development of infrastructure has "a catalytic and cross-cutting role" in implementing the 2030 Agenda. Unfortunately, as in all conflicts, there are some challenges that face us on our way towards protecting infrastructure. The inadequacy of infrastructural support by NGO's and outside contributors could be explained by sanctions, concerns about staff security, operational feasibility, and loss of access to the territory.

The presumably biggest challenge is money. In order to sort the financial part out we should handle the issue in two separate parts: financing in developing countries and financing in More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs). In the developing countries, the main problem is the inadequacy of infrastructure. These countries are still developing, so they don't have enough resources or money to allocate to the construction and protection of infrastructure. That is why they need more funding than other countries. According to estimations, infrastructure deficits in Africa cost 2% of GDP growth. On the other hand, there are some MEDCs in which protracted armed conflict is going on. Even if those States had strong infrastructures initially, it is very likely that these infrastructures are going to degrade because of the physical damage, late salary payments, and international sanctions as a result of the on-going conflict.

Moreover, the unavoidable rise in the security budgets during these conflicts cause the budgets for infrastructure, health, education and social services to automatically decrease. The State services might have been sustained at pre-conflict levels but the humanitarian aspects of the conflict can put heavy burdens on such countries, making them struggle to cope. So, in certain cases, MEDCs might become countries that need help with the reconstruction and protection of their infrastructure to make the delivery of humanitarian-aid easier. Considering the fact that two billion people will be added to urban areas due to the expected doubling of the number of people living in areas with emerging markets by 2030, a second big challenge is urbanization. More people in urban areas mean better infrastructure needed to sustain those people. So, urbanization might be another cause of an infrastructural crisis in which urbanized MEDC cities are desperately in need of help.

The longevity of the stability of infrastructure is another important point. For the infrastructure to endure large-scale conflicts it is really critical that you connect them in the most efficient way. The technical sophistication of urban infrastructure is a big challenge for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which is an organization working towards protecting victims of conflicts. The inter-connected infrastructure is so fragile that it could be destroyed and degraded in a breeze. Aerial bombardment is a fast method with which infrastructure could be annihilated. Lack of compartment parts is another reason why systems become impaired.

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

European Commission (EC)

European Union (EU) is committed to delivering long-term humanitarian aid and improving disaster response mechanisms. According to EC's vision, logistics and infrastructure are two essential parts of humanitarian aid delivery. That is why they have an ongoing program called the European Programme for Critical Infrastructure Protection (EPCIP), which focuses specifically on facilitating these two parts.

Medicines du Monde (MDM)

MDM organization, also known as the Doctors of the World, is a French NGO working in France and 64 other countries. Their main focus is to enable universal access to health services and facilities. Therefore, in most of their projects, they focus on improving water and sanitation infrastructure to allow the construction and improvement of health facilities.

Agence d'Aide a la Cooperation Technique et au Development (ACTED)

ACTED is a French NGO, which was founded in 1997 in Afghanistan. In 1997, they opened their first office in Central Africa with the aim of aiding people affected by the Congo-Brazzaville, and they worked on the reconstruction of infrastructure in the area. Since then, they pursue this mission internationally with a total of 490 projects.

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

The ICRC aims to ensure humanitarian protection and assistance for victims of humanitarian conflicts and war. In their long-term projects, they value the protection and restoration of infrastructure a lot. They are pretty successful in the area of infrastructure.

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

- [Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2017/14](#)

This statement is mainly addressing the famine threat in Yemen, Nigeria, South Sudan, and Somalia. It urges the aforementioned four countries to take steps that would facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid to those regions. This statement also specifically urges the protection of civilian infrastructure by the related parties. This is a recent statement issued in August 2017, so there was no serious improvement observed since then.

- Development of CIWIN by EC

CIWIN is an Internet-based multi-level system that enables the exchange of ideas, studies and projects about the protection of critical infrastructure. The development of this network also aims at raising

awareness on the significance of critical infrastructure. It has been improved and used a lot in our current age of technology.

- EPCIP

EPCIP sets the general framework for all projects and attempts of the European Union about the protection and reconstruction of critical infrastructure in EU states and other economically related countries. All Member States have successfully established a process for identifying and designating European Critical Infrastructures after EPCIP. However, there is no direct evidence that points out an improvement of the European Critical Infrastructures in the transport and energy sectors.

Possible Solutions

In the process of protecting and reconstructing infrastructure, we should be careful about four particular areas: integrated policy advice, capacity building, financial partnerships and a control mechanism. Infrastructure projects generally last for 20-30 years so policy frameworks need to be stabilized. The regions' population trends need to be studied for designing infrastructure models that can sustain the region for a long time. For financing, multilateral Development Finance Institutions (DFIs) could support the projects and facilitate some actions on sustainable infrastructure.

While projects need to be promoted to continue getting essential public investments, private financing will also need to significantly build up. De-risking infrastructure investments, incentivizing the interested financers would be nice ways to attract money. Meanwhile, domestic resources should also be mobilized to help finance the project better. Partnerships with humanitarian organizations could also be effective for developing a strategic financial plan.

Most importantly, delegates need to keep in mind that finance coming from only one source would not be able to compensate for all the requirements. So financial plans must include multiple methods and sources of finance. Another important part is to support and invest in domestic and global technology development, research and innovation to ensure the facilitation of sustainable and resilient infrastructure development. Considering the Paris Climate Pact and the promises made by it, new models of environment-friendly and climate resilient infrastructure models with reasonably low carbon emissions need to be developed. Finally, a control mechanism is vital. There should be an emergency plan for the potential attack that emphasizes three main stages: preparation, response, and recovery.

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