

Forum: Human Rights Sub-Commission 1
Issue: Measures to ensure the continued education of refugee and displaced children
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Introduction

With more than 19 million classified refugees, approximately 10 million are children, and more than half of these children are currently unable to receive an education. Education is the foundation of a peaceful society, long-term stability, and economic growth. Quality education equips people with knowledge and skills. It enables them to increase their income and expand opportunities for employment. People on the move are entitled to universal human rights under any circumstances, just like everyone else. International law provides special protection to migrants, asylum seekers and refugees to ensure they can exercise such rights in countries of origin, transit or destination alike. In reality, however, their rights are often violated and they are subject to discriminatory and arbitrary treatment, especially the right to education for refugee and displaced children. According to international law, all children have the right to education. At the primary level, education should be compulsory and available free to all. Secondary and vocational training should be made available and accessible to all. There are several factors that undermine the right to education of millions of involuntary migrants and displaced children around the world, which includes, the lack of availability of education services in refugee camps. the limited availability of free secondary education and vocational training in host countries and the lack of education and accessible services for children with disabilities.

Definition of Key Terms

Refugee

“A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war, or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Most likely, they cannot return home or are afraid to do so. War and ethnic, tribal and religious violence are leading causes of refugees fleeing their countries.”

Internally displaced persons

An internally displaced person (IDP) is a person who has been forced to flee his or her home for the same reason as a refugee, but remains in his or her own country and has not crossed an international border.

Host country

Referred to as “country of asylum” or “country of refuge”. This is the State that hosts the refugee or asylum seeker and grants him or her the necessary protection.

Vocational Training

It mainly provides job related and technical skills and competences required in particular occupation or more broadly on the labor market.

Asylum Seekers

Asylum seekers are people whom self-identify as refugees. The difference is they have not been processed through the host state’s national asylum systems to be deemed a refugee. This means that any asylum seeker deemed to not be a refugee might be deported by the country they denied seeker resides in.³

Background Information

Syrian Refugee Crisis

The Syrian refugee crisis is one of the largest refugee’s crises in history. Millions of Syrians fled to different countries, mainly being Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan. As a matter of fact, more than 2 million Syrian children are refugees in neighboring countries with more than half of the registered refugees not enrolled in education. Public systems are overburdened and stretched. Public schools are becoming overcrowded due to the large influx of Syrian children. Moreover, the education provided to those who make it to some form of learning is of very poor quality, due to inadequate facilities, lack of qualified teachers and strained economic budgets. Syrian children are finding it very difficult to cope with the educational systems of the host countries, which is why this issue needs to be solved.

Access to education

There are several barriers that seem to prevent refugees from accessing education. To begin with, some refugees are excluded from national secondary schools due to explicit exclusion policy or because access has not been negotiated with national authorities. Also, refugees don’t usually have the required documentation, such as birth certificates or previous school transcripts. This issue is worsened by the lack of cross border recognition or certificates and equivalences. Particularly, Syrian refugees in Jordan faced delays enrolled their children in school because they had moved after receiving a service card but couldn’t update their registration and obtain new cards, prolonging the time they had already been out of school.

In terms of demand barriers, refugee families mostly prioritize the short term benefits wage-earning activities including, early marriage and labor, as they are in need of a source of income. The inability of Syrian refugees to gain lawful employment harms their children's ability to go to school. Studies have found rates of child labor among Syrian refugees in Jordan up to four times higher than in pre-conflict Syria. More than a quarter of Syrian households rely on children as the primary worker, and around half depend on child labor for some household income, surveys found. The lack of educational opportunities makes refugee children vulnerable to child labor, exploitation and negative coping behaviors such as drugs and petty crime. Girls' education can protect them from early marriage and sexual exploitation.

Secondary schools also generally cost more and require specialized infrastructure and equipment for science and computer laboratories or libraries, and transport options may not be available or affordable in remote and rural areas. In the host country, the new language of instruction can also present a significant barrier.

Discontinuity is another barrier facing refugee children. Many children haven't attended school due to the conflict, making it difficult reentering school. Many of these children have forgot the basic information they've learnt in the past years. Particularly, Syrian refugees in Jordan find it very difficult to reenter school due to the "Three Year Rule", which bans any child, who is more than three years older than the grade level for children their age to enroll in formal schooling. As a result, it is estimated that 77,000 children were ineligible to enroll in public schools for this reason.

The lack of mental health resources is another major barrier for Syrian refugees. Refugees have experienced many extremely stressful events because of political or religious oppression, war, migration, and resettlement. Before being forced to flee, refugees may have experienced imprisonment, torture, loss of property, malnutrition, physical assault, extreme fear, rape and loss of livelihood. The flight process can last days or years. During flight, refugees are frequently separated from family members, robbed, forced to inflict pain or kill, witness torture or killing, and lose close family members or friends and endure extremely harsh environmental conditions. The educational system of host countries doesn't seem to take the refugees' mental health issues into consideration. For instance, many Syrian refugee children with disabilities in Jordan found lack of physical accessibility, specialist educational care and psychological effects of the Syria conflict were key barriers to education. The teachers seemed to be poorly trained, not knowing how to support children with physical or mental disabilities, forcing many children to drop out of school.

The lack of affordable transportation to schools, which in some cases are only reachable by walking along main roads, puts young children at risk of road accidents and can lead to dropouts. The majority of Syrian families interviewed by Human Rights Watch said that they faced difficulties getting to school. Firstly, the distance to schools is impractical, especially children returning home at night, unlit paths during winter.

Quality and relevance of the education:

In addition to access, the quality and relevance of the education provided is also an important issue. The provision of education in refugee settings often faces the issue of quality and relevance. Governments not only have to find or create school places, but also provide trained teachers and learning materials for tens or even hundreds of thousands of newcomers, who often do not speak the language of instruction and have missed out on an average of three to four years of schooling.

Language Barrier

Refugees struggle in coping with the new educational system as other countries teach in a language that isn't the refugee's first language. For example, while the Syrian curriculum is only in Arabic, in Lebanon, children learn in Arabic, French and English. The children struggle to make sense of lessons taught in English and French. As a result, Syrian children were being placed in lower grades than the ones they attended back in their country. As a matter of fact, the language barrier is one reason that 66% of the Syrian children aren't attending school in Lebanon. This problem is also prevalent in Turkey, where the national curriculum is based on the Turkish language and in other Arab countries, where the dialect is different.

Teacher qualifications

Teachers matter more than any other single factor for the quality of learning in schools. Teachers are the central aspect of refugee education. Sometimes there is no building, no administration, but there is a teacher. Teachers are the ones who determine the effectiveness of the refugee education. There are several challenges including, shortage of quality teachers, lack of preparation and resources. The poor quality of teachers is mainly due to UNHCR allowing teachers to become accredited through a 10-day training program, which certainly proved unsuccessful. Not only that, but the quality of education has been on the fall due to the opening of second shift classes, which are run in the afternoon to accommodate additional students. This means that teachers are overworked, reducing the quality of both shifts. Under qualified teachers and double shifts also affected quality of education in Jordan.

Education System

Refugee education is generally of a very low quality, with ineffective indicators that measure inputs rather than outcomes. Teacher-pupil ratios average as high as 1:70 and, in many situations, teachers do not have even the ten days of training that would categorize them as “trained.” Available data indicate that many refugee children are learning very little in schools; among Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia, less than 6% of refugee children had reached benchmark reading fluency by grade 4.

Some communities have used parallel education systems following the curriculum of the country of origin, which is the country left by the asylum seeker or migrant, however, this imposed significant challenges, especially lack of access to examinations and certifications, leaving children unable to continue their education. For example, in Thailand, thousands of refugee children have been educated in camps on the Myanmar border using a curriculum that is not recognized by neither the Thai nor the Myanmar governments, leaving the children unable to continue their education.

