

Committee: Economic and Social Council

Issue: Rejuvenating the economies of former conflict zones

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Position: President

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Dear delegates,

My name is Niki Paraskevopoulou and I am an 11th grader in HAEF Psychico College. In this year's ACGMUN, I will have the honor to serve as the President of the Economic and Social Council, which will mark my 15th conference and my 7th time chairing, specifically, my 4th time chairing in ECOSOC.

Model United Nations (MUN) is an extracurricular activity that has had a truly meaningful impact on my life. Personally, through MUN, I have realized that my utmost passion is hidden in politics, economics and international relations. Having had the opportunity to explore how international organizations, like the United Nations (UN), work and operate as well as why such foundations exist, my interest in volunteering has increased, since I am now more sensitized to help my community to the greatest extent, the same way the UN aims to aid the international community.

ECOSOC is undoubtedly my favorite committee in a MUN conference because I believe that, as one of the Main Organs of the UN, its role is crucial. Delegates of the Council put efforts in order to resolve matters that trouble both the economy and the society. For instance, finding ways to rejuvenate economies of former conflict zones is of utmost importance in order to achieve Sustainable Development. As the President of the Council, it is my duty to not only guide you during the conference but also help you while you are preparing for it. This study guide will offer you some introductory information regarding the issue at hand. Towards the end of the guide, you will find some possible solutions for the topic's resolution. These proposals, however, should be your first ideas in order to conduct your own research which has to be based upon the policies of the country each of you will represent in the Council. Be reminded that plagiarism is not allowed and your resolutions for each topic will be checked by the expert chair. As a final note, I would like to encourage you to contact me via email (nikiparaskevo@icloud.com) in case you have any inquiries regarding the study guide, your overall research for the specific matter or the committee as a whole.

I look forward to meeting you all and sharing my passion for MUN with you!

Yours truly,

Niki

TOPIC INTRODUCTION

As it is universally recognized, all armed conflicts induce severe consequences for the regions that the conflict is taking place. Although a war has detrimental effects for all countries involved, it is undoubtable that the population affected the most is the one of the country which is under actual attack. Moreover, war is the worst enemy of Sustainable Development as it hurts all three pillars of sustainability: social, environmental and economic. Conflicts cause numerous to uncountable casualties, important environmental damages due to bombings and other outbreaks, almost complete economic collapse and so much more.

The Economic and Social Council is the main organ of the UN that deals with Sustainable Development the most. Under its auspices, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has set 17 goals, creating an Agenda which needs to be resolved by the year 2030. These goals constitute the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) whose achievement is of utmost importance for not only ECOSOC but also every UN Member State. Therefore, the topic of revitalising the economies of post conflict regions is crucial since its achievement would enable the Council to tackle a great obstacle in attaining its goal which is promoting Sustainable Development. It is foreseeable that by reviving the economy, the society benefits directly since economic and social growth, most of the times, come hand in hand.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Conflict

The word conflict has various meanings. In the particular topic, the word is used in the sense of the fight between countries or groups of people¹.

War Zone

War zone is the zone in which belligerents are waging war. The term generally refers to an area marked by extreme violence.²

Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

¹ "Definition of 'Conflict'." *Collins English Dictionary*, 2019, www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/conflict.

² "War Zone." Merriam-Webster, Merriam-Webster, 2019, www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/war%20zone.

GDP measures the monetary value of final goods and services—that is, those that are bought by the final user—produced in a country in a given period of time. It counts all of the output generated within the borders of a country. GDP is composed of goods and services produced for sale in the market and also includes some nonmarket production, such as defense or education services provided by the government.³

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Post-Conflict Economic Recovery

By definition, post-conflict economic recovery may be considered as the return to the economic state -the GDP and employment rates- of a country or a region before the outbreak of conflict. However, the levels of economic growth of a country or a region right before the commencement of a conflict may have been very low, meaning that the return to those levels would impact the economy negatively. Therefore, an effective post-conflict economic recovery would involve growth being sustained at significantly higher rates and should be accompanied by significant employment creation and action to reduce severe horizontal inequalities.

