

**Forum:** Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

**Issue:** Improving economic and social repercussions in post conflict areas

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## Introduction

Since 1946, there have been more than 260 conflicts happening around the globe. While there is violence spreading around the globe, post-conflict countries face challenging obstacles in improving their situation with followed economic and social repercussions. Wars only exacerbate poverty and destroy infrastructure in post-conflict areas. People struggle on a day-to-day basis in some of these post-conflict areas, and in addition there are many challenges post-conflict countries face in achieving development. Improving economic and social conditions with practical and effective solutions that provide external assistance is not only crucial to post-conflict countries' future, development, and well-being, but also necessary to prevent nations from falling back into conflict.

Post-conflict countries are in a situation where conflict has ended yet the possibility of another conflict remains. There are different problems intertwined together in this topic, such as poverty, unemployment, crime, overall insecurity, weakened capacity, education, etc. It is essential for organizations including the UN to provide necessary aids for the countries to tackle problems even if the issues are as big and complex as having to reconstruct the economic system of a country.

Because post-conflict countries often lack the financial resources to make improvements, external assistance is critical. Mobilizing countries' essential resource, their domestic resource, is a challenging task for LDCs. In addition, many of the post-conflict countries were low-income countries since the 1990s. As a result, in this condition, many countries find themselves stuck in a loop called the 'poverty-security trap', which is the cycle of weak security leading to poverty which then again leads to weak security overall within a country. This is not only harmful to the nation itself, but also to related countries that are impacted by the post-conflict country(s). For instance, due to weakened economic systems, other countries would inevitably receive the according consequences and changes, which are visible especially in the long term. Therefore, there is an urgent need for active progress in situations in post-conflict areas in this aspect.

Not only was it found that post-conflict areas have unique situations that require their own compatible practices when being addressed, but also that post-conflict areas were paid more attention since the Cold War. This meant theoretical solutions with predictions were the only option due to a lack of adequate amount of past data.

## Definition of Key Terms

### Post-conflict

Post-conflict signifies the absence of hostility and direct conflict which provides the opportunity and an amount of time to stabilize/improve situations and possibly approach peace. In other words, the situation is defined as the state when the actual warfare is not present, however, it still is the state when there can remain some level of tension between the conflicting countries as well as the potential of re-entering conflict.

### Social repercussions

Social repercussions are the social consequences that post-conflict countries face; they are consequences in different aspects such as refugee flows, and infrastructure destruction, and poor governance. For instance, post-conflict countries can have political instability as one of the consequences of conflict.

### Economic reconstruction

Economic reconstruction is shortly the process of making an economic change. The term used in this report refers to the economic reconstruction of post-conflict countries. Related terms include: economic recovery, economic growth, and economic restructuring.

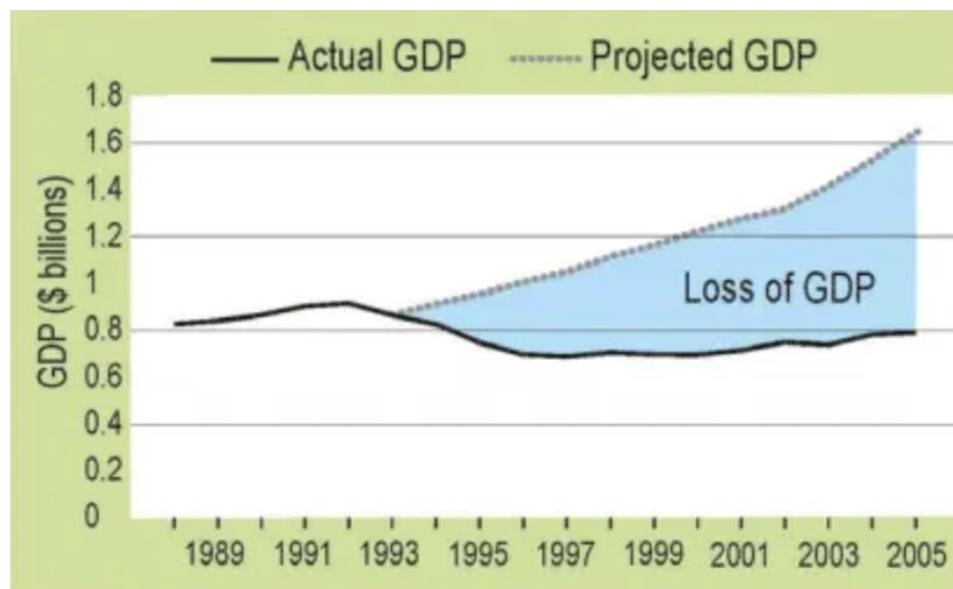
## Background Information

When a country is in a post-conflict situation, checking what state of recovery the country is, is and should be prior to the actual reconstruction process. In the past, Western Europe's economic reconstruction after WWII has been the most effective in result. During the two years after the war, Germany was funded with \$200 per capita, and Bosnia and Herzegovina were funded with about \$1,400 per capita. In contrast with possible assumptions of important solutions such as priority of funds, which is still an important factor, demobilization and reintegration of the military in the post-conflict area was considered to be impactful in efficiency. Likewise, several milestones such as violence mitigation or the

status in demobilization and reintegration can help the international community and other organizations help start, if it is done already, the improvement process of the post-conflict country.

