AGENDA ITEM 1
The Rise of Populism & its Impact on Democratic Values, Human Rights & Global Free Trade

United States President Donald Trump signs the Secretary-General's guest book at the UN Headquarters in New York.

UN Photo/Rick Bajornas

Introduction

Populism is a political approach that strives to appeal to ordinary people who feel that their concerns are not regarded by elite groups.

The ideas of 'the people' are emphasised in this political approach, although political parties rarely call themselves 'populists'. The term was developed in the 19th Century to describe the changing political movements the increased attention paid to the needs of 'the people' rather than 'the elite'. The American political scientist Francis Fukuyama described populism as "the label political elites attach to policies supported by ordinary citizens that they don't like" (Lehne, 2017).

Populism is often described as being strategic in its approach and its appeal to the masses (Rice-Oxley & Kalia, 2018). As described by a leading scholar, Cas Mudde, populism is 'a thin-centred ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogenous and antagonistic camps, 'the pure people' versus 'the corrupt elite'" (Rice-Oxley & Kalia, 2018). No two populist movements are exactly the same, and there is no real structure in whether or not populists are left or right-wing politicians.

The new world order we see developing with changes in the UK and US political agendas, as well as the UK leaving the EU, is due to a change in mind set from our politicians. Members of parliament including Nigel Farage are examples of people who have moved away from looking to please the elite, and towards wanting to appeal to the masses. The people of the UK are thinking more and more about their identity, rather than the positive impacts integration of different cultures could have (Shuster, 2019). We live in a multilateral world with increased equality between countries, genders, races and populism could threaten this changing world (UN, 2019).

According to an Oxford University study: "populist attitudes are less widespread in Northern and Western European countries than in Eastern and Southern Europe. In almost every country we analysed, populist

attitudes are more common among those either in the older age groups, with lower incomes, or with lower levels of formal education." (Fletcher, 2019).

Impacts on Democratic Values

The impacts of populism are widespread, and there are suggestions that it could have more negative connotations than positive.

The first perceived impact is the one it has on democracy and democratic values. The rise of populism has encouraged the development of a political structure that threatens liberal democracy. The definition of 'the people' as being a homogenous group is problematic too, as different views are therefore lost, preventing democracy. It is clear from historical examples that liberal democracy is a positive, (changing face of Russian politics, fall of the Berlin Wall, apartheid in South Africa) and so populism threatens this positive political movement (Galston, 2018).

It is important to note that the voice of the masses may be positive too; more peoples' views are heard and changes within a country will be more suitable to everyone, no matter what your economic status. However, with the media playing a larger role in shaping political views, perhaps this common voice is not always well informed.

Often populist movements are run by those who are charismatic and treat politics like a personality contest (Lehne, 2017). This can be problematic in that the public tend to vote for those people who they like, rather than the policies that they believe will work best for their country. This can also be risky in that there can be an abuse of power once in office and they can rule in a very corrupt way (Lehne, 2017).

In some respects, populism can revitalise democracy and give rise to a new voice. It brings new people into the political lime light, as well as providing a voice which challenges the established ways. It can be integral in bringing about political and societal change as a result (Lehne, 2017).

Another positive is that populism highlights issues that a large proportion of the population care about and want to talk about. They often bring to light issues that the political elite would rather avoid discussing. A good example of this is the immigration debate within the EU (Mudde, 2015).

Impacts on Human Rights

As stated in Article 3 of the 1948 UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person" (UN, 1948). Human rights are in place to ensure people are treated fairly and are looked after in their country by the state. Rules and regulations surrounding human rights are put in place for the benefit of the people within a country. However, populism can often threaten these human rights due to the horrific acts that are carried out by people in trying to get their voices heard. A new wave of internal threats due to the rise of populism has increased dramatically in recent years and is bringing with it "a move to normalise states of emergency" (Alston, 2017).

Those who are integral members of the populist movements often see national sovereignty as the most important factor. This then leads to an adoption of unrealistic and low tolerance foreign policies, leading to a rise in nationalism (Lehne, 2017).

The rising populist agenda is becoming evermore "nationalistic, xenophobic, misogynistic, and explicitly antagonistic to all or much of the human rights agenda" (Alston, 2017). There are therefore greater challenges to human rights than there have been before. The rise of a common voice leads to extreme actions and events which can have detrimental impacts on human rights.

A recent speech by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, highlighted the threat that populism has on human rights. She spoke of how the UN declaration has been sustainable in incorporating rights for people through changes including climate change and the increased awareness of the LGBTQ+ community. However, "many of these rights are under threat from politicians pushing a nationalistic agenda" (Schlein, 2018). "When leaders… speak against migrants or a sort of hate speech or xenophobic speech, you are giving license to people's rights" (Bachelet, 2018). Leaders are accountable for what they say and we are seeing a rise in nationalist views, personality contests, and pushing Western ideals which could threaten human rights (Shlein, 2018).

