

WHY CHOOSING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ACTIONS OVER PLANNED INVESTMENTS IN POTENTIAL WORLD WAR III

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Abstract: *Given nowadays economic issues and challenges on large scale, social responsibility actions became much more appealing over the planned investments at the European Union level for the defense and potential conflicts in case of the third war. This article undertakes a qualitative theoretical approach and aims to answer the question through Chabot interaction of what would be the savings in choosing planned investments in social responsibility action to feed the entire population over investment for the defense of the population in case of war. One basic human right is the access to adequate food, right that is far from being accessible worldwide. As food security is a question of environmental and social justice, the value of this paper findings is addressed to international organizations, policy makers, stakeholders and citizens. We can become more aware about the fact that we all are sharing a collective responsibility in increasing economic growth and social well-being. We can contribute today, in 2025, to boost food security in order to achieve economic access to sufficient safe and nutrition food and that the actual investment for the future would prioritize both security and sustainability actions.*

Keywords: *poverty; food security; seed balls; social responsibility; war*

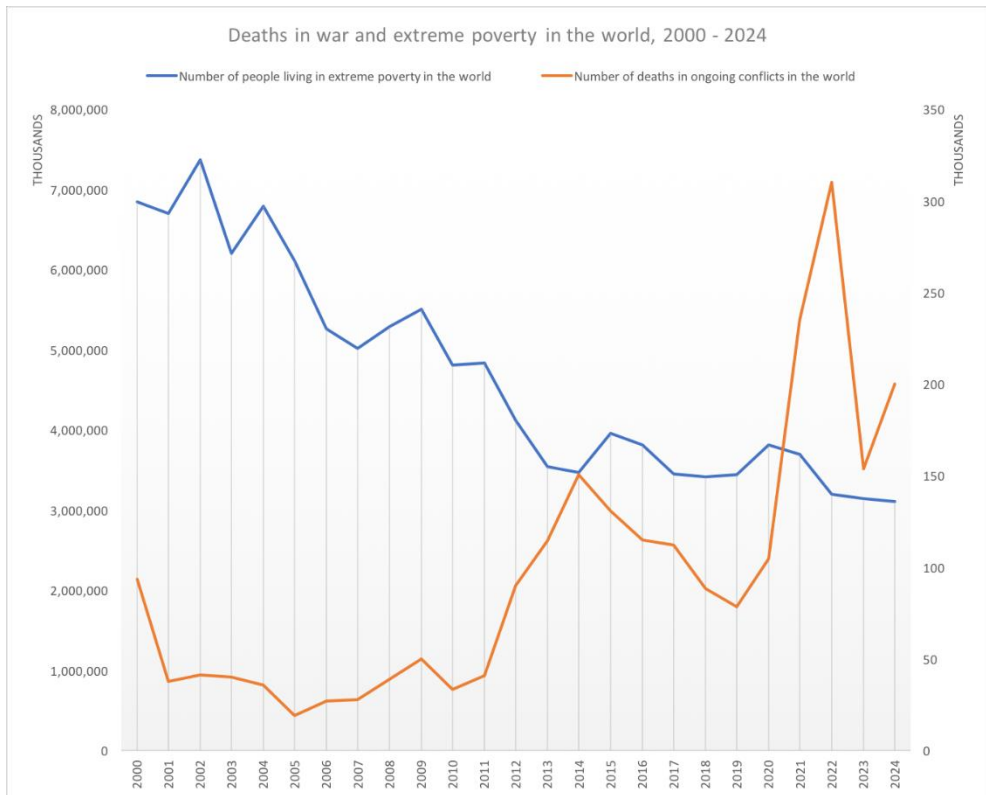
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1. Countries worldwide and active conflicts

