



United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Budgeting: Analysis and Challenges

PROF(DR) KIRANDEEP SINGH¹

PROFESSOR ,HEAD OF DEPARTMENT, DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE , LOVELY PROFESSIONAL UNIVERSITY , PHAGWARA , INDIA – 144411.

DR AMRESH KUMAR GAUDA²

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR ,DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE , LOVELY PROFESSIONAL UNIVERSITY , PHAGWARA, INDIA – 144411.

DR AJIT KUMAR³

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, LOVELY PROFESSIONAL UNIVERSITY, PHAGWARA , INDIA – 144411.

The United Nations (UN) Peacekeeping operations play a pivotal role in maintaining international peace and security. In the contemporary inter-connected and globalized world, the difference between local and global conflicts have been blurred, therefore, every conflict is global, nothing local. Amid growing conflicts, the role of UN Peacekeeping is indispensable to prevent any conflicts to become threat to international peace and security. The funding for the peacekeeping is the one critical part to sustain it, however, it is one the most discuss and debatable matters among the scholars, policy makers and member states. This paper starts with discussing method of establishing peacekeeping operation, describe and explain the methods, procedure and preparation of peacekeeping budget. The second part seeks to provides trend analysis of the UNs peacekeeping funding since its inception and derives critical insights from it. The last section deals with contemporary challenges of UNs peacekeeping funding and come with some suggestions to counter these challenges.

Basic Understanding of Peacekeeping Operation and Budget

The preamble of the UN Charter starts with “we people of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war...”. It is clear from the preamble that the UN has prime purpose to maintain international peace and security, take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and bring settlements by peaceful means. The more specifically, the Security Council (SC) has responsibility to maintain international peace and security under Chapter VI and VII of the United Nations Charter. The Council has also power to define threat, breach and aggression to international peace and security. From these two Chapters, the SC has derived power to establish or extend peacekeeping.



To establish a new mission, a survey mission is sent to the area where peacekeeping operation is going to plan. The survey provides the basis of the most important aspects - operation plan and budget analysis of the peacekeeping operation. The Secretary -General submit this report to the Security Council with signifying need of the mission and financial implication. After this, the SC resolution establishes mandate for establishment of a new mission. The extension of the mandate or change in the mandate of the peacekeeping also undertaken by the SC (The United Nations Document)

The budget of peacekeeping operations is based on the mission's mandate of the Security Council. The strategies documents aligning resources to achieve the overall objectives of the operation. Each peacekeeping operation has its own budget and account. This budget includes both costs-operational and staff costs. The operational costs mainly comprise of transport and the logistics costs whereas expenditure on salaries of the staffs is the main cost of the staff costs (The United Nations Document).

The fiscal year of peacekeeping runs from 1st July to 30th June. The budget is prepared to operationalize current mandate of the mission.

The Secretary General submits budget proposal to the Advisory Committee on the Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). This proposal is based on the preliminary estimates called as start-up costs. The ACABQ review the proposal and makes recommendations to the General Assembly's Fifth Committee for its review and approval. Untimely, the budget is endorsed by the General assembly as a whole (The Fifth Committee Document). Generally, the ABABQ can commit up to the \$100 million start-up costs for any mission. If any peacekeeping requires financing more than \$ 100 million fund, the commitment Authority shall request from the General Assembly for this amount but this amount must not more than \$150 million in (General Assembly Resolution 49/233 A, part IV and 64/269, Section VI; The UN Report ,2023: 16).

At the end of the financial cycle, each peacekeeping operation prepares and submits a performance report which shows the actual use of resources. This report is also considered and approved by the General Assembly (The UN Report ,2023: 16).

Detailed Procedure for Budgeting of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations

A new mandate

As the Security Council's Resolution mandates the peacekeeping, A start up team is instituted. A budget proposal for the first year of the operation is prepared based on the standardized funding model. The detailed budget estimate and proposals are prepared in the subsequent years. In the case of the existing operation only detailed proposals are prepared. These proposals are presented and submitted to the ABCBQ and the fifth committee of the General Assembly for review. The GA under Article 17 of the Charter, approves the budget and appropriate amount for current mandate period and for additional period, subject to mission mandate. The letters of assessment



corresponding to mandate period are sent to member states after General Assembly approves appropriation. Before the end of mandate period, Secretary General prepares report to security council on the future of mission (The UN Report ,2023: 17).