Corporal Punishment

As classrooms are often crowded, students in the same classroom have different levels of education and may have spent long periods out of school. And since teachers are relatively less experienced and well trained, thus, corporal punishment may be worsened during second shift classes. According to UNICEF, 78% of Syrian parents with children in public schools complained that teachers had used physical violence.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Turkey

In Turkey, out of more than 2 million Syrian refugees, currently more than 1.7 million Syrians are under temporary protection status, of which more than half are children. In 2015, Turkey became the largest refugee-hosting country in the world, with the Government taking on the bulk of the significant financial burden of responding to this crisis. The Turkish Government reported that it has spent 5.5\$ billion supporting Syrians. The Turkish Government and UN agencies are working on the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan; UNICEF has developed a two-year plan of activities to address the needs of Syrian children mainly in education. The Turkish government took measures in August 2017 to standardize the education process in both Syrian and Turkish schools for refugees and expedite the integration of Syrian students into Turkish society. Students receive intensive Turkish-language sessions and are being taught the

Turkish curriculum. Turkey's government also trained around 290 Syrian teachers under the supervision of UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund, and distributed them across Syrian schools as staff and to build capacities. Also, Turkey established several schools to meet the needs of Syrian refugees. However, there are some cultural clashes between Turkey, the host country and the Syrians. For instance, Syrians demand for the separation of the sexes in classrooms. Most Syrian parent don't approve of the Turkish insistence on placing boys and girls in the same classroom. Syrian parents also tend to insist that their daughters wear headscarves (hijab) in public and in schools, while it is illegal for Turkish teenage girls to cover their hair at school; this is an issue that needs to be dealt with.

Lebanon

Lebanon is hosting approximately 1.1 million Syrian refugees, where more than half are children. It is the highest per capita refugee-receiving country in the world, with refugees representing one in five residents in the country. The influx of displaced school-aged children from Syria has doubled the number of education spaces required and placed an added financial burden on Lebanon's traditionally underfunded public school system. The quality of educational services also remains a significant challenge, especially in crowded classroom environments, with teachers experiencing difficulties in coping with the specific education needs of children affected by the crisis. For refugee children, the main barriers are transportation, schooling fees, language, and difficulties with the curriculum, child labor, discrimination, migration, and unpredictable enrolment regulations. Within the scope of the MEHE 2010-2015 Education Sector Development Plan, the Ministry launched its 'Reaching All Children with Education' (RACE) plan. RACE aims to bridge the needs of children displaced from Syria as defined in the No Lost Generation strategy with the development objectives of the Lebanese education system. The plan commits government and partners to providing 470,000 Syrian school-aged children (3-18 years) affected by the Syria crisis and poor Lebanese children with access to quality learning opportunities in safe and protective environments by 2016.

Jordan

An estimated 75,000 Syrian refugee children are out-of- school (along with at least 30,000 Jordanian children). While the Jordan Response Plan endorsed by the Government anticipates that 160,000 Syria refugee children will be enrolled in school in the upcoming academic year, the Ministry of Education has separately indicated that schools are at maximum capacity already and need more support. Donors including the US, EU, Germany, UK, and Canada have promised to significantly increase support for Jordan to build new public schools,

expand and improve existing ones including by making them accessible to children with disabilities, and help subsidize school transportation costs

UNICEF

UNICEF has continuously supported governments to deliver essential services in refugee camps, and host communities. Due to UNICEF's contribution, about 974,000 children across the region enrolled in formal education and more than 57,200 accessed informal education.

United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)

UNRWA was established following the 1948 Arab – Israeli conflict to work in the benefit of Palestine refugees. The agency is funded by voluntary contributions and its aim is to encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, microfinance and emergency assistance, including in times of armed conflict.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
1966	Introduction of postsecondary scholarships for refugee students, often those in urban areas, funded by UNHCR, among others
1988	The first UNHCR guidelines for refugee education were published
March 2011	Syrian crisis begins
May 2011	First camps for refugees open in Turkey
March 2012	Za'atari Refugee Camp opens in Jordan.
December 2012	UNHCR and partners launch a US\$1 billion Regional Response Plan for Syrian refugees in Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Turkey and Egypt.
August 2013	The number of Syrian refugee children passes 1 million
September 2013	UNHCR and government ministers from Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq meet in Geneva and pledge joint action to seek greater international help for host countries struggling to cope with the Syrian refugee crisis.

March 2014	UNHCR launched a campaign to raise awareness about the plight of Syrian refugees on social media #CHILDRENOFSYRIA
October 2014	More and more Syrians risk deadly sea journeys across the Mediterranean to reach safety in Europe. By the end of the month, 31% of all those arriving by sea are Syrian
July 2015	The number of Syrian refugees surpasses the four million mark.
September 2016	The International Organization for Migration (IOM) joined the United Nations at the General Assembly

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- The right to education, 18 June 2008 (8/4)
- The right to education of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, 23 June 2017, (35/26)
- UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Right
- Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, 2011

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

The main attempts to solve the issue are in the form of monetary funds. The EU was the biggest education donor for Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey in 2016, giving more than 776\$ million. It provided this funding through three ways including, its humanitarian arms, ECHO, its facility for Refugees in Turkey, and the Regional Trust Fund in Responses to the Syrian Crisis. Another major donor is the US, where it has given 1.4\$ billion in humanitarian aid, but it is unclear how much of that money went to education for refugee children. Not only do nations fund, but so do NGO's. For example (RET), Protecting Through Education is committed to working in emergencies to ensure the protection of vulnerable young people through education. The Human Rights watch also attempted to solve the issue.

Possible Solutions

To begin with, there are endless solutions that could be implemented in order to ensure access to quality education. Partnering with schools, universities and organizations to provide refugees continued education is one solution. Secondly, the creation of a software that will enable students to access online resources. The software will start with a baseline testing that

will determine the ability of the student, and will cater the education in several different languages. The software will be downloaded once onto the PC, or phone and will not need access to the internet making it more accessible. Ensure non-nationals have access to quality language support programs in primary and secondary schools, and vocational centers.

To provide easier access to education, this could be done through Establishing and implementing flexible guidelines so that children will not be denied the ability to enroll in school because they lack birth certificates or service cards or because their service cards were issued in a different district from the school in which enrollment is sought. Also, waiving the bar on enrollment for children who are three years older than their age cohort; in cooperation with donors, the Ministry of Labor, and the Teachers' Association, work to eliminate detrimental regulatory restrictions prohibiting Syrian teachers from being able to teach as well as expand vocational training for students who are too old to return to school. To help refugees bridge the gap of many missed years of schooling, more flexible forms of education are essential such as accelerated education, catch-up and bridging programs. Accelerated education comprises a condensed curriculum so that students can complete it in half the number of years normally required for that level, or even less. Students sit for accredited examinations which allow them to be integrated into mainstream education (in the right class for their age), transfer to the next level or move on to skills-based technical and vocational education.

Finally, creating catch-up and bridging programs to either help students learn content they missed or give them the knowledge and skills (such as the acquisition of a new language) they need to adapt to a different system. Support and expand programs to help Syrian as well as Jordanian families offset school-related fees that would otherwise be a barrier to education, including transportation expenses.

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Appendix or Appendices

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Forum: Human Rights Sub-Commission 1
Issue: Protecting the rights of persons with disabilities in situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies
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Introduction

Disability and the right to life are two concepts that are closely linked to each other. More often than not, people who are disabled have been denied their right to life. Furthermore, their right to protection in dangerous situations (such as natural disasters, civil wars and other humanitarian emergencies) have also been compromised, although today, more than one billion people, which is equal to 15% of the total population, live with disabilities. A disproportionately large number of people with disabilities live in developing countries, with disabilities that may actually originate from their exposure to situations of risk.

Some cultural practices, which are considered harmful, may breach the right to life of persons with disabilities. Furthermore, in most countries, euthanasia involves withholding life-saving treatments from children that are born with disabilities. Medical treatments, that can save lives if implemented on time, are sometimes withheld from people with disabilities. This is because the standard of living that is experienced by persons with disabilities is often misjudged and undervalued by health care providers, and therefore, treatments that would've otherwise been provided to other patients is often withheld. Cases where adults and children died under the care of medical personnel have been exposed by disability rights organizations, who assert that these doctors decided that their patients lives were “not worth living.”

