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General Assembly Plenary
Background Guide 2018

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NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2018 National Model United Nations China Conference (NMUN•China)! We are pleased to welcome you to the General Assembly Plenary (GA Plen). This year's staff are: Director Dieyun Song and Assistant Directors Fangyuan Ren and Shihao Li. Dieyun has been a volunteer staff for NMUN for five years, and this will be her 11th NMUN conference. Dieyun is currently working on her PhD at the University of Miami, Florida, and her research focuses on non-State actors' role in Cold War politics and imperialism in the Americas. Fangyuan is currently a student at Northwestern Polytechnical University pursuing Master's degree in Composite Materials. This will be her first year on staff. Shihao is currently a junior doing his Bachelor's degree in Northwestern Polytechnical University. This will also be his first year on staff.

The topics under discussion for the General Assembly Plenary are:

1. Safeguarding the Health of Refugee Children and Youth
2. Rebuilding Community Security in Post-Conflict Iraq and Syria

As one of the six principal organs of the United Nations, the General Assembly is the main deliberative, policymaking, and representative body of the organization. With universal membership, the General Assembly provides a global forum for world leaders to discuss a variety of topics across the United Nations system. In order to accurately simulate the committee, it will be key for delegates to focus on consensus building and best practice-setting approaches of the General Assembly, as opposed to operational work.

This Background Guide serves as an introduction to the topics for this committee. However, it is not intended to replace individual research. We encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in depth and use the Annotated Bibliography and Bibliography to further your knowledge on these topics. In preparation for the Conference, each delegation will submit a Position Paper by 11:59 p.m. (Eastern) on 1 November 2018 in accordance with the guidelines in the *NMUN Position Paper Guide*.

Two resources, to download from the NMUN website, that serve as essential instruments in preparing for the Conference and as a reference during committee sessions are the:

1. *NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide* - explains each step in the delegate process, from pre-Conference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting processes. Please take note of the information on plagiarism, and the prohibition on pre-written working papers and resolutions. Delegates should not start discussion on the topics with other members of their committee until the first committee session.

2. *NMUN Rules of Procedure* - include the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure.

In addition, please review the mandatory NMUN Conduct Expectations on the NMUN website. They include the Conference dress code and other expectations of all attendees. We want to emphasize that any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or disability will not be tolerated.

If you have any questions concerning your preparation for the committee or the Conference itself, please contact the Deputy Secretary-General, Patrick Parsons, at dsg.china@nmun.org.

We wish you all the best in your preparations and look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

Dieyun Song   Fangyuan Ren   Shihao Li
Director   Assistant Director   Assistant Director

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Committee Overview

Introduction

In 1945, following the conclusion of the Second World War, the United Nations (UN) was founded to maintain international peace and security, foster diplomatic relations between states, achieve international cooperation in addressing global problems and promoting human rights, and harmonize state actions towards these ends.[1] Article 7 of the *Charter of the United*

> The **General Assembly Plenary** has six Main Committees. A report is issued to the General Assembly Plenary for each item allocated to a Main Committee.

Nations (1945) establishes six principal organs: the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat.[2] Of these, only the General Assembly has universal membership, rendering it a unique forum for discussion within the UN system.[3] As the normative center of the UN, the General Assembly is a generator of ideas, a place of international debate, and a hub for new concepts and practices in the political, economic, humanitarian, social, and legal spheres.[4]

Governance, Structure, and Membership

All 193 UN Member States are represented in the General Assembly, with each Member State having one vote.[5] The General Assembly may grant Observer status to intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and non-Member States or entities, which allows them to participate in sessions but does not grant them voting rights.[6] The General Assembly makes the majority of its decisions via consensus.[7] When a vote is held, regular decisions require a simple majority of members present and voting, while important decisions require a two-thirds majority of members present and voting.[8]

The General Assembly has six Main Committees that are topically organized around the General Assembly's main fields of responsibility: the Disarmament and International Security Committee (First Committee); the Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee); the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee (Third Committee); the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee); the Administrative and Budgetary Committee (Fifth Committee); and the Legal Committee (Sixth Committee).[9] The Main Committees discuss agenda items assigned to them, adopt draft resolutions, and submit a report on their work to the Plenary.[10] The Plenary then considers these reports and "proceeds without debate to the adoption of the recommended resolutions and decisions. If adopted by consensus in the committee, the Plenary decides by consensus as well; likewise, if adopted by a vote in the committee, the Plenary votes on the resolution or decision in question."[11] The Plenary may also decide to address an issue without prior reference to a committee.[12]

Each year, the General Assembly's regular session begins on the Tuesday of the third week in September.[13] Since its 44th session in 1989, the General Assembly has been considered in session throughout the year.[14] The busiest period, otherwise known as the "main part of the General Assembly," lasts from the start of the session in September until

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[1] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 1.

[2] Ibid., Art. 7.

[3] UN General Assembly, *General Assembly of the United Nations*.

[4] Thakur, *The United Nations, Peace and Security*, 2006, pp. 91, 162; UN General Assembly, *Functions and powers of the General Assembly*.

[5] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 18.

[6] Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 30.

[7] New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2017-2018*, 2017, p. 12.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 18.

[10] New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2017-2018*, 2017, p. 23.

[11] Smith, *Politics and Process at the United Nations: The Global Dance*, 2006, p. 161; Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 62.

[12] New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2016-2017*, 2015, p. 23.

[13] Ibid., p. 17.

[14] Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 14.

the end of December; it includes the general debate and most of the Main Committees' work.[15] The remainder of the year, or the "resumed part of the General Assembly," involves thematic debates, consultation processes, and working group meetings.[16] In addition to the regular session, the General Assembly may also hold special sessions on individual issues at the request of either the Security Council or a majority of Member States.[17]

The President of the General Assembly (PGA) is the largely ceremonial head of the General Assembly, elected each year by a simple majority of Member States to a nonrenewable one-year term.[18] The PGA's duties are to facilitate Plenary sessions by directing discussion, managing the administration of meetings, and enforcing the General Assembly Rules of Procedure.[19] The PGA does not preside over all six General Assembly committees separately; rather, Chairs and Vice Chairs are the facilitators of individual committees.[20] The PGA also performs executive duties, such as meeting regularly with the Secretary-General, the President of the Security Council, and the President of the Economic and Social Council; communicating with the press and the public; and organizing high-level meetings on certain thematic issues.[21]

As a main organ of the UN, the General Assembly does not report to any other organ.[22] It receives substantive and organizational support from two important entities: the General Committee and the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM).[23] The General Committee is comprised of the PGA and the 21 Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly, as well as the Chairpersons of the Main Committees; all position-holders are elected each session on a nonrenewable basis.[24] The General Committee's main duty, aside from making recommendations on organizational issues, is to allocate agenda items to the Plenary and the Main Committees from a preliminary list received from the UN Secretariat.[25] The DGACM acts as the intersection between the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and provides valuable technical secretariat support, mainly through its General Assembly and ECOSOC Affairs Division.[26] Within the UN Secretariat, other departments and offices offer both substantive and technical support to each of the six Main Committees.[27]

Mandate, Functions, and Powers

The mandate of the General Assembly is defined in Chapter IV (Articles 10-22) of the *Charter of the United Nations*.[28] As stipulated by Article 10, the General Assembly is broadly tasked with discussing "any questions or any matters within the scope of the [Charter] or relating to the powers and functions of any organs provided for in the [Charter]," and it may make relevant recommendations to Member States or to the Security Council.[29]

Functions and powers of the General Assembly include the following:

- While the General Assembly may address matters of international peace and security, any such matters requiring action must also be referred to the Security Council. Further, the General Assembly may not make recommendations related to any dispute or situation in respect of which the Security Council is exercising its functions.[30] The only exception is if the Security Council fails to reach a decision on an issue due to lack of consensus among its permanent

