



# UNDP

## PACMUN 2016

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# PACIFIC MODEL UNITED NATIONS

## UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Dear Delegates of the UNDP,

It's my privilege to welcome you to the 2016 PACMUN Development Programme Committee. My name is Cayla Lee and I am a senior at Interlake High School and have been involved in this activity for 4 years; I will be serving as the Director of this Committee. The Chair of this committee is Alexandra Ash, a senior enrolled in Cascadia College, who has participated in Model UN for 3 years. Additionally, Alexandra Haworth, a junior from Inglemoor High School, will start her second year of MUN as the Assistant Director of the committee. It is our sincere hope that participation in this committee will be educational, thought-provoking and portable such that you will use the education and skills gained during this experience to participate in consciousness-raising in your communities and beyond.

Currently, the United Nations Development Programme focuses a lot of resources on the Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization in Iraq, which finances public infrastructure repair and promotes civil engagement and community reconciliation in areas liberated from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Recently, the UNDP has also aligned with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Kazakhstan to sign Promoting Kazakhstan's ODA Cooperation with Afghanistan. In addition, the UNDP has initiated a two-year program with Georgia to boost the domestic agricultural industry. Evidently, the UNDP is involved in a wide range of development issues and have taken on multiple methodologies to address those.

My fellow Dais members and I have decided on two topics to be discussed at this conference, both of which we believe are of the utmost importance to the increasingly developing world. The topics are as follows: Access to Sustainable Energy in Developing Nations and Education in Post-Conflict Areas. We have deliberately chosen topics concerning resources and infrastructure that are extremely beneficial to humanity, but are also highly inaccessible due to the asymmetrical nature of global development. It is my hope that researching, writing, and discussing these topics diplomatically will give you a new perspective on the potential problems with aspects of development that many of us take for granted in first-world countries.

Access to sustainable energy in developing nations is proving to be an increasingly large concern for all nations. With global warming being a threat to all life on earth and accelerating with energy production and consumption, the shift towards sustainable energy production is seen as the most viable option against the rising tide of climate change and pollution. However, the means of producing renewable energy are expensive and demand huge amounts of infrastructural development. Therefore, the inaccessibility of sustainable energy is exacerbating the asymmetrical ways in which development plays out.

Education in post-conflict areas is an important issue that hasn't gotten its due attention in recent years. Fully aware of the systemic problems that make education inaccessible and of poor quality, especially in underdeveloped and developing countries, it is not an overstatement to say that communities in post-conflict areas have much difficulty receiving regular and quality education, if at all. For example, devastated transportation infrastructure, lack of education facilities, dangers associated with warfare and intercultural conflicts, and high degrees of displacement all contribute to this issue. To complicate the issue even further, education in post-conflict areas must be particularized according to a region's culture and social values. Therefore, a nuanced discussion and finding a balance between specific curriculum and universalist strategies is necessary to resolve this issue effectively.

During your research, I truly hope these two issues do not devolve into "just another conference topic," as they are real issues that are affecting the daily lives of millions. I believe a memorable experience at this conference will come from an exploration and questioning of the ways we all engage in micropolitical structures such as this activity and the Model United Nations community, while also taking into account the reality of global politics and the ways real policies of the United Nations affects the lives of others. With that in mind, I am looking forward to innovative ideas, interesting perspectives, and productive discussions in November! On behalf of the Dais of the UNDP, I would like to welcome you to this committee and wish you all the best of luck!

Sincerely,

Cayla Lee

Director | United Nations Development Programme

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## COMMITTEE INTRO

The benefits of globalization and industrialization have not been felt equally by all parts of the world. While some countries have enjoyed economic success, decreases in poverty, and access to information, others have been left in the dust. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was created in 1965 in order to address these very issues. Currently, the UNDP works in approximately 170 countries and territories, helping them develop policies, skills, and institutional capabilities to ensure sustainable development, democratic governance and peacebuilding, as well as climate and disaster resilience. By 2014, the UNDP had created nearly one million jobs; strengthened the livelihoods of low-income communities; combated climate change; registered 18 million new voters; trained two million health workers to fight HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria; and improved energy access for 1.3 million people. As a result of its inclusive and efficient organization, the UNDP was judged to be the most transparent development agency by the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) and one of the development partners that communicates most frequently with host government counterparts. Being a network of the UN, the UNDP has similar jurisdiction to the majority of UN bodies. Most frequently, the UNDP funds and implements programs which help to reach their sustainable development goals (SGDs), as well as encouraging and working closely with governments in order to aid them with the implementation of programs and policies, with the same goal. Such discussion and collective problem-solving among delegates committed to sustainable development will be a step towards a stronger and more equal global community.

### TOPIC 1

#### ACCESS TO SUSTAINABLE ENERGY IN DEVELOPING NATIONS

## TOPIC INTRO

Unsustainable energy consumption and production are hazardous for the continued survival of the earth, and the organisms occupying it. Non-renewable sources include coal, oil and natural gas, which all negatively impact the environment through the accessing, manufacturing, and consumption of fossil fuels. While all of this is recognized by the international community, renewable and sustainable energy only accounts for 22 percent of the global electricity generation as of 2013.<sup>1</sup> The importance of implementing sustainable energy has not gone unnoticed by the United Nations (UN), which has recognized that sustainable energy can reduce poverty, promote equality and economic growth, encourage social progress, and continue

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.iea.org/aboutus/faqs/renewableenergy/>

environmental sustainability.<sup>2</sup> The UNDP has worked to provide clean, sustainable energy solutions for many countries so that the benefits may be reaped. Though their importance is recognized by many countries, developing nations have a more difficult time implementing sustainable practices. Problems emerge because of the lack of infrastructure and funds necessary to implement suggested plans, and the dependence upon fossil fuels for economic growth and stability. While change may be necessary, the process for change proves so difficult that many nations would rather suffer the consequences than go through the difficult transition. When discussing this issue, the problems of accessibility and economic viability of sustainable energy must be addressed to successfully resolve this issue and find feasible solutions to the problem at hand.

## HISTORY

Before the Industrial Revolution in the 18th century, energy needs were simple. People used fire, water, and other natural sources in order to fulfill more basic energy needs. The Industrial Revolution marked the beginning of the rise of more damaging energy sources. The invention of the coal-powered Watt's steam engine in the 1760s brought about the Industrial Revolution, and soon after coal and petroleum became the commodities fueling the world.<sup>3</sup> Beginning in Europe during the mid-1700s, countries around the world competed with each other to create economies sustained by industry and machine manufacturing, profitable pursuits for which no one yet knew the consequences.<sup>4</sup> Romania was the first country to officially record petroleum production as an international statistic in the 1850s, and also was at the forefront of incorporating the product into everyday life. The first oil refinery was created in 1856 in Ploiești, Romania, a city approximately 35 miles north of Bucharest. Subsequently, in 1857, Bucharest became the first city to be lit by kerosene, and the use of oil and its derivatives as a source of energy promptly spread throughout the world.<sup>5</sup> On a similar track, the use of coal increased severely due to its use powering the newly popular steam engines, alongside heating buildings, smelting iron, and providing electric lights through coal powered generators.<sup>6</sup> Both oil and coal were highly useful in furthering the Industrial Revolution, given the rudimentary methods of harnessing energy that were available at the time, but they both had serious environmental impacts that were not realized until much later.