The issue of the right to life has been raised by disability advocates to help give justifications for their opposition to physician-assisted suicide. Disability-selective screening that is not aimed at treating these patients, but instead terminating them on the basis of their disability is another issue concerning these advocates. The mortality rate of children with disabilities is also unevenly high in developing countries, and the reasons for this may be that such children do not receive health care that is satisfactory, such as immunization from childhood diseases.

The enjoyment of other human rights is also linked to the fulfillment of the right to life for persons with disabilities. For example, if someone with a disability does not have access to basic human rights such as health care or rehabilitation services, their right to life may also be compromised. Furthermore, making persons with disabilities vulnerable to dangerous working environments or to situations that involve forced labor is again potentially life threatening.¹

¹ *Human Rights. YES! Chap 5*, hrlibrary.umn.edu/edumat/hreduseries/HR-YES/chap-5.html.

Discrimination is also a daily issue in the lives of persons with disabilities. Oftentimes, they are denied rights equal to those of able-bodied people, struggling to receive general education, employment, voting rights, access to the justice system and social protection, medical treatment, and many other things that are often taken for granted by people without disabilities.

In situations of humanitarian emergency, people with disabilities are significantly more at risk than people without disabilities. A shockingly high percentage of victims of humanitarian crises are people with disabilities, since aid often fails to reach them in time or they are left behind on purpose. It is thus very important that the rights of people with disabilities are highlighted and increasingly enforced, especially in situations of risk.

Definition of Key Terms

Disability

A physical, sensorial or mental condition that impairs a person's ability to perceive or react to events around himself or herself and, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder the person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. Disabilities may be permanent or temporary, but this report refers specifically to those that are permanent or affect a person in the long term.

Hazard

A condition that threatens the safety and well-being of people. In origin it may be natural (e.g. earthquakes, floods), technological (e.g. transportation crashes, toxic releases), social (e.g. crowd crushes, demonstrations) or intentional (e.g. terrorism, politically-inspired violence).

Vulnerability

A person's susceptibility to harm as a result of external adverse events such as natural disasters, public emergencies, technological incidents or political violence.

Risk

The product of hazard and vulnerability leading to a probability of harm, expressed as physical or psychological injury, damage, destruction or interruption of productive and essential activities.

Crisis

A major incident that interrupts normal activities for a significant number of people and causes, or threatens to cause, harm to themselves or their property.

Disaster

A major destructive event that involves a large number of people and causes widespread damage and probably significant physical injury, possibly with a number,

more or less large, of fatalities. Attempts to quantify the threshold at which an incident becomes a disaster have not generally been successful, but disasters have a profound effect on society and communities and tend to be larger, or more serious, than incidents.

Disaster risk reduction

The process of preparing for, reducing the risk of and planning to face disaster when it happens.

Resilience

For individuals, groups of people and society as a whole, the state (and process) of being robust in the face of disaster risks. This means being able to reduce the impact of disaster, manage its effects with efficiency and recover rapidly from it, hopefully to a state of greater resistance than existed before (the “bounce forward” strategy).

Genocide

The deliberate killing of a large group of people, especially those of a particular nation or ethnic group

Humanitarian Emergency

A humanitarian emergency is an event or a series of events which puts the safety and wellbeing of a group of people at risk. Humanitarian emergencies may result from natural disasters like earthquakes, floods, droughts, and tropical storms; man-made emergencies like armed conflicts and industrial accidents; and complex emergencies resulting from a combination of the previous two.

Eugenics

the science of improving a population by controlled breeding to increase the occurrence of desirable heritable characteristics.

Discrimination

The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people.

Background Information

Eugenics

While persons with disabilities throughout the ages and in most societies have faced stigma and discrimination on account of their difference, the rise of the eugenics movement in America and Europe during the late nineteenth century led to the specific targeting of persons with disabilities for widespread abuses, and ultimately, mass murder in Nazi Germany. Eugenicists warned that the birth rate of the “fit” and “talented” members of society had declined to an alarming extent, while less desirable members of society continued to multiply. In the most

egregious cases, persons with disabilities were singled out for mass murder, as in the Nazi genocidal programs targeting persons with disabilities living in institutions.

Children with disabilities were targeted for systematic killing under a separate Nazi program that preceded the mass murder of adults with disabilities. A decree mandated the reporting of all newborns and infants under three years of age with suspected “hereditary diseases” including, among others, Down Syndrome, deafness, blindness, paralysis, and congenital physical disabilities. A variety of particularly horrific killing methods were used, including massive lethal injection to the heart, poison administered over an extended period of time, gassing with cyanide or chemical warfare agents, starvation, and exposure. The latter two methods were sometimes selected so that doctors could attribute the death to “natural causes” or routine illness such as pneumonia. Estimates suggest that at least 5,000 children with disabilities were killed under the euthanasia program during World War II.

During the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, persons with disabilities were killed at hospitals and residential institutions. More recently, human rights reports have exposed eugenics-like programmes in North Korea, where persons with disabilities are sent to dismal internment camps and are categorized and separated according to their disability. For example, camps exist for persons of especially short stature, who are rounded up, relocated, and prohibited from marrying or having children. Persons with mental disabilities are detained in camps known as “Ward 49,” where they endure particularly harsh and life threatening conditions.

Humanitarian Emergencies

Recent humanitarian emergencies – both natural disasters, such as the Asian Tsunami of 2007, and various crises resulting from armed conflict, such as Afghanistan, Iraq, and Northern Uganda – disclose the failure of large humanitarian operations to respond appropriately to the needs of beneficiaries with disabilities. Humanitarian organizations are all too often unprepared and lacking the technical expertise to ensure even the most basic needs of persons with disabilities, including adequate shelter, food, water, and health care services.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in the United States disclosed the failure of US federal-level disaster preparedness for meeting the needs of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities were left trapped in their homes for days and provided with completely inadequate medical care in shelters, and many died as a result. Later, persons with disabilities were often unable to access assistance programs because of numerous barriers, including, for example, the inaccessibility of shelters provided to survivors for persons who use wheelchairs.

Armed conflict of any kind represents a major threat to human life and security. Conflict is both a source of disabling conditions and can also aggravate or create secondary disabilities for persons with disabilities. There are many adverse effects of conflict on persons with disabilities, including the break-up of support networks of family and community; displacement

or abandonment; and destruction of health, rehabilitation, and transportation infrastructure. The devastating impact of armed conflict on the mental and psychosocial well-being of the affected population is also a major risk factor.

Although many international documents recognize that persons with disabilities are a particularly at-risk population in times of humanitarian crisis, few specific policies and practices have resulted in inclusive humanitarian action. In many instances, international humanitarian assistance organizations will claim to be operating in accordance with human rights and protection-oriented principles. It remains the case, however that few of these groups have disability-specific policies, and staff members are ill-equipped to accommodate persons with disabilities. Advocacy by disabled people's organizations (DPOs) is an essential tool in ensuring that humanitarian assistance programmes take into account the specific needs of persons with disabilities in their preparation for and response to humanitarian crises. Persons with disabilities and their representative organizations must participate in all programmes designed to reach affected populations in times of crisis.

Human rights laws regarding persons with disabilities

The right to life is the most fundamental of all human rights. Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) provides that "everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person." Article 6(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) states "Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life."