Extension of Mandate

The Security Council resolution extending a mandate usually occurs just a few days before expiry of the existing mandate. In the same way, the budget process also initiated before the expiry of the mandate. The revised budget proposals are prepared during financial period in the case of the mandate change significantly or decision is made to close the mission. After that, The ACABQ and the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly reviews these proposals and submits the performance report to the General Assembly. Subsequently, The GA approves appropriation. Upon the Security Council's decision to continue the mission, and on the basis of prior approval of the budget for extension of the mandate, new assessments are levied. The performance reports are prepared for each financial period (The UN Report ,2023: 18).

The Budget of United Nations Peacekeeping Operation: Fiscal Year 2021-22

The GA approved budget for UN Peacekeeping operation for the fiscal year 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 is \$ 6.38 billion (United Nations Report 2021, A/C. 5/75/25). This amount incurs 10 of the 12 United Nations peacekeeping missions. This includes liquidation budget for the United Nations African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and logistics support for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The budget also takes into account the cost incurs on the logistics and technological support provided through global service Centre in Brindisi (Italy) and a regional service Centre in Entebbe (Uganda) (United Nations Report 2021, A/C. 5/75/25). The two remaining missions out of twelve, the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) and the UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) are incurred through the UN regular budget (United Nations Report 2021, A/C. 5/75/253).

The ten highest contributors for the fiscal year 2020-21 are United States (27.89 %), China (15.21 %), Japan (8.56 %), Germany (6.09 %), United Kingdom (5.79 %), France (5.61 %), Italy (3.30 %), Russian Federation (3.34 %), Canada (2.73 %) Republic of Korea (2.26 %) (United Nations Report 2021, A/73/350/ Add.1). Many members voluntarily contribute and support the peacekeeping mission in the various ways are non – reimbursable. These are in the form are of transportation, supplies, personnel and financial contributions (United Nations Report 2021, A/C. 5/75/25).

UN Peacekeeping Funding Trends

The study of trends provides important insight related to UN Peacekeeping funding. This study has categorized the trends into two components- year wise and issue wise trends.



Year -wise Trends

Historical Contributions

The UN peacekeeping operations are funded through assessment on the member state based on capacity to pay. The scale of assessments determines on the criteria on the gross national income (GNI). Historically, a small group of nations included United States, China, Germany, France has borne majority of the financial burden.

Over the year, the peacekeeping funding has witness significant changes. In the initial years, only a few members have contributed the majority share. Among them, USA has been consistent highest contributor. However, in the recent years, some of the more members came forward to share the responsibility. The trends have been consistently moving towards the diversification of the UN peacekeeping budget.

Fluctuations in Funding Level

The funding of the peacekeeping operations is a political decision influenced by geopolitical events, evolving nature of conflicts and global economic conditions. While contributions generally decline at the time of global economic uncertainties, funding increases during enhanced global cooperation.

Impact of Crises

During times of global crises and pandemics like COVID-19 and the financial crises, UN peacekeeping often grapples with financial constraints. The global shocks critically hamper global responsibility of the UN to maintain peace and security. These types of external uncertainties make the UN peacekeeping operations vulnerable.

Issue -wise Trends

Mandates

The initial peacekeeping had limited mandates based on the principle of the consent of parties, neutrality and impartiality. With rise in asymmetrical, intrastate conflicts and rising civilian fatalities, the mandate transformed from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. The mandates cover the protection of the civilians in the comprehensive and wide manners, therefore, funding on the items and issues also increased in the comprehensive manner.

Nature of Conflicts

The earlier threats till the 1980s, the inter- state conflicts are major threats to international peace and security. After that ethnic violences, terrorism, civil wars and state failures are the leading challenges for maintaining international peace, therefore, the peacekeeping mandates also



transforms to include all means even use of forces to protect the civilians. This changes also increases the fatalities of the peacekeepers. Therefore, peacekeeping fund has witnessed the rapid rise after post-cold war period.

Humanitarian and Developmental Components

The peacekeeping approach has transformed into peacebuilding focuses on the long-term sustainable peace; therefore, it has integrated the wider humanitarian and development components. The focus on the institution building like health, education, police, army and judiciary are the critical component of the peacebuilding. The drastically make the peacekeeping operation costly.

Technological Advancements

The modernization of the mission including use of drones and use of advance communication system demands additional funding. The focus on the proactive, efficient, flexible and effective peacekeeping bets on the integration technological advance mission has increased the prospect of cost on the capital-intensive materials.