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[15] Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 14.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid., p. 16.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid., pp. 15, 18.
[21] Ibid., pp. 16-17.
[22] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 98.
[23] Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 17.
[24] Ibid., p. 18.
[25] Ibid., p. 17.
[26] Ibid., p. 24; UN DGACM, *Functions of the Department*.
[27] Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, pp. 63-68.
[28] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Ch. IV.
[29] Ibid., Art. 10.
[30] Ibid., Arts. 11-12.

members, at which point the General Assembly may convene an emergency special session within 24 hours to address the issue in question.[31]

- The General Assembly may initiate studies and make recommendations to promote international cooperation in the political, economic, social, cultural, educational, or health fields; the development and codification of international law; or the realization of fundamental human rights and freedoms.[32]

- The General Assembly may make recommendations "for the peaceful adjustment of any situation, regardless of origin, which it deems likely to impair the general welfare or friendly relations among nations."[33]

- The General Assembly may create subsidiary organs "as it deems necessary for the performance of its functions."[34] Main Committees are therefore capable of introducing resolutions that can lead to the creation and funding of agencies or meetings, as well as ad hoc committees or working groups, that consider a particular question with the purpose of reporting to the General Assembly.[35]

- The General Assembly receives and considers regular reports from the Security Council and from other UN organs.[36]

- The General Assembly considers and approves the UN's budget and apportions expenses to be borne by individual Member States.[37]

- The General Assembly "elects the 10 non-permanent members of the Security Council and the 54 members of the Economic and Social Council. Together with the Security Council, but voting independently, it elects the members of the International Court of Justice."[38]

- The General Assembly also elects the members of its subsidiary bodies, such as the Human Rights Council and the Peacebuilding Commission.[39]

- Based on the recommendation of the Security Council, the General Assembly appoints the Secretary-General.[40]

Only resolutions adopted by the Plenary are put into effect as official resolutions of the General Assembly.[41] However, unlike Security Council resolutions enacted under Chapter VII of the Charter, General Assembly resolutions are not legally binding on Member States even after adoption by the Plenary.[42] Nonetheless, General Assembly resolutions represent policy norms reached by consensus among Member States, and they often lead to concrete action by the international community.[43]

Recent Sessions and Current Priorities

In resolution 71/6 of 27 October 2016, the General Assembly decided on the following priorities of the UN for the 2018-2019 period:

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[31] Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 15.
[32] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 13; UN General Assembly, *Functions and Powers of the General Assembly*.
[33] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 14.
[34] Ibid., Art. 22.
[35] Weis, *The United Nations and Changing World Politics,* 2004, p. 161.
[36] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 15.
[37] Ibid., Art. 17.
[38] New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2017-2018*, 2017, p. 12.
[39] Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, pp. 72-73.
[40] New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2017-2018*, 2017, p. 12.
[41] UN General Assembly, *Functions and Powers of the General Assembly*.
[42] Ibid.
[43] UN General Assembly, *Functions and Powers of the General Assembly*.

1. Promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and recent UN conferences;

2. Maintenance of international peace and security;

3. Development of Africa;

4. Promotion of human rights;

5. Effective coordination of humanitarian assistance efforts;

6. Promotion of justice and international law;

7. Disarmament;

8. Drug control, crime prevention, and combating international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.[44]

During the main part of its 72nd session, the General Assembly made a number of important decisions, including electing five judges to the International Court of Justice and approving a $5.4 billion program budget for the UN during the 2018-2019 period.[45] The General Assembly has also remained active throughout the ongoing resumed part of its 72nd session.[46] In recent months, resolutions adopted by the Plenary without reference to a Main Committee have addressed diverse topics such as the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition, the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Review, improving global road safety, and the role of diamonds in fueling conflict.[47] Notably, on 13 June 2018, the General Assembly convened a rare emergency session and adopted a resolution "deploring the use of excessive, disproportionate and indiscriminate force by Israeli forces against Palestinian civilians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory."[48]

The 73rd session of the General Assembly is scheduled to begin on 18 September 2018.[49] The PGA for the 73rd session, María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés of Ecuador, has identified her strategic vision as "dialogue and strengthening of multilateralism as a catalyst for the well-being of all persons and a sustainable planet."[50] The high-level General Debate, which convenes heads of state and government at the beginning of every regular session of the General Assembly, will commence on 25 September on the theme of "Making the UN relevant to all people: Global leadership and shared responsibilities for peaceful, equitable and sustainable societies."[51]

The General Assembly will host various events to mark the beginning of its 73rd session, such as the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit, a high-level plenary meeting on global peace that will take place on 24 September and result in the adoption of a political declaration.[52] Other such events include a high-level meeting on the fight against tuberculosis on 26 September; a review of progress towards preventing and controlling non-communicable diseases on 27 September; and Global Goals Week, which is aimed to promote the Sustainable Development Goals, from 22 to 29 September.[53]

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[44] UN General Assembly, *Programme planning (A/RES/71/6)*, 2016, para. 4.

[45] UN DPI, *Amid Divisions over Jerusalem, Korean Nuclear Programme, General Assembly Hears Defence of Diplomacy, Dialogue to End Crisis, Put World on Sustainable Path*, 2017; UN DPI, *General Assembly approves $5.4 billion UN budget for next two years*, 2017.

[46] UN General Assembly, *Resolutions of the 72nd session*, 2018.

[47] UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025) (A/RES/72/306)*, 2018; UN General Assembly, *The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Review (A/RES/72/284)*, 2018; UN General Assembly, *Improving global road safety (A/RES/72/271)*, 2018; UN General Assembly, *The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict: breaking the link between the illicit transaction of rough diamonds and armed conflict as a contribution to prevention and settlement of conflicts (A/RES/72/267)*, 2018.

[48] UN DPI, *General Assembly Adopts Resolution on Protecting Palestinian Civilians Following Rejection of United States Amendment to Condemn Hamas Rocket Fire*, 2018.

[49] International Institute for Sustainable Development, *73rd Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 73)*, 2018.

[50] Risse, Candidates Provide Vision Statements for UNGA 73 Presidency, *SDG Knowledge Hub*, 2018.

[51] UN General Assembly, *Highlights of Press Briefing by Brenden Varma, Spokesperson for General Assembly President Miroslav Lajčák*, 2018.

[52] International Institute for Sustainable Development, *Nelson Mandela Peace Summit: UNGA High-level Plenary on Global Peace*, 2018.

[53] International Institute for Sustainable Development, *73rd Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 73)*, 2018.

Conclusion

As the "chief deliberative, policymaking, and representative organ of the UN," the General Assembly plays a key role in the UN system as "a unique forum for multilateral discussion of the full spectrum of international issues covered by the Charter."[54] Outcomes reached by the General Assembly may define new norms that can promote peace, human rights, and development.[55] Going forward, the General Assembly will continue to be a cornerstone of international efforts towards a better world.[56]

Annotated Bibliography

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> *This handbook, published annually by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of New Zealand, is an effort to improve the information available to the international community on the UN system. It provides extensive information on the structure and membership as well the purpose of UN organs. As such, it represents the perfect introduction to the UN system as a whole for individuals less familiar with its complexity. Therefore, delegates should consider this a must-read during preparation for the conference.*

Sciora, R., & A. Stevenson. (2009). *Planet UN: The United Nations Confronting the Challenges of the 21st Century.* Geneva: Editions du Tricorne.
> *Inspired by the documentary* Planet UN, *this book offers an in-depth analysis of the role of the United Nations and its challenges for the 21st century. It gives special attention to three pillars: peace, development, and human rights. It also stresses the importance of the UN's ability to adapt itself to our changing world and to react to new threats such as terrorism or nuclear risks. An account of the genesis of the UN also allows delegates to understand how the UN was started with the intent of creating a system to maintain peace and security and to become the organization it is today. Furthermore, this book contains a series of testimonies of important personalities such as the last five Secretaries-General of the UN.*

