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Group of Twenty

Tackling the causes of displacement



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Introduction

Tackling the cause of displacement, an issue that is of utmost importance in today's world. Every day in the media we see images, videos, and articles concerning the current refugee crisis. This reminds us of the relevance of the issue of displacement and how it affects people's lives. It is estimated that 11 million people fled their homes since the outbreak of the Syrian Civil War in March of 2011. By doing this, they left behind all that they had; their family, job, friends and most importantly their home. With the ultimate goal of seeking a safe livelihood for their family. Sadly, civil wars are not the only the only cause of displacement. There are so many causes of displacement, that need to be tackled. Not only wars but also natural disasters, political instability, racism, poverty, lack of healthcare or education and this list continues. According to the United Nations High Commissioners office of Refugees (UNHCR), every minute there are 24 people fleeing. The consequences of displacement are enormous. The UNHCR alarmingly reports that children make up an astoundingly 51% of all refugees in the year 2015. All these children miss out on education and suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). In order to solve the enormous disasters caused by displacement, we need to tackle the causes of displacement. the principle aim of this Research Report is to give a proper insight into the issue at hand.

Definition of Key Terms

Displacement

In this context: the activity of moving from one country or area to another country or area due to political, financial or environmental reasons.

G20

The Group of twenty is a group of finance ministers of the 19 nations that are leading in our current economy and the European Union. The goal of the G20 is to promote



economic growth on a global level, regulate financial markets, and establish international trade.

Deforestation

The action of clearing an area of forest or trees. Most often this takes place under industrial pressure and causes land degradation.

Land degradation

Land degradation means that the top layer of soil degrades which causes the land to turn infertile. This is usually caused by inappropriate or excessive exploitation of the soil. Fertilizing the soil is very time consuming and expensive.

Desertification

The process by which fertile land becomes a desert, typically because of drought, deforestation, or inappropriate agriculture.

Overfishing

Overfishing is an occurrence that takes place when a stock of fish in a body of water is depleted due to excessive fishing. The tuna is an overfished fish species.

General Overview

Displacement is the result of different causes, such as war, poverty, persecution and even climate change. However, in order to tackle these causes the political, social, economic and environmental aspect of the issue must be dealt with in collaboration with all member states since an affected country cannot solve its own problems on their own. It is also very important to differentiate between the term migrant and refugee.

A refugee is a person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution or natural disaster, while a migrant is a person who moves from one place to another, especially in order to find work or better living conditions (Oxford Dictionaries). Thus the lives of migrants would thus not be as much endangered as the ones of the refugees, but migrants should nevertheless be treated equally because they probably didn't make quite as much as the average citizen of an economically developed country and left their homes in search for a better future.

Unfortunately, there are two big problems caused by displacement which affect the global economy: The current situation in the nation they are arriving at, for example, Greece and the nation of departure, where they lose another citizen. Some countries thus take the easy route, avoiding the refugees by not letting them seek asylum in the first place, while other countries struggle with their already limited financial capabilities to assure the refugees an adequate standard of living. Therefore, the flow of immigrants needs to be decreased, but, as mentioned before, there is a reason for fleeing that needs to be solved first.

Political causes

Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq are just a few of the countries to whom displacement can be traced back to. The war-struck zones cause millions of innocent civilians to flee into the bordering countries or even take the dangerous route over the sea. If we want to change these political conflicts currently dividing our world, we must all be ready to contribute *financially*. There are already many programs set up by the UN framework in place, doing everything they can to improve the situation. But they need more financial resources. If the only hindering key to success in the battle against terrorist groups is money, then we shouldn't hesitate and join our financial resources to fund those organizations, whose goal is to solve the issue at hand. Of course, not all member states are capable of funding, however, therefore, we should fill this gap to finally establish peace. Once peace is established and infrastructure rebuilt, the displacement will slowly decrease again and both the affected country and the destination country will have less financial problems, also keeping in mind that they will need the displaced workforce to establish an own economy. The second political aspect would be persecution, may it have a racial, gender-related, political, religious or any other background, because they are moving to another country in the hope of living a peaceful life.

