

Case 1: Education in the Middle East

Background: Syrian Conflict and Refugee Crisis

In 2011, the Syrian Civil War started when protests against the presidency of Bashar al Assad were met with violent repression from the government (UNHCR, 2018). As opposition groups struggling to unite and fight back, thousands of refugees seek shelter in Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan and by 2015 it was estimated that twelve million people were displaced by the conflict (UNHCR, 2018). These refugees are struggling to meet their basic human needs, making most children at risk of not receiving an education (Bernstein, 2017). This education gap between developing nations that are unable to provide for refugees and the developed world will create global disparities that are detrimental to future peacebuilding and education should be a priority for these governments. The Millions Learning organization works to close this gap by providing education and job opportunities to youths in developing nations such as Jordan (Bernstein, 2017).

Problem Development: Fighting Conflict with Education

This case shows how a current conflict is destroying the educational opportunities for millions of children in the Middle East, preventing any opportunity for sustainable development and making them vulnerable to future inequality and conflict. Millions Learning aims to provide quality education using “education ecosystem” (Robinson, Winthrop, & McGivney, 2016). By reshaping our approach to education and including the government, private sector, NGOs, and local communities, they are able to provide an adaptable education to marginalized children (Robinson, Winthrop, & McGivney, 2016). For example, INJAZ Jordan is an organization featured in the Millions Learning report that fights the unemployment by providing the youth with the training and skills needed in the job market (Robinson & Abu Jaber, 2015). INJAZ is engaging leaders from the private and public sector to ensure that students are receiving relevant skills that will stabilize the economy for the future. However, INJAZ Jordan has come across challenges with securing funds, volunteers, and a method to quantify their impact. The stability of a nation is key in promoting sustainability and peace.

Discussion Questions:

1. How do the differences in education create disparities of privilege in a society?
2. What are the opportunities for technology to improve education? What are the risks?
3. How would education improve global justice for developing nations? Does this have the potential to decrease future conflict?
4. How does this case challenge the status quo in the Middle East?
5. Will an increase in education change the power structure of a society and why?

References:

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Miriam Kim; Narice Ninyesiga; Alexander Parks

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<http://www.catalyticaction.org/education-for-children-in-armed-conflicts-the-case-of-syria/>

Literature to read:

<https://www.thesolutionsjournal.com/article/scaling-education-climate-crisis/>
<http://www.unhcr.org/ph/13427-seven-years-timeline-syria-crisis.html>
<https://www.brookings.edu/research/millions-learning-scaling-up-quality-education-in-developing-countries/>

Case 2: Gender Equality in Rwanda

Background: Rwandan conflict & Genocide of 1994

In 1990, the Rwandan Civil War emerged when Tutsi refugees, who were displaced in Uganda after the 1959 Hutu led revolt against Belgian colonial rule, came into conflict with the dominant Hutu led government in Rwanda. The Arusha accords were enacted to form a ceasefire between the two groups, but after the assassination of Hutu President of Rwanda, Habyarimana, the peace accord between the two groups ceased to exist. Following this, the Rwandan Genocide of Tutsi was commenced by Hutu militia, police, and even civilians. Hostilities ended after the Tutsi led front captured Kigali, the Rwandan Capital. After the genocide was brought to an end by Paul Kagame, the president of the Tutsis, implemented a new Rwandan constitution that decreed 30% of parliamentary seats must be reserved for women. 60-70 % of Rwanda's population after the genocide were women. The president, Paul Kagame, wanted to involve women in the country's politics. After a lot of hard work from both Kagame and the women involvement they came to hold 56 of the parliamentary seats 24 years after the genocide.

Problem development: Continuation of Gender inequality in Rwanda

Despite a new constitution, within the Rwandan government, being implemented that promotes gender equality, the social opinion regarding this equality is still negative outside of the political realm. For actual change in behavior towards the idea of equality there needs to be a change in values held by society. For instance the word 'Feminism' is viewed as a taboo subject/value among the Rwandan public despite the presence of political provisions that promote the idea of feminism.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) How can you include and enable unprivileged groups in society into the political and decision making sphere?
- 2) What is the potential for technology in the future with this case?
- 3) How can a more diverse government in developing nations combat the injustice they've experienced from globalization?
- 4) Do you have any ideas/examples of how to implement change from the inside of a society rather than from outside legislation?
- 5) What tools do you need to give unprivileged groups in order for them to be able to have more control and power over their own life?

References:

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<https://www.thesolutionsjournal.com/article/lessons-from-rwanda-how-women-transform-governance/>

Literature for our classmates to read:

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2016/07/29/487360094/invisibilia-no-one-thought-this-all-womans-debate-team-could-crush-it?t=1536917678130>

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