### Economic consequences of civil war

Different conflicts may have different consequences. In the case of civil war, post-conflict countries usually face consequences such as collapses in foreign and domestic investment. This is evident just by looking at consequences of wars in Africa. The Democratic Republic of Congo experienced war and faced consequences of the loss of 29% of its GDP. Despite the projected GDP having a predicted increase, that was not the actual case due to the country's decade-lasting civil war. One of the major reasons this happened is that a large percentage of the country's GDP was used in military hardware more heavily than in promoting development and recovery.



*Caption #1: Cumulative GDP loss in Burundi*

### Economic reconstruction

The main purpose of economic reconstruction, especially in terms of short-term development, is security as well as the ensuring of basic livelihoods. Economic reconstruction includes the restoration of infrastructure facilities, public services, and conditions needed to achieve private sector development. In the process of economic reconstruction, some countries aim to restore their economic systems as they were prior to the conflict, while some undergo a reform in their economic system.

As previously mentioned, assistance for post-conflict countries is crucial and necessary for the countries to be able to progress in their development and economic reconstruction. Nevertheless, in the UN, the role of external assistance and funds was stated to be aiming for long-term developments. UNCTAD released a report in 2006: Economic Development in Africa. It was stated that development

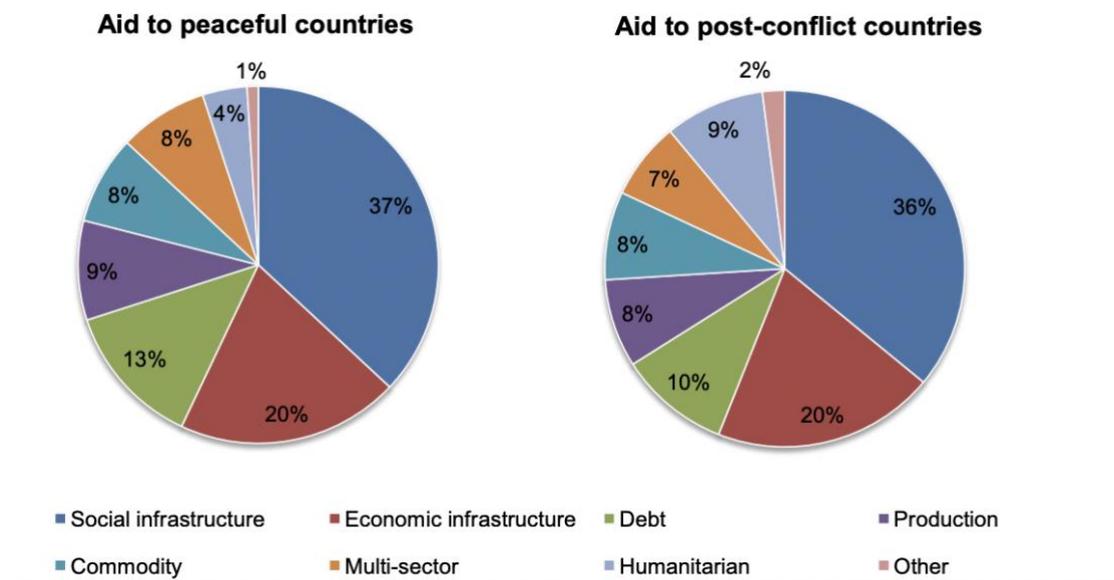
aids provided by other organizations/countries cannot be lasting substitutes for the mobilization of domestic resources, highlighting the importance of domestic resource mobilization and independence.

*Reconstruction of Infrastructure*

After the direct and short-term results of the conflict including public health emergencies, more indirect results of the economic aspect are to be addressed. The issue of reconstructing infrastructure is not only concerned with the improved reconstruction itself, but also the process necessary to get to that point where reconstruction can happen. It is needed to be kept in mind that post-conflict countries may have limited institutional capacities. In other words, the problem lies in cooperating with other countries and organizations in order to achieve institutional capacity development that can enable reconstruction. In order to launch a growth trajectory, it is also necessary to understand the institutional capacity and availability of infrastructure.