In contrast, populist views are to blame for an increased number of rights activists which often threaten national laws and have little understanding of what they are fighting for. This is having negative impacts on law enforcement within countries and those who are rights activists are often viewed as enemies of the elite (Goldston, 2019).

It is true that, for the most part, those fighting for rights are doing so in the correct way and with the correct end goal in sight. Examples include the #MeToo movement and protests on climate change. However, there was a lot more to it than just the rights organisations who "contributed to

these victories, so did political parties, labour unions, women's coalitions, environmentalists and professional associations" (Goldston, 2019).

Impacts on Global Free Trade

With regard to the economy, populism is closely linked to globalisation. Globalisation is the way in which the world is becoming increasingly interconnected as goods, services, people, money and culture are spread across the globe. As globalisation increases, so too does the global economy with trade links between countries increasing. Most core (wealthy) countries will exploit those periphery (poorer) countries for resources or labour. As large trans-national corporations employ factory workers in less developed countries with a large work force, less strict working regulations, and raw materials. The main link to populism is the fear of loss of jobs and changes to well-being as a result as people claim globalisation is a source of inequality and the poor distribution of the benefits of trade (Bacaria, 2017). We are starting to see a rise in political parties going against free trade, for example talks about the withdrawal from NAFTA in the US and the UK leaving the EU.

Restrictions and regulations on migration can have a negative influence on worker mobility and therefore lead to a higher demand for a smaller workforce. It can lead to an increase in wages which is positive for those who are working, but is less attractive to investors and big businesses, so forcing them to withdraw and look elsewhere (Learner 2019).

"The lower the level of education, the lower the income, and the older people are the more likely they are to see globalisation as a threat. Moreover, those who feel close to populist parties are mainly motivated by fear of globalisation. This effect is particularly evident when it comes to right wing populist parties, but it is also present or left-wing populist parties" (de Vries & Hoffman, 2016).

Within countries there is an increase in government spending which can, in turn, lead to an increase in budget deficit and so increase taxes. This can discourage people from working and therefore lead to an increase in trade barriers, particularly linked to resources that are needed for manufacturing (Learner 2019). It is clear, therefore, that not only is there an impact on global trade, but there is also an impact on trade within countries and trade blocs too.

Some argue that the rise in globalisation and the integration we see as a result have led to a rise in populism (Rodrik, n.d). Many see the impacts of free trade as being unfair and the benefits are not felt by everyone. Despite the fact that a sector shift and increased mechanisation of labour has led to a decrease in jobs, populists feel that globalisation is to blame (Kopf, 2017). The main aim of global trade is to increase productivity and economic output, find the cheapest supplier or product and unfortunately globalisation tends to favour those in less developed countries as employees. The World Trade Organisation have put in place rules and regulations to prohibit goods being exported for too little money and to have control over outsourcing of labour (Kopf, 2017). However, there are still areas that seem unfair according to people working on minimum wage in countries such as the UK.

Other Notable Impacts and Links

As a result of populist movements, there becomes a real divide in society, an 'us' and 'them' mentality. This can be very detrimental to the stability of a country, as it often leads to greater disparity between the elite and those who are not, perhaps even between nationals and foreigners (Lehne, 2017).

There is a concern that the rise of populism is being driven by online media. However, those with populist attitudes prefer offline news resources, including the television. According to an Oxford University study; "Of those with populist attitudes 46% say that television is their main source of news, compared to 40% of those without. This preference is stronger for commercial television outlets, but weaker for public service broadcasters" (Fletcher, 2019). There is a link between internet and social media use and populism as; "In Europe, directly accessing a branded website or app is the single most popular way of arriving at online news for those with populist attitudes (31%) and for those without (35%). However, those with populist attitudes have a stronger preference for social media (24% compared to 19%). In the US, social media ties with direct access as the main way of arriving at news for those with populist attitudes. There's also no clear preference for direct access among those without populist attitudes." (Fletcher, 2019). This shows that social media has an influence on political views and therefore populism. It can also act as a tool for populism. This suggests there will be a global disparity between levels of populism as a result of access to social media. Those areas with less media presence and access to social media will be views that are less influenced by the media, and they will have less platforms on which to air their views. Therefore, these areas may be less impacted by the populist movement.

Populism is seen by many as an expression in the West of a "sense of powerlessness: the powerlessness of ordinary citizens when faced with massive changes

going on all around them; but the powerlessness too of western leaders and politicians who really do not seem to have an answer to the many challenges facing the West right now" (Cox, 2018). We live in an ever-changing world with modern threats including cyber security and climate change, we are more connected now than we have ever been, living beyond borders. For some, this poses a level of uncertainty and so a need to make a change and regain control, so bringing with it the rise of movements such as populism.