The Human Rights Committee, which monitors the ICCPR, has stated in **General Comment 6** on the right to life that "States have the supreme duty to prevent wars, acts of genocide and other acts of mass violence causing arbitrary loss of life." States may not limit the right to life during times of war or emergency and are required to provide protection and safety to persons who are non-combatants as a matter of international humanitarian law. States must also refrain from action that may intentionally take away life. The Human Rights Committee has condemned the practice of infanticide for infants with disabilities and noted that it is gravely concerned at reports that new-born handicapped infants have had their lives ended by medical personnel. It has also stressed that the protection of the right to life requires that States adopt positive measures designed to protect life. These may include measures to increase life expectancy, decrease infant and child mortality, combat disease, and provide rehabilitation, adequate food, clean water, shelter, and other basic survival needs. Rule 2.3 of the UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities requires that "States should ensure that persons with disabilities, particularly infants and children, are provided with the same level of medical care within the same system as other members of society."

The CRPD reflects these concerns about the right to life of persons with disabilities. In Article 10, Right to life, the CRPD recognizes the inherent right to life for persons with disabilities and, in addition, requires States to “take all necessary measures” to ensure the enjoyment of that right by persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others. CRPD Article 11, Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies, requires positive measures of protection and safety for persons with disabilities affected by situations of humanitarian emergencies and risk. This provision was regarded as essential by the drafters of the CRPD to ensure that the specific needs of persons with disabilities are taken into account when providing assistance to persons affected or displaced by natural disaster, armed conflict, or other emergency. Article 11 is closely connected to Article 10 insofar as natural disaster, war, and other acts of mass violence continue to take the lives of thousands of innocent human beings every year.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

The CRPD is an international human rights treaty adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2006. It is set to ensure that persons with disabilities (PWDs) can fully enjoy human rights and be equal before the law. The convention is decisive in changing the global view of PWDs as equal members of society instead of objects of charity. The convention has 160 signatories and is monitored by the Committee of the CRPD. Article 11 of the CRPD specifies and reinforces the obligations states have under international humanitarian law to ensure the safety of PWDs in situations of risk and humanitarian emergency. These obligations include the following: ensuring effective management and dissemination of accessible information at all stages of emergencies; mobilising adequate resources to ensure emergency preparedness and response, which has to be inclusive of PWDs; promoting the inclusion of PWDs UN frameworks dealing with emergency situations; and adopting internationally accepted guidelines on humanitarian response with regards to the rights of PWDs.

World Health Organization

The WHO Disability and Rehabilitation Team (DAR) is situated within the Department of Injuries and Violence Prevention in the Cluster of Non-Communicable Diseases and Mental Health. DAR works to enhance the quality of life for people with disabilities through national, regional and global efforts to raise awareness about the magnitude and consequences of disability; facilitate collection, conduct analysis and dissemination of disability-related data and information; support, promote and strengthen health and rehabilitation services for people with disabilities and their families; promote community-based rehabilitation (CBR); promote

development, production, distribution and servicing of assistive devices and technologies; support development, implementation, measuring and monitoring of policies to improve the rights and opportunities for people with disabilities; build capacity among health and rehabilitation policy-makers and service providers; foster multi-sectoral networks and partnerships.

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

The ICRC is a humanitarian institution whose job is to protect victims of armed conflicts without discrimination. It is only natural that they support the CRPD – especially Article 11 – as much as they can.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

The OHCHR tries to ensure the equality of every person and to promote human rights without discrimination. Therefore, naturally, the organisation has been a strong supporter of the CRPD.

Disability Rights International

DRI is currently calling for an end to institutionalization of children based on its years of documenting and reporting on human rights abuses inside institutional settings around the world. DRI is currently developing a comprehensive report that shows the unfortunate role that international funders play in perpetuating the segregation of children with disabilities and explains the link between institutionalization – particularly in developing countries – and the misuse of foreign assistance funding to build new institutions or rebuild old crumbling facilities, instead of providing assistance and access to services for families who want to keep their children at home and in the community.

Findings by DRI on conditions of institutionalized children

- Mexico: DRI documented the near absence of any official oversight of children in private institutions, and reports that children have “disappeared” from public record. Evidence further that children with disabilities have been “trafficked” into forced labour or sex slavery.
- United States: DRI reported that children with autism and other mental disabilities living at a residential school in Massachusetts are administered given electric shocks as a form of “behaviour modification” or bogus “aversive” therapy.
- Paraguay & Uruguay: DRI tracked children with disabilities experiencing inhuman and degrading treatment, including being locked up in cages within institutions.

- Turkey: DRI documented children as young as 9 years old being given electro-shock treatments without anesthesia until exposed by human rights reporting efforts.
- Romania: DRI found that teenagers with both mental and physical disabilities were isolated in an adult psychiatric institution and were in near-death condition on account of from intentional starvation. Some of the teens weighed less than 30 pounds.
- Russia: DRI documented thousands of neglected infants and babies subjected to isolation in so-called “lying down rooms,” where row after row of babies with disabilities are confined to live and die in their filthy cribs.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
23 August 2005	Hurricane Katrina; one of the strongest tropical storms recorded, which killed between 1,245 and 1,836 people; a disproportionately large number of the victims were People with disabilities
13 December 2006	CRPD is adopted by the UNGA
13 December 2006	Optional Protocol to the CRPD is adopted by the UNGA

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 24 January 2007 **(A/RES/61/106)**
- The right of persons with disabilities to live independently and be included in the community on an equal basis with others, 7 March 2015 **(A/HRC/RES/28/4)**

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

Disability advocacy has, in recent years, begun to address how a growing “right to die” or “assisted suicide” movement may impact the right to life of persons with disabilities. These movements claim to provide persons with significant and/or terminal illnesses or disabilities the right to choose death according to their own timing and place. The major question of concern for disability advocates is whether death in such cases is really a free and informed choice or merely a response to external pressure and negative messages about the “burden” of disability or assumptions about quality of life. Some disability organizations, such as the US-based group Not Dead Yet are confronting the “right to die” movement and challenging the movement’s

positions on the basis that it is disregarding and essentially devaluing the lives of persons with disabilities. Such organizations oppose attempts to legalize physician-assisted suicide and also work to address other medical and bioethics issues. Other disability advocates are addressing the right to life in other contexts, such as working to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to quality health care, including immunization programs and health education. Still others are working on ensuring that emergency preparedness plans address the needs of persons with disabilities in a variety of situations of risk. In these and many other contexts, persons with disabilities must work in cooperation with other stakeholders to advocate on right-to-life issues.

Possible Solutions

In preparing for, reacting to and recovering from emergencies, crises and disasters, every effort should be made to ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against. The aim should be to ensure that the treatment and services they receive are as effective a form of support as that given to the able-bodied population. Leaders and decision makers in public administration, businesses and civil society who have responsibility for services that affect people with disabilities should accept that they may be more at risk than the general public, and may be more vulnerable to hazards, the consequences of a disaster, and unfair treatment during the event or its aftermath.

To ensure that people with disabilities receive adequate care is a matter of equity, fairness and justice, as well as an important affirmation of the values of civility. As the proportion of people with disabilities in society may be anywhere between 9 and 20 per cent, the problem is not one that can be ignored, nor should it be.

Whereas emergency preparedness for the non-disabled is usually provided to groups, it is necessary to consider the particular needs of people with disabilities more in detail. This is likely to be a resource-intensive process, and hence the provision of services should involve a wide variety of participants: official emergency managers and responders, volunteer groups in both emergency response and the care of people with disabilities, local and national social services, and others. On the other hand, including the needs of people with disabilities in traditional rescue-schemes will improve the quality of those schemes and will thus benefit many kinds of stakeholder.

Disability is not limited to restrictions on personal mobility such as those of people in wheelchairs. Instead it covers a very wide range of physical, sensorial, mental and emotional conditions, including the effects of old age or illness, and forms of dependency on medical drugs or equipment. With respect to the general population, people with disabilities may be less able

to perceive hazards and risks, or less mobile, or dependent upon assistance in order to be able to react to crisis situations.

Assisting people with disabilities during public emergencies requires planning, foresight and concerted action before disaster strikes, so that programs and procedures are in place when the situation becomes critical. Improvisation is the enemy of good procedure and hence it needs to be reduced to a minimum by application of consultation and planning processes that predispose resources for use when they are needed.