A sizable negative impact of the Industrial Revolution was a global rise in pollution levels and environmental decay, which quickly began to affect the quality of life for the humans and animals occupying earth, alongside significantly impacting the

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/climate-and-disaster-resilience/sustainable-energy.html>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.ucsusa.org/clean\\_energy/our-energy-choices/a-short-history-of-energy.html#.V4EwOrgrKUI](http://www.ucsusa.org/clean_energy/our-energy-choices/a-short-history-of-energy.html#.V4EwOrgrKUI)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/event/Industrial-Revolution>

<sup>5</sup> [https://kuwait.mae.ro/sites/kuwait.mae.ro/files/romanian\\_oil\\_industry.pdf](https://kuwait.mae.ro/sites/kuwait.mae.ro/files/romanian_oil_industry.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.ucsusa.org/clean\\_energy/our-energy-choices/a-short-history-of-energy.html#.V4EwOrgrKUI](http://www.ucsusa.org/clean_energy/our-energy-choices/a-short-history-of-energy.html#.V4EwOrgrKUI)

earth's ecosystem. Some environmental pollutants are traced back to natural causes, but the majority are caused by human industrialization. Many of the largest pollutants today are chemicals, pesticides, oil refineries, metal smelting, and food processing industries.<sup>7</sup> These impact the environment by contributing to pollution levels and a growing shortage of natural resources such as timber, water, and land. A major negative environmental influence is coal and other fossil fuels, and the various methods for attaining them. Oil fracking and mining for coal results in water contamination; release of dangerous material such as coal dust, greenhouse gasses, and toxic chemicals; and unusable and infertile lands. Other ramifications from the use of these products include acid rain, air quality deterioration, oil spills, and global warming. Since reliable record keeping began during the 1800s, the global temperature is calculated to have risen more than two degrees Fahrenheit.<sup>8</sup> Though this may sound minor, the consequences of this change over time include more extreme environmental events such as storms, tsunamis, and hurricanes; more intense and lengthy dry spells; infrequent rainfall; and increased snowmelt.<sup>9</sup> Fossil fuels and other unsustainable energy sources have greatly contributed to this increase, as many of them release carbon dioxide which has been shown to lead to a depletion of the ozone layer and ultimately an increase in global temperature.<sup>10</sup> Since these negative impacts were realized, scientists, as well as international groups and individual governments, have been working to use more sustainable energy sources that do not cause such negative impacts upon the world.

The pursuit of more sustainable sources has existed for years, but there have also existed many obstacles that have made implementation near impossible. Scientists worked for many years to be able to utilize the sun's energy for a wide variety of reasons; however, solar power was not successfully converted into usable electrical energy until 1954, and was not effectively implemented in the real world until the 1970s.<sup>11</sup> Hydropower and wind are also popular sources of renewable energy, but lack widespread implementation due to insufficient technology. While many nations were able to conceptualize ideas during the early 1900s, the technology available did not begin to catch up until much later in the century. Worldwide solar energy usage rose from under one percent of the global energy output in 1980, to a little over one percent in 2014. Wind power increased from under one percent to three percent in the same time frame, while hydropower has decreased from 24 percent to 17 percent. Even with this progress, coal, gas, and oil account for over half of the world's energy

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.pollutionissues.com/Ho-Li/Industry.html>

<sup>8</sup> <http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/Features/WorldOfChange/decadaltemp.php>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.livescience.com/10325-living-warmer-2-degrees-change-earth.html>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/ghgemissions/gases/co2.html>

<sup>11</sup> <http://instituteforenergyresearch.org/topics/encyclopedia/renewable-energy/>

output.<sup>12</sup> Though renewable energy sources have risen dramatically over the past 30 years, the world still relies heavily on energy sources which will destroy the current environment.

## PAST UN ACTION

The UN has worked hard to encourage sustainable energy practices, watching with concern the negative impact on developing nations and the difficulty many countries face when implementing sustainable energy practices. Though there have been attempts on the part of the UN to encourage more sustainable energies, these have been most effective in more developed countries, rather than developing ones. The latter have limited budgets, and frequently have an economic dependence on oil or coal that they cannot afford to lose.<sup>13</sup> On a massive scale, the convenience and affordability of unsustainable energy sources has led the world to depend on these sources in a way that cannot realistically be continued.

The UN and other international organizations have had many discussions concerning sustainable energy, focusing on slowing and preventing climate change; the primary consequence of unsustainable energy practices. With the creation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000, target seven sought to encourage environmental sustainability, which led to the passing of many resolutions by international organizations to encourage and begin sustainable practices. Some goals of this target included integrating sustainable development principles into country policies, reversing the loss of environmental resources and ecosystems, and improving access to safe drinking water.<sup>14</sup> As the final deadline for the MDGs came and passed in 2015, the targets of MDG7, though mostly achieved, were still a major goal post-2015, as a highly functional ecosystem can be invaluable in improving living standards and lessening the severity of potential environmental disasters.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, with the creation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), goal seven was dedicated to ensuring global access to affordable and sustainable energy<sup>16</sup>. So far, there has been no measurable progress, but if the action taken resembles the global action in pursuit of the MDGs there will most likely be a measurable positive impact in the near future.

Aside from these global goals, UN bodies have passed resolutions concerning sustainable energy. In 2012, the UN named 2012 the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All, and subsequently passed General Assembly Resolution 65/151. The resolution called for multiple UN bodies to cooperate and plan activities to encourage

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.tsp-data-portal.org/Breakdown-of-Electricity-Generation-by-Energy-Source#tspQvChart>

<sup>13</sup> [http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/resources/res\\_pdfs/ga-66/SG%20report\\_Promotion\\_new\\_renewable\\_energy.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/resources/res_pdfs/ga-66/SG%20report_Promotion_new_renewable_energy.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/environ.shtml>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.mdgmonitor.org/mdg-7-ensure-environmental-sustainability/>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sdgoverview/post-2015-development-agenda/goal-7.html>

the Year of Sustainable Energy, and to create an international environment where countries could work together with their existing resources. It also encouraged groups to spread awareness for the importance of sustainable energy, using the platform created by the project. Finally, the resolution called for all member states to utilize more sustainable energy technologies and encourage heightening accessibility to them. While the focus was on spreading renewable energy, the primary method was through improving access to it across developed and developing nations alike.<sup>17</sup> Following this and the relative success it achieved, the UN passed resolution A/70/422 in 2015, which established the Decade of Sustainable Energy for All to encourage widespread sustainability over an extended period of time. The resolution outlined multiple goals for achieving sustainability, such as plans for increasing access to clean energy sources, in addition to an effort to make energy more affordable for all. It also called for more international cooperation when implementing the plans that it outlined, such as spreading awareness. International support is specifically important to this topic, as more diversified countries can spread knowledge to more people, companies, and governments. Ultimately, the goal was to expand infrastructure and to spread the use of sustainable energy to as many people as possible. The success of the resolution has yet to be determined, as it is currently in the second year of a ten-year plan. However, it contains many policies and procedures which have a high potential for success, and hopes to catalyze further conversation on sustainable energy in the world.<sup>18</sup>

The UNDP itself has had its hand in many of these activities, and is the committee which supervises the SDGs. The other major initiative in which it is involved is the Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) mission. Their mission is to "ensure universal access to modern energy services, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency, and double the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix."<sup>19</sup> They work in collaboration with world leaders, NGOs, businesses, and nations to attain these goals, and are working hard within these partnerships. Since the creation of the SDGs and the Paris Climate Change summit in 2015, they have been working to achieve the goals set out by both global documents. The international community has not ignored the problem of implementing sustainable energy, and there is much action being taken all around to combat the issue.

