MUN ISE

ECOSOC

Improving the accessibility to primary and secondary education, especially in times of conflict

Forum: ECOSOC

Issue: Improving the accessibility to primary and secondary education, especially in times of conflict

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Introduction

"Education is not a privilege, it is a right!" This famous saying by William J. Clinton sets the stage for ECOSOC's first issue in the 4th Annual Session of MUNISE. Education empowers individuals by providing them with knowledge, skills, and opportunities for personal and professional growth. It is fundamentally integral for children to receive education to become successful individuals with the chance of living fulfilling lives. Education equips them with the necessary tools to navigate the world effectively, making it an imperative aspect of personal development and societal progress. But as the world progresses conflicts arise regularly; from the Israel-Hamas Conflict to the Russia-Ukraine war: conflicts have become the new norm. Many many children are in these nations where these conflicts take place and as a result their education is compromised. More than 25 million children between 6 and 15 years old, or 22 percent of children in that age group, are missing out on school in conflict zones across 22 countries, as said by UNICEF. It is of utmost importance that member nations work together to find solutions that ensure education, the biggest right for children is not compromised.

Definition of Key Terms

Primary Education

- The initial stage of formal education, typically covering the first years of schooling where basic literacy, numeracy, and foundational knowledge are imparted.

Secondary Education

- The stage of education that follows primary education, usually consisting of middle and high school levels, provides further instruction in a broader range of subjects helping children choose their future careers.

Education Equity

- The principle of fairness and inclusion in education, ensuring that all individuals have equal opportunities to access and succeed in education, regardless of background, socio-economic status, or circumstances.

Conflict Sensitive Education

- Education programs and policies designed to mitigate the impact of conflict on education, promote peacebuilding, foster tolerance, and protect the rights of learners and educators in conflict-affected areas.

Resilience Building

- Strategies and interventions aimed at strengthening the capacity of education systems and communities to withstand and recover from the impacts of conflict, crisis, or adversity, ensuring continuity and quality of education services.

Government Organizations

- Government agencies and ministries are entities within a government structure that are responsible for specific functions, services, or policy areas. These agencies and ministries play a central role in implementing government policies, programs, and initiatives to serve the public and address various societal needs. For example: Education Ministry,

NGO's

- NGO stands for Non-Governmental Organization. It refers to a non-profit organization that operates independently of any government and is typically focused on addressing social, humanitarian, environmental, or developmental issues. Like: Save the Children.

General Overview

Improving accessibility to education in conflict-affected areas is an immediate priority. It involves addressing barriers that prevent children and youth from accessing quality schooling due to the impacts of armed conflict, displacement, and insecurity. This effort aims to ensure that education remains available and children receive it no matter the circumstances.

Since the United Nations recognized education as a fundamental human right after World War II, efforts to improve education accessibility have been ongoing. Over the decades, international organizations, governments, and NGOs have increasingly prioritized education in emergency situations. Despite these efforts, ensuring access to education for all, regardless of the severity of the situation, remains a significant challenge.

Conflict-affected regions often experience numerous difficulties, such as damaged infrastructure, displaced populations, and a lack of educational resources. Schools may be destroyed or used for other purposes during conflicts, making it impossible for children to attend. Families fleeing violence often end up in refugee camps where there are no schools or only temporary learning centers with

limited resources. Teachers might be displaced or unable to work due to the conflict, leading to a shortage of qualified educators.

Geographical factors like remote locations, difficult terrain, and unsafe environments further hinder the delivery of education. For example, children in rural or isolated areas might have to travel long distances to reach the nearest school, which can be dangerous during times of conflict. Additionally, the lack of transportation and poor road conditions can make it even harder for children to attend school regularly.

The psychological impact of conflict on children cannot be ignored. Many children in conflict zones experience trauma, which can affect their ability to concentrate and learn. Providing psychosocial support and creating a safe and supportive learning environment is essential for these children to succeed academically. Schools need to have trained counselors and mental health professionals who can help children cope with their experiences and continue their education.

International organizations like UNICEF and UNESCO, along with various NGOs, have been working to address these challenges. They provide temporary learning spaces, train teachers, and supply educational materials. They also advocate for the protection of education during conflicts and the importance of integrating education into humanitarian response efforts. These organizations often work in partnership with local communities to ensure that their programs are effective and meet the needs of the children.

Despite these efforts, there is still a long way to go. The international community must continue to prioritize education in conflict-affected areas and invest in long-term solutions. This includes rebuilding schools, training teachers, and ensuring that educational resources are available even in the most challenging circumstances. It is also important to involve local communities in the planning and implementation of education programs to ensure that they are culturally appropriate and sustainable.