Switzerland, Permanent Mission to the United Nations. (2011). *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly.* Retrieved 13 July 2016 from: https://www.eda.admin.ch/content/dam/eda/en/documents/publications/InternationaleOrganisationen/Uno/UN-pga-handbook_en.pdf
> *This publication by the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN is another contribution by a Member State of introductory information about the UN system. The General Assembly is a central focus of this handbook. A detailed description of its organization, structure, rules, and working methods can be found. Further providing information specific to all six Main Committees, this handbook offers a unique source of information to delegates to understand the work of the General Assembly and its place within the UN system.*

Thakur, R. (2006). *The United Nations, Peace and Security.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
> *Ramesh Thakur, a renowned commentator on the UN, examines the UN from a contemporary perspective in the context of factors such as human security. The author focuses on questions related to international peace and security. By doing so, he critically analyzes the use of force by the UN with the intention of making it more effective in the light of today's threats and with a particular focus on security and how it has evolved over the years and the role of the UN system including the General Assembly. His book is a valuable guide to the UN and offers an interesting perspective on international peace.*

Weis, T., et al. (2004). *The United Nations and Changing World Politics.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

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[54] UN General Assembly, *Functions and powers of the General Assembly*.
[55] Thakur, *The United Nations, Peace and Security*, 2006, p. 162.
[56] Sciora & Stevenson, *Planet UN: The United Nations Confronting the Challenges of the 21st Century*, 2009.

This book aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of international governance and the UN, human rights and humanitarian affairs, and building peace through sustainable development. While the authors outline the failures of collective security and the problems that the UN is facing when maintaining peace by military means, they address the role played by other UN entities such as the General Assembly in international security. As such, this book questions and analyzes how the international community governs itself by outlining its successes and failures.

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Weis, T., et al. (2004). *The United Nations and Changing World Politics.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

I. Safeguarding the Health of Refugee Children and Youth

"Usually more than half of any refugee population are children. Refugee children are children first and foremost, and as children, they need special attention. As refugees, they are particularly at risk with the uncertainty and unprecedented upheavals which are increasingly marking the post-Cold War era."[57]

Introduction

An unprecedented 65.6 million people around the world have been displaced, among which nearly 22.5 million are refugees, and over half of those refugees are under the age of 18.[58] In particular, children under the age of five constitute 15-20% of the refugee population and are the group at the greatest risk.[59] Forced displacement due to conflict, persecution, and violence, including terrorism, has reached the highest level since the Second World War.[60] During its 71st session, the General Assembly affirmed the significance of addressing the protection of forcefully displaced refugee children and youth who are exposed to food shortage, infectious diseases, and poor sanitary conditions.[61] Mass migration, lack of sufficient water and sanitation, and inadequate shelter increase the risks of refugee children and youth acquiring communicable diseases.[62] The *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* (1951) states that health care services, such as vaccines, should be provided to both refugees and asylum seekers irrespective of their legal status.[63] Health conditions include not only physical health but also mental health, which is equally essential because the traumatic experience of displacement may lead to sharp mental declines that harm overall health.[64] Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 highlight mental health as a fundamental component of overall well-being and human rights.[65] Additionally, the fulfillment of the SDGs, especially SDG 2 on zero hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 5 on gender equality, and SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation are intimately connected to refugee children's and youth's health.[66] The General Assembly bears a crucial coordinative role in addressing the health of refugee children and youth in the context of international sustainable development.[67]

International and Regional Framework

The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) emphasizes that all children are entitled to special care and assistance and shall enjoy the same social protections, which includes health services for refugee children.[68] Article 24 of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989) emphasizes the responsibility of all the States Parties to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to health care services.[69] Furthermore, the *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants* (2016) stands as another milestone for global solidarity and refugee protection at this time of unprecedented displacement.[70] In the declaration, 193 Member States of the United Nations (UN) reaffirmed the importance of the international refugee protection regime, committed to fully respect the rights of refugees, and pledged to provide more sustainable support to refugees.[71] The declaration also reaffirms Member States' commitment to protect the human rights of refugee children, to provide access to basic health services, and to ensure that the best interests of the child is of primary consideration in all relevant policies.[72]

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[57] UNHCR, *Refugee Children: Guidelines on Protection and Care*, 1994.
[58] UNHCR, *Figures at a Glance*, 2018.
[59] Ibid.
[60] UN General Assembly, *Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (A/RES/72/150)*, 2017.
[61] UN General Assembly, *Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa (A/RES/65/193)*, 2010.
[62] WHO et al., *WHO-UNHCR-UNICEF joint technical guidance: general principles of vaccination of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants in the WHO European Region*, 2015.
[63] *Convention relating to the Status of Refugees*, 1951.
[64] WHO, *Mental health included in the UN Sustainable Development Goals*, 2018.
[65] Ibid.
[66] UN DPI, *Sustainable Development Goals*.
[67] UNHCR, *Refugee Children: Guidelines on Protection and Care,* 1994.
[68] UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*, 1948.
[69] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of the Child (A/RES/44/25),* 1989.
[70] UN General Assembly, *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (A/RES/71/1)*, 2016.
[71] UNHCR, *The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants: Answers to Frequently Asked Questions*, 2018.
[72] Ibid.

The SDGs include 17 goals and 169 targets that seek to promote sustainable development in all Member States.[73] The goals provide valuable guidance on the protection of refugee children's and youth's health, especially on areas including food security, funding, mental health, and sanitation.[74] SDG 3 puts emphasis on ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being.[75] Its target 3.4 particularly stress the importance of promoting mental health, and target 3.2 also sets to goal to reduce eliminate preventable deaths of children under the age of five by 2030.[76] Additionally, SDG 6 on increased accessibility to clean water also contribute to promoting the health care of children as sanitation and clean drinking water is essential for healthy living conditions.[77]

Role of the International System

The World Food Programme (WFP) assists refugee camps through general food distributions, complementary feeding for the first 1,000 days after conception, treatment of acute and chronic malnutrition, and education programs on healthy eating.[78] Additionally, The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is responding to the refugee crisis globally through initiatives including delivering lifesaving supplies to children in refugee camps including those in the Middle East and Northern Africa, providing safe drinking water, and creating safe spaces for the growing wave of refugee children moving through Europe.[79] Through these actions, WFP and UNICEF are crucial in not only providing for the basic needs of children and youth, but in ultimately working to comprehensively promote the overall health of refugee children and youth.[80]

Many civil society organizations are also involved in promoting the health conditions of refugee children and youth.[81] For example, The Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI) aims to create equal access to new and underused vaccines for children and youth in least developed countries.[82] The introduction of vaccines in developing countries has been made possible through an innovative finance mechanism pioneered by GAVI called the Advance Market Commitment.[83] Investments in the development of new vaccines to address health problems that are rather hurtful for children, such as pneumonia, diarrheal disease, HIV/AIDS, and malaria, has increased rapidly since 2007.[84] The International Rescue Committee also focuses on capacity building for community health workers by developing treatment strategies such as providing food and shelter, assisting with access to clothing, giving medical attention, and offering education to refugee children through mobile technology.[85]

Primary Health Care and Vaccinations

Primary Health Care (PHC) provides comprehensive, accessible, and community-based care that meets the health needs of individuals throughout their life.[86] This includes a spectrum of services from prevention efforts like vaccinations and family planning to management of chronic health conditions and palliative care.[87] PHC can meet 80-90% of an individual's health needs over the course of his or her life.[88] A health system with a strong PHC component delivers better and more efficient health outcomes, as well as an improved quality of care compared to other models.[89] To strengthen national health systems and delivery of quality health care, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' (UNHCR's) urban policy recognized the need to support equitable and