## CURRENT SITUATION

In 2012, the International Energy Agency (IEA) found that 13.2 percent of the total primary energy for the world was supplied by renewable sources, which soon grew to 22 percent in 2013. The IEA predicts that by 2020, this number will have risen

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<sup>17</sup> [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/65/151](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/65/151)

<sup>18</sup> <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N15/314/03/PDF/N1531403.pdf?OpenElement>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.se4all.org/>

to a minimum of 26 percent.<sup>20</sup> While these improvements and all of the action being taken by the UN is useful, fossil fuel usage is also expected to rise, and more work needs to be done to help remedy the wide variety problems caused by unsustainable actions.<sup>21</sup> Pollution is amongst the most immediate problems, and it plagues many regions. The most polluted city in the world is New Delhi, India, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). The reasons for this include geography, rapid growth, and poor energy sources that have been polluting their air for years, causing a major problem for the inhabitants and their continued well-being.<sup>22</sup> Beijing, China also suffers a similar plight. Both nations host an air pollution level twice the amount which the WHO deems healthy. These problems are largely caused because of the continued reliance upon dangerous energy practices, demonstrating that not only developing countries are suffering and struggling. A pressing issue in the use of sustainable energy is working to stop the environmental deterioration that unsustainable practices cause.

Another major problem when discussing sustainable energy is how difficult transitions are. The main reasons that many countries are having difficulties installing renewable energies include “commercialization barriers faced by new technologies competing with mature technologies; price distortions from existing subsidies and unequal tax burdens between renewables and other energy sources; failure of the market to value the public benefit of renewables; and market barriers such as inadequate information, lack of access to capital, ‘split incentives’ between building owners and tenants, and high transaction costs for making small purchases.”<sup>23</sup> Many of these issues are tied to the existing dependence, and how difficult converting from set practices can be. Many countries find it easier to continue operations than to deal with the transitional period which can result in economic and trade instability, a risk that many nations cannot afford to take. Another problem is that many economies rely upon fossil fuels to thrive, and switching to sustainable methods would severely impact global trade, and the nation's overall stability. This is something the UN is working hard to address, because while these developing countries may be fine, continued use of such practices will have consequences similar to what China and India are struggling with today.

The other problems worth mentioning arise when evaluating sustainable energy methods. Technologies which harness wind, water, and solar power can be expensive to create, and require a large amount of land to yield enough energy to sustain cities. This is problematic for both developing nations and countries with limited space. There is a reliance upon the expected output of fossil fuels for energy.

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<sup>20</sup> <https://www.iea.org/aboutus/faqs/renewableenergy/>

<sup>21</sup> [http://web.stanford.edu/class/e297c/trade\\_environment/energy/hfossil.html](http://web.stanford.edu/class/e297c/trade_environment/energy/hfossil.html)

<sup>22</sup> <http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/delhi/the-most-polluted-city-in-the-world-delhi-suffers-from-a-toxic-blend-study/>

<sup>23</sup> [http://www.ucsusa.org/clean\\_energy/smart-energy-solutions/increase-renewables/barriers-to-renewable-energy.html#.V4GbhgrKXl](http://www.ucsusa.org/clean_energy/smart-energy-solutions/increase-renewables/barriers-to-renewable-energy.html#.V4GbhgrKXl)

which makes any deviation from this difficult to work with for countries that are both established or in transition. When looking at sustainable energy, the majority of countries recognize that it is better for the long term and overall would prove beneficial for them. Many problems arise because of the current dependence on unsustainable energy and the difficult transition that would result from changing. If sustainable energy does not become the norm, then the world will continue to suffer, and the environment will deteriorate until the earth can no longer sustain mankind.

## BLOC POSITIONS

### NORTH AMERICA

While North America did industrialize quickly and relies heavily upon unsustainable energy, many of its nations are actively pursuing sustainable practices which leaves their current situation better than most. The United States of America (USA) is currently ranked second in the top 10 clean energy investment markets in the world, and now 10 percent of its electricity supply comes from renewable energy sources.<sup>24</sup> <sup>25</sup> A major goal for the USA, along with many other more developed nations, is accomplishing the goals laid out in the Kyoto Protocol, created by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It recognizes how more developed nations are responsible for the majority of emissions, and tasks them with reducing their footprint.<sup>26</sup> Alongside the USA, Canada is also pursuing sustainable practices such as water, wind and solar power. Hydroelectricity is their highest contributor, followed by a rising prevalence of wind and solar energy.<sup>27</sup> Worldwide, they have the best hydroelectric energy system. In general, North America is at the forefront of sustainable energy practices because of how established and stable both the USA and Canada are; however, Mexico struggles due to government corruption and civil unrest.

### SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA

Renewable energy practices are currently a promising option for much of South and Central America, where there are many untapped resources. With their climate and geography, sustainable methods are a feasible option for many of the nations, even if they have yet to begin transitioning. Some key components to consider when

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<sup>24</sup> <http://www.nacleanenergy.com/articles/23752/real-time-monitoring>

<sup>25</sup> <http://nawindpower.com/report-u-s-can-and-should-transition-to-100-renewable-energy>

<sup>26</sup> [http://unfccc.int/kyoto\\_protocol/items/2830.php](http://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol/items/2830.php)

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/energy/renewable-electricity/7295>

looking at the transitions currently are the engagements of financiers and companies, who view the regions as untapped promise and are investing heavily.<sup>28</sup> The favorable policies being created by various nations are also driving the growth of the region, and their renewable energy market shows a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the benefits because of the general stability of the area.

## EUROPE AND OCEANIA

Europe is close alongside the USA when looking at renewable energy, and has embraced the practices. The European Union (EU) works hard amongst its member nations to lower their dependence upon imported fossil fuels, and make its energy production more sustainable so as to drive technological innovation and employment.<sup>29</sup> A goal was set by the EU in 2010 to produce 20 percent of their total energy from renewable sources by 2020, and many nations have already achieved this goal long before the end date. This is not reflected in all nations, however, due to economic instability, and it remains a prominent goal of the EU.<sup>30</sup> Where the EU, which consists of most of Western Europe, works hard towards sustainable energy sources, Eastern Europe does too, but suffers from different problems. Russia, Poland, Hungary, and other nations are in a major state of transition because of the role petroleum products played in their development. Many of these nations' economies are based upon fossil fuels, which makes the transition a much more difficult process for both the country and the companies based in the region. Meanwhile, Australia's situation most closely resembles Western Europe, and they are working hard towards sustainable practices.

## ASIA

Asia, and China in particular, was one of the regions impacted the most by industrialization. The region suffers from high population density and pollution levels, which means that sustainable practices and damage control are their current course of action. With its dependence upon fossil fuels comes the problem of transition, something which many of the countries have yet to face. Though they recognize their issues and how sustainable energy can help find the solutions, they struggle with the implementation. Small countries within Asia do not struggle to the same extent as China, but they are still working on transitioning their economies. The Asia Sustainable

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<sup>28</sup> <http://www.renewableenergyworld.com/articles/2015/08/why-renewable-energy-in-latin-america-is-a-winner.html>

<sup>29</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/topics/renewable-energy>

<sup>30</sup> <http://qz.com/359415/three-european-countries-have-already-hit-their-2020-renewable-energy-goals/>

and Alternative Energy Program (ASTAE) has been aiding nations with this transition, and holds a prominent place amongst its members.

## MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

The Middle East and North Africa region (MENA) accounts for over half of the world's oil reserves and is a significant global producer and exporter of energy.<sup>31</sup> As a result of this dependence on unsustainable energy method, there would need to be a complete restructuring of the regional energy market and the economies of many of the nations, which causes much concern. These regions have been at the root of many conflicts because of their access to fossil fuels, and it is a key part of the countries identities. This makes it difficult for MENA countries to transition to sustainable methods, in addition to how this region is home to many developing countries, leaving them with even more obstacles on the path to sustainable practices. Solar energy shows the most promise, and the Middle East Solar Industry Association (MESIA) is working hard to make it a reality.<sup>32</sup> Southern Africa is not home to as much oil, but since they are home to many developing nations that struggle with access to resources, sustainable energy practices are not the most important problem for the region.<sup>33</sup>

## CASE STUDIES

### GERMANY

Germany is a textbook example of the payoff of the international efforts to encourage the move towards the use of renewable energy. After the nuclear meltdown in Fukushima in 2011, Germany, which in 2011 relied on nuclear power for 20 percent of their energy, decided to shut down all of their nuclear power plants by 2021.<sup>34</sup> This decision dramatically accelerated the German movement toward sustainability in energy, aptly referred to as "Energiewende", for the German word for "energy transition". Not only did Germany vow to completely eliminate their reliance on nuclear energy, but they also made plans to compensate for the loss by relying on renewable energy sources for up to 80 percent of their total energy output, reducing carbon emissions by 40 percent, and cutting energy consumption by 50 percent by

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<sup>31</sup> <https://www.oxfordenergy.org/publications/a-roadmap-for-renewable-energy-in-the-middle-east-and-north-africa/>

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.renewableenergyworld.com/articles/2015/09/solar-surges-in-the-middle-east-and-north-africa.html>

<sup>33</sup> [https://timedotcom.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/aap\\_database\\_results\\_2014.pdf?ua=1](https://timedotcom.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/aap_database_results_2014.pdf?ua=1)

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/feb/02/germany-leads-europe-in-offshore-wind-energy-growth>

2050.<sup>35</sup> Though many of Germany's plans for Energiewende are long-term, their efforts are already starting to pay off.

One of the methods Germany is using to become more sustainable is by increasing the use of solar energy. Photovoltaics (PV), the method used to transform sunlight into usable energy, has become increasingly popular on an increasingly large scale. In 2000 none of the PV systems in Germany had a minimum capacity of 500 kilowatt peak (kWp), but by 2015, approximately 49 percent of PV systems had 500 kWp capacity according to the Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, the percentage of solar power in terms of the total renewable energy used in Germany has risen from zero percent from 1995 to over 40 percent of all renewable energy in 2015. Solar energy, though not Germany's most common form of sustainable energy, has increased most dramatically in the past 25 years, driven by the German government's encouragement and their efforts to make it more affordable and accessible for the people.<sup>37</sup> While solar energy has experienced the most drastic rise recently, wind power remains the highest contributor in Germany. Though usage has fluctuated over time, the use of wind energy has continued to rise and now accounts for almost 45 percent of Germany's renewable energy resources.<sup>38</sup> Harnessing its energy requires serious modifications to the electricity grid, and, along with solar power, requires major investments from the government.<sup>39</sup> While wind energy comes at great cost, it still is a clean, effective method of implementing sustainable energy, of which Germany has taken advantage.

The benefits of Germany's Energiewende go beyond the creation of a sustainable energy future. The efficiency of the newfound energy sources, stimulation of the economy, and lessened reliance on importing energy sources provide economic benefits for the entire country. By focusing on new ways to create renewable energy, the creation of new, green technology is encouraged, and even more affordable methods become available over time. Altogether, the path of renewable energy set forth by Germany creates a brighter future for the country. By slowing climate change, decreasing the risk of a nuclear meltdown, and increasing security in energy and its prices, the future is made more certain through Germany's efforts to increase the use of sustainable energy.

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<sup>35</sup> <http://thinkprogress.org/climate/2014/05/13/3436923/germany-energy-records/>

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.ise.fraunhofer.de/en/downloads-englisch/pdf-files-englisch/power-generation-from-renewable-energy-in-germany-assessment-of-2015.pdf>

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.bmwi.de/EN/root.html>

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.seia.org/research-resources/solar-energy-support-germany-closer-look>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.ise.fraunhofer.de/en/renewable-energy-data/renewable-energy-data>

## SOUTH SUDAN

Having seceded from Sudan on the 9th of July, 2011, South Sudan is the youngest country in the world.<sup>40</sup> With its secession, South Sudan took approximately 75 percent of the former Sudan's oil reserves.<sup>41</sup> This eventually forced the creation of a greener energy system for Sudan, and created an economy in South Sudan that earns 98 percent of its budget revenue from oil.<sup>42</sup> While several other countries in the area are creating more sustainable energy, South Sudan is falling behind. Their struggle lies in finding a way to make clean, sustainable energy available and affordable for the people in their country without destroying their economy. While the UNDP has created feed-in tariffs in Sudan to encourage the growth of renewable energy, as well as investing four million dollars to increase the amount of wind energy, South Sudan is struggling to transition in their situation.

In South Sudan, only one percent of the population has access to an electric grid. The majority of the country relies on biomass fuels in the form of animal feces and wood for light and cooking. 35.4 percent of energy for light comes from wood or charcoal, while only around four percent comes from electricity. Biomass fuel, a method of renewable energy, accounts for 70 percent of South Sudan's energy, significantly higher than crude oil's 30 percent, but this is largely due to the fact that there are few other methods of obtaining energy. What areas do have power use diesel generators, which are expensive and unsustainable. Around the country, there are frequent power outages, causing outrage among the people who were left without electricity, according to South Sudan's Ministry of Electricity, Dams, Irrigation, and Water Resources.<sup>43</sup> These upsets have prompted the government make efforts towards implementing more renewable energy, though the movement has been slow, and delayed by conflicts concerning the country.

South Sudan has a relatively high capacity for sustainable energy that has yet to be properly utilized. It is located on the White Nile river, creating an optimal situation for hydropower. Given a slow average wind speed of two and a half meters per second (m/s) there is little potential for large scale wind farms, but on a smaller scale, without an electrical grid, the investment may pay off. Additionally, a significant portion of the country is considered a desert, making it an extremely viable area for solar power.<sup>44</sup> Despite these capabilities, the country has still been unable to make to switch towards renewable energy. It is a goal of South Sudan's government to expand the energy grid

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<sup>40</sup> <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/od.html>

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.renewableenergyworld.com/articles/2015/07/sudan-sees-hydropower-boost-after-protests-over-electricity-cuts.html>

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/od.html>

<sup>43</sup> [https://www-cif.climateinvestmentfunds.org/sites/default/files/meeting-documents/south\\_sudan\\_eoi\\_0.pdf](https://www-cif.climateinvestmentfunds.org/sites/default/files/meeting-documents/south_sudan_eoi_0.pdf)

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/od.html>

and create more sustainable energy methods, in order have a more secure future for electricity and the economy of the country. Their model now is to replace current diesel powered generators with hydropower systems, the renewable energy source with the highest potential for their country. Their goals are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, stabilize and grow the economy, and improve public health by reducing air pollution. These goals are applicable on both large and small scales, given that the majority of the population is rural, and there are very few large cities which could be connected to an electricity grid.<sup>45</sup>

Given that so much of South Sudan's economy relies on oil, the change to sustainable energy will be difficult. While investing in it can create a more stable economy in the future, there will still be a reliance on crude oil. Within the country, energy may shift from diesel to more renewable sources such as hydropower, it will still rely heavily on oil economically. This has been proven to be damaging to the environment, and while the country may shift to become more sustainable inside, retrieving oil will still be detrimental to the environment. Though internally South Sudan will be able to transition to more renewable sources without a major problem, it is the revenue coming from the exportation of oil found in the region that is difficult. For South Sudan, the main problem that arises is how to balance their economic needs and stability, with the sustainability of the world.

## GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. How can developing countries balance a fossil fuel-based economy with the implementation of sustainable energy technologies?
2. What can developing nations do to increase accessibility of sustainable energy to people without an electricity grid?
3. How can sustainable energy methods be made more affordable for developing nations?
4. What strategies could be implemented to incentivize the transition to renewable energies? How could individual countries, NGOs, or the UN help?
5. How should the UN strategy towards alternative energy change, if at all, to help make alternative energy more accessible to developing nations?