Some possible things that may be implemented can include involvement of the public during disaster planning and having a special evacuation plan for persons with disabilities, such as evacuation chairs.

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Forum: Human Rights Sub-Commission 1

Issue: Preventing child sexual exploitation in the age of information and communication technologies

Student Officer: Victor Cardenas

Position: Deputy President

Introduction

In the 21st century, the daily lives of millions depend on the use of digital platforms. Over the last 10-15 years the internet, mobile devices, computers, and most importantly information and communication technologies (ICTs) have become very prominent in countries all over the world. The benefits that said technologies have brought to society are innumerable, from allowing millions of people to communicate with each other daily, to providing a medium for individuals, influential figures, governments, and companies to share and obtain information quickly and freely, ICTs and the internet have revolutionized the world.

However, the fact of the matter is that said technologies have also provided a leeway for sexual predators to lurk in the dark of the web. The overwhelming exposure of these technologies to children from very early ages, the facility of navigating anonymously through the web, and low prices of high speed internet and ICTs have all inadvertently allowed harmful content like child pornography to proliferate and have increased the vulnerability of children to predators both on and offline. Also disturbing is the fact that more than 80% of child porn online depicts children 10 years or younger and 3% depicts children 2 years or younger.

Child sexual exploitation can occur online in many forms, for instance, the exposure of children to offensive or abusive sexual material, the forcing of the sending of nude images or 'sexts', and the distribution of pornographic/nude images, videos, and live-streams are all ways that children can be sexually exploited online. Platforms such as chat rooms, online gaming, and social media sites have all facilitated the carrying out of said events and have enabled predators to reach children in alarmingly high volumes. According to Interpol, the US National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) received 78,946 reports from the public and 1,027,126 reports from companies that provide online/digital services in 2014 linked to the presence of child sexual abuse material online.

Also, the finding of sexual perpetrators online is also a very prominent issue and a daunting task for national and international intelligence agencies. Because of the rapid development of technology and the availability that said predators have to access platforms such as the dark web, detecting the users that create, possess, and distribute offensive material online is next to impossible. Moreover, larger organized criminal organizations (that sell child pornography and have child sex trafficking networks/groups) are able to operate with relative ease because they make use of the same secrecy factors as individual predators to distance themselves from the institutions that can prosecute them. Consequently, as reported by the United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF), there has been a profuse increase in URLs containing child pornography on the web, from 2012 to 2014, they increased by a whopping 139%.

Definition of Key Terms

Dark Web

A section of the world wide web that can only be accessed through special software. This part of the world wide web allows users to remain anonymous/untraceable. Usually used by individuals to buy or sell illicit goods such as: drugs, child pornography, illegal weapons, etc.

Information and communication technologies (ICTs)

An extended term for information technology (IT) which stresses the role of unified communications and the integration of telecommunications (telephone lines and wireless signals), computers as well as necessary enterprise software. The list of ICT technologies is extensive and continues to grow as it can encompass antiquated technologies like broadcasting systems to very new ones like specific forms of artificial intelligence. Examples of ICTs include the internet, mobile phone systems, broadcast radio and TV systems.

Internet (World Wide Web)

A global computer network providing a variety of information and communication facilities, consisting of interconnected networks using standardized communication protocols.

Grooming

The act of establishing an emotional connection with another individual to gain trust or affection from them (usually a child) with the purpose of sexually abusing, exploiting, or trafficking them in the future. Individuals can be groomed in person or online.

Live Online Child Sexual Abuse

The act of sexually violating or abusing a child whilst streaming or displaying video online to others. Typically those watching are the ones that requested that the sexual act take place and have paid and indicated how they want it to be done.

Pedophile

A person who is sexually attracted to children. This person does not necessarily have to be a sex offender.

Sex Offender

A person who commits a sexual crime (e.g: rape, sexual harassment, etc).

Sexting

The act of sending nude or partially nude images through digital or online mediums. Is very common amongst young people and can occur consensually or non-consensually through coercion or grooming.

Sexual Predator

A person attempting to obtain sexual contact with another person in an abusive or 'predatory' manner.

Background Information

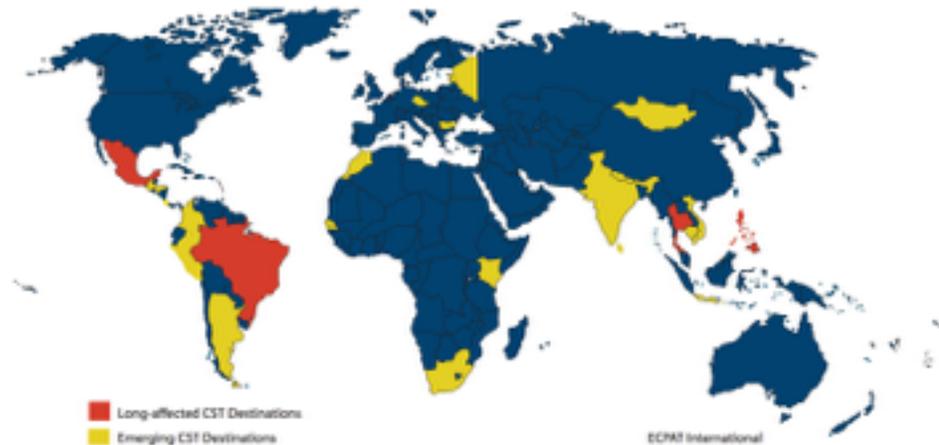
Ways in which child sexual exploitation can occur online

Child sexual tourism

Child sexual tourism refers to the act of typically adult men traveling domestically or transnationally (usually from more to less developed countries) and engaging in sexual acts with children. Said tourists usually purchase tourism-related services like transportation and accommodation to facilitate contact with children and remain inconspicuous in their surrounding environment. Children that form a part of that industry can individually charge food, clothes, or cash in exchange for services, however, most of the time there is a third party involved and the

sexually abused child is typically a sex slave that has been abducted from a young age. Frequently, there might also be extensive coordination that goes into the planning of such offenses.

The mental and physical repercussions for victims are significant. These children can suffer not only from sexual abuse but they can also suffer from other health problems like frequent illnesses, drug addictions, malnourishment, repeated infections, physical injuries, and STDs (see repercussions of child sexual exploitation and effect on impacted children for more details).



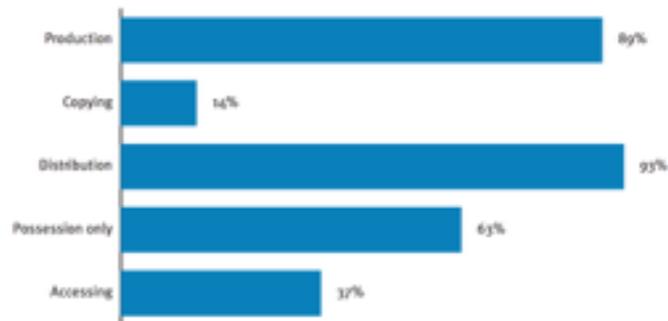
It is also important to note that ICTs and other digital resources provide organized criminal organizations and predators a medium to communicate with each other; without said resources, sex tourism would be copiously difficult to coordinate. Through chat rooms, message boards, peer-to-peer file-sharing servers, news groups, and specialized websites, potential offenders can contact individuals who manage child sex slaves and plan trips; placing children in a position of extreme vulnerability. As a result, the volume at which child sexual tourism occurs has increased radically in recent years. Finally, this industry is considered to be a mobile industry, this means that when harsher regulations are put into one country regarding the issue then it can move to a neighboring country, it therefore contributes to the issue of child sex trafficking as well.

Child pornography

The child pornography industry is one that has been aggressively fueled by emerging digital mediums and ICTs. It is defined as any material depicting children of any age (including infants) engaged sexual acts with other children and/or adults. It can also come in the form of images or videos focusing on children's genitals that are either created by the child or by an adult. Oftentimes, there may be large online communities of sex offenders where such illicit material is exchanged. Said communities typically

require members to contribute with pornographic material depicting children instead of

Figure V. Acts constituting child pornography offences



Source: UNODC legislation review (n=70).

money to remain in the group. The prevention of the production, copying, distribution, possession, and access of said material are all issues that need to be tackled.