Economic Consequences of Armed Conflict

In order to comprehend the urgent need to focus on rejuvenating all post-conflict regions' economies, we have to consider delving into the consequences of conflict to the particular economies. While investigating the detrimental effects of war, it would be beneficial to divide them to those which occur during and those which follow the official cease of war. Firstly, when armed conflict takes place, trade with other countries is most likely to halt, along with all foreign investments. As the

region of a conflict may be extremely dangerous, the levels of tourism fall to zero, while sometimes the entrance to a region may not even be permitted. Simultaneously, the state has to

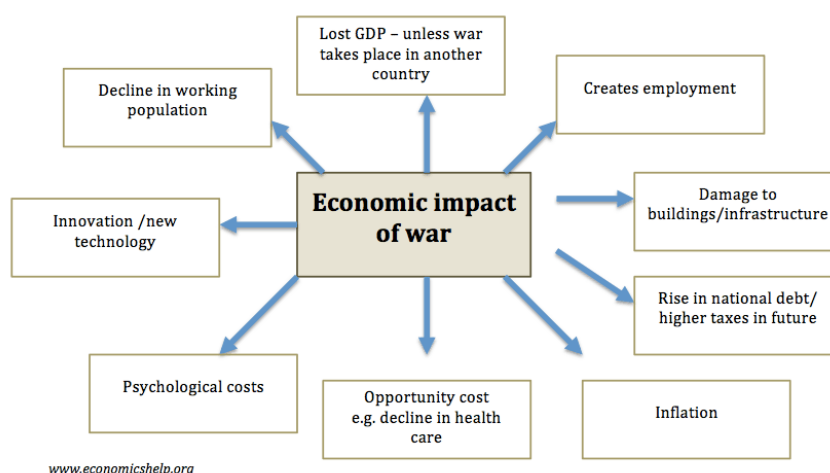


Figure 1 The economic consequences of war shown in a diagram

³ Callen, Tim. "Gross Domestic Product: An Economy's All." IMF, 18 Dec. 2018, www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/basics/gdp.htm.

face numerous military expenditures. In the aftermath, although the state doesn't have to face these kinds of costs, it is obliged to spend enormous amounts of money in order to repair the destroyed infrastructure. Moreover, foreign investors are seemingly still skeptical regarding the post conflict regions since the population of the regions struggle to obtain even the absolutely necessary commodities, while tourism levels are very low.

All in all, the economy of every post-war country is really hurt because of the lack of income in contrast to the many expenses occurred during war, along with all the costs that country is to face in order to restore the damaged infrastructure.

Social Implications of the Economic Consequences of War

It is obvious that war does not negatively affect only the economy of a region. As explained in the previous section, all industries will face difficulties, but the environment is deeply affected as well. However, the society is hurt more than any other domain. Casualties ranging from hundreds to millions bring about the most terrible effect to the society. Survivors are people that have been exposed to cruel situations and have experienced death very close to them. This shapes their comportment and attitude. That is to say, that the society of a post-conflict region has no motive. This is detrimental for the social development of the region while it serves as an obstacle to economic growth as well.

The explained situation leads to a dead end since the economy is damaged and the society is not motivated enough to improve it. The broken society of a region that is devastated because of conflict is most likely to be unable to create its own proper guidelines which will have to be followed in order for both the economy and the society to flourish again. Therefore, the need of external support and help arises.

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is one of the main goals of the international community and the UN is currently trying hard in order to achieve sustainable development worldwide, with ECOSOC being the main organ responsible to promote it. Conflicts are the greatest obstacles to Sustainable Development because they harm all three pillars of it; society, economy and environment. In order to overcome this obstacle, the first step is to rejuvenate the economy. Without the necessary resources, the state cannot improve the infrastructure which will give the opportunity to the hurt populations to have access to basic services such as health care and education. Moreover, only when a country is at a decent economic state can it help better the living conditions, including putting efforts to revive and protect the environment as well. Hence, we may establish that revitalizing the economy should be the priority of all post-conflict regions.

Achieving Sustainable Development is not a regional matter. It is a global responsibility since it has a global benefit. Therefore, the issue at hand does not or should not only concern countries that actually are former conflict zones, rather the entire international community. Were we to shifting our focus to the SDGs, we would realize how rejuvenating post-conflict economies is linked to a plethora of the goals.