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<sup>45</sup> [https://www-cif.climateinvestmentfunds.org/sites/default/files/meeting-documents/south\\_sudan\\_eoi\\_0.pdf](https://www-cif.climateinvestmentfunds.org/sites/default/files/meeting-documents/south_sudan_eoi_0.pdf)

## FURTHER RESEARCH

- The Institute for Energy Research (IER) provides information about all renewable energy sources, and detailed explanations of how they work. There are also articles relating to renewable energy and the global situation.

<http://instituteforenergyresearch.org/topics/encyclopedia/renewable-energy/>

- This National Geographic article provides an explanation about why solar and wind energy are so widely used, when they are more expensive than fossil fuels. Since it was published recently, it provides an accurate depiction of the current status.

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/energy/2016/01/160122-why-solar-and-wind-thrive-despite-cheap-oil-and-ga/>

- In this article, the Energy and Policy Institute provides a depiction of what the continued costs of fossil fuels will be with their continued use. There are also predictions about the future situation if the current trends hold.

<http://www.energyandpolicy.org/the-real-cost-of-coal-exports-and-fossil-fuels/>

- The USA's National Aeronautics and Space Administration details what global warming and carbon emissions have done the world. There is also discussion about the current trends and what they mean.

<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/Features/WorldOfChange/decadaltemp.php>

- This article in The Guardian discusses how alternative energy is becoming a more viable option for civilians due to dropping oil prices. It also highlights how the exporting nations are reacting to this course of action.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/jan/20/slump-in-oil-prices-drives-green-energy-take-up-in-top-exporting-nations>

# TOPIC 2

## EDUCATION IN POST CONFLICT AREAS

### TOPIC INTRO

When recovery begins after a conflict, there are many different areas of focus. The restoration of deteriorating governments, rebuilding of war-torn infrastructure, and recovery of the civilians and soldiers in the region are simply a few of the topics which receive the most attention. A major part of all of these processes involves the rebuilding of infrastructure; one of its many important focuses being the restoration and improvement of education. A large portion of the 132 million out-of-school children live in countries that are or were subject to war and conflict, making this a problem that needs to be discussed.<sup>46</sup> The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has worked to improve education worldwide, and because of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has succeeded in halving the number of out-of-school elementary age students from 100 million in 2000, to approximately 57 million in 2015.<sup>47</sup> Despite all of the progress made because of these goals, many issues still arise when restoring the education system in war-torn regions. As a result of the destroyed infrastructure, lack of reliable transportation, the high numbers of deaths and displaced individuals, along with the general lack of safety as the region is cleared of war-related materials and weapons, strategies need to be created and implemented. However, providing aid to these countries can prove difficult for the United Nations (UN), as religious and cultural differences must be addressed and national sovereignty must be honored. Finding a way to provide safe, quality education in post-conflict areas while respecting each nation's cultural and societal differences is the task with which delegates are faced when discussing in this topic.

### HISTORY

Ensuring quality education is an important issue that must be addressed, especially in the wake of a conflict. Due to the unique events that occur with each conflict, the restoration of education after said conflicts has historically taken numerous approaches with the common goals of regularity and consistent access. Variables which have significantly influenced such approaches have included: the duration of the conflict, the location, the total population and the density of affected regions, the amount of money allocated to recovery, and the amount of both physical

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<sup>46</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/themes/pcpd/education-in-emergencies/>

<sup>47</sup> [http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/mdgoverview/mdg\\_goals/mdg2.html](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/mdgoverview/mdg_goals/mdg2.html)

and psychological damage inflicted.<sup>48</sup> The reactions of each nation are specific to their situation; some countries have used the opportunity to create systems that maintain heightened standards and foster an environment of peace and security, while many others have focused on rebuilding different aspects of their nation, allowing educational standards to fall behind.<sup>49</sup> Variations with regards to the amount of resources devoted to building a highly functional education system, if any at all, is an international issue that must be addressed in post-conflict recovery.

The rebuilding of infrastructure is paramount to recovery after a majority of conflicts, with education being a major factor that must not be ignored. Government directed and funded education has existed for decades to varying degrees, arising from the need to educate people beyond what is necessary for survival. Beginning in the early 16th century, the idea of universal compulsory education began to develop and spread due to assorted religious groups, developing at different rates throughout the world. The value of centralized education was quickly discovered by many, with employers viewing it as a method to create more effective workers and nations using the opportunity to create improved patriots and soldiers.<sup>50</sup> Today, education has come to be considered a fundamental human right, and is cited by the Global Partnership for Education as playing “a key role in human, social, and economic development”. Education has been proven to reduce poverty, increase economic growth and income, raise a person’s chance of having a healthy life, and promote gender equality and peace.<sup>51</sup> These benefits are widely agreed upon, and each nation develops their individual system, tailored to their region and culture, which works to promote these positive ideals. While many nations have worked tirelessly to overcome cultural barriers and spread education and its values, the presence of conflict and civil unrest can reverse positive progress instantaneously.

It has been estimated that over 36 percent of the out-of-school children worldwide live in conflict areas, a problem that many hope can be resolved once the conflict is ended. Unfortunately, this is rarely the case. Education in crisis situations receives a small amount of the humanitarian budget, which extends into post-conflict rebuilding as well.<sup>52</sup> The Geneva Convention specifically mentions protection of education in times of war, citing that orphans under 15 must receive appropriate education, occupying forces must provide education, interned children must receive education, and nations with internal conflicts must continue their provision of education.<sup>53</sup> While these clauses can serve as a strong foundation for others, it must be

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<sup>48</sup> <http://conflictaideducation.org/?p=95>

<sup>49</sup> <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/sept92/vol50/num01/Typical-Responses-to-Conflict.aspx>

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/freedom-learn/200808/brief-history-education>

<sup>51</sup> <http://www.globalpartnership.org/education>

<sup>52</sup> <http://www.globalpartnership.org/focus-areas/conflict-affected-and-fragile-countries>

<sup>53</sup> [http://www.unicef.org/education/files/EEPCT\\_Peacebuilding\\_LiteratureReview.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/education/files/EEPCT_Peacebuilding_LiteratureReview.pdf)

acknowledged that there is a central insufficiency: these clauses, as well as many others in the past, only specifically apply to conflicts in which a formal state of war has been declared between countries. This means that when conflicts are waged between organizations and countries, as is often the case today, there is no accountability mechanism to keep international authorities in check, and the values surrounding education are often not upheld. There is work that has been done to update this; however, the problem again arises that these groups are not held to the same standards as the countries are. Situations then occur wherein these parties will occupy school grounds, destroy the buildings, and disrupt any semblance of a formal education system. This, in combination with the lack of humanitarian aid dedicated to education, exacerbates the already present problems during post-conflict peacebuilding as it relates to education.

Despite these difficulties, there have been instances in which education has been used as a method of peacebuilding. By using education as a tool to create a better future, schools have taught students in a way that allows for deeper understanding of their past conflicts and how to create a more peaceful environment. Introducing ideals and beliefs which discourage violence and conflict has helped to prevent both relapsing and new outbreaks of conflict, and fostered peaceful environments.<sup>54</sup> By educating children on past conflicts and their causes, future conflicts can be prevented. An example of this is the changes to Germany's educational systems after World War II, specifically with regards to their methods of teaching history. By reforming their history education and textbooks, Germany created a generation with a more understanding populace and has since been able to create close, peaceful ties with neighbors.<sup>55</sup> Similarly, South Africa was able to utilize education to create peace after the end of apartheid. The country worked tirelessly to document all apartheid era crimes through public documentation from family, victims, and perpetrators. The resulting records are a valuable resource for the education of future generations on how to avoid similar conflicts.<sup>56</sup> Education has been used before to help avoid relapse, but examples of this are few and far between, highlighting the need for improved methods of using education as a tool post-conflict. After conflicts it is essential that rehabilitation and rebuilding begin, but there is no one clear course of action to follow, as no two conflicts or countries are the same. This makes it imperative that methods of implementing accessible, quality education post-conflict be created in way that allows a variety of countries to regrow, rebuild, and improve.