Specific forms of child pornography that can be harmful towards

children include:

1. Digitally generated child sexual abuse material (virtual child pornography):

Even though this type of child pornography does not depict actual children, it can be dangerous because it increases the presence of child pornography online and can stimulate demand for it.

2. Live streaming of child sexual abuse:

This has been becoming a growing trend in the world of child pornography. The live streaming of child sexual abuse occurs when sexual predators or adults film nude children or adults having sexual acts with children and livestream them on illegal websites. This is very common amongst online communities of sex offenders like the ones briefly described above. Also, material is typically requested and paid for by other sex offenders online and the sexual act is typically done in way that they request it. Typically children in such videos have been groomed, are child prostitutes, or form a part of the child sex tourism industry. In the process there is also usually an intermediary that convinces the child to “perform” in front of a webcam or engage in sexual act (oftentimes a family member).

3. Sexting:

A significant portion of children and adolescents worldwide engage in sexting. A significant danger of this is that once a “sext” is sent, it is virtually impossible to control what happens to its content (the dissemination of said content will be inevitable). As a

result, removing abusive content from the hands of predators is a significant challenge. Therefore, young people should be vigilant of what they send to anyone (as it may end up anywhere on the internet or on digital platforms worldwide). Often, sexts can be sent on behalf of children to predators because they have been groomed through social media platforms or simply coerced. The most typical type of coercion occurs when predators threaten to release previously attained material if victims refuse to send more sexts. These occurrences highlight the importance of teaching children to be wary of communicating with older or unknown people online.

Obstacles in finding and prosecuting sexual predators

Lack of legal uniformity across countries

An important tool in helping find child sexual predators that use ICTs to carry out their offenses is a strict set of government laws or regulations. Though there are some institutions that exist to help find and prosecute online sexual offenders, laws are very inconsistent throughout countries and can oftentimes take a great deal of time to be enacted to keep up with the rapid pace of technology. There has been little to no cooperation between different nations in the past in attempting conjointly to combat online child sexual exploitation, as a result, engaging in acts of sexual tourism, and accessing, distributing, creating, copying, and creating child pornographic content has remained a relatively easy task for sexual predators.

Lack of technical skills from law enforcement agencies in dealing with online criminals and victims

A significant challenge in finding online sexual predators has to do with the rapid increase in the speed at which technology advances and how it allows criminals to learn techniques that keep them anonymous. Due to this, law enforcement agencies worldwide lack sufficient personnel with technical skills to handle digital evidence, conduct image analysis, and develop methods for finding illicit content online. Moreover, other than being unable to diligently capture sex offenders that lurk online, there is also no standard procedure for aiding or supporting victims through an investigation process or interviewing and collecting data through affected individuals.

Repercussions of child sexual exploitation and effect on impacted children

Sexual exploitation can have profound physical and psychological negative effects on children. In particular, in the short term, children can experience regressive behaviors

(behaviors that child had typically grown out of and are usually exhibited by younger children) such as bed wetting, thumb-sucking, etc. Sleep disturbances, eating problems, performance problems at school, a lack of social activity/unwillingness to engage in social activities, and a hard time trusting other adults in the future are not uncommon to occur short after children are sexually exploited. In the long term, however, children can develop problems that range all the way from immune deficiency, chromosome erosion, missing brain tissue, higher risk of suicide, and an odd development of their sexuality. Lastly, these children are also significantly more likely to be sexually assaulted in the future again and they can experience severe trauma once they realize that content online of them as children still being downloaded and distributed.

Demand for child sexual exploitation

Understanding the demand side of child sexual exploitation is incredibly important in understanding the issue and determining measures towards combating it. In essence, the individuals that allow the sexual exploitation of children to occur are: those who engage in sexual acts with them, intermediaries that support demand, and consumers of pornographic content (these categories can overlap).

First of all, there are pedophiles or violators who engage in sexual acts with children for self-pleasure or as a response to other demand. Approximately 74% of the time, these individuals form a part of the abused child's inner circle (parents/guardians, uncles/aunts, coaches, babysitters, etc) according to the NCMEC. Alarming is the fact that these individuals do not only commit these sexual acts but typically also record them and disseminate the content online. In addition, when potential predators are not in a child's inner circle they can tend to rely on grooming them on social media sites or contacting intermediaries such as pimps, brothel owners, employers of child workers, and modeling agencies to reach victims. Lastly, there are also individuals that incite the creation of child pornography by demanding it online through said dark web groups.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Council of Europe

The Council of Europe is an organization comprised of 47 states aimed at promoting and sustaining human rights in Europe. Regarding the subject, the Council of Europe established the "Lanzarote Convention" urging all member states of Europe and beyond to adopt adequate legislation that criminalizes child pornography and other forms of child sexual exploitation. Until now the convention has been ratified by 42 states.

ECPAT

“ECPAT conducts cutting-edge research to build the collective understanding of what it will take to end the sexual exploitation of children. Together with our members and partners, we coordinate evidence-based advocacy at all levels to strengthen national justice and protection systems and increase investment in the fight against sexual exploitation of children” - ECPAT Mission Statement (see Appendix for website).

INHOPE

“INHOPE Hotlines offer the public a way of anonymously reporting Internet material including child sexual abuse material they suspect to be illegal. The hotline will ensure that the matter is investigated and if found to be illegal the information will be passed to the relevant Law Enforcement Agency and in many cases the Internet Service Provider hosting the content.” - INHOPE Mission Statement (see Appendix for website).

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom’s main involvement in the issue has to do with the creating of the international organization WEProtect. WEProtect is a international alliance that was created under Prime Minister David Cameron in 2012 aimed at halting the spread of abusive material online and at stopping child sexual exploitation. It is a foundation backed by over 70 countries, 20 technology companies, and 30 NGO’s (see *Possible Solutions* section and *Appendix* for more information on WEProtect).

United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF)

UNICEF has carried out a variety of studies on the issue of child sexual exploitation in the digital age. Their work has resulted in plentiful information regarding how child sexual exploitation is carried out and the how children respond to it. Inherently this UN body’s main duty is to protect and ensure the safety of children so it plays an important role on the issue.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of Event
August 6, 1991	World Wide Web goes live to the world.
December, 2006	Amount of URLs containing child pornography exceeds 3000.
October 25, 2007	Lanzarote Convention signed in Lanzarote, Spain.

Date	Description of Event
January, 2009	First Bitcoin mined.
July 1, 2010	Lanzarote Convention came into force.
October 2013	Silk Road shut down.

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- Rights of the child: information and communications technologies and child sexual exploitation, Human Rights Council, March 23rd, 2016 (A/HRC/31/L.9/Rev.1)
- Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, Human Rights Council, March 27th, 2008 (7/13)
- Rights of the child: access to justice for children, Human Rights Council, March 27th, 2014 (25/6)
- Prevention, protection and international cooperation against the use of new information technologies to abuse and/or exploit children, ECOSOC, July 28th, 2011 (2011/33)

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

Most previous attempts to solve the issue have come in the form of the creation of NGO's and the carrying out of studies on the ways the issue of preventing child sexual exploitation should be addressed. Many of these studies have been carried out by UN offices like the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). For example, the UNODC study determined that a feasible course of action would be to encourage the private sector to develop 'safe' technologies/advancements, make internet providers/other online agencies self-monitor and self-regulate themselves, and take preventive measures like spreading information globally about dangers of child sexual exploitation through digital mediums and teaching children ways to defend and report on instances of sexual exploitation/violation/etc.