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[73] UN DPI, *Sustainable Development Goals*.
[74] UNHCR, *UNHCR and the 2030 Agenda - Sustainable Development Goals*, 2017.
[75] UN DESA, *Sustainable Development Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages*.
[76] Ibid.
[77] UNHCR, *UNHCR and the 2030 Agenda - Sustainable Development Goals*, 2017.
[78] WFP, *Food Assistance for Refugees*, 2018.
[79] UNICEF, *Child refugee and migrant crisis*.
[80] Ibid.
[81] WHO, *Refugee and migrant health*, 2018.
[82] WHO, *2017 Assessment Report of the Global Vaccine Action Plan, 2017.*
[83] WHO, G*AVI Alliance partners to tackle childhood killer in Ethiopia,* 2011.
[84] Ibid.
[85] WHO, *The African Regional Health Report: The Health of the People*, 2018.
[86] European Commission, *Definition of a frame of reference in relation to primary care with a special emphasis on financing systems and referral systems*, 2015.
[87] WHO, *Health systems service delivery*, 2018.
[88] WHO, *Primary Health Care (PHC)*, 2018.
[89] Ibid.

sustainable access to quality health care services while also enhancing community-based health care.[90] Along with improving equal and non-discriminatory access to existing services, UNHCR also prioritizes scaling up coverage of health services by improving services in refugee-impacted areas.[91] These actions brought many benefits to those who are displaced, also increased the coverage of PHC services by relying on a widespread network of public health facilities.[92]

Vaccination is one of the most effective methods to prevent contagious diseases because it is cost-effective, relatively easy to deliver, and, in most cases, provides lifelong protection.[93] In 2012, the World Health Assembly endorsed the Global Vaccine Action Plan, a commitment to ensure that no one misses out on vital immunizations.[94] Despite gains in vaccination coverage in some regions and countries in the past few years, global vaccination targets remain off track.[95] UNHCR, along with UNICEF and World Health Organization (WHO), is striving to bring refugee children under coverage of the national vaccination program.[96] As proper vaccination often requires multiple vaccines and booster shots until the full schedule is completed, there should be a strengthened cooperation among the countries of origin, of transit, and of destination to avoid delays in timely vaccination.[97] Sound and reliable information is the foundation of decision-making across all health system building blocks, and is essential for health system policy development and implementation including assessing and adjusting health facility on vaccinations.[98]

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

"Children's access to safe water and sanitation, especially in conflicts and emergencies, is a right, not a privilege," said Sanjay Wijesekera, UNICEF's global chief of water and sanitation.[99] More than 180 million people in crisis-torn countries have no access to drinking water.[100] Every time young children drink unclean water, they are putting their lives at risk from diarrhea, malaria, typhoid, cholera, worms and parasites, and trachoma.[101] Hence, UNICEF's water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) sector aims to increase refugees' safe access to sufficient drinkable water and improved sanitation.[102]

The prevention of cross-mixing of wastewater with stormwater and potable water sources is critical for public health.[103] Ideal technologies for surface water drainage and wastewater management in refugee camps should be operative in keeping the camps free of stagnant water, preventing contamination of drinking water sources and groundwater, and encouraging sustainable use of water in the camps.[104] For instance, Pure Water for the World is a nonprofit organization that works closely with underserved communities in Central America and the Caribbean, which gives residents the resources and knowledge to be involved in water projects in their communities.[105] In their 18 years of existence, they have reached more than 750,000 people in Haiti and Central America by seeking local and international volunteers to help the people, especially vulnerable people like refugee children who are suffering from the crisis, with their daily life.[106] Charity Water is another nonprofit organization that provides clean water to struggling populations, among which refugee children and youth are significant parts.[107] The organization has invested in water services in refugee camps, as it follows up each water project with a detailed report of its results

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[90] UNHCR, *Primary Health Care: Mainstreaming of Syrian Refugees in Egypt,* 2016.
[91] Ibid.
[92] UNHCR, *Primary Health Care: Mainstreaming of Syrian Refugees in Egypt,* 2016.
[93] Williamson, *Health Implications of the Global Refugee and Migrant Crisis* 2017.
[94] UN DPI *Immunization 'game-changers' should be the norm worldwide, says UN health agency,* 2016.
[95] WHO, *2017 Assessment Report of the Global Vaccine Action Plan, 2017.*
[96] WHO Regional Office for Europe, *WHO, UNICEF and UNHCR call for equitable access to vaccines for refugees and migrants*, 2015.
[97] Ibid.
[98] WHO, *Health Information Systems*, 2008, p. 9.
[99] UN DPI, *Children's access to safe water and sanitation is a right, not a privilege – UNICEF*, 2017.
[100] Theirworld, *Millions of children at risk in world's unsafe water crisis,* 2017.
[101] Ibid.
[102] UNICEF, *Water, Sanitation and Hygiene*.
[103] Ajibade et al., *Challenges of poor surface water drainage and wastewater management in refugee camps,* 2016.
[104] Pure Water for the World, *We Partner With Communities*, 2015.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Charity Water, *Our Approach*, 2018.

and locations, so donors can know exactly where their money has gone, making the donation more dependable.[108] Partnerships with research institutes, universities, and private companies for advanced and innovative designs of infrastructure should be continuously expanded, in order to strengthen assessments and piloting innovative solutions for refugee children and youth.[109] Globally, these methods can be of reference value to assist refugee children and youth in order to promote their access to clean water by making use of local resources, which is more effective.[110]

Mental Health

Refugee children and youth are vulnerable to sexual violence, genocide, torture, and the loss of loved ones, which not only have immediate damage but also long-term psychological effects for survivors.[111] The disruption and insecurity inherent in refugee camps can also present challenges to children's physical, intellectual, psychological, cultural, and social development.[112] Research has shown that many refugee children and youth suffer mental health diseases, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and anxiety.[113] As children rarely seek services for themselves, it is crucial for adults to identify problems and pursue assistance on their behalf.[114] However, parents and teachers are poor at recognizing children's internal distress because of their inadequate knowledge of mental health.[115] Even if distress is recognized, refugee parents may be reticent to present children to services because of stigma associated with mental health problems.[116]

Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) activities are now an integral part of any humanitarian response, and as such are recognized as requirements of humanitarian response.[117] Provision of services, activities, and support through community centers is one of the approaches to providing MHPSS activities.[118] One example of a particular intervention is Psychological First Aid (PFA).[119] The Inter-agency Standing Committee Guidelines define PFA as "basic, non-intrusive pragmatic psychological support with a focus on listening but not forcing talk; assessing needs, and ensuring that basic needs are met; encouraging but not forcing company from significant others; and protecting from further harm".[120] PFA involves helping people cope with their problems, including helping them access support and coping mechanisms within their families and communities.[121] PFA is based on three principles: feeling safe, connected to others, calm, and hopeful; having access to social, physical, and emotional support; and feeling able to help themselves, as individuals and communities.[122] WHO reports that PFA can provide a mental health lifeline to people affected by crises including war, natural disasters, or an individual traumatic event.[123] PFA has been used with success in countries around the world, including Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone during the recent Ebola epidemic.[124]

There is also emerging evidence for the efficacy of group cognitive-behavioral interventions, such as narrative exposure therapy, testimonial psychotherapy, and eye movement desensitization and reprocessing in reducing PTSD in children from refugee backgrounds.[125] Storytelling, artistic expression, and non-specific school-based mental