It is estimated that there are 50 countries worldwide that are experiencing active conflicts and other regions of the world that became increasingly vulnerable to uprising. Conflicts surged across the world in 2024 (and over the past five years) amplify the multitude of economic issues and challenges worldwide. According to the estimations of the non-governmental organizations it was found that the political violence increased by 25% globally in 2024, as compared to 2023. The reports are showing that one in eight people was exposed to conflict in 2024. More sadly, there are a total number of 233,000 people killed, and this number is with 37% greater than the previous year. War and conflicts do have severe socio-economic consequences while influences upon the global system and the negative results are felt worldwide. Rabbi et al. (2023) indicates that “the food supply in Europe does not seem to be jeopardized since most European countries are generally self-sufficient in many products”. It might then be that in order to resist to (the negative conflicts) consequences the solution at the country level is to be self-sufficient (in term of food affordability and access)?

In the figure from below, the negative consequences in terms of number of deaths in ongoing conflicts are reported, together with the number of people living in extreme poverty in the world.

Figure 1: Number of people suffering from extreme poverty and victims of war around the globe between 2000 – 2024



Source: Adapted from World Bank data (2024)

But why do wars happen? Can a country anticipate a potential conflict in order to mitigate it? Christopher Blattman (2023) reported: *“bumbling leaders, ancient hatreds, intransigent ideologies, dire poverty, historic injustices, and a huge supply of weapons (...). War seems to be their inevitable result”*. The global crisis will impact each country depending of their level of independence and stability to resist to high inflation, trade restrictions, food price hikes, shortages of fertilizer, and political turmoil can directly impact the EU’s food security pillars.

Even if statistics show a decreasing trend in the number of people suffering from extreme poverty—due, for example, to the implementation of labor market measures that increase youth employment rates or support a greater variety of employment forms—it remains crucial to maintain and accelerate this trend (Niță & Fleșer, 2011). Labor market measures, as a factor in reducing poverty and social

insecurity, contribute to reduced spending on social protection and inclusion, higher household incomes, increased consumption and production, and ultimately stimulate economic growth and sustainable development (Niță & Isac, 2016).

1.1. Food security

As stated by Sevil Omer (2024), *“from armed conflicts and extreme weather events to the lasting socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, global hunger levels are at a critical point”*. Recent examples of crisis situations are the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. As a result, lockdowns and travel restrictions weakened the global economy, therefore, in 2023 the number of people suffering from food insecurity almost doubled compared to 2022. Also, according to World Vision from the conflict in Ukraine one fifth of the global population suffered disruptions in food and energy supplies. These factors (among others) are not the only ones affecting food security. Besides the war, there are also factors such as climate crisis and environmental shocks, as well as food waste that put at risk the very food security for many people.

According to Sevil Omer (2024), facts that we need to know, when addressing the global hunger are as follows:

- as of year 2024, with world population of 783 million people, one out of ten peoples are facing chronic hunger;
- food insecurity is increasing at an alarming rate;
- in 2022, a total of 258 million people across 58 countries experienced crisis-level food insecurity;
- in the context of increasing variety of major drivers of hunger COVID plus weather events plus conflict resulted that in 19 countries, 117.1 million people faced crisis or higher levels of food insecurity;
- as of 2024 the war in Ukraine continues to have a global impact, the war and increased natural gas prices have disrupted fertilizer production and exports globally, threatening supply, spiking costs and jeopardizing future harvests;
- children often became victims of families in food insecurity situations, as they become more vulnerable. As a result, 45 million children suffer from acute malnutrition, and over 1 million children are dying each year. We are specifically talking about children from Asia or Africa mostly, who are exposed to irreversible cognitive and physical consequences, due to food related insecurity issues;
- other consequence that arises from the food insecurities and is fueled by wars, economic crises, and extreme weather events is represented by an important increase in the number of refugees. These are people being displaced, reaching a total of 110 million by the end of June 2023.

The above-mentioned facts, determined the non-governmental organizations to ask for and receive donations from people worldwide. The number of donors increased from 1.2 billion in 2011 to 1.4 billion in 2014, and, by 2030 the number of people donating is expecting to grow to 2.5 billion.