Figure 2 The 17 Sustainable Development Goals

Ongoing conflicts

In order to find viable solutions to tackle the issue at hand, it is highly important to fully comprehend its focus. There is a great distinction between countries that are currently in conflict and former conflict zones. Ongoing conflicts require different measures in order to face the challenges conflicts bring about. The aftermath of an armed conflict leads to additional consequences which are detrimental for the already damaged economy of a post-conflict region. Were we to try to combat the damaging effects of war on the economy by suggesting and applying the same measures to both countries that currently endure conflict and post-conflict regions, many challenges would arise. The two different states require different distribution and allocation of resources and international aid. For instance, war zones need to allocate a certain amount of funds to military expenditures, while post-conflict regions need to use funding to repair infrastructure that has been completely damaged. As far as administration is concerned, regions where conflict is ongoing need international aid in order to provide security and safety to their unarmed civilians while former conflict zones need such aid to reform their governments in order to achieve political stability and restore the rule of law.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

United States of America (USA)

USA is currently the largest economy in the world. This allows the country to provide aid to other countries that need it. The US currently pays the 22% of all assessed contributionsⁱ of the UN and yet spends more money for voluntary contributions. Although the current President has threatened to cut US-funding for several UN bodies, it still provides great financial support. Also, USA along with some other More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs) sign unilateral trade agreementsⁱⁱ, as a type of foreign aid since they aim to help markets that struggle in order to strengthen strategic industries that do not, however, constitute a threat for the large U.S. economy; on the contrary, the emerging markets flourish, this way forming new market options for American exporters.⁴

Angola

The last conflict Angola engaged in was the civil war that lasted 27 years and ended in 2002. Since then, Angola has made substantial economic and political progress. For instance, the country has committed to impose economic and political sanctions against the armed rebel groups of the Great Lake's regionⁱⁱⁱ, as it strives to achieve peace and stability in Africa. In 2010, the country decided to reform its governmental system by establishing new constitution in order to sustain political stability. However, despite its efforts, Angola is still facing multiple challenges which serve as obstacles to its sustainable development which, of course, includes the complete revival of its economy. The living conditions of the population are alarming since a large part of it is bound to endure extreme poverty. The government needs to rebuild its infrastructure since the resident of Angola have inadequate access to basic public services. It is highly important for the country to diversify its economy, which could be achieved by reducing its dependency on oil while improving public financial management systems.

Ethiopia

Some years after the end of Ethiopia's conflict with Eritrea, its economy experienced strong, broad-based growth averaging 10.3% a year for a decade after 2006, compared to a regional average of 5.4%. Ethiopia's main economic challenges as a post-conflict region include sustaining its positive economic growth and accelerating poverty reduction, which both require significant progress in job creation as well as improved governance. Other key challenges are related to an underdeveloped private sector, which would limit the country's trade competitiveness which, consequently, constrains the development of manufacturing, the creation of jobs and the increase of exports. Lastly, political disruption,

⁴ Amadeo, Kimberly. "3 Types of Free Trade Agreements and How They Work." The Balance Small Business, The Balance, 3 Jan. 2019, www.thebalance.com/free-trade-agreement-types-and-examples-3305897.

associated with social unrest, could negatively impact growth through lower FDI, tourism and exports. Currently, the government is devoting a high share of its budget to pro-poor programs while it aims to expand the role of the private sector through foreign investment and industrial parks to make Ethiopia's growth momentum more sustainable.

Chad

Chad joined the list of oil-producing countries in 2003 and since then its economy has been heavily dependent on oil. However, this would be the last problem that its economy would have to face since the country's last engagement in conflict ended in 2010. Many Chadians face severe deprivation; most of the Millennium Development Goals were not met by 2015. Progress on non-monetary poverty presents a mixed picture, with gains in some areas offset by losses in others. Since 1963 when Chad joined the World Bank, the Bank has financed more than 50 development projects in it, supporting the country to achieve sustainable economic growth, while IFC commitments in the region presently stand at about \$63 million.