It is too early to come to a decision as to what the long-term impacts of the recent rise of populism will be. "An increase in protectionism may raise the return premium demanded by investors as compensation for increased country risk, particularly for less liquid assets such as commercial real estate. To paraphrase a comment from a European Central Bank panel member, there will be no winners under protectionist policies – just different degrees of losers." (Learner, 2019).

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AGENDA ITEM II
The Protection and Advancement of the Rights of Women and the Girl Child during Armed Conflict and in Postconflict Situations

Members of the peacekeeping mission in Haiti move relocate displaced persons.

UN Photo/Logan Abassi

Introduction

Although war is indiscriminate in the human suffering that it causes, women and girls often experience its impact differently from men.

Conflict drives higher rates of sexual violence and increases the challenge of finding justice for survivors. During armed conflict, women are more vulnerable to poverty, loss of employment, denial of education and loss of essential healthcare. They are also more likely to be excluded from decision making during peace processes, and left unsupported during post-conflict disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration.

The United Nations (UN) Security Council has included the issue of women, peace and security on its agenda for nearly two decades, but there has been little change in the vulnerability of women during armed conflict and the impunity of those who abuse their rights.

The impact of armed conflict on women and girls is multifaceted and there is not space in this study guide to consider all aspects of the question. Focus has been placed on sexual and gender-based violence; forced and early marriages; human trafficking; access to education, health and employment; and women involvement in peace processes.

Current International Law

Current international law provides additional protection to women during armed conflict. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979) (CEDAW) makes no specific mention of armed conflict or gender-based violence, but does require State Parties to take appropriate measures to prevent trafficking and exploitative prostitution (United Nations, 1979). The non-binding Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against

Women (1993) (DEVAW) recognizes the vulnerability of women during conflict and outlines a number of measures for States to combat violence against women (United Nations, 1993).

The UN Security Council has passed a number of resolutions concerning women during armed conflict, which are legally binding on all Member States and form the most comprehensive legal basis for the treatment of women during armed conflict.

The ground-breaking Resolution 1325 (2000) called upon those involved in conflict to "take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence" and emphasized States' responsibility to end impunity and prosecute perpetrators (UN Security Council, 2000). In Resolution 1820 (2008), the Council placed greater obligation on States to address the problem by demanding the "immediate and complete cessation" of acts of sexual violence against civilians. It also recognised that "rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute a war crime, a crime against humanity, or a constitutive act with respect to genocide" and stressed that perpetrators should not be granted amnesties as part of peace processes (UN Security Council, 2008). Resolution 2331 (2016) condemned the trafficking of persons affected by armed conflict (UN Security Council, 2016).

The office of the UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict (SRSG-SVC) was created in Resolution 1888 (2009) with a mandate to advocate and promote cooperation and coordination on the issue (UN Security Council, 2009). The Special Representative chairs an inter-agency network known as United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict (UNASVC, which coordinates action, provides technical support and advocates for change. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations routinely deploys Women's Protection Advisers to its missions to provide technical support to force commanders, and conducts pre-deployment training for peacekeepers on the protection of girls and women.

Sexual and Gender-based Violence

The threat of sexual violence, including rape, significantly increases during armed conflict. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, for example, more than 637 cases of conflict-related sexual violence were reported to the United Nations mission over a recent period of twelve months, of which 375 victims were women and 262 were girls (UN Secretary-General, 2016a). Experts in the field suggest that the number of rapes that occur in conflict areas is likely to be between 10 and 20 times higher than the number reported (UN Security Council, 2016a). A government survey of 1,300 women conducted following thirteen years of civil war in Liberia found that 92% had experienced sexual violence (UNHCR, n.d.). The Secretary-General (2016a) has reported that women in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Mali, Myanmar, Libya, Sudan, Somalia, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic are currently at heightened danger of sexual violence due to armed conflict.

The majority of incidents are committed by non-governmental armed groups. However, a significant minority of perpetrators are members of national armies or police services and, in some cases, international peacekeepers. In 2016, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 26% of acts of sexual violence were committed by government security forces, and there were 23 cases of sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeepers. In October 2014, personnel from the Sudanese armed forces allegedly participated in the mass rape of 200 women and girls in North Darfur over a period of 36 hours (Human Rights Watch, 2015).

A particularly concerning aspect of sexual violence in conflict areas is that some offenders are UN staff and military personnel attached to peacekeeping missions, who have been sent to conflict areas to provide humanitarian assistance and security to vulnerable civilian populations. In 2015, there were 69 allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by members of ten different peacekeeping missions, and 30 similar allegations made against employees of UN agencies (UN General Assembly, 2016). These include twenty-three allegations of sexual activity with persons under the age of 18.