1.2. Policies for better life

Hunger is an issue affecting a fundamental human right. As reported in the previous paragraph, there are gigantic negative consequence on a large scale that needs more than ever to be mitigated. There is an acute need for policies aimed at ensuring the circumstances for a better life for the population worldwide. For the countries inside European Union there is the need of adaption and the need to consider (in their own adaption process) actions based on inter-European collaboration, unified strategy and enacting policy actions (as for their individual needs). At a country level, if we address the shocks generated by the consequences of war, armed conflicts (or other external shocks that are unforeseeable), policies would require an ad-hoc adaption.

The growing world population is predicted to reach 10 billion by 2050. Considering the actual food security situation there will be a need for an increase of 70% in food production (as predicted by United Nations, compared with 2009) in order to sustain the population food necessities. Food security goes hand in hand with mitigating climate changes in order to guarantee and safeguard agriculture in fruits and vegetable production. By boosting a more efficient use of the natural resources (while simultaneously reducing the environmental damage caused) it would be possible to feed more people. In this scenario, a diversified and sustainable food system would minimize (food waste and) environmental impact adding great potential for improving the food security. The impact of the conflicts may vary across different countries (and even regions) considering their degree of dependence on agricultural imports, capacity of producing food locally and vulnerability to food price shock.

Moreover, the need for policies for better life is experienced in the day-to-day activities. If non-governmental organizations (that are estimated to reach a total number of 10 million worldwide) were a country, as stated by John Hopkins University, Center for Civil Society Studies, they would have the 5th largest economy in the world. At the European level, in the Source provided by Donors and Foundations Networks in Europe, there are 53 billion euros annually given (by public-benefit foundations combined with non-governmental organizations) in Europe. Also, Walden University states that eighty percent of global citizens do agree that non-governmental organizations facilitate the involvement in positive social change.

1.2.1. Seed balls as social responsibility action

In the above section, it was highlighted why there is a need for policies for better life. In this section, social responsibility action is addressed, guiding the attention on the use of seed balls.

One important fact is that the degradation of land ecosystem together with the marine ecosystem undermines the well-being of 3,2 billion people and cost about 10% of annual global gross domestic product in loss of species and ecosystems services. As a response, the United Nations undertake as a measure to fight the climate crisis and enhance food security (within the project dedicated to the ecosystem restoration). One previous initiative is the planting of the trees as measure for ecosystem restoration. However, planting trees and the challenges of successful plantation made this initiative one with low return of investment.

Achieving this future goal is depending on the success of the current restoration initiatives. Shoo and Catterall (2013) explored different alternative strategies to restore landscapes other than tree planting.

One emerging, rediscovered technology from the 20th century is represented by the use of seed balls in order to rehabilitate degraded lands. The technology comes with the advantage that the seeds are packaged and protected against possible risk of being consumed by bird and rodents and so, are expected to achieve higher rate of germination and planting than the planet trees. Figure 2 describes the main phases on should proceed in order to construct a flow chart for the seed balls preparation endeavor.

Figure 2: Seed ball assembling procedure



Source: Adapted from Kannan, R., Dhivya, V., Janani, T.S.K. (2021), "Future Perspective of Seed Ball Technology for Creating New Ecosystem", International Journal of Plant and Environment. 7(4), 293-296

The usage of seed balls is a low-cost technology. It is unique due to the controlled manner in which it can be scattered. It can give life to new plants in desert area, vegetation deficient area, deforestation area, agriculture and horticulture cultivable areas. Among other advantages, we highlight the following:

- the success rate of growth is 80%;
- they make the activity less labour-intensive;
- they can just be sprinkled on the ground;
- they are cost-effective, long-lasting and efficient especially in arid regions with irregular and infrequent rainfall;

Seed balls are seeds in balls that germinates through rain usually, when their moisture becomes available. The balls are feed composed of biochar and growth nutrients that stays together with the seed that is indented to be planned through the process of establishing themselves. Seed balls technique can overcome stresses that impact seed germination and viability, increase the successful rate rather than planned trees, contribute to better seedling establishment even in resource-limited conditions. Seed balls are performing even better under non-irrigated conditions than in the controlled ones.