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[108] Charity Water, *Our Approach*, 2018.
[109] UNHCR & ILO, *Self-reliance and sustainable livelihoods for refugees in Dadaab and Kakuma camps*, 2005.
[110] Water for Good, *Strategy*, 2018.
[111] Unite For Sight, *Module 2: Mental Health in Refugee Camps and Settlements*, 2015.
[112] Crowley, *The mental health needs of refugee children: a review of literature and implications for nurse practitioners*, 2009.
[113] Hodes, *Psychologically distressed refugee children in the United Kingdom*, 2003.
[114] Cauce et al., *Cultural and Contextual Influences in Mental Health Help Seeking: A Focus on Ethnic Minority Youth*, 2002.
[115] Lustig et al., *Review of Child and Adolescent Refugee Mental Health*, 2004.
[116] Henley & Robinson, *Mental health issues among refugee children and adolescents*, 2011.
[117] UNHCR, *UNHCR's mental health and psychosocial support for Persons of Concern*, 2013.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Ibid.
[120] IASC, *IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Setting*, 2007.
[121] Ibid.
[122] Ibid.
[123] WHO, *Psychological first aid: Guide for field workers,* 2011, p. 2.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Oras et al., *Treatment of traumatized refugee children with eye movement desensitization and reprocessing in a psychodynamic context*, 2004.

health service also have demonstrated significant improvements.[126] Building family strength and resilience can also increase refugee children and youth's social support, problem-solving communication, and family communication, which could promote the access to mental health services and improve refugee children's and youth's mental health.[127]

There are several challenges to providing mental healthcare to refugee children, including where the refugees came from and the duration of their stay in the host country.[128] Many refugees, especially children, have a poor command of the language of the host country.[129] Even when interpretation is available, inadequate direct communication may complicate proper assessments.[130] Different belief systems may also obstruct mental health assessments and clash with the practitioners' understanding, including the tendency to find physical explanations for psychological problems.[131] Cultural expectations could be another barrier between the treatment and refugee children, adults may have different views on expectation from mental health care and information they want to share, which could be the most controversial facts whether they accept a mental diagnosis and consequent treatment.[132] Because of previous experiences in their country of origin, refugees may feel particularly distrustful of the authorities, trust issue is also a problem that needs to be solved.[133]

Conclusion

Refugee children and youth face far greater dangers to their safety and well-being than average children.[134] The sudden and violent onset of emergencies, the disruption of families and community structures, as well as the acute shortage of resources deeply affect the physical and psychological wellbeing of refugee children.[135] Significant progress in safeguarding health of refugee children and youth has been achieved through international partnerships, including cooperation between UN organizations such as UNHCR, WHO, and UNICEF, as well as partnerships between UN agencies and local authorities or private sector organizations.[136] The organizations work together to provide assistance to refugee children in areas involving investment in high risk diseases, primary health care services, life-support necessaries' supplement, education, and psychological intervention.[137] Though some outreach already exists, there is still a long and challenging journey ahead to fully achieve the SDGs and provide refugee children and youth all over the world a better health care systems.[138] To further implement the goal that the overall health of refugee children should be safeguarded, besides physical health, mental health is equally essential to be discussed.[139] In compliance with SDGs, a mutual respect for human rights, and international collaboration, it is certain that the future for refugee children and youth will be much more considerable.[140]

Further Research

To further the research of your Member State's position, please consider the following questions in your research: What are the biggest obstacles faced in safeguarding the health of refugee children and youth? What can be done to promote continuity and quality of PHC for refugee children and youth? How could the support for mental health be more streamlined to the UN and Member States' work in protecting refugee children and youth's health? What is the General Assembly's role in coordinating and leading the next steps to address this issue?

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[126] Rousseau et al., *Evaluation of a classroom program of creative expression workshops for refugee and immigrant children*, 2005.
[127] Weine et al., *Evaluating A Multiple-Family Group Access Intervention for Refugees with PTSD*, 2008.
[128] Sandhu et al., *Experiences with treating immigrants: a qualitative study in mental health services across 16 European countries*, 2012.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Ibid.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Yule, *Alleviating the effects of war and displacement on children*, 2002.
[133] Ibid.
[134] UNHCR, *Refugee Children: Guidelines on Protection and Care*, 1994.
[135] Ibid.
[136] UNHCR, *Partnerships*, 2018.
[137] UNHCR, *What We Do*, 2018.
[138] UN DPI, *Sustainable Development Goals*.
[139] WHO, *Mental health included in the UN Sustainable Development Goals*, 2018.
[140] *Convention relating to the Status of Refugees*, 1951.

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https://www.unicef.org/violencestudy/pdf/refugee_children_guidelines_on_protection_and_care.pdf

> *The guideline set out the practical measures for the protection and assistance of refugee children from three basic viewpoints: Children are vulnerable as they are susceptible to disease, malnutrition, and physical injury; Children are dependent and they need the support of adults both physically and mentally; Children are developing because they grow in developmental sequences, which can be interrupted easily. These Guidelines will help countries of origin and countries of asylum to understand what UNHCR is trying to do for refugee children and why, and will therefore serve as a solid basis for cooperation. Furthermore, the Guidelines will be a starting point for dialogue with the UNHCR Executive Committee and donor States on refugee children.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-first session. (2016). *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (A/RES/71/1)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 3 July 2018 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/71/1

> *The New York Declaration reaffirms the importance of the international refugee regime and contains a wide range of commitments by Member States to strengthen and enhance mechanisms to protect people on the move. The document, in particular, highlights the importance to implement a comprehensive refugee response that is build upon an international network consists of the UN system, Member States, and civil society organizations to better respond to the refugee crisis . Delegates will find this comprehensive and informative document helpful in understanding the refugee issue at large and the aspects Member States should pay attention in order to implement these commitments.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-second session. (2017). *Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (A/RES/72/150)* [Resolution]. Adopted on the report of the Third Committee (A/72/433 and A/72/433/Corr.1). Retrieved 17 June 2018 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/72/150

> *This document expresses deep concern about the long-term impact of continued cuts in food rations on the health and well-being of refugees globally. It emphasizes the critical situation in Africa and the Middle East, and highlights the importance to reduce the impact of food shortage on children. Because of insufficient funding and increased costs, the document calls upon States to ensure sustained support for the Office of the High Commissioner and the World Food Programme, while looking to provide refugees, especially vulnerable refugee children, with alternatives to food assistance, pending a durable solution.*

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II. Rebuilding Community Security in Post-Conflict Iraq and Syria

"Reconstruction and development programmes must go hand in hand with a strategy to prevent the recurrence of violent extremism and terrorism... This must include full respect for human rights, including political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights. There will be a major role for civil society."[141]

Introduction

The Iraqi forces' successful defeat of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Rawah, Iraq, in November 2017 marked the end of ISIL's three-year occupation in Iraq.[142] In Syria, ISIL has lost a significant amount of territory with over three years of United States of America-led bombings, but still remains active.[143] Beyond the unacceptable loss of life that ISIL's occupation caused, the armed conflicts also led to massive institutional destruction and social degradation in both Iraq and Syria, which left much work to be done to rebuild community security.[144] The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defines community security as "a concept that seeks to operationalize human security, human development and state-building paradigms at the local level."[145] In the context of post-conflict areas, rebuilding community security focuses on the components of capacity building of the police force, increasing accountability measures for institutions, and protecting human rights, instead of infrastructure rebuilding.[146] While Syria remains an active conflict zone, post-ISIL rebuilding efforts, particularly in Iraq, are of paramount importance.