BLOCS EXPECTED

Unlike others, the topic at hand is not highly controversial. The revival of post-conflict regions' economies is beneficial not only for the region in need but also for its allies and the global economy. In addition, all member states aim to achieve the SDGs, therefore, no member of ECOSOC could be against rejuvenating the economies of former conflict zones. However, disagreements may arise regarding whether countries that weren't involved in the conflict should help financially, and in case they do, the question of how and how much remains unanswered. Thus, the blocs could be formed according to how much help countries wish to offer. The countries that need the financial aid will go together with those that are more willing to provide it.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of event
1944	Creation of the IBRD which joined with IDA to form World Bank
1945	Creation of ECOSOC
June 18, 2000	End of armed conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea
2002	End of Angolan Civil War
July 2006	AUC publishes a "Policy on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development"
2008	UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention publishes a report titled "Post-Conflict Economic Recovery Enabling Local Ingenuity"
January 15, 2010	End of the most recent armed conflict in Chad

RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

The United Nations Development Programme Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery published a Crisis Prevention and Recovery Report in 2008 with title Post-Conflict Economic Recovery Enabling Local Ingenuity.

The Conflict Management Division, Peace and Security Department of the African Union Commission (AUC) published a Policy on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development in 2006 which was adopted in Banjul, the capital city of the Gambia.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

World Bank

World Bank publishes reports regarding the economic growth of former conflict zones including their achievements along with the development challenges they face. Such reports aim not only to raise awareness and inform all citizens about the status quo but also help affected countries comprehend their accomplishments and challenges in order to enable them to improve their strategies and plan their measures accordingly.

The Bank has created a Country Partnership Framework (CPF) with many former conflict zones in order to provide aid through it. The CPF aims to make our country-driven model more systematic, evidence-based, selective, and focused on the Bank's twin goals of ending extreme poverty and increasing shared prosperity in a sustainable manner. It is used along with a Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD) which aims to identify the most important challenges and opportunities a country faces in advancing towards the twin goals. This process is achieved through thorough analysis and collection of information by consultations with a range of stakeholders. Lastly, every SCD informs each new CPF.

However, World Bank supports post conflict regions through other programs as well, which often target the specific needs of each region. For example, the Bank has been involved in four different programs in order to hasten the socioeconomic Angolan development. These programs include the Angola Social Action Fund, the StatCap Project, the Market Oriented Smallholder Agriculture Development Project (MOSAP) as well as the Learning for All Project.

International Financial Corporation

IFC is a sister organization of the World Bank and member of the World Bank Group. It constitutes the largest global development institution focused exclusively on the private sector in developing countries. The corporation leverages its products

and services so as to create markets that address the biggest development challenges of our time. IFC applies its financial resources, technical expertise, global experience, and innovative thinking to help its clients and partners overcome financial, operational, and other challenges. In addition, it is the leading mobilizer of third-party resources for projects while it engages in difficult environments, having a development impact well beyond our direct resources.

International Development Association

The International Development Association (IDA) is the part of the World Bank that helps the world's poorest countries. Overseen by 173 shareholder nations, IDA aims to reduce poverty by providing loans and grants for programs that boost economic growth, reduce inequalities, and improve people's living conditions.⁵

International bank for reconstruction and development

The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) is the largest development bank in the world owned by 189 member countries. It provides a combination of financial resources, knowledge, and technical services, including loans, guarantees, risk management products, and advisory services to middle-income and creditworthy low-income countries. It also coordinates responses to regional and global challenges. It was created in 1944 to help Europe rebuild after World War II, joining with IDA to form the World Bank. IBRD raises most of its funds in the world's financial markets by borrowing at low cost. Thus, it is able to offer middle-income developing countries access to capital on favorable terms, this way, helping ensure that development projects go forward in a more sustainable manner, while often complemen