1.2.2. Seed balls accountability framework

An important aspect that deserves to be taken into consideration in the restoration initiative is the correct framework and funds allocation through the lifecycle. If we are to consider the seedlings, Government agencies that are responsible for restoration (should also constrain the actors interested in restoration) to put aside the resources required for proper care of the planted seedlings in the years ahead (up to 7 years after the seed being germanised). A framework needs to be defined and afterword's to be clearly assigned among source of funds and responsibility by tree growing years.

2. European Union Defence

Built as a project of peace, European Union is guided by principals of free economic and commercial exchange, making progress in developing the military union. The threat of an extension of existing war (or military conflict) increases the investments in army industry (one of the most profitable in this geo-political scenario). The European Defence Fund (implemented by the European Commission) have the main objective the modernizations of defense products and technologies (with main arms-producer's countries Germany, France, Italy and Sweden) where other countries inside European Union are obliged to buy products and technologies for the defense. For the period 2018-2023, Romania ranks the second among the countries with the higher values of foreign direct investments, surpassed only by Poland. Both Poland and Romania are not only central to the policies of the European Union, but also play a crucial role in terms of regional security and stability within NATO.

3. The Artificial Intelligence

GhatGPT is a generative artificial intelligence Chabot developed by OpenAI, launched in 2022. GhatGPT is a generative artificial intelligence Chabot developed by OpenAI, launched in 2022. Considering that in the above sections only the benefits and incentives were presented, and given that no monetary estimations were assessed (due to the absence of official data that can support the amount of investment for both defense at European Union level and seed balls initiative at globe level), in this last section, the attention is redirected to the artificial intelligence connecting Chabot interaction with the investment in the defense in case of war and investments in social responsibility.

Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer (ChatGPT) received considerable interest from researchers while exploring its potential in process industry. By testing ChatGPT and researching through Chabot the question: “-I would like to know how much money is needed in order to reforest the entire planet with fruit trees so that the food became free cost and so, to decrease the necessity of working 40 hours per week ?” the answer received is that “-With 150 billions euro there could be planned around 263 billions of fruit trees through seed balls, enough to feed 9 billions of people; Each tree is producing on average 50 kg of fruit per year that equals to 25,000 kilocalories for tree; this would assure the abundance of free food for the population worldwide, reducing the need for work for survival”.

On the other hand, if the question address to Chabot is “-How many billions were thrown away recently for the preparation of the third world war”, the received answer is the following: “-European Union planned to invest around 800 billion euro in the future years for the defense and the preparation to potential conflicts in case of the eventuality to a war on a large scale”. After the interactions with ChatGPT it results that it takes 14,375% from the total of 100% from the planned investments in the preparation for potential conflicts to be able to feed the entire population by the use of seed ball.

4. Conclusions

Events such as wars and other social and economic crises are affecting the global food security. The conflict in Ukraine (and Middle East) produced changes in the dynamic of global security, states and companies in the industry of the defense adopting new strategies, deciding to invest in new military capabilities. One important strategy to be covered is also the identification of the ownership of the restoration efforts by local actors and communities. Seed balls technology boost ecosystem conservation in the forest (especially when humans cannot enter in difficult areas) seeds can be spread through aircraft and helicopters, recently emphasized the used also of drone technology in order to disperse them. His value is confirmed by different institutions, political groups, groups of people, and individuals that were actively evolved in the production and distribution of seed balls. When discussing about ad-hoc adaption of policies for better life challenges are multiple and complex, and in order to handle them there is a need of innovative solutions, innovation from different disciplines and innovative ways for their

intersections. There is a need for new approach in relationship to the needed knowledge, solutions and strategies in order to ensure the sustainability and the resilience for what concern the food system in Europe.

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