Addressing community security in Syria and Iraq is beyond national importance, but is vital for international peace and security, as well as sustainable development. The achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 on "no poverty," SDG 5 on "gender equality," SDG 10 on "reduced inequalities," SDG 16 on "peace, justice and strong institutions," and SDG 17 on "partnership for the goals" are all directly connected to this topic.[147] Just as post-conflict rebuilding in Iraq and Syria advances the achievement of the SDGs, the SDGs' specific targets also provide concrete directions to guide international initiatives to improve people's daily lives in those areas. Key targets include 16.a "strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels" and target 17.9 "enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans."[148] The United Nations (UN) expert programs and agencies, such as the World Food Programme (WFP), UNDP, and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) have already launched both research and operational projects in rebuilding community security in Iraq and Syria.[149] As one of the six primary organs of the UN, the General Assembly bears crucial responsibility in facilitating and coordinating international dialogue and advancing collective progress with specialized UN agencies and its state and non-state partners to rebuild community security in Iraq and Syria.[150]

International and Regional Framework

The Iraq Recovery and Resilience Programme (RRP) was launched on 14 February 2018 at the Kuwait International Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq.[151] The RRP is a two-year initiative focused on social and institutional

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[141] UN Secretary-General, *Secretary-General's statement to Conference on Reconstruction in Iraq*, 2018.
[142] Sobhani, End of ISIL's Life in Iraq, *Tehran Times*, 2017.
[143] Denselow, Syria: Dabiq and ISIL's end of times, *Al Jazeera*, 2016.
[144] Kossov, Mosul Is Completely Destroyed, *The Atlantic*, 2017; *Social Degradation in Syria: How the War Impacts on Social Capital*, Social Watch, 2017.
[145] UNDP, *Community Security and Social Cohesion: Towards a UNDP Approach*, 2009, p. 28.
[146] UNDP, *Community Security*, 2018.
[147] UN DPI, *Sustainable Development Goals*.
[148] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, pp. 26-27.
[149] *Japan contributes $ 10 million to Iraq's reconstruction*, The Baghdad Post, 2018; UN Iraq, *UNFPA Welcomes the Generous Donation from the Government of Japan to Meet the Needs of Women and Girls in Iraq*, 2017; UNDP in Iraq, *Overview*, 2018.
[150] UN Secretary-General, *Secretary-General's statement to Conference on Reconstruction in Iraq*, 2018.
[151] UN Iraq, *UN Country Team Iraq Joint Press Release: UN Secretary-General António Guterres Launches the Iraq Recovery and Resilience Programme*, 2018.

reconstruction in post-ISIL Iraq.[152] The Iraqi government made recognizable national efforts to provide 80% of the humanitarian assistance needed by the six million displaced Iraqis, however, more international attention and initiatives are needed.[153] Building upon existing programs, such as the UNDP's Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization that has reached 25 cities in Iraq and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO's) cultural preservation projects in the Old City of Mosul, the RRP marks the UN's increased commitment in coordinating international collaboration on bringing tangible and sustainable improvements to Iraqis' lives.[154] As the overarching and forward looking framework guiding the UN's work in rebuilding community security, the RRP outlines nine key components to empower national and community-level capacity to further advance the achievement of the SDGs.[155] Out of the nine components, three of them are specifically tailored to tackle violent extremism including preventing violent extremism, revitalizing communities, and restoring agriculture and water systems.[156] By rehabilitating pumping stations and water storage systems, crop and livestock diseases may be reduced, which could improve a healthy, stable, and sustainable living condition for the community and prevent individuals from instead resorting to extremism.[157] The other six components are designed for specific national situations, which include promoting sustainable returns, decentralizing basic services, supporting survivors, expanding political participation, engaging youth, and promoting community reconciliation.[158]

Youth empowerment, enhancing community networks, and revising Iraq's electoral, judicial, and government processes and systems are three areas of emphasis that are incorporated into most of the nine components listed above.[159] Responding to the high amount of displacement in Iraq, the RRP particularly emphasizes sustainable returns.[160] By conducting a reconstruction that prioritizes peaceful post-conflict co-existence, the program aims to enhance community cohesion and, in turn, rebuild a stable and sustainable community.[161] In furtherance of SDG 17, especially targets 17.1 on domestic resource mobilization, 17.9 on capacity building, and 17.14 on policy coherence, the RRP's "supporting survivors" component sets out a goal of establishing a systematic legal framework that encompasses social, financial, and technological segments for the protection and empowerment of survivors.[162] Additionally, in line with SDGs 5, 10, and 16, the RRP also aims to increase the political participation of youth, women, minorities, and civil society through long-term electoral and parliamentary reforms that expand institutional inclusion in post-conflict decision-makings.[163] SDG target 5.5 focuses on women's equal and full political participation, and the RRP specifically highlights a gender perspective in the components of "expanding political participation" and "engaging youth" to protect women and girls from discrimination and engage women's role in post-conflict community reconstruction.[164] Besides target 10.7 on achieving "orderly, safe, regular and responsible" migration and mobility, targets 16.3, 16.6, and 16.a on institutional building also emphasize the importance of the rule of law and institutional accountability in the implementation of the RRP.[165] Both Iraq and Syria have witnessed a tremendous amount of pain and horror, and these targets provide a vital guiding compass to the reestablishment of strong and sustainable institutions that serves every citizen equally.[166] The RRP puts both the SDGs' priorities and Iraq's national specific needs into account and is a transportable and valuable framework of reference once Syria enters the post-conflict stage with the support from the international community.[167]

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[152] UN Iraq IRRP, *About*, 2018.
[153] UN Secretary-General, *Secretary-General's statement to Conference on Reconstruction in Iraq*, 2018.
[154] Ibid.
[155] UN Iraq IRRP, *RRP Components*, 2018.
[156] UN Iraq IRRP, *Iraq Recovery and Resilience Programme*, 2018, p. 2.
[157] Ibid.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Ibid., p. 3.
[160] UN Iraq IRRP, *Promoting Sustainable Returns*, 2018.
[161] Ibid.
[162] Ibid.
[163] UN Iraq IRRP, *Expanding Political Participation*, 2018.
[164] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, pp. 18, 21, 26; UN Secretary-General, *Secretary-General's statement to Conference on Reconstruction in Iraq*, 2018; UN Iraq IRRP, *RRP Components*, 2018.
[165] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, pp. 18, 21, 26.
[166] UN Secretary-General, *Secretary-General's statement to Conference on Reconstruction in Iraq*, 2018.
[167] Ibid.

In additional to the specific rebuilding framework established in the RRP, recovery efforts are also guided by established international documents on human rights and security. The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948), the *Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict* (1974), and the *Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism* (1994), which was adopted by the General Assembly unanimously, emphasize the right to security, liberty, and life as fundamental human rights.[168] They also highlight the importance of a comprehensive legal framework to protect such rights and provide a foundation for rebuilding community security in both Iraq and Syria.[169] Additionally, the *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants* (2016) reaffirms Member States' commitment and responsibility in building capacity of developing countries in post-conflict.[170] As signatories of the declaration, the Iraqi and Syrian governments both are expected to fulfill their commitments to provide humanitarian assistance, access to education, response to gender-based violence, and sustainable settlements for all without discrimination.[171]

Role of the International System

The most recent resolution the General Assembly adopted on the issue of Iraq was resolution 56/147 on 27 February 2002 on the topic of "Situation on Human Rights in Iraq."[172] The resolution calls for the enhancement of a comprehensive and independent judicial system based on strong rule of law and international standards.[173] Additionally, political killings, using rape as a political means, and systematic torture still exist in the Iraqi judicial system.[174] To tackle these issues, this resolution calls for a reform and further capacity building of the police and prison system to protect civilian and previous war prisoners' human rights and reintegration into the society.[175]

In implementing the RRP, UNDP is the leading agency assisting the Government of Iraq (GoI) in broadening political participation by revising the electoral process and providing increased access to political participation for women and minorities.[176] With the joint efforts of UNDP, the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), and the Iraqi High Elections Commission (IHEC), capacity building workshops for gender equality have been hosted for IHEC's gender unit.[177] The workshop primarily focused on reviewing the current Iraqi electoral process and women's participation in it.[178] A one-day meeting followed the workshop to discuss the collaboration and future works of the gender units in the main government ministries.[179] The workshop noted the quota of employing at least 25% female employees in national and local governments had been achieved and that further policy revisions to mainstream gender equality in all phases of elections and processes would be advanced.[180] Future workshops were also planned to increase social media efforts and continue expanding women's political participation.[181] Additionally, UNDP's Strengthening Participatory and Accountable Governance project particularly focuses on supporting and engaging civil society organizations (CSOs) and vulnerable groups, such as youth and women, to enhance Iraq's legislative and democratization processes.[182]