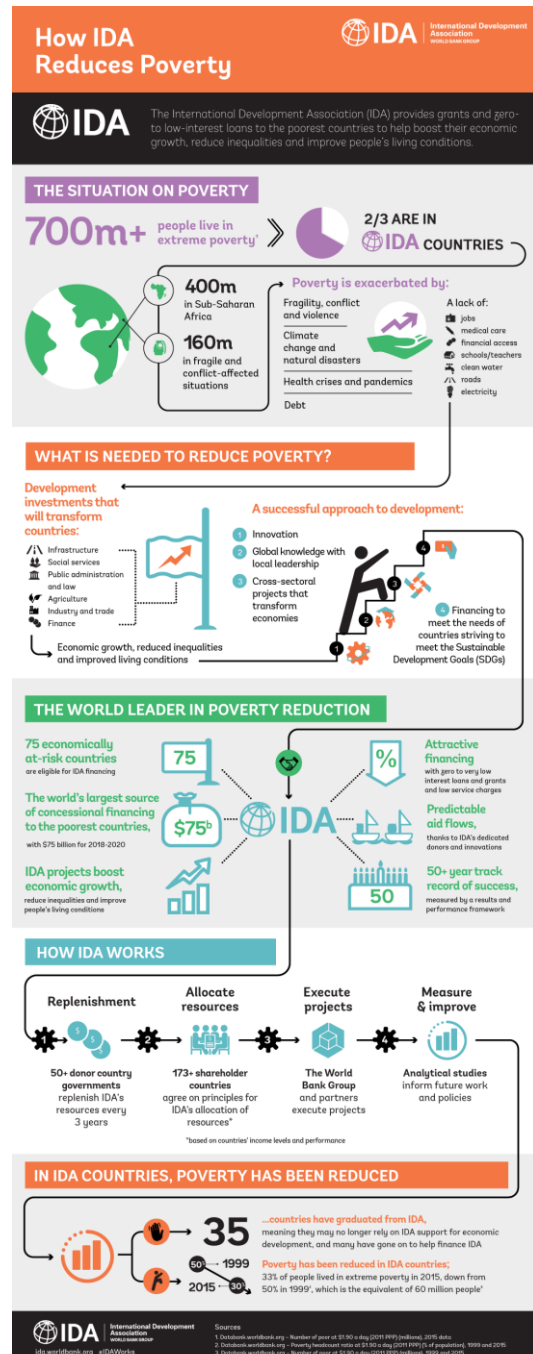


Figure 3 Information about the IDA

⁵ “What Is IDA?” International Development Association - World Bank, The World Bank Group, 7 Dec. 2018. ida.worldbank.org/about/what-is-ida.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

The role of the state affected

It is foreseeable that the role of the former conflict zones' government is vital, meaning that its actions are of outmost importance. Therefore, the state needs to consider a variety of measures which are to be taken. Preceding any governmental decision, the state ought to provide security to all citizens and promote the rule of law. It is crucial that the state legitimacy is restored, in order to ensure political stability without which the post economic recovery and development are impossible.

However, legitimate national elections are not the only process that needs to be restored since local representative institutions also foster an inclusive political process as they lessen the risks of conflict recurrence due to political exclusion and unending socioeconomic inequalities. It is crucial that a 'social contract' is established in order to ensure the reciprocation between the state's provision of security, justice and economic opportunity and citizens' acceptance of the authority

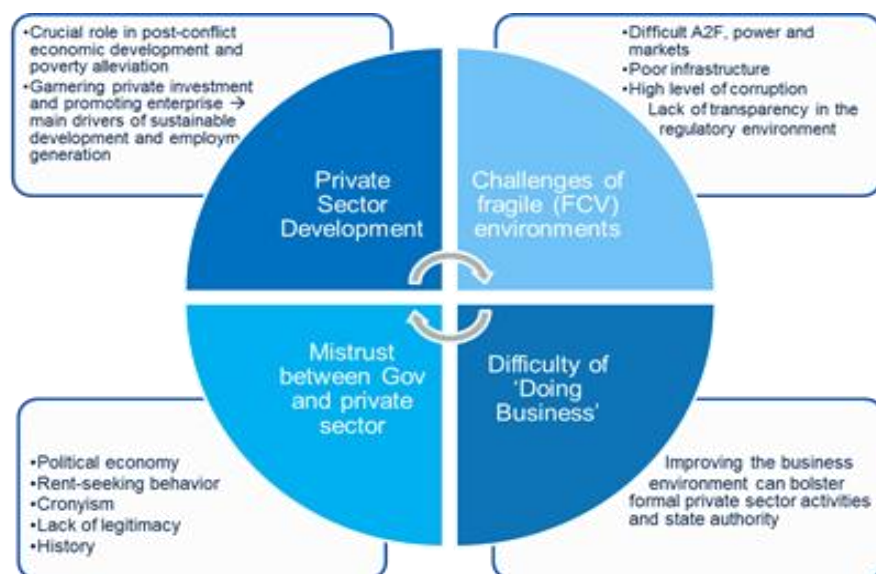


Figure 4 Steve Utterwulgh, PSD in Fragile States: Public-Private and Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue, 2014

of the state.