Another prominent solution deals with the United Kingdom and the setting up of WEProtect, a global coalition aimed at halting the spread of abusive content like child pornography and safeguarding children from online sexual exploitation. It is an organization supported by over 70 countries and numerous private tech companies and NGO's. In 2015, the

organization merged with other prominent coalitions like the Global Alliance Against Child Sexual Exploitation and the alliance is now aimed at:

1. *“Securing high-level commitment from all parts of the international system on the need to end online child sexual exploitation and making resources available for this purpose;*
2. *Supporting comprehensive national action, by providing authoritative guidance to countries and organizations that support the development of national responses to online child sexual exploitation, and strategic advice to the UNICEF-hosted Fund to End Violence Against Children,*
3. *Galvanizing global action, by catalyzing and driving global initiatives that bring together countries, industry, law enforcement agencies and international and civil society organizations to develop the critical interventions needed to end online child sexual exploitation; and,*
4. *Developing strategy and governance, including securing a long-term future for the WePROTECT Global Alliance and a clear and stable governance structure.”*

Finally, similar to the aforementioned approach, the Virtual Global Taskforce was also set up. In difference to WEProtect, the Virtual Global Taskforce is a group of law enforcement agencies from all around the world that actively try to stop the spread of child pornography through initiatives that deter pedophiles from exploiting children. Some of the law enforcement agencies that comprise this Taskforce include: the Australian Federal Police, the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre in the UK, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the US Department of Homeland Security, INTERPOL, the Italian Postal and Communication Police Service, the Ministry of Interior for the United Arab Emirates, the New Zealand Police, and EUROPOL.

Possible Solutions

Possible solutions responding to the issue of child sexual exploitation should cater directly to the problems delineated above. A resolution regarding the strengthening of legal frameworks on an international level on online sexual exploitation and making regulations consistent throughout multiple countries has great potential to combat this issue. Ideally, there should be an emphasis on encouraging proper communication between countries and making sexually exploiting children a punishable crime throughout the world. Criminalizing the specific act of online child sexual exploitation would be a great step towards shedding light on sexual predators that lurk in the shadows of the internet and would dissuade said individuals greatly from engaging in illicit activity.

Suggesting the training of law enforcement agencies to handle issues in new ways that tailor to the needs of victims in situations of online sexual exploitation could also prove effective in a resolution. By establishing child-friendly investigation techniques and standardizing protocols throughout nations when dealing with issues of online sexual assault, grooming, exploitation, et cetera the issue could be handled much more diligently and advancements could be made on a global scale.

Also, strengthening children's capacities to defend themselves rather than aiming exclusively at capturing or prosecuting online sexual perpetrators could be the aim of some resolutions. Important steps that would have to be made would include making children and adolescents more aware of the issue of child sexual exploitation and teaching them potential ways of determining when they are being groomed and/or could be exploited. In order to do this delegates could suggest the utilization of different mediums (education, online, etc) that could be used when advising children of the potential dangers of sexual exploitation. Calling for the creation of counseling, complaint-mechanisms, awareness campaigns, or support services that could to be made available for everyone could also be a feasible option. Religious institutions could also drastically aid in developing frameworks for supporting children after sexual exploitation. Due to their immense reach, such institutions could provide aid to millions of children in dealing with the repercussions of or preventing traumatic events.

Enforcing self-security measures made by the private sector through a forum or organization where all relevant organizations/stakeholders participate in is also a viable option. This would ensure that different groups all adequately voice their concerns and that the private sector be more responsible when developing new technologies, consequently, measures could be made towards taking abusive content off the internet and empowering children.

Lastly, suggesting more research be conducted in order to better understand the scope of child sexual exploitation could prove interesting as well. Though there has been a tremendous deal of research conducted in the past on the issue, it would be interesting to see delegates be creative and discuss what other areas of research could provide law enforcement officials and other relevant stakeholders with information that could aid in the tracking down and prosecuting of online sex offenders or in the ways that children could be supported.

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Appendix or Appendices

- I. WEProtect website: <http://www.weprotect.org/>
- II. ECPAT website: <http://www.ecpat.org/>
- III. INHOPE website: <http://www.inhope.org/gns/who-we-are/at-a-glance.aspx>

Forum:	Human Rights Sub-Commission 1
Issue:	The role of good governance in the promotion and protection of human rights
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Position:	Deputy President

Introduction

“Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status.” (*The United Nations on Human Rights*).

Human rights provide a basic foundation for the treatment of all humans on Earth, playing a vital role in the relationship between governments and citizens. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ratified in 1948, is a foundational unit of the United Nations as well as international humanitarian law. These human rights include 30 Articles which will be discussed to further detail in this research report. They can be regarded as fundamental freedoms that every person deserves to be granted at birth. These legal bases pressure governments into abiding and granting such rights to their civilians. International human rights law falls under the umbrella of public international law, meaning that it involves individual states. Nations are obliged to respect, protect and fulfil these universal fundamental freedoms. Hence, states must undertake positive action to promote these rights. This is why good governance includes the promotion and protection of human rights.

Definition of Key Terms

Human rights

The United Nations Human Rights of the High Commissioner (OHCHR) defines human rights to be “rights inherent to all human beings, whatever our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, language, or any other status.”

Sustainable development goals (SDGs)

According to the United Nations Development Programme, **the SDGs are** “A universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.”

Fundamental freedoms

These are the rights and freedoms considered essential to the functioning of a democracy.

Political corruption

The abuse of political power by the government leaders to extract and accumulate for private enrichment, and to use politically corrupt means to maintain their hold on power (*Legal*).

Civil rights

Civil rights are an “expansive and significant set of rights that are designed to protect individuals from unfair treatment; they are the rights of individuals to receive equal treatment (and to be free from unfair treatment or discrimination) in a number of settings -- including education, employment, housing, public accommodations, and more -- and based on certain legally-protected characteristics.”

Background Information

The history of human rights

Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (1789)

The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen is an important document when considering the larger issue of human rights, as it has inspired liberal democracy across the globe and it continues to serve an important role in civil and human rights history. It was signed in 1789 and was influenced by Thomas Jefferson and General Lafayette. This declaration provided the fundamental basis for establishing a State in which ‘all’ are equal under the power of the law. The first Article states that “Men are born and remain free and equal in rights.” Though revolutionary, it did, respectively, lack essential content. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen did not, for instance, address the inhumanity of slavery nor did it mention women’s rights.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR)

As made clear from its name, the UNDHR is the universally agreed upon human rights document. It was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 1948, which was three years after the founding of the United Nations itself. The declaration was inspired by the death and destruction that was experienced during the Second World War. It therefore places emphasis on the fact that ‘inherent dignity of all members of the human family is

the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.” See Figure 1 for a run-down/summary of the content of the UNDHR. A major issue with the UNDHR, however, is that it is not a legally binding document, meaning that States are legally permitted to disregard the guidelines and not expect to fall subject to any direct consequence from doing so. On the other hand, the UNDHR has given rise to legally binding documents (if signed and ratified by the State), such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), as well as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). A signatory of the ICCPR who has failed to ratify it is China, a State which has one of the world’s largest economies.



Figure 1 <https://www.lightscap3s.com/blog/414-2>

Governmental power over the promotion and protection of human rights

Spreading awareness of individual human rights through education

Attention can be drawn towards human rights as facilitated by education. This includes spreading awareness about the history and laws of human rights into public and private education, both for the young and old. This is a way in which governments can effectively promote human rights. Nepal, for instance, decided that their educational programs will start teaching Primary school students about their rights as children. When individuals are more aware of the rights that they deserve, there is a higher chance of minimizing human rights violations by States. When a government does infringe upon the human rights of one of their civilians, the individual is more capable of identifying the HR violation and can hence use their own power to draw attention towards it. In Cambodia, female, as well as minority, rights are promoted through the help of HR NGOs working in collaboration with the government. Human rights classes are incorporated into educational programs. These lessons emphasize prejudices and forms of discrimination that groups or individuals experience with in Cambodia.

Efficient public services

A government can promote human rights by implementing efficient public services. Civilians have an entitlement to good health, “the right to a system of health protection that gives everyone an equal opportunity to enjoy the highest attainable level of health.” A government should therefore try their best to allocate resources accordingly in order to have a functioning health system that everyone can access.