UNDP also supported Iraq's Council of Ministers and National Reconciliation Commission (NRC) in developing a Social Cohesion Road Map for the Nineveh Plains region in March 2018.[183] The primary goal of the plan is to

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[168] UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217A (III))*, 1948; UN General Assembly,
  Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict (A/RES/3318 (XXIX)), 1974;
  UN General Assembly, *Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism (A/RES/49/60)*, 1994.
[169] Ibid.
[170] UN General Assembly, *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (A/RES/71/1)*, 2016, p. 23.
[171] Ibid.
[172] UN General Assembly, *Situation on human rights in Iraq (A/RES/56/174)*, 2002.
[173] Ibid., p. 3.
[174] Ibid.
[175] Ibid., p. 4.
[176] UN Iraq IRRP, *Expanding Political Participation*, 2018.
[177] UNDP in Iraq, *UNDP and UNAMI works with Iraqi High Elections Commission (IHEC) on gender mainstreaming in Iraq's
  elections*, 2018.
[178] Ibid.
[179] Ibid.
[180] Ibid.
[181] Ibid.
[182] UNDP in Iraq, *Strengthening Participatory and Accountable Governance*, 2018.
[183] UNDP in Iraq, *Social Cohesion Road Map for the Nineveh Plains Launched in Bartela*, 2018.

rebuild community rapport and trust among ethno-religious groups to facilitate of sustainable returns.[184] A socially cohesive community that welcomes individuals of all religious and ethnic backgrounds while respecting gender equality is crucial to promoting community reconciliation.[185] The Road Map is composed of three pillars of public awareness raising; local peace mechanisms, processes, and committees; and "documenting the experiences, needs and demands of Iraqi citizens with special emphasis on the redress of sexual and gender crime during previous conflicts."[186] UNDP aims to use this Road Map to support the GoI in revising transitional justice processes and overall societal reconciliation via consultation, partnership, and funding on both local and national levels.[187]

Additionally, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) specifically conduct work on peaceful and sustainable migration and returns.[188] IOM and UNHCR work with the GoI on legal frameworks to assist vulnerable groups and strengthen community police by hosting capacity building forums on building community cohesion.[189] The Community Policing Forum (CPF), for example, is one of these programs and empowers citizens to raise security concerns to CSOs, police officers, and local government officials.[190] By the end of 2017, 66 CPFs were hosted in Iraq by both IOM and the Iraqi government.[191] Beyond political and ethnic cohesion, building a unified Iraqi national image is vital to prevent community-based violence and realize sustainable returns.[192] As the lead agencies for this component, the UNDP and UNESCO specifically work on documenting and preserving survivors' testimonies, monitoring and alleviating community violence, and utilizing media as a means for bridging ideological, political, and social gaps.[193] The goal of building community reconciliation is to promote the joint cultural and national ownership for an entire community to move forward with a shared identity while discarding the abuse and differences of the past.[194] Education and public campaigns that advocate for understanding and tolerance are also key to achieve this goal.[195]

Besides UN agencies, CSOs such as War Child and the World Bank are also active actors in post-conflict reconstruction in Iraq and Syria.[196] War Child protects and empowers children and youth impacted by armed conflicts by improving access to education, educating youth on the legal process and their rights, and providing protection in armed conflicts.[197] In Iraq, with a special focus on girls, War Child offers summer school and teacher training programs to help over 6,000 displaced children and youth receive education in emergencies.[198] War Child has also launched initiatives to reconnect displaced children with their families, as well as offering opportunities to the displaced to generate income.[199] Additionally, the vocational training, micro-finance loans, and psycho-social support War Child provides to women and girls not only resolves short-term living needs, but also empowers them to be fully integrated into the society and fight against stigma and obstacles.[200] In the case of Syria, although armed conflicts still remain active and reconstruction efforts may not start immediately, according the World Bank, proactive development efforts that engage CSOs in areas of funding, technological assistance, and humanitarian relief could promote and eventually help achieve peace.[201] To promote and maintain sustainable peace in Syria, the World Bank states that infrastructure rebuilding alone is not enough to establish community security, but an inclusive institutional reconstruction that considers ethnic, religious, and geographic aspects of the society.[202] The

[184] UNDP in Iraq, *Social Cohesion Road Map for the Nineveh Plains Launched in Bartela*, 2018.
[185] Ibid.
[186] Ibid.
[187] Ibid.
[188] UN Iraq IRRP, *Revitalizing Communities*, 2018; UN IRRP, *Promoting Sustainable Returns*, 2018.
[189] UN Iraq IRRP, *Engaging Youth*, 2018; UN IRRP, *Revitalizing Communities*, 2018.
[190] IOM, *IOM Iraq Holds Community Policing Conference on Ninewa*, 2017.
[191] Ibid.
[192] UN Iraq IRRP, *Promoting Community Reconciliation*, 2018.
[193] Ibid.
[194] Ibid.
[195] Ibid.
[196] War Child, *We Are War Child*.
[197] Ibid.; War Child, *Our Approach*.
[198] War Child UK, *Education*, 2018.
[199] War Child UK, *Iraq*, 2018.
[200] War Child Canada, *For Iraq's Displaced Women, Economic Opportunity Can Mean a Brighter Future*, 2016.
[201] World Bank, *Syria: Reconstruction Could Foster Peace*, 2016.
[202] World Bank Middle East and North Africa Region, *Syria Reconstruction for Peace*, 2016, p. 30.

ongoing armed conflicts has caused over $4.5 million worth of destructions in Syria's education, energy, health, and institutions by the end of 2014.[203]

Engaging Youth in Post-Conflict Reconstruction

Developing countries host over 86% of the population between ages 10 and 24, and about 60% of the Iraqi population is under the age of 25.[204] The world is witnessing a "youth bulge," and Iraq is not an exception.[205] Lack of employment, limited access to education, and social stigma can put youth at great risks of violent extremism and criminal activities.[206] However, if provided with opportunities and empowerment, youth can be a powerful resource for recovery, rebuilding, and reconstruction efforts in post-conflict societies.[207] The RRP places youth in a vitally strategic role in post-conflict community security because of its potential in ending the cycle of extremism and building social cohesion.[208] As a part of its commitments to the RRP, the GoI aims to revise its juvenile justice system and legal frameworks to further protect the rights of youth while empowering youth to engage in public life with more inclusion.[209] One of RRP's key strategies to empower youth against violent extremism is through institutional capacity building in the justice system.[210] In the case of Iraq, The Iraqi National Child Protection Policy is a guiding compass to adapt the Juvenile Welfare Law to improve local and national practices and to achieve an accessible, child-friendly, and functional justice system for all by 2020.[211] The collaboration between the GoI, the National Juvenile Care Council, and UN leading agencies, is key to promote and advance justice system reform.[212]

UNFPA is a leading agency in preventing violent extremism and supporting survivors.[213] The agency's work primary involves assisting the GoI in establishing youth advisory boards to involve youth in local and national decision-making and training community workers to educate youth on the root causes of extremism.[214] UNFPA's initiatives to support survivors mainly centers around building civil society networks and expanding CSOs political participation.[215] The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) co-leads efforts in youth empowerment with the UNFPA.[216] The two agencies' priority is to build youth advisory boards to increase youth's access to political participation in local councils.[217] Volunteer corps, which can both provide youth with skill training and also empower youth to engage in community works, have also been created.[218] Empowering youth to lead initiatives in partnership with CSOs and governments, providing "skills-to-market" workshops, and educating youth on their legal rights and obligations would also provide means to transform youth into independent and sufficient individuals.[219]

Furthermore, gender equality should be mainstreamed in all UN and national policies and practices, especially considering girls often face more obstacles and risks of violence.[220] Gender equality should be emphasized in both public and private spheres, including government's sensitivity towards gender in policymaking, as well as education for young men regarding equal gender roles in society.[221] Girl's and women's equal and important role in post-