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<sup>54</sup> [http://www.unicef.org/education/bege\\_65480.html](http://www.unicef.org/education/bege_65480.html)

<sup>55</sup> <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001913/191341e.pdf>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.google.com/search?tbo=p&tbs=bks&q=isbn:146164397X>

## PAST UN ACTION

The task of rebuilding post-conflict and peacebuilding has been a focus for the UN for years. The UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in particular has focused on peacebuilding, defined as "efforts to reduce a country's risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development."<sup>57</sup> Along with other alternative approaches, ECOSOC primarily focuses on security first when emerging from conflict, with the ultimate goal of creating a sustainable peace in the region. For this problem the committee created the ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Groups dedicated to the task of establishing long-term methods for aiding nations which have recently come out of a conflict. These groups have been utilized in Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, and other countries where they have successfully promoted peace and economic recovery. Additionally, ECOSOC passed resolution 2011/43, which called for similar measures in South Sudan. The country is an example of the success of these programs, which provided support to the country in accordance with its own laws and culture.<sup>58</sup> Long-term plans are essential when looking at post-conflict recovery, so long as they are tailored to the situation and location.

Another aspect of the issue that is often looked at is the situation of education during conflict, which both the General Assembly (GA) and United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have worked to address. In resolution A/RES/64/290, UNESCO defined education as a basic right, and recognized that it is often denied in conflict situations where students are displaced or it is unsafe to attend school. To remedy this, the resolution suggests implementing quality education systems with widespread accessibility from an early age, as well as using education for peacebuilding after a conflict.<sup>59</sup> The GA has also published works stating that education can provide psychological protection, which can, in some cases, sustain lives, therefore making education during conflict important to address.<sup>60</sup> Part of the GA's goal is creating understanding by educating people about different cultures and religions, shown in their adoption of resolution A/RES/70/19 which is dedicated to that task, as well as their follow-up resolution A/RES/70/20, which further encouraged this in peacebuilding. The resolutions advocate for an environment of peace, largely based around improvement of accessibility to and use of strong curriculum.<sup>61</sup>

The UNDP works to address education in all situations. Beginning with MDG 2, whose goal was to "achieve universal primary education", it was found that it reduced

<sup>57</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/peacebuilding.shtml>

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/peacebuilding.shtml>

<sup>59</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/education/postconflict/educationinemergencies.pdf>

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.un.org/ga/president/63/letters/background.pdf>

<sup>61</sup> <http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/ga11734.doc.htm>

the number of out-of-school children by half from 2000 to 2015.<sup>62</sup> To replace this goal, as there is still much progress necessary, SDG 4 was created to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.”<sup>63</sup> Lack of access to education continues to be tied to conflict to many situations, which leads the UNDP and its partners to create agendas in search of a solution to the problem.

Aside from the UNDP, the UN body that works to address many aspects of the issue of post-conflict education is the UN Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF). In its Peacebuilding Literature Review, it addresses the use of education for peacebuilding, recognizing that violence is what most frequently prevents education in the world’s poorest countries. Similarly, it stresses the importance of educating both sides of the conflict in order to create widespread understanding. UNICEF also classifies education, both during and after conflict, as a humanitarian response, noting that official response only applies to declarations of war between two countries, which excludes a significant portion of violent conflicts which occur in the world at present. Finally, UNICEF addresses recovery, distinguishing physical, ideological, and psychological. Rebuilding schools, improving school systems, and restoring normalcy in education are all topics which are addressed, both to help those in need of education and to assist with the rebuilding of the country as a whole.<sup>64</sup>

## CURRENT SITUATION

After a conflict, countries will often become hyper focused on repairing the government and infrastructure, leaving education to fall by the wayside. With the high prevalence of conflict in the world today, this is a major concern of the international community, and more action needs to be taken to remedy this problem. Many international organizations have recognized the need for outside action on this problem. While it is essential when rebuilding a nation to maintain its independence so that it may establish itself as a sovereign nation, there remains situations where outside influences can assist without being domineering, especially when addressing education. Often there are a lack of educators and the necessary equipment and supplies, which is where outside organizations can step in and assist. Concerns frequently arise about how education systems in different countries would be impacted by outside organizations rebuilding the system. While there are many nations that welcome the assistance, there are an equal number that view any help related to education as destructive to their culture, and detrimental to the regrowth of their country.

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<sup>62</sup> <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/mdg/the-millennium-development-goals-report-2015/>

<sup>63</sup> <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sdgoverview/post-2015-development-agenda/goal-4.html>

<sup>64</sup> [http://www.unicef.org/education/files/EEPCT\\_Peacebuilding\\_LiteratureReview.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/education/files/EEPCT_Peacebuilding_LiteratureReview.pdf)

The UN holds a unique role when discussing peacebuilding as it relates to education. The Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) supports countries as they emerge from conflict by bringing together resources, and advising countries on how to avoid relapsing into conflict.<sup>65</sup> Their main focus is on the rebuilding of infrastructure and government to avoid relapse into conflict, but it is now recognized that education can also play a significant role in avoiding relapse. In a published paper, the Forced Migration review stated that “while education does not cause wars, nor end them, every education system has the potential either to exacerbate or to mitigate the conditions that contribute to violent conflict.”<sup>66</sup> Education can heal psychosocial consequences of war, solve youth unemployment, discourage youth involvement, and promote development beyond the conflict. Though recognized on the list of long-term goals post-conflict, many have wondered if education may hold a more important role than it is given credit for, and should be amongst the first problems solved and fixed.

When discussing reinstating an education system, there are many steps that have to be taken so that it is safe for all involved in the recovery. Safe transportation to and from school, a stable location to host the students, and a balanced curriculum are all important components to consider post-conflict.<sup>67</sup> It is also important to take into consideration the differing opinions on education in the region. Depending upon the conflict, there may be animosity towards certain methods of teaching and living that would cause a divide, similar to social and cultural differences. These are many aspects that, while considered by NGOs, are not always put towards the top of the priority list. Whether creating a plan or looking at how to properly integrate the old and the new, education is always adapting. With the high prevalence of conflict in the world today, it is essential to determine how to best approach the issue to avoid further conflict and distress for the children.

## BLOC POSITIONS

### NORTH AMERICA

The majority of the North American region has not suffered from major conflicts in recent years, leading to this problem not being a major issue. Both Canada and the USA have not had a conflict on their soil for decades, though they recognize the importance of education for children and work to provide quality education to all. There exist many NGOs in the region that work overseas to help remedy the problem, using insights gained from the established education systems about how to best address the issue and pursue the problem. Both countries also provide humanitarian

<sup>65</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/>

<sup>66</sup> <http://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads/en/FMRpdfs/EducationSupplement/03.pdf>

<sup>67</sup> <http://www.eldis.org/go/home&id=17142&type=Document#.V4HHDbgrKUk>

aid to countries in conflict, some of which is dedicated to education. Mexico is different than its northern neighbors, however, and is home to much civil unrest, leaving the education system insufficient, or simply nonexistent, for many students. The conflicts and drug cartels in the region create an inconsistent education system, which leaves many children and adults in the country without the education required to gain employment and lead productive lives.<sup>68</sup>

## SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA

Despite the economic growth and improvement of the region in recent years, education systems in South and Central America are some of the lowest ranked in the world. The region has also been home to many conflicts and civil unrest over the years, compounding the issue of poor education systems. The region struggles with quality of education, and many countries score below the global Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) average.<sup>69</sup> The education gap closely resembles the income gap in the regions, which is large enough to cause concern for many. It has also been found that the education investments in the region are poorly directed, inadequate, and primarily favor the high-income students, which means that these problems are not being solved as many hope.<sup>70</sup> Central America suffers a similar situation where it caters to their higher income residents, with large dropout rates amongst students above the age of 10.<sup>71</sup>