Capacity building and Training

The capacity building and training of the host nations are critical components for the effective peacekeeping and sustained peace. The continuous and regular funding for ensuring sustained support for training are indispensable to become self-sufficient for nations in the conflicts.

Challenges and Suggestions for Reform

Arrears and Payment Delays

Delays in commitment of payments leading to arrears and delays in funding disbursement. These impacts timely execution of the peacekeeping missions. The UN should introduce incentives for member states to make timely and complete payments. This could include recognizing and rewarding nations that are consistent in meeting their payment contribution.

Disproportionate Financial Burden

The current funding structure puts disproportionate burden on a few economically powerful nations. Additionally, there is no incentive for new contributors. This raises concerns about the sustainability and fairness of the system. Therefore, reform for equitable burden sharing is necessary. There is also need to incentivize new contributors including voluntary non-government contributors, and encourage diverse range nations. These are essential for sustainable and inclusive approach of peacekeeping.



Divergences between TCCs/ PCCs and FCCs

The approach of TCCs / PCCs are different from the FCCs especially from the permanent members of the Security Council. The TCCs emphasizing on greater participation in preparing of the mandates demands adequate resources and equipment at the disposals.

There is a need of the greater participation of TCCs and outlines mandates according to availability of the funds and resources. The approach of peacekeeping should be based on the collective responsibility and greater consensus among stakeholders.

Adapting to Changing Conflict Landscape

The UN must continuously adapt its funding strategies to align with the changing nature of conflicts. This involves anticipating emerging threats, integration of the advance technology and adopting flexible funding mechanisms to meet evolving peacekeeping needs.

Conclusion

United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations stands at a cornerstone in global efforts to maintain international peace and peace and security. While the decision to establish, maintenance or expansion of the peacekeeping operation lies with the Security Council, the financing of the operation is the collective responsibility of the member state. The Article 17 of the United Nations Charter empowers the General Assembly to consider and approves the budget of the United Nations. It also specifies that the expenses of the organization shall be borne by the members but it will be apportioned by the General Assembly, therefore, every member of the UNs is legally obliged to contribute their share in the peacekeeping.

Although funding of peacekeeping is complex and dynamics, it is the one of the most critical and indispensable ingredients. The total finding of the peacekeeping is even less than one percent the global military expenditure despite grappling serious challenges. The total budget has reduced than the previous fiscal year 2020-21.

The commitment to collective and shared responsibility to the global peace and security is the prime challenge of the fundings. The other challenges include arrears and delays in payments, disproportionate burden sharing on few countries inflexible funding mechanisms and high logistics charge.



As the international community grapples with new challenges and opportunity, a collective commitment to equitable burden sharing and adaptable funding mechanism is paramount for the continued success of UN peacekeeping missions. Addressing these challenges in UN peacekeeping funding requires a comprehensive reform that ensures fair burden sharing, incentivizes timely payment and encourages the involvement of all nations. These reforms are crucial for sustaining effective peacekeeping operations and fostering a more inclusive a co-operative approach to international security.

References

(* Indicates the Primary Literature)

*The United Nations Document, “what is peacekeeping” , [Online: Web] Accessed on 30th November, 2023, URL: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/how-we-are-funded#gadocs>

*The United Nations Report 2021, A/C. 5/75/25 [Online: Web] Accessed on 30th November, 2023, URL: <https://documents-ddsny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N21/002/95/PDF/N2100295.pdf?OpenElement>

*The United Nations Report 2021, A/C. 5/75/253). [Online: Web] Accessed on 30th November, 2023, URL: <https://www.un.org/ga/acabq/>

*The Fifth Committee Document, [Online: Web] Accessed on 30th November, 2023, URL: <https://www.un.org/en/ga/fifth/about.shtml>

*The United Nations Report 2021, A/C. 5/75/253). [Online: Web] Accessed on 30th November, 2023, URL: <https://www.un.org/ga/acabq/>

*The Article 17 of The United Nations Charter [Online: Web] Accessed on 30th November, 2023, URL: <https://www.un.org/en/ga/fifth/art17.shtml>

*The United Nations Charter [Online: Web] Accessed on 30th November, 2023, URL: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text#:~:text=Article%2017,apportioned%20by%20the%20General%20Assembly.>

*The UN Report ,2023: 16-22 [Online: Web] Accessed on 30th November, 2023, URL: <file:///C:/Users/Admin/Downloads/peacekeepingfinance.pdf>