

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT: 2030 AGENDA FOR SDGs HANGS IN THE BALANCE

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KEYWORDS:

• SDGs

• Sustainable development

• Russia-Ukraine war

• Socio-economic crisis

Introduction



- Multiple security and health crises, amplified by biodiversity and climate crises, are now putting the SDGs Agenda at risk.
- The Russia-Ukraine ongoing dispute – began in February 2022 – has shocked the world, triggering a grave humanitarian and economic crisis.
- UN Deputy Secretary-General, Amina Mohammed, in UN Economic Commission for Europe Regional Forum for Sustainable Development 2022, has said that the Ukraine war is causing massive suffering that has halted years of progress on the 2030 Agenda for SDGs [United Nations (UN), 2022a].
- The negative consequences of the Russia-Ukraine conflict extend far beyond the borders of Ukraine and Europe as a whole.
- The most critical impacts of the Ukraine war include:

i. a worsening debt crisis	iv. increased hardship for poor households
ii. growing inequalities between the rich and poor	v. poverty
iii. rising fuel and food prices	vi. escalating social tension and unrest

- The objectives of this research note are:
 - to provide a thorough understanding of the ramifications of the Russia-Ukraine war in SDGs progress around the world.
 - to explore how stakeholders can help engage in support of SDGs in such a challenging time.

Methodology



Motivation of this research note:

To allow social and economic policy practitioners and researchers to learn from Russia-Ukraine dispute.

- To do so, the authors:

Step 1

- Conducted a preliminary factual analysis to determine patterns of how the conflict affects the SDGs Agenda.
- Collecting and analysing secondary sources (e.g.: articles, newspapers, reviews and reports) using library research techniques.

Step 2

- Drawn from the analysis, proposed recommendations for urgent actions to rescue the SDGs and achieve progress by 2030.

How does the Russia-Ukraine dispute affect sustainable development progress?



1. Poverty and hunger

- Ukraine and Russia are key commodities producers that are traded globally.
- Global supply chains are facing serious disruptions.
- Sudden rise in food prices.

2. Health and education

- Causing losses of life and catastrophic human suffering.
- Health systems suffer due to destroyed clinics and hospitals.
- More than 5.5 million children has been turned upside down with an average of 22 schools under attack every day (Save the Children, 2022).
- Ukrainian refugees face a huge problem in accessing education in other countries.

3. Gender equality

- Women and minorities are affected and face serious challenges related to safety, health, and access to food (UN Women and CARE, 2022).
- Gender roles in Ukraine are rapidly changing.
- Many men have lost their jobs and joined the military.
- Women are taking on new jobs to support their families.

4. Decent work, economic growth and energy

- Has affected by raising food, commodity and energy prices, surging inflation, and tightening position of monetary policy.
- Led to widespread losses in jobs and incomes, with International Labour Organization (ILO) estimating 4.8 million jobs lost.
- Sanctions imposed on Russia may result in job losses for migrant workers, causing a massive economic collapse across Africa and Central Asia.

Recommendations



1. SDG 16 as a core

- The inclusion of SDG16 in sustainable development is undoubtedly essential.
- Goal 16 is not only about ending conflicts and mitigating violence incidence but also focuses on other important forms of conflicts, such as transparency, injustice, bribery and corruption, essential freedoms and participatory decision-making.
- SDG16 is a pre-requisite to sustaining other goals and SDGs by 2030 would not be maintained without inclusive peace of earth.

2. Refugees should be economically empowered

- The main legal documents that codify the legal rights of refugees are the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol.
- The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) must co-ordinate with countries to standardize the procedures and ensure quick economic empowerment for refugees.
- Islamic finance can be used (Putri et al., 2019; El Fadili et al., 2019; Kachkar, 2017) to achieve financial inclusion among refugees.

3. Resilient and sustainable food systems need to be put in place and energy transition is required

- Importing food is not a sustainable food security system. The countries could establish a resilient and sustainable food system.
- Key strategies to ensure a resilient and sustainable food system include:
 1. Providing small-scale food producers, including women, with access to agriculture-focused rural markets
 2. Managing post-harvest food wastage
 3. Developing food protection standards
 4. Adopting technology to boost harvests in a safe environment

Conclusion and implications



- This research note could provide significant insights and information to leaders and stakeholders worldwide in a number of ways:
 1. Put a stronger emphasis on SDG16 (peace and justice) as an absolute pre-requisite to sustaining the 2030 Agenda for SDGs.
 2. Set out certain measures and rules in the 2030 Agenda for SDGs for the inclusion of refugees in national development plans.
 3. Develop resilient and sustainable food systems, and energy based on a just transition.
- This study serves as a springboard for future research by identifying patterns of war crises that have halted progress in achieving sustainable development worldwide.

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