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[203] World Bank Middle East and North Africa Region, *Syria Reconstruction for Peace*, 2016, p. 48.
[204] UNDP, *Community Security and Social Cohesion: Towards a UNDP Approach*, 2009, p. 10; UN IRRP, *Engaging Youth*, 2018.
[205] UN Iraq IRRP, *Engaging Youth*, 2018.
[206] UNDP, *Community Security and Social Cohesion: Towards a UNDP Approach*, 2009, p. 10.
[207] UN Iraq IRRP, *Engaging Youth*, 2018.
[208] Ibid.
[209] Ibid.
[210] Ibid.
[211] Ibid.
[212] Ibid.
[213] UN Iraq IRRP, *Preventing Violent Extremism*, 2018; UN Iraq IRRP, *Supporting Survivors*, 2018.
[214] UN Iraq IRRP, *Preventing Violent Extremism*, 2018.
[215] UN Iraq IRRP, *Supporting Survivors*, 2018.
[216] UN Iraq IRRP, *Engaging Youth*, 2018.
[217] Ibid.
[218] Ibid.
[219] Ibid.
[220] Ibid.
[221] UNDP, *Community Security and Social Cohesion: Towards a UNDP Approach*, 2009, p. 29.

conflict reconstruction should also be respected and effectively utilized in all community security rebuilding efforts to achieve the best outcome for all.[222]

Building Cohesive Local Communities

Building upon the previous national reconciliation programs that only emphasized civil participation, the RRP points out the urgent need to focus on community cohesion in order to expedite the process of sustainable returns and eliminating violent extremism.[223] An example of community-based cohesion program is UNDP's Support for Integrated Reconciliation in Iraq.[224] The project focuses on creating Local Peace Committees (LPCs), providing support for victims, especially survivors of sexual violence, and developing high-level civil consultations for political processes.[225] Since the launch of the project in early 2017, six LPCs have been established, and over 1,000 women have received survivor support and skill training.[226] Additionally, 101 sexual violence survivors received legal support and representation, and 265 women received one-on-one sessions with social support specialists.[227] Besides, six minority groups have been formed and put into force to address issues faced by vulnerable groups.[228] Such civic-led, systematic approaches have enhanced community comradery, reinforced institutional capacity, created a base for civilian and survivor support, and fostered an inclusive community for vulnerable groups, such as youth, women, ethnic and religious minorities.[229] A broadened scope and space for civic engagement and social participation bridges the gaps between civilians and authority as well as among different social groups.[230] When local community is cohesive and empowered, it could promote joint cultural heritage and national identity, and break the cycle of violent extremism.[231]

Conclusion

The SDGs and the RRP both have laid down concrete guidance for rebuilding community security in post-conflict Iraq and Syria.[232] Massive displaced populations, poverty, gender-based discrimination, and fragile governance are a continuing challenges in both states.[233] To rebuild community security, preventing violent extremism, revitalizing communities, engaging youth, and prompting community reconciliation are of primary pertinence.[234] $482 million is required for RRP's operation in the first year, and funding remains a challenge for the UN and its partners.[235] Government accountability, gender equality, and legal reforms still require ongoing efforts and attention to fulfill the goals set out by the RRP.[236] The General Assembly plays a coordinating role in facilitating dialogues within and beyond the UN system. UNDP's projects in Iraq are successful cases that Syria's future reconstruction and recovery efforts could consider; and it is hopeful that Syria will end its armed conflicts with the continuous support and proactive efforts from the international community. The General Assembly should continue its collaboration with its government and civil society partners to promote peaceful dialogues and support both Iraq and Syria in their transitional periods.

Further Research

In continuing their research on the topic, delegates should consider the following questions: How can the General Assembly increase coordination across UN agencies, CSOs, and levels of the GoI to maximize available funding for implementing the RRP? As a two-year initiative, how can the General Assembly help monitor and assess the

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[222] UNDP, *Community Security and Social Cohesion: Towards a UNDP Approach*, 2009, p. 10.
[223] UN Iraq IRRP, *Promoting Community Reconciliation*, 2018.
[224] UNDP in Iraq, *Support for Integrated Reconciliation in Iraq*, 2018.
[225] Ibid.
[226] Ibid.
[227] Ibid.
[228] Ibid.
[229] Ibid.
[230] UN Iraq IRRP, *Promoting Community Reconciliation*, 2018.
[231] Ibid.
[232] UN Secretary-General, *Secretary-General's statement to Conference on Reconstruction in Iraq*, 2018.
[233] Ibid.
[234] UN Iraq IRRP, *RRP Components*, 2018.
[235] UN Iraq IRRP, *About*, 2018.
[236] UN Iraq IRRP, *Expanding Political Participation*, 2018.

successes and shortcoming of the RRP, and how can that evaluation be used to augment current and future rebuilding efforts in Syria? What is the General Assembly's role in institutional capacity building and reform in Iraq and Syria? What can the General Assembly do to encourage the Iraqi and Syrian governments to uphold their commits to existing international human rights instruments?

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>The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provides the blueprint for the UN's work in the next 12 years and are related to all aspects of the UN's initiatives. Concerning this topic in particular, Goal one, "end poverty in all its forms everywhere" five, "achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls," and 16, "promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development" should be studied in detail for a better understanding of the UN's priorities in addressing this topic. This document also offers an extensive review on the past actions and documents adopted that paved the road for the SDGs, which provide a broad view of the UN's blueprint and philosophy for the next decade. This document would help delegates further grasp the key components in community security rebuilding in the context of international sustainable development.

United Nations Development Programme in Iraq. (2017). *Funding Facility for Stabilization 2017 Q3 Report*. Retrieved 30 May 2018 from: http://www.iq.undp.org/content/dam/iraq/docs/Stabilization/UNDP%20IQ-%20FFS%20Stabilization%20Q3%202017%20Report-20171219.pdf
>As the expert agency specializes in development issues, the UNDP has launched projects that encompass numerous areas in community recovery in Iraq. This document provides a review of the agency's 1,208 projects in Iraq that reached positive results in issues, such as community stabilization, youth empowerment, and public health. The "performance tracking matrix" and "risk framework" in the annex are also helpful resources for delegates to understand the philosophies and rationale behind the UN's practices. Delegates will find it a valuable resource to understand the UN's involvements in Iraq, as well as the challenges remaining.

United Nations Development Programme in Iraq. (2018). *Iraq* [Website]. Retrieved 30 May 2018 from: http://www.iq.undp.org/
>This website is the hub for all UNDP's involvements in Iraq. It includes UNDP's reports and updated press release on its projects and research regarding post-conflict reconstruction in the region. UNDP is one of the key UN agencies who works intensively on development issues in Iraq. Delegates should visit this website often to stay tuned with success examples and lessons learnt to form comprehensive proposals for the future.

United Nations Iraq, Iraq Recovery and Resilience Programme. (2018). *RRP Components* [Website]. Retrieved 30 May 2018 from: http://www.uniraqrrp.org/components
>The RRP is the overarching framework of the UN's work in post-ISIL Iraq. The framework includes nine key components, which are all interconnected and equally pertinent for a sustainable peace in the region. This webpage also introduces the key UN agencies and national government branches that are involved in each component. Understanding the stakeholders and areas involved in the program is fundamental to understand the concept of community security rebuilding and to research viable future solutions.

World Bank, Middle East and North Africa Region. (2016). *Syria Reconstruction for Peace*. Retrieved 30 May 2018 from: https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/24010/9781464809071.pdf
>The World Bank provides a concise and, yet, in-depth overview of the past and current situations in Syria in this report. Based on scientific research and expert opinions, this report makes suggestions for a peaceful transition concerning Syria's current situation. Previous success examples are also included in the "Country Notes" section to direct delegates in their research. This document should be used as a background note on Syria and provides a starting point for delegates to start thinking about future proposals for Syria.

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