Misconduct by civilian staff is investigated by the UN. Where allegations are substantiated, personnel can have their employment terminated and files handed over to the legal authorities of their home State for action. It is up to Member States to investigate and punish cases of misconduct by members of their armed forces deployed to peacekeeping missions.

Gender-based violence is often poorly reported during conflict. State institutions weaken during conflict, and government security forces maintain few specialists in the investigation of sexual crimes and recruit few women. In Afghanistan, for example, women represent less than 2% of the national police (Oxfam, 2013). Survivors fear stigmatisation or reprisals if they report incidents of sexual violence, and have little confidence in the ability of law enforcement agencies. For many there are

also financial implications in reporting. In Somalia and the Central African Republic, survivors are asked to pay fees for medical certificates, which are required before police will process reports of sexual crimes (UN Secretary-Genera, 2016b). In other jurisdictions, healthcare facilities require victims to submit police reports before receiving care. This requirement in Myanmar means that only 4% of victims of gender-based violence receive support from healthcare professionals (UN Secretary-General, 2016a). Medical personnel are sometimes complicit in abuse. Healthcare workers attached to ISIL have reportedly given hormone treatment to young girls in order to accelerate their physical maturation and drugged women to facilitate rape (UN Secretary-General, 2016a). Even when cases are reported, the fears of survivors can often mean that they take some time before deciding to approach authorities. In the Central African Republic, for example, only 26% of victims report sexual crimes within three days, thereby missing crucial opportunities to gather forensic evidence, prevent the transmission of sexual transmitted disease including HIV/AIDS and take steps to prevent unwanted pregnancy (UN Secretary-General, 2016a). The result is, according to the UN Secretary-General (2016a), "Rapists anticipate that their victims will not have the means, courage or support required to testify against them, especially in the chaos of conflict".

There are a number of reasons why incidents of gender-based violence increase during armed conflict. Rape is frequently employed as a deliberate military tactic to intimidate, control or punish rival communities. For example, in the Central African Republic, rape has been used to punish Christian women for purchasing goods from Muslim traders and to "dishonour" them so that they will not enter Muslim communities. ISIL have raped women in an attempt to transmit their ideology. According to the Secretary-General (2016a), "In this way, women's bodies are used as 'biological weapons' to alter the demography of a region and to unravel existing kinship ties". The militarisation of society during periods of conflict exacerbates existing discriminatory attitudes towards women. These attitudes can be reinforced by news media and political propaganda. For example, in Burundi, women who are allied to the political opposition have been depicted as sex workers in media cartoons (UN Secretary-General, 2016a). Furthermore, conflict often occurs in localities where State institutions are weak. Structures established to provide security and justice for women are further eroded in times of conflict and humanitarian crisis.

Solutions include:

- **Ending the impunity of offenders.** The Security Council has affirmed that sexual violence during armed conflict and the use of rape as a tactic of war and terrorism are prohibited under international law. However, in many jurisdictions affected by conflict, State institutions are poorly developed for gender-sensitive support of victims, the investigation of sexual crimes, the sensitive judicial handling of cases in court and the setting of sentences capable of deterrence. The ability of such systems to handle sexual crimes is further complicated by the chaos of conflict as vast populations are displaced. The result is that many services are "overburdened, underfunded or inaccessible" to survivors (UN Secretary-General, 2016a). Steps are required to ensure that security and justice systems are reformed and supported in order to address conflict-related sexual violence.

- **Supporting survivors.** Jurisdictions that offer coordinated and integrated medical, psychological and legal support for survivors produce greater reporting and action in addressing sexual violence. Measures that promote relief and recovery programmes, including medical care, psychological support, social reintegration and support of future economic livelihoods are much needed in conflict areas.

- **Addressing sexual violence by UN staff and peacekeepers.** Measures to reduce the incidence of sexual crimes committed by UN personnel include: military pre-deployment training on standards of conduct; limits on the length of tours spent deployed; providing welfare facilities to allow personnel to stay in contact with home; construction of bases properly separated from civilian populations; the proper vetting of staff before deployment; and the exercise of greater command and discipline by managers. In cases of misconduct by military personnel, there is a need for Member States to investigate rapidly and ensure criminal accountability where allegations are substantiated.

Forced and Early Marriage

Heightened pressures on families during armed conflict greatly increase the incidence of forced or early marriages. These are another form of gender-based violence.