*About Aid*

So far, there are no policies that can specifically describe how aid can increase growth in post-conflict areas. But in either case, it is important to understand how much external support is given to post-conflict countries as aid is used to improve situations in post-conflict areas. In the past few decades, excluding the aid for debt, the rates of aid that are provided for peaceful countries and post-conflict countries have no significant difference.



**Caption #2: Aid to peaceful countries vs post-conflict countries**

## Social Repercussions

### *Refugees*

Various conflicts causes refugee number to increase. This then leads to a displacement crisis that can threaten displaced people, aid workers, as well as peacekeepers. There have been efforts to prevent displacement and manage Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). However, this aspect of the issue is interlinked with employment, education, and health care, which were the most common reasons refugees as well as IDPs did not want to return to the countries of their origin. Therefore, delegates should consider vari ways of addressing this aspect of the issue.

### *Unemployment*

After demobilization and reintegration of the army in cases of war, there lies the issue of unemployment. Although there were cases including the US and Europe that didn't experience major obstacles in this aspect, there are countries including the UK that struggled with unemployment for a long period of time. The creation of employment opportunities and the right environment is what post-conflict countries should be able to do, however, it is not an easy process due to their current circumstances. Employment can be an essential peacebuilding tool. This is because employment can help the people of the post-conflict country to have basic livelihoods. Conflicts not only destroy jobs, but also destroy communities and infrastructure-- in that process, citizens are not easily able to work, which is how they encounter challenges in employment. The post-conflict country as a whole also faces difficulties in job creation as well. This is because conflict reduces incentives and the ability of firms to create jobs, which then affects the demand for labour. Thus, employment programmes are vital in assisting post-conflict countries as they contribute to employment growth.

### *Health system*

In post-conflict areas, health systems are disrupted. While resources often are depleted, health provision is important for citizens. WHO defines a health system as a "system which consists of all organizations, people, and actions whose primary intent is to promote, restore, and maintain health." The health system can be divided into: service delivery, health workforce, health information systems, financing and governance, technology. What is important is that reconstructing a health system is determined mainly by these building blocks. Contrary to the requirement of an active progress in resolving issues in post-conflict countries, health system recovery is a non-linear process. Lack of health workers, weak governance capacity are some of the challenges that need to be addressed.

## Major Countries and Organizations Involved

### Sudan

Sudan, an LDC, faces economic insecurities in its infrastructure aspect, with only 1.2% of the GDP being spent on public health and 1% on education. According to the 2022 Global Report on Internal Displacement, the number of internally displaced persons became 3.2 million. Two years ago the Darfur conflict that started in 2003 ended with an agreement signed. Sudan's spending of finance on military was doubled since the start of the conflict. The consequences included the destruction of major infrastructure amounting to \$88.7 billion dollars, as well as the burning of local villages.

### Afghanistan

The Afghanistan War began in 2001 and ended in 2014. Afghanistan currently faces serious challenges in reconstruction of infrastructure and effective market relationships. There is the organization The Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), and there has been previous attempts including the cooperation of the ARTF and the World Bank to enhance the situation by providing funds to implement projects including The Afghanistan Emergency Food Security Project, The Afghanistan Community Resilience and Livelihoods Project, and The Afghanistan Health Emergency Response Project.

### Iraq

After conflicts faced by Iraq, electricity, water, education, and welfare weren't given sufficiently to the people of Iraq due to the consequences of the conflict. The unemployment rate in 2014-2017 was 12.6%-17.7%. Despite the past progress that was made in Iraq's situation, challenges people have to face are inevitable still present. Iraq's governmental measures such as restoration of basic public services were assisted by the UNDP.

### More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs)

MEDCs, determined by the UN based on a specific criterion, can be influential by assisting post-conflict countries in improving their economic and social situations. In the past, MEDCs have provided aids post-conflict countries need for certain stability conditions; certain aids were given so post-conflict countries were able to restore stability.

## Timeline of Events

| Date           | Description of event   |
|----------------|--|
| 1920           | The international community officially cooperated to rehabilitate Austria after the recognition of the need to make efforts toward the problem.                                |
| 1997           | The World Bank established a Post-Conflict Unit (also known as: Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Unit) and Post-Conflict Fund.   |
| 1943-1946      | At the end of WWII, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration worked towards the reconstruction and rehabilitation in several countries in Europe and China. |
| 2001           | The UNDP made the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery which was aimed for restoring the basic livelihoods of the victims of the conflict.                                |
| 2005           | UN established a new Peacebuilding Commission along with the Peacebuilding Fund with the aim of improving the cooperation between organizations.                               |
| February, 2014 | The UNDPKO decided to have measures that will ensure the programmes of peacemakers will be overseen.   |

## Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African Countries Emerging from Conflict, 15 July, 2002 (**ECOSOC Resolution 2002/1**)

This resolution was in response to a previous request made by the General Assembly. This was made for African States; it allows African States to request assistance for the state's post-conflict reconstruction.
- Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields, 20 September 2005 (**A/60/L.1**)

This was a draft resolution from the General Assembly that was regarding the 2005 World Summit Outcome.
- [Presidential Statement], 20 December 2012 (**S/PRST/2012/29**)

This is a Presidential Statement in which Mohammed Loulichki reaffirmed "the critical importance of peacebuilding as the foundation for sustainable peace and development in the aftermath of conflict".

## Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

### UNDP

Through cooperation with other nations as well as the World Bank, UNDP has taken previous actions including building shelters and creating opportunities for employment in multiple regions from the past. Guidelines made in the past were improving through changes that were adjusting to different outcomes.

### Post-Conflict Fund (PCF)

Established in 1997, Post-Conflict Fund is part of the World Bank that supports post-conflict countries. It provides funds to different organizations, institutions, and governments. Examples of grants in the past include providing \$230,000 to an NGO in Bosnia and Herzegovina to aid the project for women in ethnic groups. \$2 million was given to support Burundi for a community rehabilitation project regarding refugees. Previously there were also efforts to help education and health services in Somalia as well, where the organization aided \$1.5 million dollars. PCF also aimed for economic recovery support, demobilization and reintegration, and other policy studies that were to better policy planning.

### The World Bank

The World Bank, an organization that aims to support countries through financial aid, consists of different departments. These departments together helped countries approach economic and social stability. For instance, its Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA) is an example of a growth-promoting policy that has been used by the World Bank.

## Possible Solutions

For possible solutions, there are ones that aim to practically resolve or improve a certain aspect, and there are ones that aim for efficiency because of the much-needed active progress as well as consideration of the long-term development. In approaching this topic as a whole, efficiency in the usage of funds is important. In other words, despite having adequate funds, if the fund is not used to implement effective actions, then the problem will be left unsolved at its core. In some situations, there are times when there were practices that were unsustainable despite the good side of its visibility of effect in the short term. However, considering the possible difficulties there may be in predicting such undesired effects, there should be more analysis and in-depth discussions when concluding actions planning to be made based on the lessons learned from past experiences.

## Preventing Post-Conflict Relapse

Although this issue as a whole does not fully emphasize the obliteration of root causes of conflict outbreaks, when done correctly it can reduce the potential of conflict relapse, as it is important not to let countries go back into conflict again. Nearly half of all civil wars are due to post-conflict relapses. Preventing this itself can be significant in reducing the risk of further damage. The recidivism rate of post-conflict countries from 1945-2009 was 57%, and 40-50% of post-conflict countries re-enter conflict within a decade. Conflict relapses are in relation with political institutions, and many times it is derived from the factors including grievances regarding economic underdevelopment.

## Addressing Uniqueness

Analyzing each country's situation even in urban and rural divisions is important because situations are unique, making practicality imperative. While some countries may experience unemployment, some other countries, which in the past were US and UK, might not. Instead, there may be other factors influencing their economic and social situation. Finding the gaps between the situation the solution was anticipating and the actual situation would be necessary to make progress in improvement. In addition, the process of communication of this would also be needed, and thus a separate organization or a gathering in a similar form of it would be needed to communicate information. A current challenge is that the majority of the victims as well as the aftermath of the conflict are mostly at the local level. Their perspective is rarely represented. The desired outcome should be communicated to understand each different situation. Although basic necessary structural developments are to be kept in progress, more representation of the opinions of the population to help improve their situation faced as victims is vital. An inevitably significant process in understanding the victims' perspective is by communicating in order to understand what they stand for, and how they view different situations. In other words, a solution for this could be to find an effective way of communicating with representatives of communities within the post-conflict area.

## Effectiveness in implementation

Effective and close cooperation is key in improving post-conflict areas' situation because post-conflict countries rely heavily on assistance. Having a system where reflection upon progress is on track would be fundamental in moving forward to continue making progress in different post-conflict areas. Furthermore, it is important for countries to be able to implement actions in an effective manner. For this reason, the capable public service building is a necessary step, as it is the basic structure that allows actions to be implemented. The accountability of a country to do this is fundamental in improving countries' situation, however, many governments of post-conflicting areas often lack the capacity. This cannot be something that is achieved in the short-term, thus persistence would be important when approaching this problem.

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## Appendix or Appendices

- I. Further reading on preventing conflict relapses: Further reading on preventing conflict relapses: [https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep07728#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep07728#metadata_info_tab_contents) , <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/9069>