Economic causes

Regarding the economic aspect of this issue, one must keep in mind that it is not automatically the fault of the government if they are currently facing financial instability. Those countries are in desperate need of new trade deals and a new financial section for their government. Therefore, if the country isn't exchanging goods or services with other nations and does not belong to any sort of group which could provide financial help in times of need it is only logical that it will not be able to cope with its masses of unemployment and unstable industry. This again causes civilians, either unemployed and homeless or employed with a very small income to leave their country, hoping to be able to gain some money elsewhere.



Natural causes

Global warming

Another cause is the environmental one. Even if it doesn't directly come to one in mind, global warming plays a big role in global displacement. Due to the increase in temperature, the climate has changed rapidly in the last few years, resulting into more and more natural catastrophes forcing people to flee. These include for example floods and storms; however, it has not yet been scientifically proven in which amount the global warming phenomenon contributes to these catastrophes. The fact is that the world needs to invest in green energy and reduce its current CO₂ production to minimize the flow of immigrants. Moreover, one should also invest into the preparation and the building of stronger houses for possible hurricanes or typhoons.

Environmental causes

There are more environmental causes that exist due to us as opposed to being natural, mankind. For instance, deforestation is a rapidly evolving issue. Many people and animals are forced to move due to the 48 football fields of forest that disappear every minute. 1.6 billion people rely financially on the existence of forests and all of us rely on the oxygen provided to us by these forests. Another example is desertification, which is an extreme form of land degradation. Due to deforestation and us not taking care of our fertile soil, more and more land degrades. This causes farmers to move occasionally, leaving behind another piece of land that has become infertile. Overfishing causes people in the fishing industry to move. All these are prime examples of how we damaged our earth. These are all issues that were caused by mankind and can only be solved by mankind.

Major Parties Involved

The United States of America

As President Trump stated multiple times he strongly thinks that illegal immigration can be tackled by building a wall, especially since "I [Trump] would build a great wall, and nobody builds walls better than me, believe me, and I build them very inexpensively." (BBC, 06 Feb. 2017). The United States of America themselves currently have about 1.000.000 internally displaced persons and the causes include, for example, Hurricane Katrina (Wikipedia, 08 June 2017). However, as Trump wants to promote and prioritize American employees, he has argued in many different interviews that the Mexicans for example only take jobs away from American people.

Germany

Germany has more than 12m foreign-born citizens and it has been, is at the moment and will probably remain the second most popular country for immigration (Wikipedia, 15 June 2017). They believe that only together will we mitigate the root causes of displacement, thus ending human trafficking and other crisis causing global displacement (G7G20, 8 June 2016).

Turkey

The Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê (PKK) and other groups have forced more than 900.000 people to flee their homes and since Turkey borders Syria and Iraq it has to deal with many refugees at the moment, fleeing from the violence the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) causes (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 31 Dec. 2013). Therefore, one could say that Turkey under the lead of current President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan will be affected just as much by this issue, particularly in their decision to persecute the Gulenists in other countries, too (Deutsche Welle, 3 Nov. 2016).

Syria

This is, of course, self-evident, yet very vital to understanding most aspects of the current global situation of displacement. As already mentioned before, Syria is a warzone at the moment, where ISIS still controls a significant part of the country as well as rebel groups fighting against each other. Therefore more than the half of the original population has already fled and it is safe to assume that the political and military situation will not likely change at present, meaning that other countries will have to help them more than ever to finally establish peace and hence reduce displacement (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, n.d.).

UNHCR

UNHCR, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, is one of the most important organizations when it comes to displacement seeing as their focus lies on Refugees, who have been victims of human trafficking, violence or abuse. It does, however, differentiate between economic migrants and refugees, because refugees unlike economic migrants, flee to reach safety and freedom. The UNHCR put their 10-Point Plan of Action on Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration in action in 2006, also specifying where an intervention is absolutely needed. In general, one could say that the UNHCR provides displaced people with protection, shelter, advocacy and health and they tackle the causes of

displacement by ensuring that crisis which forces families to flee are prevented and previously internally displaced people do not need to move again.