The economic disruption of conflict and displacement of civilian populations causes severe economic hardship for many families and fears for future security. In addition, interruption of education and training means that the economic opportunities for girls decline. According to the United Nations Population

Fund (UNFPA) (2015), "Where food is scarce, due to extreme poverty or drought, families may marry off their daughters so they have fewer mouths to feed, and as a form of income generation, where the practice of bride price compensates the bride's family".

The rate of underage marriage has significantly increased amongst Syrian refugee girls living in neighbouring Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey (UN Secretary-General, 2016a). A study by UNICEF (2014) found that the proportion of underage marriages in Syrian refugee communities in Jordan rose from 12% in 2011 to 25% in 2013.

Armed groups or security forces regularly force girls and young women into marriage. This can be a deliberate tactic to subdue or convert a different racial or religious group. In northern Iraq and eastern Syria, ISIL has abducted girls and women from "unbeliever" non-Arab and non-Sunni Muslim communities for forced marriage to their fighters (Reinl, 2015). The militant group Al-Shabaab has conducted raids against schools in Somalia to seize teenage girls for forced marriages (Human Rights Watch, 2012). In Nigeria, Boko Haram has similarly coerced underage girls into converting from Christianity and marrying their fighters (Human Rights Watch, 2014).

In some communities, accusations of rape are traditionally settled by requiring victims to marry the perpetrators. In Nigeria, Somalia and Myanmar, "restitution" or "reparation" marriages are customary in rape cases and permit families to avoid what they perceive as "shame" or "loss of honour" (UN Secretary-General, 2016a). In South Sudan, 90% of rape cases are resolved by customary courts in this manner (UN Secretary-General, 2016a). Such marriages fail to provide restoration for the victim and involve, according to the Secretary-General, "effectively sentencing her to repeated rape" (UN Secretary-General, 2016a).

Early and forced marriages have a range of impacts on physical and psychological health. These include early and forced sexual activity; heightened exposure to sexually transmitted disease (including HIV/AIDS); premature childbearing; and the denial of the right to education (UNFPA, 2015 & Save the Children, 2014). In conflict-affected Afghanistan, a 2010 survey found 12% of girls aged 15 to 19 had started childbearing, with 32% of deaths amongst girls in that age range related to pregnancy (Human Rights Watch, 2013). Victims of forced and early marriage report difficulty earning independent livelihoods due to loss of years in education, and facing long term stigma and social exclusion (Mazurana & Carlson, 2006).

Solutions to the issue of forced marriages are likely to focus on ending the impunity of perpetrators. Measures to increase understanding of the long term consequences of underage marriage amongst at risk communities are likely to be successful. Steps are also required to provide training and employment for refugee girls and young unmarried women so that early marriage is no longer viewed as attractive.

Trafficking of Women and Girls

Armed conflict aggravates many of the risk factors associated with vulnerability to trafficking and modern slavery including higher instances of gender-based violence, economic hardship, separation from family, lack of documentation and limited access to education. As the UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking notes, during conflict: "The pressure to move is often urgent and intense, leading people to take risks that would be unacceptable under normal circumstances" (UN Special Rapporteur, 2016).

Young women are lured by opportunities to flee conflict areas and leave refugee camps with promises of education, employment or marriage, but are instead trafficked and exploited for financial gain. Exploitation of trafficked persons includes recruitment as child soldiers, prostitution, forced labour, domestic servitude, non-official adoption of children and organ harvesting.

Examples of such exploitation include:

● ISIL and other extremist groups have trafficked Yazidi women and girls from Iraq to Syria for sexual enslavement (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2016).

● Refugees have been trafficked out of Syria and Iraq for the removal of their organs for sale for transplant operations (International Centre for Migration Policy Development, 2015).

● Syrian refugees have been trafficked for exploitative low paid work in agriculture and industry in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey (UN Special Rapporteur, 2016).

● Syrian children have been trafficked for exploitative work including begging or street selling in Lebanon (Caritas France, 2015).

● Women have been coerced into prostitution in Lebanon and Turkey after leaving Syria with offers of work or marriages to local men (Caritas France, 2015).

● Afghan and Sudanese child refugees have been trafficked to Northern France and promised passage to the United Kingdom in return for work as thieves or drug sellers (UNICEF, 2016).

- Refugees from conflict in Sudan and Somalia have been kidnapped and held captive in Libya or Egypt while payments are extorted from their relatives (Amnesty International, 2013).

- Refugees fleeing internal conflict in Myanmar are being trafficked by boat to Malaysia to work on palm oil plantations as bonded labour (UN Special Rapporteur, 2016).

For those that survive such practices, reintegration into their home society can be difficult. Survivors often face discrimination and stigma from their communities, which heightens their vulnerability to being retrafficked (UN Special Rapporteur, 2016).