## EUROPE AND OCEANIA

Europe hosts a strong education system in most countries. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union (USSR) in 1991, many of the countries that were once a part of the USSR had to restructure their communist-based education systems. Since then, many of the countries have come back strong and are ranked as having the best education systems in the world.<sup>72</sup> With the involvement of the EU, their members are held to a higher standard and work hard to improve their education systems constantly. While there is some civil unrest in a few eastern European countries, the impact upon their education systems has not been extreme, though it is considered. Australia's

<sup>68</sup> <https://www.childfund.org/Content/NewsDetail/2147489378/>

<sup>69</sup> <http://www.forbes.com/sites/alejandrochafuen/2014/11/20/educational-quality-and-inequality-in-latin-america/#6be798e76224>

<sup>70</sup> <https://worldfund.org/en/about-us/education-gap.html>

<sup>71</sup> <http://reliefweb.int/report/dominican-republic/finishing-school-central-america-pending-challenges-executive-summary>

<sup>72</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/business-27314075>

education system is also strong, though they constantly pursuing improving upon the system. Most of these countries work with less developed nations to strengthen struggling education systems, which allows them to grant their insight to those regions.

## ASIA

The state of the education system in Asia varies greatly depending upon the region. In East and South-East Asia, the education systems are strong and the population views education as the primary, and often only, way to better themselves. Since the area has not suffered a major conflict for decades, the issue of post-conflict education has not been a major part of their domestic agenda, though the overall furthering of their education system is constantly checked. The 'education fever' in the region has led to the creation of many different types of schools, along with concern over how highly education is valued, and what costs people may pay for an excellent education.<sup>73</sup> Meanwhile in other, less economically developed regions of Asia, primarily West Asia, the education systems are not as robust. Some of the reasons for this include poverty, social exclusion, socio-economic gaps, urban-rural disparities, rampant mismanagement, and lack of adequate education programs.<sup>74</sup> The need for reform in their education systems is becoming recognized more and more by the countries, but more work and research is required so that strategies can be executed to improve the situation.

## MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

The growth of education in the MENA region has been difficult because of the large amount of conflict currently going on in the general region. Many of the Middle Eastern nations have been embroiled in conflict since the Arab Spring occurred in 2010, and have struggled to recover long enough to repair their education systems. It has been reported that ongoing conflicts in the Middle East impede more than 13 million children from attending school, and have rendered at least 8,500 schools unusable.<sup>75</sup> The conflicts have also caused a major refugee crisis in neighboring nations, leaving education as one of many problems for the region. Northern Africa has also been home to much violence similar to the Middle East, which has created a need for a better and stronger education system. While these nations may recognize

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<sup>73</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/business-24537487>

<sup>74</sup> [http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/archive/Publications/Prospects/ProspectsOpenFiles/pr115ofe.pdf](http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/archive/Publications/Prospects/ProspectsOpenFiles/pr115ofe.pdf)

<sup>75</sup> <http://time.com/4021101/middle-east-children-education-unicef-report/>

the problems and the need to address education, it is not always a priority to immediately start working on the education infrastructure leaving much work needed. South Africa's situation is not as dire, and in recent years much progress has been made through shifts in national policy and development partners to increase the number of students enrolled in school.<sup>76</sup> Work is needed to take care of the subpar quality of education though, with many countries recognizing this as a critical situation. Just this year, the South African minister of education stated that the country's schools are in crisis because of massive dropout rates and an abundance of children that did not complete the school year. Though the education budget is the best in the region, around six percent of the GDP, the problem arises on how to properly utilise this budget.

## CASE STUDIES

### AFGHANISTAN

In December 1979, Afghanistan was partially invaded by the Soviet Union. Afghanistan had been experiencing uprisings against their recently pro-communist government, leading the communist Soviet Union to attack in their defense. This then led to the replacement of the one anti-communist Afghan president, with a new leader who supported the presence of the Soviet troops. After a brief period of violence, the invasion of 30,000 troops settled into a relatively peaceful period, and 100,000 Soviet troops were stationed Afghanistan controlling multiple cities and major strongholds.<sup>77</sup> However, insurgencies did not stop with the Soviet invasion, and what followed was a bloody conflict that lasted until 1988, killing an estimated 14,500 Soviet troops, and over 1,000,000 Afghan civilians. Civil war continued even after the Soviet troops were withdrawn, and eventually a new extremist group, the Taliban, led the country into further ruin.<sup>78</sup> In 1996 the Taliban took control of the country, initially gaining support from the majority of people due to their successful removal of the Soviet troops and their promises of ending the turmoil and violence brought on by the years of conflict in the Soviet-Afghan war. Despite these promises, the Taliban only brought more destruction to the country, causing violence that was considered by many worse than what the Soviets had inflicted. While the Taliban takeover was not technically a war, the destruction of infrastructure and the devastation inflicted upon the people living there was calamitous because of their restrictive laws and

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<sup>76</sup> [http://www.unicef.org/esaro/5481\\_education\\_gender.html](http://www.unicef.org/esaro/5481_education_gender.html)

<sup>77</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/event/Soviet-invasion-of-Afghanistan>

<sup>78</sup> <http://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2014/08/the-soviet-war-in-afghanistan-1979-1989/100786/>

discriminatory judicial system. It wasn't until 2001 that their regime was toppled, and the degree of damage become recognized internationally.<sup>79</sup>

The destruction caused by years of warfare from the Soviet invasion and the Taliban takeover did not spare the schools, particularly in the capital city of Kabul. Schools were left damaged or destroyed from attacks during the Soviet invasion, and the people were left terrorized after the violence inflicted on the population; particularly that against women by the Taliban. By the end of the Taliban's control over Afghanistan in 2001, only 21 percent of children were attending school, with approximately one million men and zero women formally enrolled.<sup>80</sup> Additionally, the overall literacy rates were 52 percent for men and 24.2 percent for women, with men staying in school five years longer than women did.<sup>81</sup> This gender disparity is a concern for the UNDP, whose SDGs strive to take care of gender equality, as well as quality education. This concern, in addition to the destruction of schools during years of warfare, created an education environment which is in dire need of repair.

Since the Taliban were removed from Afghanistan, there has been significant improvement in the educational gender gap. In 2012, the number of women in schools had risen to 2.9 million, out of the 7.8 million total students enrolled. While this makes up only 37 percent of the total, it is significantly higher than during the conflict, both in gender equality and total number of students. Despite these advances, there is still serious work that needs to occur. Given that a significant number of schools were destroyed, many have since been forced to run out of temporary structures such as tents, or even outside underneath trees.<sup>82</sup> Additionally, while there are close to 185,000 teachers, there is a severe lack of qualifications in up to 50 percent of Afghanistan's districts, and there are 46 students for every one teacher, compared to the 18:1 ratio present within the United Kingdom.<sup>83</sup> The benefits of small class sizes are immense, and reducing this ratio to a lower number of students to teachers is another obstacle to overcome.<sup>84</sup> Overcoming the gender disparity, the lack of qualified teachers, and the need for permanent school buildings are the challenges that Afghanistan is faced with in order to improve their educational system in the wake of a lengthy conflict. Unfortunately, not much work was done to establish the education system immediately after either conflict, which has made this problem harder to solve. The problem now results from much of the population having become set into the restrictive education mindset created by the conflict, which makes changing the

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<sup>79</sup> <http://www.cfr.org/afghanistan/taliban-afghanistan/p10551>

<sup>80</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-26747712>

<sup>81</sup> <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/af.html>

<sup>82</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-26747712>

<sup>83</sup> <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/afghanistan/overview>

<sup>84</sup> <http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Organizing-a-school/Class-size-and-student-achievement-At-a-glance/Class-size-and-student-achievement-Research-review.html>

system harder because it requires changing how people think. The situation in Afghanistan demonstrates how a conflict can impact the education system, both between countries and between terrorist groups and countries, and what can occur when education is not a main focus in the recovery process.