Timeline of Key Events

Date	Description of Event
17 February 2017	Debate between EU and Middle East expert at the Munich Security Conference (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 17 June 2017)
30 May 2017	Global Report on Internal Displacement (GRID) in Geneva (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, n.d.)
5 June 2017	Meeting discussing ocean health, climate change and migration: Understanding the nexus and implications for people on the move, taking place at the United Nations headquarters
7-8 July 2017	G20 summit in Hamburg, Germany, focusing amongst other topics on displacement and migration (G20, n.d.)

Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

Political

Political causes include all instability, wars, and civil wars. Since World War II, several institutions were set up with the mandate to secure global peace. On October 24th, 1945, the United Nations were established with the aim to make sure a World War would never again take place. Later, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), the first subcommittee of the General Assembly on Disarmament and International Security (DISEC) the United Nations Peacebuilding commission (UNPBC) were created. Peacekeeping forces were mobilised on several occasions to establish peace. The UNPBC is working on setting up international guidelines for peacebuilding. The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights makes political violence illegal. These are all steps towards a world without political violence.

Economic

The United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN ECOSOC), the Second subcommittee of the General Assembly on Economic and Financial matters (ECOFIN) were established to promote and regulate global trade. The European Union (EU), G20, Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and many more commissions were established. They all have one thing in common; promoting global trade. Without economic instability and financial crises civilians are less likely to flee.



Environmental solutions

Global warming already caused and will cause many natural disasters. Many Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) have been established that try to stop global warming and climate change. The 2015 climate top in Paris was the first concrete treaty that was signed on the topic of global warming. This treaty would slow global warming down but not stop it. The current president, Donald J. Trump, of the United States of America, the most CO2 producing nation on a global level, denies the existence of global warming and refuses to drastically decrease the production of CO2.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is the UN organization that tries to solve current issues concerning climate change. They pass resolutions on subjects like deforestation, desertification, and overfishing. These are all issues that cause displacement. These environmental causes are caused by industrial pressure and unsustainable agricultural activities.

Possible Solutions

Political solutions

There is not one answer to all political instability, bad governance, and war. But there is one universality that needs to be kept in mind. Peace can only be established through dialogue. Guidelines for peacebuilding need to be established. These guidelines should focus on how to create a successful ceasefire and establishing long term peace. When global political stability will be established, there will be no more reason for a person to become displaced.

Economical causes

All trade treaties are created with the purpose of promoting global trade. The only issue that these treaties often cause is that they benefit the economically developed nations more than the economically developing nations. Tax evasion, unfair trade deals, corruption, and western subsidies increase financial problems in economically developing nations. In order to increase economic stability, fair trade deals need to be made, western subsidies need decrease or regulated and corruption needs to be stopped. When economic stability has been established, the amount of displacement will decrease.



Natural causes

Natural disasters that cause displacement, are increasing in frequency and intensity due to global warming. The production of CO₂ needs to decrease and environmental treaties need to be signed and implemented. We must intensify the research into sustainable fuels instead of using our fossil fuels. Natural disasters are a cause of displacement of increasingly importance. It is very unlikely that global warming can be completely stopped, but with maximum effort we can at least decrease it.

Deforestation, desertification, and overfishing are all the result of industrial pressure. Companies only have an interest in increasing their profit. By implementing stricter regulations and limits, we can minimize the damage caused by these industries. These limits will cause companies to be more cautious with natural resources and less wasteful. Again this will decrease global warming.

Appendices

Appendix I

Here are several YouTube videos that give a good explanation of deforestation, desertification and overfishing:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M4jht1_eyM

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w9RxnuBiFbg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F6nwZUkBeas>

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