A range of recommendations for addressing the trafficking of women and girls during armed conflict can be found in two key reports:

- The Report of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (A/71/303 – August 2016); and

- The Secretary-General's Report on the Implementation of Measures to Counter Trafficking in Persons (S/2016/949 – December 2016)

Access to Education, Health, Employment and Justice

Armed conflict can often increase discrimination against women in their access to a range of rights and services, including education, healthcare and employment.

There are large discrepancies in male and female enrolment in schools outside of conflict-affected areas. Globally 74% of girls are enrolled in primary education compared with 92% of boys, and in secondary education enrolment rates are 42% for girls and 48% for boys (UN Secretary-General, 2016b). The enrolment gap widens significantly during conflict. A study of twenty-five conflict-affected countries found that girls in conflict areas are 90% less likely to be attending secondary school than girls in countries free from conflict (Education for All Global Monitoring Report, 2015). In 2014, more than a third (35%) of primary school-aged children lived in 32 countries affected by conflict.

Denying girls education and training has significant effects on their political, economic and social status, causing long term gender inequality. Girls' absence from education also places them at greater risk from trafficking; forced or early marriage; and prostitution (Brown, 2016).

Access to healthcare decreases during armed conflict as medical facilities struggle to deal with the increased number of conflict-related injuries, and increased illness caused by declining access to sanitation and safe water. Medical services are further disrupted by displacement of healthcare workers, funding constraints, physical damage to facilities and disruption to the delivery of medical supplies (Percival et al., 2014).

The additional pressures on healthcare services increases risk for all. A survey in Afghanistan by Médecins Sans Frontieres (2014) found that 19% of people had a family member or close friend who had died as a result of being unable to access healthcare in the previous twelve months. However, women are particularly affected due to the impact on maternal and reproductive health services. In 2015, 210 out of 100,000 live births globally resulted in maternal deaths: a figure that doubles to 418 per 100,000 live births in conflict and post-conflict countries (UN Secretary-General, 2016b). In some conflict-affected areas, such as Afghanistan, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali and the Sudan, maternal deaths rise to more than 700 out of 100,000 live births (UN Secretary-General, 2016b). Deaths caused by unsafe abortions also increase during conflict (McGinn et al., 2004).

Economic opportunities for women can increase during conflict, with increased opportunity to work outside the home and become their main household decisionmakers (International Committee of the Red Cross, 2001). However, such advances in the economic status of women are commonly reversed once hostilities are over. The economic power of women also decreases during conflict as they are forced out of landownership. Only 11.1% of landowners are women in contemporary conflict areas (UN Secretary-General, 2016b).

Women Involvement in Peace Processes

Traditionally women have been excluded or poorly represented in conflict prevention and peacebuilding processes. The UN has placed new emphasis on the involvement of women in these processes and of recognition of their needs in peace agreements. The move follows Security Council Resolution 2242 (2015), which urged Member States to involve women more in the negotiation of peace settlements. However, despite encouraging trends, the gender balance of participants in peace processes and peacekeeping roles is far from equal.

Recent practice increasingly includes women. Peace

talks between the Colombian government and FARC in September 2016 actively involved women in all stages; they made up a third of peace table delegates, a half of consultation participants and 60% of victims and experts who visited the peace table (UN Secretary-General, 2016b). Women made up 20% of delegates participating in talks in 2016 between the government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the opposition in Geneva (UN Secretary-General, 2016b). Since 2012, all UN mediation support teams have included women and most negotiating parties to peace processes supported by the UN include women at a senior level (UN Secretary-General, 2016b).

Provisions that protect and recognise the rights of women are also routinely included in peace agreements. Of the ten peace agreements signed in 2015, seven (70%) included gender-specific provisions (compared with 22% in 2011). These include agreements reached in Colombia, Mali, Myanmar and South Sudan (UN Secretary-General, 2016b).

Female involvement in UN peacekeeping continues to rise, with the Security Council establishing a target of doubling the number of women amongst military and police personnel by 2020 (UN Security Council, 2015). As of December 2015, women made up only 3.2% of military peacekeepers; 16.9% of UN police officers; and 23% of higher-level and professional-grade civilian personnel in peacekeeping missions (UN Secretary-General, 2016b). The presence of women as part of peacekeeping operations is crucial for the engagement and protection of women in conflict areas. Furthermore, the UN risks losing credibility by demanding female participation in peace processes on the one hand, but not reaching gender parity amongst its own personnel on the other.

Measures are required to continue progress towards greater involvement of women in peace processes, and the recruitment and training of female professionals for employment by UN peacekeeping operations.