## SRI LANKA

Prior to its civil war in 1983, Sri Lanka recognized the importance of education. Following the industrialization of India, a movement in which Sri Lanka's economy is closely tied, Sri Lanka experienced multiple non-consecutive years of a booming plantation economy. While much of the revenue was spent on public improvement, an even greater portion was spent on making education free and accessible. A focus was put on increased accessibility to rural areas, and on ensuring that it remained free, both through public funding and private donations, which were effective because of the relatively small size and population of the country.<sup>85</sup> In addition to these major steps for quality education, there was also a historically unusual push to include women, making education a cultural sphere with the least gender disparity.<sup>86</sup> Considering the time period, Sri Lanka's push toward widespread, free education regardless of gender shows a progressive education system, as well as a historical commitment to quality education.

On July 23, 1983, the civil war in Sri Lanka officially began, and the situation changed. During the British colonial periods, the British reportedly favored the Tamil ethnic group, who were religiously Hindu and made up the minority of the population. After Sri Lanka gained its independence in 1948, the government changed the primary religion to Buddhism, as Buddhists were the majority. In 1976, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) group was formed, and advocated for a homeland for Tamils.<sup>87</sup> Rising tensions between the LTTE and the government exploded into civil war when the LTTE attacked an army convoy and killed 13 soldiers, resulting in riots which killed 2,500 Tamils.<sup>88</sup> While there were peace attempts, the two groups fought brutally against each other for 26 years, only ending the war after the LTTE was defeated in 2009. The actual number of casualties is unknown, with conflicting reports stating that anywhere from 40,000 to 140,000 people were killed in the fighting, and up to 1,000,000 people were displaced either within Sri Lanka or to India.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/place/Sri-Lanka/Demographic-trends#toc24284>

<sup>86</sup> <http://www.fao.org/docrep/005/ac791e/AC791E03.htm>

<sup>87</sup> <http://www.cfr.org/terrorist-organizations-and-networks/sri-lankan-conflict/p11407>

<sup>88</sup> <http://www.pbs.org/pov/nomoretears/timeline/>

<sup>89</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-11999611>

While the actual death toll is unknown, the effect on the educational system is much easier to quantify. Even though there was limited physical damage inflicted on schools, education was one of the weapons used in the war. The Sinhalese government created discriminatory laws that applied inside of schools, such as language laws which made it difficult for Tamil-speaking students to learn.<sup>90</sup> If and when there was physical damage done to school buildings, it was limited to the northeast, where the majority of the Tamils were located, creating disparity between ethnic groups in terms of access to education. The fighting made it difficult for children in areas where the most devastation occurred to go to school, and many students were unable to attend school, or had their learning frequently interrupted by air raids. Additionally, the displacement caused by the war meant that many students were far from their homes, and were unable to gain access to education in their temporary housing situations.<sup>91</sup>

Despite these major setbacks due to the civil war, many schools were able to remain open and functioning during the war, and education through the secondary level remained free, as it had before.<sup>92</sup> With the help of international organizations, Sri Lanka was able to quickly rebuild schools and safely allow students to learn once again.<sup>93</sup> With consideration to the causes of the recent conflict, schools began teaching the history, language, and religion of multiple ethnic groups, to help foster a system of understanding.<sup>94</sup> Sri Lanka's current education system is focused on educating students based on the needs of the job market, with hopes of growing the economy and creating a more effective, knowledge-based workforce.<sup>95</sup> As of 2015, just six years after the end of the conflict, Sri Lanka's literacy rating is higher than the world average, with 92.6 percent literacy compared to an average of 86.1 percent worldwide. The amount of time spent in school is two years longer than the global average, at 14 years for both males and females. The gender disparity is significantly low when it comes to education, making it one of the sectors with the most equality in terms of gender.<sup>96</sup> In wake of the civil war, Sri Lanka wasted no time repairing damaged school and creating more culturally sensitive educational standards, improving quickly upon the education available before and during the war. With free, widely accessible, and thoroughly inclusive education, Sri Lanka has excelled at creating a quality education system in the wake of a serious conflict.

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<sup>90</sup> <http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/1428/Sri-Lanka-SUMMARY.html>

<sup>91</sup> [http://www.unicef.org/hac2011/files/HAC2011\\_4pager\\_SriLanka\\_rev1.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/hac2011/files/HAC2011_4pager_SriLanka_rev1.pdf)

<sup>92</sup> <http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/1428/Sri-Lanka-SUMMARY.html>

<sup>93</sup> <http://www.worldvision.org/news-stories-videos/sri-lanka-education-provides-hope-post-war-recovery>

<sup>94</sup> [http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Sri%20Lanka/Sri\\_Lanka\\_Education\\_first\\_2013.pdf](http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Sri%20Lanka/Sri_Lanka_Education_first_2013.pdf)

<sup>95</sup> <http://www.mohe.gov.lk/index.php/about-ministry/overview>

<sup>96</sup> <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ce.html>

## GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. How can the UNDP work to find a balance between the cultural education standards and beliefs, and the international community's standards and beliefs?
2. What work can be done to rebuild confidence in a country's education system?
3. Where can funding and resources be found when assisting developing countries recover from conflicts?
4. What future plans need to be made when repairing an education system, and who is accountable for what is done, the adjusting nation or the outside parties assisting?
5. How can education be used as a tool to combat relapsing into conflict?

## LINKS FOR FURTHER READING

→ Humanitarian Practice Network, in collaboration with United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), wrote this article, which gives an overview of the topic, in addition to mentioning the considerations necessary when solving issues such as these.

<http://odihpn.org/magazine/education-in-post-conflict-settings/>

→ This brief article from the Human Rights Watch clearly defines “attacks on education”, and references efforts to protect educational institutions, which can be useful for aiding countries to rebuild their educational systems after a conflict.

<https://www.hrw.org/topic/childrens-rights/education-and-conflict>

→ World Education, in collaboration with multiple areas of government, works to repair educational systems after a crisis, as is outlined in this article. Additionally, it provides links to multiple projects which have a focus related to the topic.

<http://www.worlded.org/WEIInternet/international/whoweserve/display.cfm?tid=1024&id=788>

→ This in-depth article from Beyond Intractability details involvement from the UN concerning post-conflict education, and reviews multiple different areas of recovery, such as accessibility and infrastructure.

<http://www.beyondintractability.org/library/role-education-build-peace-and-reconciliation-post-conflict-settings>

→ The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) wrote this statistic-filled article about education in areas that have recently or are currently experiencing conflict, and

gives an overview of the work of the GPE concerning these topics, as well as their results thus far.

<http://www.globalpartnership.org/focus-areas/conflict-affected-and-fragile-countries>

## SOURCES

### TOPIC 1

#### Topic Intro

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<http://www.iea.org/aboutus/faqs/renewableenergy/>

<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/climate-and-disaster-resilience/sustainable-energy.html>

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[http://www.ucsusa.org/clean\\_energy/our-energy-choices/a-short-history-of-energy.html#.V4EwOrgrKUI](http://www.ucsusa.org/clean_energy/our-energy-choices/a-short-history-of-energy.html#.V4EwOrgrKUI)

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<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/environ.shtml>

<http://www.mdgmonitor.org/mdg-7-ensure-environmental-sustainability/>

<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sdgoverview/post-2015-development-agenda/goal-7.html>

<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N15/314/03/PDF/N1531403.pdf?OpenElement>

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<http://www.se4all.org/>  
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