Obstacles to overcome

Government corruption

Government corruption has been a large issue for a long period of time. Government corruption may encompass corrupt management of public services, which has the potential to interfere with the human rights to health care, education and more. It can also inhibit a democracy’s progress, which may lead to a restriction of the freedom of speech. When corruption spreads to a state’s legal system, further concerns are brought into perspective. When the very system that aims to establish universal human rights is corrupted, laws will inconsistently be upheld and illegal activity may be left unpunished. This is why a United Nations Convention against Corruption was put into place in 2005.

The link between human rights and development

There is a strong linkage between human rights and sustainable development. All the sustainable development goals relate to human rights in various ways. Individual rights are

important for having a functioning economy and when states prohibit full access to human rights, they risk harming their own economy. For instance, when large minority groups within a society are marginalized, they are less likely to become employed, which results in a smaller and more restricted work force. Discrimination may lead to instability that can result in conflict. The Syrian Civil War is arguably an example of such a case. War and violence threatens the human right to social order and structure and it also stunts sustainable development. Health care and other essential facilities often fail to reach those who are discriminated, which makes it more challenging to achieve the third SDG, which is “good health and well-being.” It is therefore in the interest of all States to promote and protect human rights in order for them to see sustainable development.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

The United Nations

The United Nations, founded in 1945, has been an active party for hosting human rights discussions as well as implementations. It is a platform that enables governments to come together to discuss the promotion and protection of human rights within each and every State. Some of the UN human rights conventions include the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. The United Nations has various specialized bodies that focus on solving human right problems across the globe. This includes the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Amnesty International

Amnesty International was founded in 1961 in London. The prime reason as to why it was founded was because the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR) was losing international support. Amnesty International has various methods of handling human rights violations. This includes interfering with issues such as armed conflicts, arms control, discrimination, the death penalty, corporate accountability, freedom of expression, sexual and reproductive health, torture, detention and disappearances. For example, Amnesty pushed Cameroon to release 84 children in June 2015. In 2017, they aided Fiji with abolishing the death

penalty. In conclusion, Amnesty International is one of the most well-known human rights NGOs.

Russian Federation

The Russian Federation has long been criticized for their violations of human rights. Recently, they have tightened control of (online) free speech. The assault on the freedom of expression spiked in 2012, when Vladimir Putin was re-elected as President. New laws have been set by the government in order to weed out any politicians or other people who disagree with the current Russian politics. The Human Rights Watch reports that in 2015, the parliament passed a law requiring internet firms to save the contents of all communications for six months and the data for three years, allowing for easier surveillance. There are also laws that violate the rights of minorities, such as discriminatory policies against LGBTs. Russia has continued to engage in the conflict with Ukraine, which contravenes many human rights. In 2015, Ukrainian filmmaker, Oleg Stenstov, was sentenced to 20 years in prison by a Russian court. He was accused of planning terrorist acts, however, there were multiple irregularities in the trial. Stenstov claimed that he was tortured and this was evident from the bruises and marks across his whole body, yet the court still denied his assert. Russia's offense against Crimea and Eastern Ukraine are good examples of how governments can violate human rights through conflict and war.

Norway

According to CIRI rankings, Norway ranks in the top 10 as one of the best nations for human rights. Norway gives priority to education, particularly aiming to improve the education of girls and children with disabilities. Norway wishes to improve the rights of indigenous people, the Sami, as Norway actively supported the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)

The Human Rights Watch records plentiful human rights violations in North Korea. These include rape, forced labor, extermination, murder, enslavement and torture. There is no religious freedom, independent media or civil society. As estimated by Amnesty International and the Human Rights Watch, 200 000 people are being held in North Korean prisons and are subject to forced labour, physical abuse execution by firing squads. DPRK citizens are legally forbidden from leaving the country, which violates the right to the freedom of movement.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
August 1789	Declaration of the Rights of Man, approved by the National Assembly of France
December 1948	Universal Declaration of Human Rights was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly
1950	The European Convention on Human Rights was signed. It was the first regional agreement on human rights. Member States of the EU are obliged to follow its principles.
1966	The International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights; and Civil and Political rights marked the first international rights law that binds nations on an international scale.
1986	The African Charter on Human and People's Rights enabled members of the African Union to follow new sets of human rights. The African Charter on Human and People's Rights, however, has no legal power over the actions of African States.
1998	The Rome Statute came to existence, allowing for the creation of the International Criminal Court. Nations who have not ratified or signed this cannot be involved or be pressed charges against in any ICC court cases. China, the USA and Russia are examples of countries who have not signed or ratified the Rome Statute.

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

There are relevant UN Treaties and Events relating to the role of good governance in the promotion and protection of human rights.

- The role of good governance in the promotion and protection of human rights, 27 March 2008 (**RES/7/11**)
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 10 December 1948
- United Nations Convention against Corruption, 14 December 2005

- Role of local government in the promotion and protection of human rights- Final report of the HRC Advisory Committee, UN General Assembly, 07 August 2015

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

In recent history, there have been many attempts to promote and protect human rights within States. The difficulty is that often, States do not approve of having their sovereignty infringed upon. As previously mentioned, the UN has played a big role in trying to improve the human rights of all people, by creating bodies and councils such as the Human Rights Council, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, amongst others.

There is some criticism that the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights stresses cultural rights less than the other human rights issues. In the ICESCR, merely Article 15 is directed towards cultural rights, and some, like Janusz Symonides, find that this is unsatisfactory. Cultural rights include the right to freely participate in the cultural life within a community, such as enjoying the arts and sharing scientific advancement, as well as the right to protect any scientific, artistic or literary production when the individual is the author of the piece. This provides evidence for the fact that though the ICESCR and the ICCPR are good, they do not cover all the issues regarding human rights.

The UN resolution on “The role of good governance in the promotion and protection of human rights” only contains 4 clauses (see Appendices) that focus more on signing treaties rather than taking direct action. A key point that is emphasized in **RES/7/11** is that corruption must be fought against in order to help establish universal human rights.

Possible Solutions

Because of how broad this topic is, there are a multitude of possible solutions for improving a government’s protection and promotion of human rights. Data collection is of high relevance, as without data on the human rights situation within individual States, it is challenging to understand the state of human rights globally. Fully eradicating corruption in governments is extremely difficult and idealistic, however, the United Nations can do their best to come close to achieving this, as a corruption free world would aid in promoting and protecting human rights.

Though implemented in a handful of countries already, States should be encouraged to integrate at least some human rights programs into their education systems. See the Background Information for further detail on this policy/action plan. Adapting or eliminating

national laws that violate the human rights of civilians and marginalized groups is essential, as these are major obstacles when it comes to promoting and protecting human rights.

There should also ideally be increased communication between businesses (especially transnational corporations), NGOs and governments. This is because firms have power over human rights too (regarding labor, for instance). There is a new and intriguing concept, called Human Rights Cities. Human Rights Cities draw attention towards economic, social, cultural, political and civil human rights enjoyed by the residents of such settlements. They allow for discussion, learning and critical analysis within the community in order to share creative ideas on how to improve the human rights situations in those cities. An example of a Human Rights City is Korogocho, Kenya. Korogocho is one of the largest slum neighborhoods of Nairobi. There are many social, environmental and economic problems that it faces, so the local government has created development programs such as the Korogocho Slum Upgrading Programme. Delegates are encouraged to keep an open mind when coming up with clauses for their resolutions on this issue, as it is a very broad topic that can include a large diversity of solutions.

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Appendices

I Role of good governance in the protection and promotion of human rights UN resolution 7/11

http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/E/HRC/resolutions/A_HRC_RES_7_11.pdf

II Recommendation on Systematic Work for Implementing Human Rights on the National Level by the European Commissioner for Human Rights <https://rm.coe.int/16806da952>

III Role of local government in the promotion and protection of human rights www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/.../A_HRC_30_49_ENG.docx