Conclusion

As the study guide has described, women are vulnerable to grave human rights abuse during armed conflict. Their rights are undermined in a variety of ways and some prioritisation and selection may be required when drafting resolutions to focus on particular areas of the problem. However, all the issues are interconnected and share the same causes: discriminatory attitudes; the largescale displacement of civilian populations; fear, insecurity and economic hardship; and the collapse of State institutions. While the Security Council has done much to ensure that many abuses of women during armed conflict are identified as war crimes and crimes against humanity, the reality on the ground in many conflict areas is that survivors suffer alone and unsupported; are deprived justice; are stigmatised by their families and communities; and are excluded from peace processes.

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AGENDA ITEM III
Building resilience & Reducing the Vulnerability of the Poor to Climate-Related Hazards & Disasters

Flooding in Haiti caused by days of continuous rain.

UN Photo/Logan Abassi

Introduction

Climate change is a global threat to all humankind. A hazard is defined as a danger or risk, this becomes a disaster when great damage or loss of life is caused. Climate-related disasters such as floods and droughts hit a range of geographical areas. However, there are differences in how countries of different development are impacted by climate-related hazards and disasters and how easily they recover.

Climate-related disasters are occurring at a rate of one per week with very few of these disasters occur in developing countries, drawing international attention. These areas are therefore more vulnerable as there is less knowledge about the impacts and less international input. It is estimated that the cost of climate-related disasters is $520bn a year (Harvey 2019).

The physical geography of an area has an impact on the vulnerability to climate-related disasters. Semi-arid regions such as the Sahel region in Northern Africa, are most at risk to drier temperatures and lower rainfall. People living in such areas are reliant on subsistence farming (growing food for themselves and their families) and so a change in the climate can have a major impact on yields. Coastal areas and low-lying land, such as Bangladesh, where many people live close to a water source are at risk of flood disasters.

Around 325 million poor people could be living in the 49 most hazard-prone countries by 2030, most of these in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. The most notable hazards will be droughts and flooding as these can have a major long-term impact on impoverishment (Shepherd et al, 2013).

The UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction states that, '250 million people on average have been affected annually by floods over the last 10 years. Floods are the single most widespread and increasing disaster risk to urban settlements of all sizes.' (UNFCC)

In developing countries, female incomes are highly dependent on local natural resources, particularly climate-dependent agriculture. Constraints on their mobility mean that women's ability to travel greater

distances to find employment is more limited than men. Furthermore, the additional challenges faced in accessing water and household fuel are felt most by women and girls, who in rural communities are often responsible for the collection and consumption of such natural resources. Women are also at greater risk of several health risks associated with climate change.

The risk of hazards is increasing due to climate change, urbanisation and an increased number of people living in poverty.

Vulnerability

'Vulnerability is a concept which describes factors or constraints of an economic, social, physical or geographic nature, which reduce the ability to prepare for and cope with the impact of hazards'

Vulnerability can be looked at on a national or regional level. Developing countries are most vulnerable to climate-related hazards due to the lack of funding, expertise and preparation for such events. Many poorer areas do not have the medical expertise or provisions to deal with disasters and so their recovery is a lot slower than more wealthy areas. In developing countries such as Bangladesh, a high percentage of the population live in areas that are prone to climate-related disasters at least once a year. This results in a short recovery time for these countries and, coupled with little funding, this makes them more vulnerable. Geographical location within a country is also a factor in influencing vulnerability. Often poorer regions are more isolated geographically with poor transport links and little or no communications. This makes the reaction to disasters very slow and therefore increases their vulnerability. There is therefore a large disparity between the vulnerability of urban and rural areas. Low-lying coastal areas and small island developing states are at the most risk as a result of storm surges, sea level rise, and the risks of coastal flooding.

Resilience

Resilience is the ability to recover from an event, in the case of climate-related disasters this is the ability of a community to recover through rebuilding and re-establishing their lives. Poorer areas, particularly those which are rural, are less resilient due to a lack of capital available to rebuild after a disaster. Often houses will be built poorly and will not be structurally sound, particularly in squatter settlements. These houses will be easily destroyed during a flood or extreme weather event. According to the UNFCC, flooding affects more people globally than any other natural disaster. Floods can result in some of the largest economic and social losses (UNFCC). The Zurich Flood Resilience Program is a multi-agency program set up to build resilience to flooding through mitigation. The program has put USD 35.6million towards the implementation of schemes to build flood resilience, benefitting thousands of people including 50,000 in Peru. Flood prevention schemes including early warning systems have been set up in the some of the words poorest countries with the highest risk of flooding including Indonesia and Nepal. The initiative has been set up in such a way that it can be implemented in countries across the globe, so having a large-scale impact.

Another initiative which can be learned from is the World Bank 'Building Resilience to Climate Related Hazards Project for Nepal' which aims to improve the government's ability to mitigate climate-related hazards and so building resilience. The project focuses on weather forecasting and flood warnings in those communities which are most vulnerable to climatic hazards. Funding and technology have been utilised to help farmers to mitigate the risk of decreased yields as a result of climate-related disasters (World Bank, 2013).