One of the key strategies to improve education accessibility in conflict-affected areas is the use of technology. Mobile learning platforms, online courses, and educational apps can provide alternative ways for children to continue their education when they cannot attend school. These technologies can also help train teachers and provide them with the resources they need to teach effectively in difficult conditions.

Another important aspect is the integration of education into broader humanitarian efforts. Education should be considered a critical component of emergency response, alongside food, shelter, and medical care. By doing so, we can ensure that children's education is not interrupted and that they have the opportunity to build a better future for themselves and their communities.

In conclusion, improving accessibility to education in conflict-affected areas is a complex but essential task. It requires a coordinated effort from international organizations, governments, NGOs, and local communities. By addressing the barriers to education and providing support to children and teachers, it is integral that member nations work together to find collaborative solutions to these problems.

Ongoing Events

Africa: More than 35 Armed Conflicts

Asia: 21 Armed Conflicts

Europe: 7 Armed Conflicts

Latin America: 6 Armed Conflicts

Middle East and North Africa: More than 45 Armed Conflicts

Impacts

Globally, over 33 million children living in areas affected by armed conflict are unable to go to school.

Major Parties Involved

- Global Partnership for Education (GPE):

   The GPE provides funding and support for education programs in low-income countries, including those affected by conflict.

- Save the Children

   Save the Children: Save the Children works to ensure that children affected by conflict have access to education, protection, and support services.

- International Rescue Committee (IRC)

   The IRC supports education programs for children and youth affected by conflict, providing access to safe learning environments and educational resources. Mercy Corps: Mercy Corps implements education programs in conflict zones to support children's access to education and promote community resilience.

- UNICEF

It stands for the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, which is a specialised agency of the United Nations responsible for providing humanitarian and developmental assistance to children.

- Education in Crisis

Newly formed NGO that is based in Africa which ensures and works to provide education in some way or the other to children in conflicts.

Timeline of Key Events

Timeline of events in reverse chronological order leading up to present day.

Date	Description of Event
2016	Launch of a new education initiative by UNICEF to provide emergency education services in conflict-affected regions. ECW- Education Cannot Wait.
2015	SDG (Sustainable Development Goals Launched) Goal 4: Quality Education, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
2001	The Education in Emergencies Initiative was launched by UNICEF, UNESCO, and other partners to respond to the educational needs of children affected by conflicts.
2000	The MDGs, adopted by world leaders at the United Nations Millennium Summit, had the goal of achieving universal primary education all the time (Even in conflicts) by 2015 (MDG 2).
1948	Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) adopted by the UN. Article 26 of the UDHR emphasises the right to education, which includes access to free and compulsory primary education no matter what.

Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

- UN Security Council Resolution 2143: This resolution highlighted the importance of protecting schools and educational facilities during armed conflict and called for measures to prevent attacks on schools and ensure safe learning environments for children.
- Education for All Goals and Sustainable Development Goals: Initiatives like Education for All (EFA) goals and SDG 4 (Quality Education), has prioritised improving education access and quality in conflict-affected areas as part of the goals.
- Education Cluster Strategic Plan: The Education Cluster, led by UNICEF and Save the Children, developed plans for emergencies, like conflicts. The plan focuses on education in crisis settings.

Possible Solutions

- Establish Safe Learning Spaces: Temporary schools and community centres where education can continue without the fear of insecurity.
- Implement flexible learning approaches such as distance learning, mobile learning so students undergoing conflicts do not need to attend traditional schools to learn.
- Ensure protection of schools from attacks, operation in accordance with human right principles.
- Educate the community like parents and educators in designing and implementing education programs temporarily. Like: educate parents to provide home schooling for a while. Provide them with all the necessary resources.

The existing solutions proved insufficient in addressing the complex and multifaceted challenges associated with providing education in conflict zones. Consequently, the existing solutions proved insufficient in addressing the complex and multifaceted challenges associated with providing education in conflict zones. Since still 33 million children in conflict zones have no access to education at all and this an alarming concern. Thus, the new solutions must be innovative, relevant to the current world, and adaptable to the unique challenges present in conflict-affected regions.

Appendices

Appendix A

Case Study From Ukraine on what efforts were made to continue education in times of conflict.

https://www.oecd.org/education/Lessons-during-Crisis.pdf

Appendix B

Small documentary on Children and their education during conflicts.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4XooxS3uaM

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