Moreover, the states ought to focus on restoring sustainability by moving forward to actions such building core capacities and particularly an effective civil service. Almost as soon as hostilities end, strenuous efforts are needed in training and retraining civil servants and public-sector managers, so as to enable them to return to the service as well as reenter the employment market. In addition, the strengthening of local revenue mobilization capacity along with controlling corruption and rent seeking, especially in states with abundant natural resources, is crucial in order to restore the fiscal capacity.

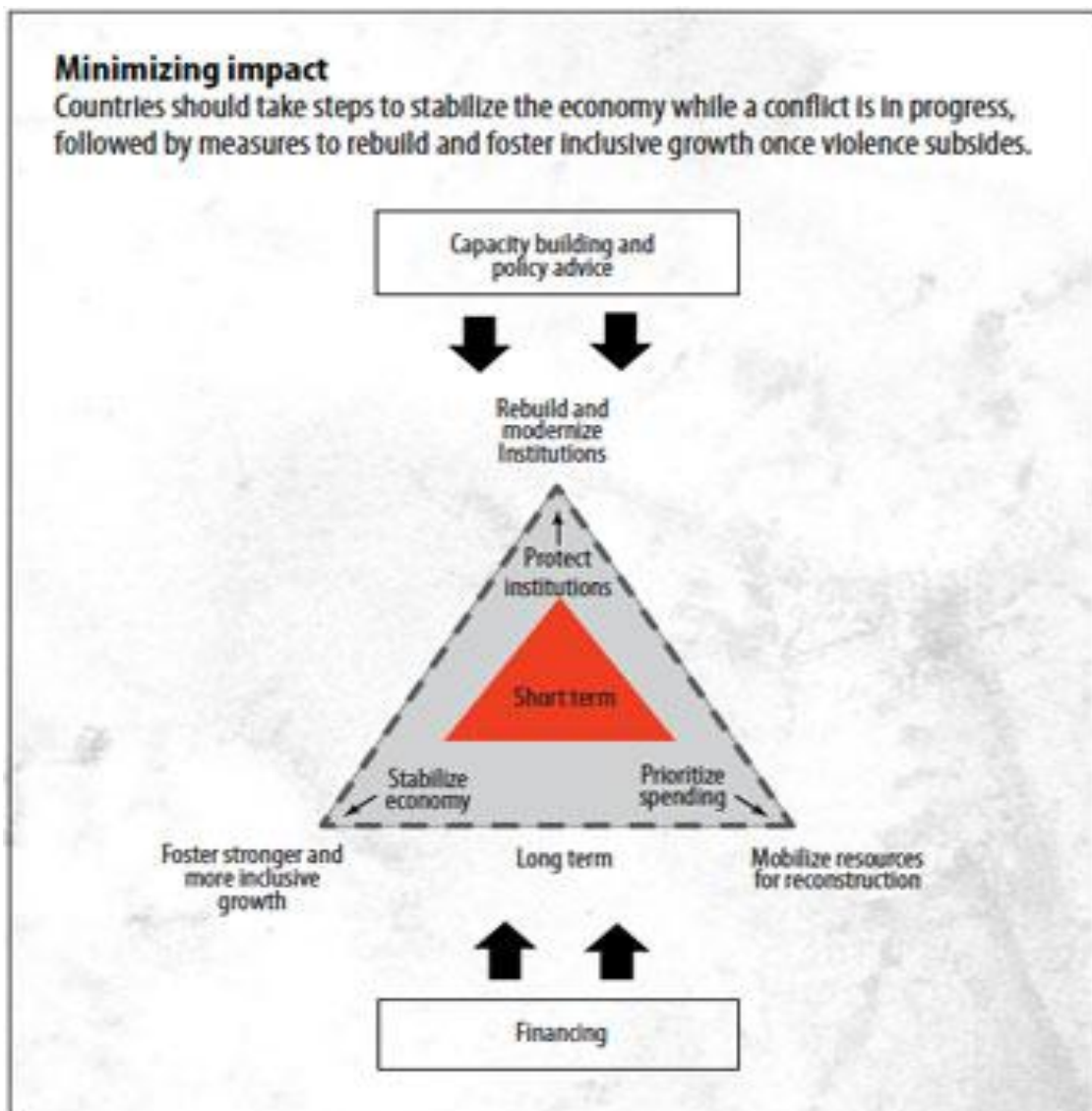


Figure 5 Institutions should adopt macroeconomic policies aiming to both lower the impact of conflict when it is ongoing and alleviate the immediate harm in order to improve the country's long-term economic prospects

Lastly, bearing in mind that during and after conflict governance is instable and there may be different informal institutions ruling only some regions within the internationally recognized borders of a state, all the aforementioned suggestions should work with and from the political, institutional and resource endowments available on the ground, including forms of governance that lie outside the generally accepted model of the developed countries.

The role of the international community

One of the main economic consequences of conflict is the diminution of foreign investments. Member States of ECOSOC could encourage countries that are in a financial advantage to invest in countries whose economies are damaged. This could be done by signing unilateral free trade agreements. Either way, the post-conflict economies consist of emerging markets that are too small to constitute a threat to stronger economies of MEDCs like the United States of America. These agreements may be, therefore, used as a type of foreign aid since they will help the post-conflict markets grow. However, this help will benefit those who offer it as well, since the emerging markets that grow will become new markets for exporters.

The Council may also encourage developed countries to offer financial aid to the nations whose economy is hurt because of a conflict. This aid should be targeted for the repair of the damaged infrastructure. MEDCs should be encouraged to provide post conflict regions both the necessary resources and their expertise in order to ameliorate their educational facilities which may be degraded or completely destroyed after the end of a war. This aid is essential to enable the regions to develop their educational systems. Hence, the regions will also be enabled to tackle the augmentation of illiteracy rates which often occurs during conflicts, since citizens are then deprived of their fundamental human rights, one of them being the right to education.