The projects mentioned in this section rely on technology and capital input. Low income countries have less financial capability and often governments may choose to invest in other areas of the country's development. In order for initiatives to be put in place, countries will need support from NGOs, multi-lateral organisations, or other governments.

Multi-hazard Zones

Multi-hazard [or a multi-hazard approach] refers to an approach that looks at more than one hazard in a given place and the interrelations between these hazards (Gill et al., 2013). An example of an area that would fit into this category is Haiti where both climatic and tectonic hazards are common. It is important to think about the impact a range of hazards will have on an area and its ability to recover and therefore its vulnerability to future hazards.

Ending poverty should be the first step in tackling climate-related disasters and their impacts on the poor (Shepherd et al., 2013). Areas which are classed as multi-hazard zones are most vulnerable to poverty and the inability to recover from these climate-related disasters.

Hazard warning systems should be implemented in such places and there should be strategies put in place to support communities in the aftermath of hazard events. Investment into building should be long-term and sustainable, focusing on buildings which

can withstand future hazards.

Climate change

Article 2 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) addresses the risks linked to climate change. Some of the findings are outlined below:

1. Extreme weather events: 'Climate-change-related risks from extreme events, such as heat waves, extreme precipitation, and coastal flooding, are already moderate (high confidence) and high with 1c additional warming (medium confidence). Risks associated with some types of extreme events (eg, extreme heat) increase further with higher temperatures (high confidence).

2. Distribution of impacts: 'Risks are unevenly distributed and are generally greater for disadvantaged people and communities in countries at all levels of development. Risks are already moderate because of regionally differentiated climate-change impacts on crop production in particular (medium to high confidence). Based on projected decreases in regional crop yields and water availability, risks of unevenly distributed impacts are high for additional warming above 2°C (medium confidence). (Oppenheimer et al., 2014).

It is clear that climate change, particularly as a result of increased temperatures, is having an impact on the risk of climate-related hazards and disasters. As global temperatures increase, so too does the risk of drought (prolonged period of time with little or no water), fires, and extreme weather events such as tropical storms. An increase in tropical storms sees a rise in storm surges and therefore coastal flooding, increasing vulnerability of coastal regions. Sea level rise as a result of ice melt due to high temperatures is too having an adverse effect, particularly on low-lying coastal regions in developing countries.

As ice melts, the albedo of the oceans changes and less sunlight is reflected from their surface. This leads to the increase in sea surface temperatures as a result of the absorption of heat. This absorption and resulting temperature rise causes further ice melt. This is known as a 'positive feedback loop', one that is difficult to break and one that can have global impacts.

Climate change and its impact on the number of climate-related disasters has a global impact. We are seeing a rise in hazards and disasters in areas where they have not been impacted before. It is clear, therefore, that this makes both developed and developing countries vulnerable and so it is an issue that should be addressed by governments from all levels of development.

Impacts of climate change on people

Climate change and climate-related hazards can have impacts on a range of sectors. The most influential being the impact on agriculture as a result of extreme weather events, desertification and loss of ecosystems.

These hazards require changes in human activity and management in order to reduce their impacts. For example, in regions with severe water stress where groundwater stores are depleted, farmers must think about the crops they grow in order to adapt to this. We are seeing a change in land use as farmers move towards more high yielding crops, to not only deal with the water loss but also to increase food security (Oppenheimer et al., 2014).

It is worth being aware, also, of the influence climate change is having on human health – as temperatures increase, and climates become wetter, we are seeing a rise in diseases such as malaria. There is also an increased risk of malnutrition as climate-related hazards influence crop yields (Oppenheimer et al., 2014). Responding through improved medical care and development of sanitation systems can have a positive influence. However, many less developed countries have less technology, expertise and money available to invest in these areas effectively.

Recommendations

In order to reduce vulnerability to climate-related hazards, foresight and forecasting is needed. 'Foresight can be defined as a forward-looking approach to help decision-makers explore and prepare for possible future scenarios, and influence and shape those futures'.

This is something that is a lot easier in more developed countries and in urban areas with more technology and funding. Predicting hazards and using past experiences is something that is carried out in developed countries. However, it is vital that countries work together to help those with less money available. Education and training for less developed countries would help with this. Climate-related disasters are increasing on a global scale and so it is the responsibility of all countries and their governments to address it.

Hazards cannot be stopped, but the impacts of these hazards can be stopped or at least reduced. It is

important that countries look ahead to the future and think about the long-term impacts of these hazards. Forecasting should be carried out using gathering of information and intelligence, thinking about how the actions carried out in countries today can impact future developments (Leitner, 2017).

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