Keeping in mind the SDGs, the aforementioned solutions may easily be linked to goals number 8 and 4 which refer to Decent work and Economic Growth, and Quality Education respectively.

The role of NGOs

A plethora of MEDCs either currently offers or wishes to offer resources or expertise in order to aid the former conflict zones achieve sustainable development. However, post-conflict regions often fail to use such aid and distribute resources effectively since they do not have the institutional capacity or lack a strong and comprehensive public financial management system. Therefore, the need for an intermediary, between MEDCs or other foundations that are willing to offer help and states that are going to receive it, arises. The particular need could be covered by

NGOs. Firstly, such organizations could distribute the offered resources to different post conflict regions according to the need of all former conflict zones. Secondly, they could collaborate with the governments of the aforementioned regions so as to facilitate the administration of the resources in order to ensure that they are going to be used appropriately to cover the reconstruction of the region as more effectively as possible. However, NGOs should not make decisions solely at their own discretion since a country or region may claim that its sovereignty is being violated. Therefore, through the collaboration of NGOs with the local authorities, sustainable development of former conflict zones may be accelerated.

For further research you may resort to:

- <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/9011/rebuilding-from-war-economic-reconstruction-in-post-conflict-states>
- <https://practicalaction.org/post-conflict-reconstruction>
- <https://pesd.princeton.edu/?q=node/260>

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ⁱ The UN is funded by assessed and voluntary contributions by its Member States. The 193 members pay the mandatory assessed contributions according to their economic size. America being the largest economy in the world, it is calculated that the country is to pay 22% of all assessed contributions.

ⁱⁱ A unilateral trade agreement occurs when a country imposes trade restrictions and no other country reciprocates. A country can also unilaterally loosen trade restrictions, but that rarely happens since it would put the country at a competitive disadvantage.

ⁱⁱⁱ The Great Lakes region in Africa refers to a series of lakes in and around the Great Rift Valley including Lake Victoria and Lake Tanganyika. The Great Lakes is considered one of the world's most endangered water systems. The area of the Great Lakes region includes the areas of Burundi, Rwanda, northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, and northwestern Kenya and Tanzania.